

## Pandemic-related legal updates: Town Meeting, Mass. Emergency Paid Sick Leave, and more

March 3, 2022

As you are likely aware, the Governor recently signed Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, supplemental state budget provisions for Fiscal Year 2022. Within that legislation (which can be found here

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter22>), several pandemic-related relief provisions were extended, until July 15, 2022:

- 1) **Open Meeting Law.** Public bodies are authorized to continue to hold entirely remote meetings, upon the provision of “adequate, alternative means” of public access.
- 2) **Quorum Reduction.** The Select Board, in consultation with and approval of the Town Moderator, can still reduce the quorum for Town Meetings to not less than 10% of the regularly required number. This requires at least a seven-day notification requirement before any Select Board vote.
- 3) **Remote Representative Town Meeting.** A representative town meeting can continue to be held remotely.
- 4) **Virtual Notarization.** Notarization may be still be undertaken through electronic video conferencing in real time.

As these are further extensions of previously adopted relief provisions, we are not explaining them in significant detail here. However, our website contains full explanations of these provisions, at <https://www.k-plaw.com/covid-19-resources/>. Again, these provisions are set to expire July 15, 2022, unless further extended.

- 5) **Elections.** Additionally, the State Primary will be held on September 6, 2022, and changes may be made to the nomination schedule based upon this date change. Statewide or districtwide recounts may be held with only two days’ notice to the candidates, and e-mail notice is sufficient for such purposes.
- 6) **Mass. Emergency Paid (COVID) Sick Leave.** The state program requiring that employers provide up to an additional 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees for COVID related reasons, will terminate on March 15, 2022. <https://www.mass.gov/alerts/the-covid-19-temporary-emergency-paid-sick-leave-program-is-ending-march-15-2022#2144016> Employers may continue to submit requests for reimbursement for this sick leave utilized by their employees through March 15<sup>th</sup>, but must submit those claims for reimbursement no later than April 29, 2022. Instructions on how to apply for reimbursement can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-temporary-emergency-paid-sick-leave-program>.

If you have any questions about any of these areas, please do not hesitate to contact your KP Law attorney.

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