

Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education
Open Meetings Act Quick Reference Document
for Agricultural Education in Illinois

The Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education (ICAE) is a Governor-appointed and Senate-confirmed group that advises the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) on matters related to agricultural education. ICAE is considered a public body by the State of Illinois, which makes the group subject to the provisions of the [Open Meetings Act \(OMA\)](#).

This act is a state law that requires business (including meetings) of public bodies to be conducted in a way that is open to the public. There are exemptions to these provisions for “closed meetings”, however none of the business that ICAE conducts is subject to exemption.

OMA law requires that the public be given prior notice of the date, time, place, and content of any meeting of a public body, such as ICAE. The ICAE website where all pertinent information, membership listings, and notice of meetings with agendas can be found at: <https://www.isbe.net/icae>

Highlights from OMA that might apply to groups that ICAE members could be involved in that discuss agricultural education matters outside of ICAE

- If more than three (3) ICAE members are invited or attend any gathering where matters related to agricultural education in Illinois are to be discussed, it is considered an official meeting of ICAE.¹
 - Means of electronic correspondence such as, but not limited to: simultaneous or “reply all” email conversations, , electronic chat, instant messaging can be a form of official meeting
- An agenda for all public meetings must be posted at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at the main office of the public body (see ISBE website for ICAE) and at the location where the meeting is to be held.
- Meetings where more than three (3) ICAE members are invited or attend must be held in a “public building” as defined by OMA as “a building or portion thereof owned or leased by any public body.”
 - Public buildings would include but are not limited to: public K-12 schools, public universities, public libraries, extension offices, city/township halls, state agencies and governmental buildings.
- Minutes must be kept for all public meetings with minutes being approved at the next subsequent meeting of the public body.

¹ "Meeting" means any gathering, whether in person or by video or audio conference, telephone call, electronic means (such as, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, and instant messaging), or other means of contemporaneous interactive communication, of a majority of a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business or, for a 5-member public body, a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business. <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=84&ChapterID=2>

- Approved minutes must be posted for public inspection within 10 days of approval by being posted to the ISBE website for ICAE.

If you would like to invite or even include in electronic correspondence, more than three (3) ICAE members, please follow the process below:

- Notify the ICAE Chair, Amy Leman, by email: bunselme@illinois.edu and ISBE consultant Erica Thieman, by email: ethieman@isbe.net
- Secure a public building to hold the meeting.
- Share the agenda with both Amy and Erica with sufficient time for the agenda to be posted to the ISBE site for ICAE at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. A minimum of four business days is recommended.
- Once minutes have been approved from the meeting, an electronic copy of the approved minutes should be shared with Amy and Erica via email within 72 hours to ensure posting to ISBE site for ICAE before the end of the 10-day window allowed by OMA.

If you think there has been a violation of OMA by a public body, within 60 calendar days from when the alleged violation occurred, you can file a Request for Review with the Office of the Attorney General.

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

Public Access Hotline
1-877-299-FOIA (3642)
publicaccess@atg.state.il.us