

PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

July 7, 2010 - revised

1. Public Comment Procedure for Regular and Special Board Meetings, and Public Hearings:

1. Sign-up in person to comment on each agenda item or proposed increase in standard prior to the start of the meeting.
2. When your name is called, come to the podium, be recognized by the Chairman, state your name, and make your comment. Comments should be concise and to the point. Supporting documentation may be distributed to the Board. Documents will be filed with the minutes.
3. Individual speakers have up to 3 minutes.
4. A spokesperson representing a group present has up to 5 minutes. Supporters may stand while the comment is being made.
5. Clapping, heckling or verbal outbursts in support or opposition to a speaker's comments is discouraged.
6. Repetitious comment(s) are also discouraged. If a speaker is saying what you signed up to say, you may stand during their comment and then decline when your name is called to speak.

Public Comment Sections of the Agenda:

- Public Comment Section during Regular Meetings: Sign up to comment on items NOT on the agenda.
- Action Items Section: Sign up to comment following staff presentation of the action item and prior to Board action.

Note:

Comment to the Board does not constitute a formal complaint, is not considered a request for records under the Public Records Act, and does not require staff response unless directed to do so by Board.

2. Making a Presentation to the Board:

To make a presentation to the Board lasting longer than 3-5 minutes but not longer than 10 minutes, please contact the Child Care Licensing Program office at 727-507-4857 for an application. All applications must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the Board meeting at which the presentation would occur.

3. Process for Decreasing or Increasing Licensing Regulations (Highlighted words are from Chapter 61-2681 et al):

Decreases:

- In the event the License Board determines it reasonable to decrease the requirements of any particular standard, it may do so by action of the Board only. However, state regulations (Chapters 65-C and 402) can only be decreased by the state not by county authority.

Increases:

- At a regular or special meeting, the Board will review the proposed increase for the first time. There shall be a finding of necessity, not merely desirability. The Board will hear public comment according to the procedure above.
- Following the meeting if approved, the licensing program must notice the finding, and mail to all licensees the old standard, the proposed new standard, the reason for the change and a hearing date.
- At the hearing, Board must give an opportunity for all affected persons to present their views. The Board will hear public comment according to the procedure above.

Public Comment Policy – continued

- The proposed new standard may not be considered (discussed) again by the Board until a meeting at least 90 days after the hearing, at which time, if approved by at least 5/7 of the Board, it shall be adopted. The Board will hear public comment according to the procedure above. During the 90 day period, written public comment may be received and will be forwarded to Board members, however, Board cannot discuss it until the final meeting.
- Any new standard must provide a reasonable effective date. The Pinellas County License Board must provide sufficient notification to providers and must establish a reasonable effective date.
- Substantive changes made during the Final Agency Action would necessitate a new Public Hearing.

A. In the event a member of the public proposes or drafts a bill that effects Chapter 61 et al and wishes to present it to the Board:

1. The person(s) may present the proposed bill to the Board at anytime during the public comment portion of its meeting pursuant to the guidelines above or in writing to the Executive Secretary who will forward it to the Board.
2. However, if the Child Care Licensing Program is notified at least seven (7) days in advance of a Board meeting that a person or person(s) would like to present a proposed bill, the Licensing Program will include the presentation of the proposed bill on the agenda of the next Board meeting, which is published on the program's website. The Board will determine the length of the presentation by the presenter pertaining to the proposed bill, but in no event will it be less than 10 minutes. At their discretion, the Board or licensing program may schedule a special meeting or public hearing regarding the proposed bill presented.
3. Board may choose to refer the proposed bill to staff for research and set a date for staff to present their findings. Board may also choose to send a letter of support or disagreement to the legislature.
4. Nothing set forth above limits the Licensing Program or the Board's ability to present or discuss or take action on proposed bills or legislation during a regular meeting or special meeting or public hearing without a presentation by a member of the public.

RECORDING MEETINGS POLICY

November 1, 2006 - revised

Citizens desiring or requiring a verbatim transcript of the meeting, or needing a transcript for appeal, should, at their own expense, retain a certified court reporter to record the meeting, or the relevant portion of the meeting.

Citizens not needing a verbatim transcript or transcript for appeal may use silent, unobtrusive recording devices to record meetings.

Video cameras may be used to record meetings, but the cameras must be hand held. Tripods may be used only in the area(s) designated by staff. The designated tripod area will not impede ingress or egress, or the ability of attendees to see the meeting and will be adjusted according to known attendance.

Persons needing an accommodation may request it by calling the executive secretary at least two business days prior to the Board meeting.