

CLIENT ALERT

March 2022



Governor Pritzker Extends Disaster Declaration *by Meganne Trela*

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois has been operating under a disaster proclamation from Governor J.B. Pritzker. The disaster proclamation has since served as the basis for local government entities to hold their public meetings entirely by remote means under the newly enacted Section 7(e) of the Open Meetings Act (“OMA”) (5 ILCS 120/7(e)).

On March 4, 2022, Governor Pritzker extended his disaster declaration for another 30 days. As a result, public bodies may still hold their meetings remotely under OMA Section 7(e).

If Governor Pritzker subsequently does not renew the disaster proclamation, public bodies will have to revert to in-person meetings or follow OMA’s traditional requirements on remote attendance. (See 5 ILCS 120(7)(a)-(d) (allowing board members to attend by video or audio conference if: (1) a quorum of the members of the public body is physically present at the meeting site; (2) the majority of the board allows remote participation; and (3) the board member seeking to attend remotely cannot attend in person because of personal illness or disability, employment purposes or business of the public body, or family or other emergency).

Questions regarding OMA’s obligations should be directed to your attorney.

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