

ACTON OPEN MEETING LAW TRAINING
DOs and DON'Ts

CATEGORY	DOs	DON'Ts
Meeting Notice	Get it to Town Clerk well ahead of 48 hour deadline (for review)	Use same boilerplate language for every meeting
Deliberation	Talk with quorum of body in open session	Discuss issues it over email!
Deliberation	Use staff or delegated member to get work done in between meetings, and compile comments	Use email to collectively finish documents (minutes, decisions, reports, etc.)
Deliberation	Post documents for discussion by body at next meeting to public prior to meeting	Circulate drafts of documents for discussion at meeting to body without access by public (if it contains members' opinions)
Minutes	Establish a practice for regularly approving minutes within 30 days or 3 meetings , and send to Town Clerk	Let minutes languish for months
Minutes	Provide a reasonable summary of the actions taken by the Public Body at the meeting – including any votes and the content of discussions	Make minutes a transcript of the proceedings, or so conclusory that the public cannot tell why the public body took specific actions
Executive Session	Follow precise procedure to discuss <i>only</i> allowed ES topics	Let discussion in ES stray off noticed topics
Executive Session	Follow formalities and take roll call votes	Be casual; enter executive session on the fly
Executive Session	Enter ES to discuss reputation, character or complaints against employee or official	Enter ES to discuss competency of employees or qualifications for employment
Complaints	Notify Town Manager and Town Counsel promptly	Blow it off and dismiss it out of hand.