

# **Budget Hearing Comment Form**

**Name (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email or Phone (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Hearing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency or Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic or Line Item:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Comment:**

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**Suggested Action (optional):**

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I request a copy of this comment as a public record.

I request a written response or follow-up.

**You cannot assume that every state requires city governments to hold both public hearings and workshops for upcoming budgets—but most do require at least one public hearing.** The specifics vary by state, type of local government, and whether property taxes are involved.

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### **What's Generally Required Across States:**

- **Public hearings are commonly mandated** for city and county budgets, especially when setting property tax levies. For example, in Washington State, cities and towns must hold public hearings on the preliminary budget and on property tax revenue sources.
  - **State laws often require at least one public hearing** before final budget adoption, but the number and format (e.g., workshop vs. formal hearing) can vary.
  - **Workshops are not universally required** but are often used voluntarily by local governments to increase transparency and citizen engagement.
  - **Some states allow combined hearings**—for example, a property tax hearing may count as one of the required budget hearings.
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### **What You Should Do as a Citizen Advocate:**

- **Check your state's municipal code or budget statutes** to confirm the minimum legal requirements.
  - **Review your city charter and local ordinances**, which may go beyond state mandates and require additional hearings or workshops.
  - **Encourage your local government to hold workshops**, even if not required—they're a powerful tool for public education and input.
  - Track key dates and ensure hearings are properly noticed and accessible.
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