

By: Canales

H.B. No. 4991

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to open meetings and public information training for certain public officials and attorneys regarding the open meetings and public information laws.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 551.005, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1) An attorney employed or engaged to assist a public official or governmental body in administering the responsibilities of the public official or governmental body under this chapter shall complete the training required by this section. The attorney must complete the training regarding the responsibilities of the governmental body and of its officers and employees under this chapter not later than the 10th day after the date the attorney is employed or engaged to assist the public official or governmental body with those responsibilities. An attorney may not be compensated by a governmental body for the time required to take and complete the training unless the attorney is an employee of the governmental body.

SECTION 2. Section 552.012, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

(c) A public official may designate a public information coordinator to be ~~[to satisfy the training requirements of this~~

1 ~~section for the public official if the public information~~
2 ~~coordinator is]~~ primarily responsible for administering the
3 responsibilities of the public official or governmental body under
4 this chapter. Designation of a public information coordinator
5 under this subsection does not relieve a public official from the
6 duty to comply with this section or any other requirement of this
7 chapter that applies to the public official. The designated public
8 information coordinator shall complete the training course
9 regarding the responsibilities of the governmental body with which
10 the coordinator serves and of its officers and employees under this
11 chapter not later than the 90th day after the date the coordinator
12 assumes the person's duties as coordinator.

13 (c-1) An attorney employed or engaged to assist a public
14 official, public information coordinator, or governmental body in
15 administering the responsibilities of the public official, public
16 information coordinator, or governmental body under this chapter
17 shall complete the training required by this section. The attorney
18 must complete the training regarding the responsibilities of the
19 governmental body and its officers and employees under this chapter
20 not later than the 10th day after the date the attorney is employed
21 or engaged to assist the public official, public information
22 coordinator, or governmental body with those responsibilities. An
23 attorney may not be compensated by a governmental body for the time
24 required to take and complete the training unless the attorney is an
25 employee of the governmental body.

26 SECTION 3. (a) Each attorney described by Section
27 551.005(a-1), Government Code, as added by this Act, who assists a

1 public official or governmental body in administering the
2 responsibilities of the public official or governmental body under
3 Chapter 551 of that code on the effective date of this Act must
4 complete the course of training required by Section 551.005 of that
5 code on or before October 1, 2025.

6 (b) Each attorney described by Section 552.012(c-1),
7 Government Code, as added by this Act, who assists a public
8 official, public information coordinator, or governmental body in
9 administering the responsibilities of the public official, public
10 information coordinator, or governmental body under Chapter 552 of
11 that code on the effective date of this Act must complete the course
12 of training required by Section 552.012 of that code on or before
13 October 1, 2025.

14 (c) A public official serving on the effective date of this
15 Act who has not previously completed the training required by
16 Section 552.012, Government Code, because the public official
17 previously designated a public information coordinator to complete
18 the training requirements for the public official must complete the
19 training required by Section 552.012, Government Code, as amended
20 by this Act, on or before January 1, 2026.

21 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.