

Aug. 30, 2024

2022 SOS poll challenger guidance upheld

This week, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that provisions of [poll challenger guidance](#) issued by the Secretary of State (SOS) before the 2022 elections are consistent with the Michigan Election Law. Lawsuits challenging the instructions were filed in 2022 and the decision this week resolved the litigation. The court found:



- **Challenger credential:** A uniform credential ([available here](#)) may be required of challengers under the SOS's [authority](#) to prescribe and require uniform forms for use in the conduct of elections.
- **Challenger liaison:** The SOS may require all challenges be made to a challenger liaison, but the challenger liaison at an absent voter counting board (AVCB) must be an election inspector (whereas the instructions provided it be the most senior member of the clerk's staff if not otherwise specified).
- **Permissible/impermissible challenges:** The distinction between permissible and impermissible challenges is allowed, the SOS had authority to deem the qualifications for an elector the "permissible" reasons for challenge, and "it is reasonable of the Secretary to label all other challenges as 'impermissible challenges.'" However, while an election inspector can decline to record a challenge if the challenger provides *no* reason for their belief that a voter is ineligible to vote, they may not decline to record if they merely "believe the explanation provided is lacking or insufficient."
- **Electronic devices:** Initially, the instructions prohibited use of electronic devices capable of sending or receiving information at an AVCB until the close of polls on Election Day, to preserve the sequestration requirement in law at that time. When sequestration was removed from the Michigan Election Law, the state Bureau of Elections (BOE) removed this requirement from the instructions. Accordingly, the court determined this issue was moot (or, no longer necessary to address, as intervening events made it irrelevant).

BOE is updating [the Appointment, Rights, and Duties of Election Challengers and Poll Watchers](#) to reflect the adjustments noted in this article.

STC sets 2025 certification and assessor certification requirements

The State Tax Commission (STC) has released 2025 certification



Michigan Township Participating Plan Risk Reduction Grant Program

Applications Due
September 15, 2024



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Upcoming MTA Training & Events

Now You Know lunchtime webinars:

Sept. 18: [Elections: Ready? Set. Go!](#)

Oct. 16: [In the Transition](#)

Nov. 13: [Onboarding New Officials](#)

Sept. 19: FREE MTA Q&A webinar:

[Obligating ARPA Funds](#)

Emerging Issues in Emergency Services

Sept. 10: [Frankenmuth](#)

Sept. 12: [Cadillac](#)

Regional Meetings:

Sept. 24: [Frankenmuth](#)

Sept. 25: [Ludington](#)

Sept. 26: [Kalamazoo](#)

Oct. 2: [Gaylord](#)

Oct. 3: [Marquette](#)

Treasurers' Guide to Tax Collection:

level requirements: [2025 Twp and City Guidelines](#) and [2025 County Guidelines](#). The commission also approved the process and conditions in which an assessor, local unit or county may request a waiver of the required certification level requirement. An assessor, local unit or county who believes they meet the conditions for a waiver may complete the process by submitting the appropriate form to the STC no later than Oct. 31, 2024. The STC also released [Bulletin 7 of 2024](#) and [Bulletin 8](#) regarding assessor certification and assessor certification level requirements for 2026. A list of approved assessor continuing education classes for the 2026 renewal cycle will be available after Sept. 19 on the STC's [website](#). Required [2024 certification levels for all local units of government](#) are also available.



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The banner features an illustration of a woman sitting at a desk with a laptop, and a man sitting at a desk with a computer monitor. The background is a light blue and white color scheme.

Applications accepted for Recreation for Rural Communities program

The [Recreation Economy for Rural Communities](#) (RERC) program is accepting applications now through Oct. 16 to provide planning assistance to rural communities to boost their outdoor recreation economy, revitalize their main streets and promote equitable access to the outdoors. Project examples include improving access to trails and nearby natural attractions, promoting outdoor-oriented businesses, expanding lodging and other services for visitors, supporting economic growth and amenities in downtown area, and ensuring access and benefit from outdoor recreation opportunities. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program will provide planning assistance to an expected 20 to 25 communities, including a facilitated community workshop and planning/follow-up calls. Learn more about the program and how to apply at an [informational webinar](#) on Sept. 5 from 3:30 to 5 pm.



FALL REGIONAL MEETINGS

A FULL-DAY EVENT CONNECTING YOU WITH MUNICIPAL EXPERTS FOR LEARNING & DISCUSSION ON THE MOST CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING TOWNSHIPS.

