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**RSNLT****LAW ALERT**

## **Compliance Reminder: Designating Open Meetings Act Designees**

**January 15, 2010**

As previously reported, in August 2009, Governor Quinn signed into law Public Act 96-542 (the "Act"), which significantly amended the Freedom of Information Act. The Act also amended the Open Meetings Act ("OMA") by (1) requiring public bodies to designate OMA Designees to receive mandatory training from the Office of the Illinois Attorney General ("AG"); and (2) creating and expanding the authority of the Public Access Counselor ("PAC") to review closed session audiotapes and minutes, and to issue binding opinions on whether a public body has violated the OMA. The Act became effective on January 1, 2010.

In accordance with the amendments to the OMA, all public bodies are required to "designate employees, officers, or members to receive training on compliance with the OMA". By the text of the legislation, it is clear that a public body must designate at least two individuals to complete the required training. While the individuals designated as the OMA Designees will vary by public body, we suggest that the OMA Designees be individuals who are directly involved with the meetings of the public body (e.g., a Board member, an administrator who regularly attends meetings, and/or the individual who keeps minutes of the meetings).

Once designated, the public body must submit the list of OMA Designees to the PAC by regular mail to Cara Smith, Public Access Counselor, Office of the Attorney General, 500 S. 2nd St., Springfield, IL 62706 or by e-mail to [publicaccess@atg.state.il.us](mailto:publicaccess@atg.state.il.us). The OMA Designees are required to complete the AG's mandatory on-line training by June 30, 2010[1]. The training is free and should be available on the AG's website, [www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/government/index.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/government/index.html), after February 1, 2010.

If you require additional information regarding the new requirements under the OMA, please do not hesitate to contact any RSNLT attorney.

Catherine R. Locallo, an associate in the firm's Chicago office prepared this *Law Alert*.

[1] Please note that if a public body designates an additional employee, officer or member as an OMA Designee after June 30, 2010, that individual must complete the on-line training within 30 days after the designation. The public body should also submit an amended list to the PAC.

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