
Frequently Asked Questions Related to the Establishment, Function and Dissolution of the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency

What is the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency?

- Public Act 102-1088 (the “Act”) requires all units of local government that may levy a tax, except municipalities and counties, to convene a Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency (the “Decennial Committee”) to “study local efficiencies and report recommendations regarding efficiencies and increased accountability” to the county board of the county in which the unit of local government is located.

When must the Decennial Committee be formed by?

- Each unit of local government that is subject to the Act is required to form its Decennial Committee no later than June 10, 2023.

Who is required to serve on the Decennial Committee?

- All elected or appointed members of the governing board of the unit of local government are required to serve on the Decennial Committee.
- In addition, the “chief executive officer or other officer” of the unit of local government is required to serve on the Decennial Committee.
- Finally, at least two (2) residents of the unit of local government are required to serve on the Decennial Committee. The President of the governing board is responsible for appointing the public members of the Decennial Committee, with the advice and consent of the governing board. The President should work closely with the governing board and staff to find two residents who possess professional knowledge that would assist the Decennial Committee and help to fulfill its purpose and goals.
- The Act states that the chair of the Decennial Committee may, but is not required to, appoint additional members to the Decennial Committee. However, it is our recommendation that each unit of local government appoint fewer public members to the Decennial Committee than there are elected officials.

Who should serve as chair of the Decennial Committee?

- The Act provides that the President of the governing board (or their designee) shall serve as the chair of the Decennial Committee. If the President does not wish to chair the Decennial Committee, the President may designate another person to serve as the chair of the Decennial Committee. Note: The President of the governing board is still required to serve on the Decennial Committee.

Are members of the Decennial Committee permitted to be compensated for their service?

- No. Members of the Decennial Committee are not permitted to be compensated for their service. However, members of the Decennial Committee may be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.
- All expenses should be pre-approved by the unit of local government.

Is it possible for two units of local government to create a “Joint Decennial Committee” to satisfy the requirements of the Act?

- No. Each unit of local government is required to establish their own Decennial Committee. A joint committee is not contemplated or authorized by the Act.
- However, that does not prohibit a representative of another unit of local government from being appointed to serve on different unit of local government’s Decennial Committee as a resident member.

What should the Decennial Committee’s charge or purpose be? What should the Decennial Committee focus on?

- Section 15 of the Act discusses the duties of the Decennial Committee. That Section provides that the duties of the Decennial Committee include, but are not limited to, “the study of the governmental unit’s governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State.” In addition, the Decennial Committee must “collect data, research, and analysis as necessary” to prepare the report discussed below.
- The Decennial Committee should establish a manageable and attainable charge. The Decennial Committee should select one or two of the above topics that it can realistically study and report on.

Is the Decennial Committee required to use outside entities or consultants?

- No. The Act provides that the Decennial Committee may use the service of outside consultants or specialists. However, the Decennial Committee is under no obligation to do so. Outside consultants would be an additional cost to the unit of local government.

How many times is the Decennial Committee required to meet? How should the meetings be structured?

- The Act requires the Decennial Committee to meet at least three (3) times.
- During the initial meeting, the Decennial Committee should at least determine what topic(s) it will focus on and plan for future meetings.

- At subsequent meetings the Decennial Committee should meet to discuss and analyze the data and documents that have been gathered on the committee's topic. This process could include presentations from staff (and possibly consultants). The Decennial Committee can schedule as many meetings as it needs to discuss and analyze the data.
- The Act does not limit how many times the Decennial Committee may meet. Some Decennial Committees may only meet the required three (3) times; others might find it beneficial to meet more often. Neither approach is right or wrong.
- Finally, the Decennial Committee must finalize a report on its findings within eighteen (18) months of formation. The report must be approved by the Decennial Committee during its final meeting.

When is the Decennial Committee permitted to meet?

- The Decennial Committee may meet during a regularly scheduled meeting of the unit of local government's governing board, so long as: (1) a separate notice regarding the Decennial Committee meeting is given in conformance with the Open Meetings Act; (2) the Decennial Committee meeting is included as part of the governing board's agenda; and (3) at least a majority of the members of the Decennial Committee are present at the meeting.
- The Decennial Committee may also meet outside of a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing board. The Decennial Committee will need to post notice and an agenda for the meeting at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting as required by the Open Meetings Act.

Is the Decennial Committee required to comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act?

- All meetings of the Decennial Committee must comply with the Open Meetings Act. In addition, the Decennial Committee must provide an opportunity for public comment of at least three (3) minutes per speaker.

Is the Decennial Committee required to survey its residents?

- At the conclusion of each meeting, the Decennial Committee is required to survey the residents who attended, asking for their input on matters discussed at the meeting. A good way to satisfy this requirement would be via email to all residents who attended the meeting and who provided a valid email address to the unit of local government.

What should be included in the Decennial Committee's final report? What is the Decennial Committee required to do with the final report? Is there a deadline for sending the final report?

- The Decennial Committee must summarize its findings in a written report. In the report, the committee must include its recommendations regarding increased accountability and efficiency. There are no specific requirements regarding the length of the report. Many Decennial Committees will aim for a succinct written report, which is prudent. The report should include: (1) the names of the committee members; (2) the dates of the committee meetings; (3) a statement confirming that input was sought from the residents who attended the meetings; (4) a statement confirming that residents had an opportunity to submit feedback; (5) the committee's charge; (6) a general statement regarding what data the committee considered; and (7) the committee's recommendations related to the committee's charge.
- Once the report is approved by the Decennial Committee, it must be sent to the county board for the county in which the unit of local government is located. If the unit of local government is located in more than one county, the report must be sent to the county board of every county in which the unit of local government is located. It is permissible to provide an identical report to multiple county boards.
- The report must be sent to the county board(s) within eighteen (18) months of the Decennial Committee's formation.
- Finally, the report must be made available to the public.

How is the Decennial Committee dissolved?

- The Decennial Committee is automatically dissolved after the final report has been transmitted to the applicable county boards and made available to the public.

Are units of local government required to go through the Decennial Committee process again in the future? If so, how does that process work?

- Yes. Each unit of local government that is subject to the Act is required to appoint a new Decennial Committee and repeat the process outlined above every ten (10) years.
- Although the Act is not clear exactly when the new ten (10) year periods begin, it is our guidance and recommendation that the new Decennial Committees be formed every ten (10) years beginning in June 2033 (i.e., June 2043, 2053, etc.).