

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 489 (Arreguín) – As Amended July 17, 2025

Policy Committee:	Local Government	Vote:	10 - 0
	Housing and Community Development		12 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires each local agency formation commissions (LAFCO) to post written policies and procedures, including any forms necessary to apply for a change or organization, on its website, and adds ministerial housing projects reviewed by public agencies to the Permit Streamlining Act (PSA).

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires each LAFCO to establish written policies and procedures and to provide access to the policies and procedures on its website.
- 2) Requires each LAFCO to include in its written policies and procedures (a) any forms necessary for a complete application for a proposed change of organization or reorganization and (b) a requirement that these forms be available in electronic format on the LAFCO's website.
- 3) Applies the provisions of the PSA to ministerial housing development projects, as defined in the Housing Crisis Act (HCA), reviewed by public agencies.
- 4) For each approval a public agency issues in connection with a housing development project, requires the public agency to publish online the public agency's list of required information and criteria used to determine the completeness of an application, pursuant to existing law.

FISCAL EFFECT:

No state costs. Local costs to cities and counties to meet new requirements under the PSA are not reimbursable by the state because local agencies have general authority to charge and adjust planning and permitting fees to cover their administrative expenses associated with new planning mandates.

Costs to a LAFCO to post written policies and procedures, and any forms for applying for a change of organization, on its website are not reimbursable by the state because LAFCOs are not eligible claimants with the Commission on State Mandates.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

[This bill] would improve the PSA by requiring all public agencies to post online the information necessary for a housing development application to be deemed complete. While the PSA currently requires cities and counties to post this information online, the PSA does not comprehensively require the myriad of other public agencies from which housing development projects are required to secure regulatory approval, to post this important information online. [This bill] will help to advance the goals of the State in building more housing and will strengthen the integrity and efficiency of California's housing approval process, ensuring that housing projects can be built on time and at predictable costs.

- 2) **Background. LAFCOs.** Existing law, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (the Act) delegates the Legislature's power to control the boundaries of cities and special districts to a LAFCO in each county. LAFCOs are empowered to review and act on a range of jurisdictional changes, including annexations, detachments, incorporations, dissolutions, and city or district consolidations.

Existing law expresses the intent of the Legislature that each LAFCO establish written policies and procedures that include forms for the various submittals to a LAFCO by January 1, 2002. This bill deletes the legislative intent language and instead requires LAFCOs to establish those written policies and procedures, including any forms necessary for a complete application for a change of organization or reorganization, and requires LAFCOs to provide access to the policies and procedures, including any forms, on its website.

PSA. The 1977 PSA requires public agencies to act fairly and promptly on applications for development permits. Public agencies must compile lists of information that applicants must provide and explain the criteria they will use to review permit applications. Public agencies generally have 30 days to determine whether applications for development projects are complete and accepted for filing; failure to act results in an application being "deemed complete." Once a complete application has been submitted, the PSA requires public officials to act within a specific time period after completing any environmental review documents, as specified.

Historically, the PSA applied only to discretionary development review projects. AB 130, (Committee on Budget), Chapter 22, Statutes of 2025, a budget trailer bill, applied the PSA's requirements to the ministerial review of a housing development project done by a local agency at the entitlement stage. This bill further applies the PSAs requirements by adding the ministerial review of a housing development project, as defined by the Housing Crisis Act, done by a public agency, not only a local government, to the definition of a development project under the PSA.

Existing law requires a public agency to prepare a list of information required from an applicant for a development project. This bill also requires a public agency prepare and publish online a list for each approval issued in connection with a housing development project, including specific criteria used to determine application completeness and the name of the approval.