

AB1234: ETHICS TRAINING FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS

On October 7, 2005, the Governor signed Assembly Bill No. 1234. This law requires (among other things) that all agencies that provide compensation, salary, or stipend to, or reimburses the expenses of, members of a legislative body must provide ethics training to local agency officials by January 1, 2007, and every two years thereafter. This potentially applies to all appointed members of Commissions, Boards and Committees.

AB1234 requires elected and appointed officials to take *two hours* of ethics training if they receive compensation for their service or if they are reimbursed for their expenses. For Albany, this applies to new members of *City Council, the City Attorney and the Planning & Zoning Commission*. The simplest way to comply is to complete the self-study at the following link, and send in the test for scoring, as described in the link. The City will reimburse the \$25 fee. The link to the self-study course is: www.ca-ilg.org/AB1234selfstudy. The two self-study courses are short (less than 10 pages) and reading the materials should take about 15 minutes.

Other boards, committees and commissions, particularly Chairpersons, and new commissioners, and staff are strongly encouraged to spend 15 minutes to read through the materials. The second course, entitled "Governmental Transparency and Fair Processes" includes a good guide to the basic Brown Act requirements. Go directly to page 4 of this document: "Conducting the Public's Business in Public" to understand the basics for serial meetings, (e-mail, phone), closed sessions, posting and following agendas, the public's right to be heard and fair process laws.