

City of Signal Hill City Council

Public Participation and Outreach Policy

(Gov. Code § 54953.4(b)(3)(C))

1. Background

Senate Bill 707 (2025) amended the Brown Act to require eligible legislative bodies to take certain actions to encourage residents, including those in underrepresented communities and non-English-speaking communities, to participate in public meetings.

2. Purpose

This Policy establishes the reasonable efforts the City of Signal Hill City Council (“City Council”) will take to invite groups that do not traditionally participate in public meetings to attend its meetings under the Brown Act (Government Code § 54953.4(b)(3)(C)). This Policy is intended to support inclusive public engagement while preserving the City Council’s discretion to determine and adjust appropriate outreach methods based on local needs, priorities, and available resources.

3. Identification of Outreach Recipients

Within 12 months of the adoption of this Policy, City of Signal Hill (“City”) staff will prepare and present to the City Council a list of organizations, media outlets, and other entities that may assist in expanding awareness of the City Council’s meetings. This list may include, but is not limited to,

- a. Media organizations that provide news coverage in the City’s jurisdiction, including media organizations that serve non-English-speaking communities; and
- b. Community-based organizations such as good government groups, civil rights organizations, civic engagement organizations, neighborhood associations, and other community or cultural groups active in the City’s jurisdiction, including organizations active in non-English-speaking communities.

The list may be updated [annually, biennially, or periodically] as determined appropriate by the City Council or designated staff.

4. Outreach Methods

Using the above list, the City Council may provide direction to staff to utilize a variety of outreach methods, depending on available resources and community needs. These may include direct distribution of meeting information through e-mail or other notification systems; posting of meeting information on the City’s website or other digital platforms; use of social media or electronic communications; and coordination with media outlets or community organizations to share information about upcoming meetings.

The City may also provide direction to staff to consider partnerships with community-based organizations or other stakeholders to help disseminate information to broader or underrepresented audiences. Where feasible, outreach efforts may include the use of multilingual communications, culturally relevant messaging, or engagement through media outlets serving diverse communities.

Nothing in this Policy, however, requires the use of any particular outreach method.

5. Role of Staff

The City Council may assign responsibility for supporting outreach efforts to appropriate City staff, including but not limited to the Clerk's office, Communications staff, or other designated personnel. Staff responsibilities may include maintaining or updating outreach contact lists, preparing and distributing outreach materials, coordinating with community organizations or media outlets, and recommending outreach strategies for consideration by the City Council. Staff may also assist in identifying opportunities to improve outreach based on experience, feedback, or changes in community needs.

6. Documentation and Reporting

The City Council may request periodic summaries of outreach efforts for informational purposes. Such summaries may include general descriptions of outreach activities undertaken, categories of organizations or groups contacted, and observations regarding participation or engagement trends. Reporting may be provided on a periodic basis as determined by the City Council and is not intended to require detailed tracking of every outreach activity.

7. Evaluation and Adjustment

The City Council may periodically review its outreach practices and make adjustments as appropriate. In doing so, it may consider factors such as community feedback, participation levels, resource availability, and evolving communication practices.

8. Discretion and Limitation

This Policy is intended to provide general guidance and does not create mandatory duties or obligations. The City Council retains broad discretion in determining what constitutes reasonable outreach efforts. Consistent with applicable law, failure to provide outreach or notice to any specific organization or group shall not give rise to any claim or liability.

9. Additional Brown Act Public Access Requirements

In addition to the outreach efforts described in this Policy, the Brown Act establishes additional public access requirements intended to support broad participation in public meetings of eligible legislative bodies like the City Council. These requirements include, among other things: provisions related to the translation of meeting agendas into applicable languages (if applicable), the availability of a public meetings webpage with specified information in required languages (if applicable), systems for requesting

agendas and meeting materials, and accommodations that facilitate public participation, including assistance for interpretation.

10. Review and Updates

This Policy may be amended by the City Council at a public meeting in open session.