

**Massachusetts House of Representatives
Bill Summary**

Bill #: H.5387

Title: An Act allowing "print-free" digital legal notices for the town of Westford

Sponsor: Rep. James Arciero

Committee: Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government

Hearing Date: May 13, 2026

Current Law:

Subsection (b) of Section 13 of Chapter 4 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that any entity required to publish a legal notice must do so through a local newspaper's print publication, website, and a website that may be maintained as a repository for such notices.

Subsection (c) states that when a legal notice is published on a newspaper or statewide website, the operator of the website must ensure that the site is publicly accessible, contains the searchable full text of legal notices, complies with accessibility standards, provides free access to view and search for legal notices (but may charge a fee for enhanced features and content), maintains an archive of legal notices for at least 90 days after the notice is no longer displayed, and charges no additional fee in excess of the usual fee for publishing a legal notice.

Summary:

Section 1 of the bill states that whenever the town of Westford or Westford public schools or any of their subdivisions, committees, boards, commissions or offices are required to post a legal notice in a newspaper or a newspaper of general circulation, they may use one or more of the following methods to satisfy the legal requirement:

- (i) print newspaper of local or general circulation;
- (ii) on a newspaper's website;
- (iii) on websites that report local news and opinion that satisfy all criteria for digital publication as enumerated in Section 13(c) of Chapter 4;
- (iv) on a website maintained as a statewide repository for such notices; or
- (v) on an official town website that may be maintained as a repository for such notices.

Section 2 provides that nothing in this act should be construed to alter or amend the timing requirements of the publication of legal notices set forth in the Massachusetts General Laws.

Section 3 provides for the act would take effect immediately upon passage.

Notes: Article 20 approved at the March 28, 2026 Annual Town Meeting by majority voice vote.