Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY

Public Comment – FAQ

Q: Why is the Department changing our Board's public comment process?
A: Public comment is a statutory right under Montana law, the change in approach affords public members the ability to take part in their government while balancing the board's need to conduct its business in a timely fashion. It also standardizes the process for participants when accessing different licensing boards and provides continuity to the public regarding public comment expectations.

Q: What are some of the benefits of the public comment change?
A: The standardization of processes throughout all licensing boards is a statutory task delegated to the Department and not specific boards. The adoption of a universal approach for all licensing board affords the public the most transparent way to engage each board. At the same time, the uniformity allows each board and the department a baseline approach to the implementation of the statutory right for the public to participate in government functions.

Q: Why can't the board hold public comment like "X" agency?
A: While recognizing the potential benefits and downsides to each agency's approach to public comment after reviewing potential changes for standardization, the division has arrived at this option being its best path forward. Allowing the public to comment at the beginning of a meeting affords attendees the ability to easily access the meeting without imposing a larger burden on their time.
Should a member of the public wish to comment further, with appropriate recognition, they may be allowed to do so.

Q: Can we modify the process to fit our needs?
A: No, the approach for public comment needs to be universal across all boards to have the desired outcome and provide certainty and continuity for public comment.

Q: Who can I talk to about this change?
A: You can talk to your board's Executive Officer who can further explain the history and necessity of this change. If you need to speak with someone beyond their explanation, they can direct you.

Q: Which boards are implementing this and when?
A: All licensing boards will be using the new procedure effective August 1, 2022.

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Q: Where do I find the boards next meeting?
A: Every board posts their meetings on their individual websites and there is a board meeting page located here: http://boardmeetings.bsd.dli.mt.gov/boardmeetings/. You can choose the board you are looking for and see all meetings, agendas, minutes, and more.

Q: Do I need to sign up to provide comment?
A: No, you do not have to sign up to provide comment at the board meeting. You can submit public comment in writing or provide oral comment during the board meeting when the public comment periods are open and when the public is prompted to provide comment.

Q: Can I talk to the board?
A: The board accepts public comment at most of its meetings. To provide public comment, you will need to prepare a concise 2 to 5-minute statement detailing the issue you want to bring to the board's attention. Please understand that the board cannot discuss an application during its public comment session if that is a part of your comments. Comments about the licensure process are appropriate discussion.