

BRIEFINGS

Briefings are in-person informational sessions provided by the regulatory agency with key stakeholders, such as elected officials and members of public interest or environmental groups who have been involved in the process.

Briefings allow key stakeholders to learn more details and directly share concerns about an action with the regulatory agency prior to public release of information regarding that action. However, because briefings are typically conducted with a small, select group of stakeholders, they are not considered public information dissemination. As a result, they always should be complemented by activities to inform the general public, such as informal meetings with small groups, public meetings, or news conferences. In addition, be careful not to exclude people key to the public participation process from the briefing; avoid the perception that you are trying to bury facts or favor special interest groups.

Required activity?

No. Briefings are an optional, informal public participation technique. Detailed descriptions of dozens of formal and informal public participation techniques also can be found in Chapter 5 of the [2016 Edition of the RCRA Public Participation Manual](#).

Making It Work

When to Use

Briefings are particularly useful when key stakeholders have expressed a moderate-to-high level of concern about the facility or the process; before the release of new information to the media and the public; when unexpected events or delays in the RCRA process occur; or at other points during the permit or corrective action processes when an upcoming action is or might be controversial.

Briefings usually precede news conferences, news releases, informal meetings, or public meetings.

How to Use

- **Inform your audience** well in advance of the date of the briefing. It is usually best to hold the initial briefing in a small public room, such as a hotel meeting or conference room, or at the stakeholders' offices. Where relationships might be antagonistic, it may be best to hold the briefing in a neutral location.
- **Present a short, official statement** explaining the information in the context of the RCRA process and announcing future steps in the process.
- **Answer questions about the statement.** Anticipate questions and be prepared to answer them simply and directly. If the briefing has been requested, find out in advance what information the stakeholders are interested in, and prepare to answer those and related questions.

Checklist for Briefings

- Determine the date, time, and location of the briefing.
 - Date: _____
 - Time: _____
 - Location: _____
- Notify key state and local officials, community members, and other interested parties of the briefing.
- Prepare presentation, including responses to anticipated questions.
- Prepare any handout materials.
- Conduct briefing.
- Follow up on any unanswered questions.