



**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Steve Leighton, Fire Chief  
**Date:** January 5, 2021  
**Subject:** AB 1234 Mandatory Ethics Training Requirements; Notice of Options

State law requires specified local officials to receive two hours of ethics training.<sup>1</sup> The requirement applies to local officials who either receive compensation for their service to the district or are reimbursed for their expenses.<sup>2</sup>

For newly elected and appointed officials, the requirement is to receive this training within one year of assuming office.<sup>3</sup> For everyone else, the requirement is to receive this training within two years of receiving one's first training.<sup>4</sup>

The training must cover both ethics laws and ethics principles.<sup>5</sup> There are a number of options for complying with this requirement.

- Self-study materials are available at [www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance). The materials require that you read two articles on public service ethics laws and principles, take a self-assessment test and then submit it to the Institute for Local Government with a processing fee for each test. The Institute will review your test(s), provide you the correct answers to the questions and a proof of participation certificate. For those of you who have already been through the basic course, there is a more advanced self-study option to enable you to apply the basic concepts in a particular series of situations. See [www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234).
- The Fair Political Practices Commission offers free online training at <https://localethics.fppc.ca.gov>. This option requires you to log onto the FPPC's website, review various screens of materials, take periodic tests to assure retention of the information and then print out a certificate.
- The Institute for Local Government also offers onsite training to local officials at conferences, regional meetings and at individual local agencies on a fee basis. For more information see [www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance) and [www.ca-ilg.org/ethics](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ethics) training options.

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<sup>1</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235(a), (b).  
<sup>2</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235(a).  
<sup>3</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235.1(b).  
<sup>4</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235.1(a).  
<sup>5</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235(b).



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Once you receive your proof of participation in the required AB 1234 training, please make a copy of the certificate for your records and provide the original to the district clerk of the board.<sup>6</sup> These records will be retained as public records for at least five years.<sup>7</sup>

As with all ethics laws, AB 1234 creates a minimum for ethics education-not a maximum. We encourage you to take advantage of additional training in ethics-related topics and document those efforts as well.

If you have any questions regarding these requirements, please contact my office. Note that general information about AB 1234 is also available at [www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ab1234compliance), including a frequently-asked-questions sheet.

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<sup>6</sup> Cal. Gov't Code §§ 53235(e), 53235.2(a).

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Gov't Code § 53235.2(b).