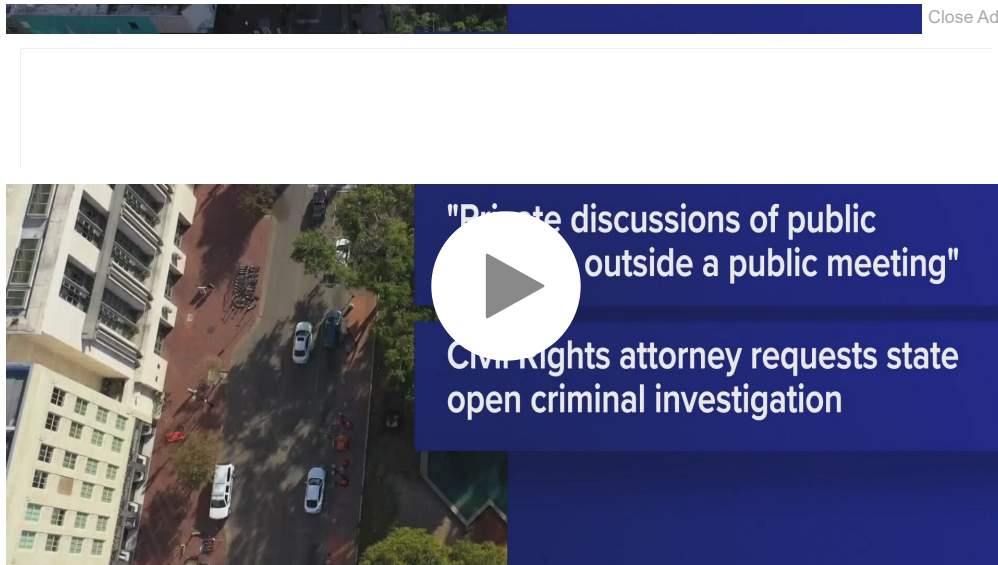


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LOCAL NEWS

Jacksonville City Council's Sunshine Law controversy timeline

Jacksonville's Ethics Commission considers new Sunshine Law training after requirement change proposal.



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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Questions over whether Jacksonville City Council members violated Florida's Sunshine Law are coming to a head tonight as the city's Ethics Commission meets to consider new training requirements. The discussion follows weeks of scrutiny that began with a series of text messages exchanged during a public meeting.

Timeline of Events

- **August 4, 2025** — During a Neighborhoods Committee meeting, Council President **Kevin Carrico** texted Council Members **Ron Salem** and **Mike Gay** about [amendments to one of his bills while the measure was being publicly debated](#). Critics argued the private exchanges amounted to discussions outside the public record.
- **Mid-August** — Civil rights attorney **Leslie Jean-Bart** filed complaints urging State Attorney **Melissa Nelson** to open a criminal investigation. Jean-Bart said the texts violated Florida's Sunshine Law, which requires elected officials to conduct deliberations in public.
- **September 9, 2025** — Nelson's office [declined to investigate](#), saying the messages reflected the legislative process and did not constitute a Sunshine violation. Carrico called the allegations partisan attacks, while Jean-Bart criticized the decision as a blow to government transparency.
- **Following Weeks** — City Council moved forward with reforms. Lawmakers approved **Ordinance 2025-658**, clarifying that all council members and executive assistants must complete annual Sunshine Law and ethics training. Council also passed **Ordinance 2025-612-E**, [revising the city's gift policy to ensure free event tickets are shared equally](#) between the Mayor and City Council, rather than solely controlled by the executive branch.

Tonight, the Ethics Commission will discuss additional measures, including updated training on Sunshine compliance and procedures to prevent private communications from raising future legal or ethical concerns.

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