



UTAH ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS

# *Membership Benefits and Services*

## **Membership Services**

Being informed and trained on new and changing statutory and regulatory provisions is critical to the successful governance of any district. *In recent years, many new statutory requirements have been enacted that apply to districts, including the Utah Entity Registry, and a law that has important implications for personal use of government property by employees and board members. Other items of importance include The Best Practice Handbook, and Cybersecurity in the State of Utah, prepared and released in June 2023 by the Legislative Auditor General. All districts must post meeting agendas, meeting materials, minutes, board-member listings, etc. on the Utah Public Notice Website to comply with the Open Meetings Law. Recent changes in the procurement law are of continuing importance. All government entities must now post all financial information on the transparency website. How can district boards and management stay informed and trained on the ever-increasing and changing requirements of government service? UASD provides the resources, information channels, and training that will help you to stay in compliance!*

There is an ever-increasing need for comprehensive governance and compliance training for special districts (17B) and special service districts (17D). State statutes governing districts require board member and management training on a variety of issues, including the Open Meetings Law and GRAMA requirements. The updated *Pocket Guide for Board Members* provides answers to these and other key issues. It serves as an important resource and is available to board members and management of UASD member districts.

An understanding of changes to the Ethics Law is most important, particularly considering penalties for violation of Ethics and Open Meetings laws.

The use of best management practices has been and continues to be a focus of legislators and the Legislative Auditor General. *The training provided by the UASD addresses these important issues and fulfills certain training requirements enumerated in statute.*

### **Membership Services and Benefits include:**

- Board member training
- Model personnel policies and procedures
- Legislative advocacy
- Website members-only section
- Resource library
- Social media communications
- Problem solving assistance
- Public relations assistance
- Procurement policy template
- Bylaws templates
- Personnel manual templates
- Useful online resources
- Q&A resources
- UASD Pocket Guide for Board Members
- UASD Pocket Guide for Legislators
- Video resources for public education
- Legal Hotline
- Personal Use of Govt. Property Template
- National Special District Association membership
- and more

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## **Legislative Services & Governmental Relations**

The UASD is the only voice on Capitol Hill that is actively representing, advocating, and fighting for all Utah districts, regardless of the district services provided, or a district's affiliation with other organizations.

The UASD reviews and monitors every bill that is introduced into legislation for its potential impact upon Utah districts. This represents a continual effort during the full-time legislative session and during interim legislative meetings throughout the year. Any bills requiring action are quickly brought to the attention of the UASD Legislative Committee, Legal Counsel, lobbyists, and Board of Directors to determine the Association's position on each issue. Through electronic communications, the UASD informs member districts of new and immediate issues and needs. These bills then become the focus of Association lobbying efforts to achieve an outcome favorable to districts and the citizens whom they serve. *The value of this effort* alone for each district exceeds several hundred thousand dollars each year!

The UASD is involved in collaborative efforts with all local government service organizations, including the Utah League of Cities and Towns, the Utah Association of Counties, the Water Coalition, Rural Water, Utah Water Users, Fire, Police, School Districts, and many others. The UASD is also a founding member of the National Special Districts Association (NSDA). NSDA provides important Federal representation for districts in Washington DC and Federal grants information. These relationships create an effective consortium in addressing issues faced by districts and other government entities.

### **Legislative Services and Governmental Relations include:**

#### **UASD Legislative Services**

- Actively represents and promotes the interests of districts, in Utah and nationally via NSDA
- Initiates, drafts, and moves forward favorable district legislation through the legislative process
- Provides direct access to legislators and the legislature
- Provides constant monitoring of the legislative process
- Monitors state rule-making activities
- Develops and participates in many coalitions and relationships, including NSDA
- Informs and functions as a resource for legislators regarding district issues
- Coordinates with affiliated organizations
- Provides comprehensive weekly legislative updates during the general legislative session
- Provides daily emails during the legislative session regarding new bills affecting districts
- Provides representation and updates as needed during the interim legislative session
- Provides education and training on new statutory requirements
- Makes available the UASD Pocket Guide for Legislators, providing information about districts

#### **Governmental Relations**

- Functions as a liaison with state agencies
- Actively develops and maintains open communications
- Provides advocacy with state departments
- Provides constituent affairs and promotes interests
- Provides information and education on audit issues
- Provides referrals for funding sources and grant opportunities at federal and state levels
- Provides representation for districts on various state boards, i.e., procurement, URS, water, sewer, transparency, taxes, Utah Land Use and Eminent Domain Task Force, Utah Asset and Investment Task Force, and other special legislative committees and working groups