



From the State Library - March 17, 2020

Canceled Board Meetings and Accreditation Status

We have received some questions about the effect of cancelled board meetings on a library's accreditation status. **At this time, cancelling a board meeting because of concerns about the COVID-19 virus will not impact a library's present or future accreditation status and will in no way affect your current Tier status.**

If your library misses a meeting because of virus concerns, please make sure to report this the next time you apply for accreditation and we will take this into account when calculating the number of board meetings per year.

Virtual Meetings

We encourage library boards to use virtual meetings when possible. There are times when boards must meet, especially on budgetary and salary matters. When handled correctly and when there is a quorum present, virtual meetings are acceptable and will meet the accreditation requirement.

According to guidance from Law Librarian Mandy Easter:

"[Iowa Code section 21.8](#), entitled 'Electronic Meetings,' applies to this situation. Entire boards can meet remotely using technology, but trustees have to state in their minutes a clear and exact reason why. The meetings must take place in real time, with all board members in attendance able to hear each other. Since all meetings of the board must be public meetings, the public must also be able to hear all board members speak, so the technology has to be set up in a place where the public may attend. A conference call type of meeting is permissible as long as all trustees can hear each other and the public can attend and listen to the conversation. Meetings may NOT be conducted via email unless the public can see the email conversation happening in real time, which is nearly impossible to do from a technological standpoint, so meetings by email are thoroughly discouraged."

If you have any questions about this issue or accreditation, please contact Scott Dermont at 515-281-7573 or scott.dermont@iowa.gov. As a reminder, our agency is still operating and Scott is available during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[Accreditation Webpage](#)

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