CLICK HERE FOR DATES, LOCATIONS & TO LEARN MORE!

The banner has a background of autumn leaves and includes the Michigan Townships Association logo in the top left corner.

Grant funding available for fisheries habitats, dam removal and more

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering up to \$1.5 million in [Fisheries Habitat Grants](#) for activities that can improve state fisheries and aquatic resources, such as fish habitat conservation, dam removal and repair, resource assessment studies and recreation opportunities. Grant amounts start at

Nov. 19: [Marquette](#)
Nov. 20: [Gaylord](#)
Nov. 21: [Kalamazoo](#)
Nov. 25: [Frankenmuth](#)

MTA QUICK LINKS

[Answer Center](#)
[Training](#)
[Advocacy](#)
[Classifieds](#)
[Community Connection](#)
[Webcasts](#)
[Store](#)
[Township Governance Academy](#)
[Allied Service Providers](#)
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* [Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler, P.C.](#)

\$25,000; smaller projects within the same region addressing similar issues can be bundled into a single grant proposal package to reach the minimum grant amount. All applicants must first discuss their projects with a [local DNR fisheries biologist](#) and submit a short preproposal for DNR review by Oct. 4 using an online form on the [grant website](#). Contact nohnerj@michigan.gov or (517) 599-6825, or kosloskic3@michigan.gov or (517) 281-1705 with questions. A detailed [2024 Fisheries Habitat Grant Program handbook](#) includes a timeline, preproposal guidelines and forms.



BOE reminders

Weekly virtual training sessions. Beginning in September, the state Bureau of Elections (BOE) will host weekly 30-minute virtual "Training Tidbits" sessions, with Q&A, to cover election process topics with key reminders in preparation for the November election. Presentations and related training materials will be available in the BOE's eLearning Center before each session, and recordings will be available after each session. All clerks and election administrators are encouraged to attend these sessions live or watch the recordings. The first session, held Sept. 5 at 11:30 a.m., will cover the first step in the absent voting (AV) process—sending/receiving AV applications and issuing AV ballots. [Sign-up for this first session is available in eLearning.](#) Future sessions will be available in eLearning starting on Sept. 3.

Sept. 6 deadlines. Sept. 6 is the deadline to establish, move or abolish early voting sites or places for the Nov. 5 election. Moving an early voting site or polling place requires township board approval, notice to voters and notice of the change posted at the previous polling location. Any early voting sites or polling places changes must be updated in the Qualified Voter File. Sept. 6 is also the deadline for local clerks in a combined absent voter counting board (AVCB) agreement to inform the county clerk that the AVCB has been authorized by the local board of election commissioners.

Share input on DNR state forest plan

Public input is being sought on the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) new State Forest Management Plan, which will serve as a guide for the next 10 years and aims to ensure the long-term, sustainable management and health of the state forest. A [webinar](#) on Sept. 5 at 1 p.m. will provide an overview and answer initial questions. The plan will be available on the [DNR's state forest planning webpage](#) beginning Sept. 5; send feedback to ForestPlanComments@Michigan.gov through Oct. 4. Public meetings will also be held from 1 to 4 p.m. at:

- **Sept. 9:** Rose Lake State Wildlife Area headquarters building, 8562 E. Stoll Rd., East Lansing
 - **Sept. 10:** Kirtland Community College, 4800 W. 4 Mile Rd., Grayling
 - **Sept. 12:** Marquette Charter Township Hall, 1000 Commerce Dr., Marquette
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MDOT eases traffic restrictions for Labor Day weekend

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is suspending work and lifting traffic restrictions over the Labor Day holiday. Beginning at 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 30, and continuing until 6 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 3, 96 out of 161 projects statewide will have lane restrictions removed.

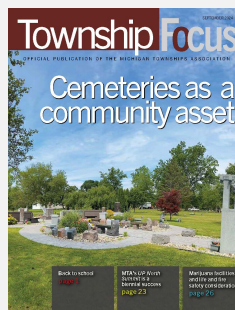


Member input sought for MTA's 2025 legislative policy platform

Township officials can review and provide input on the MTA's legislative policy platform. Reviewed and updated annually, the legislative policy objectives guide the Association's government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review our [2024-25 Policy Platform](#) and share any proposed revisions and suggested additions by Monday, Nov. 4. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA committees for word selection and legality, and to ensure they conform with the Association's overall goals and objectives. The proposed policies will be presented at the 2025 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

Read the September issue of *Township Focus*—hitting mailboxes and online now!

The [September issue of *Township Focus*](#) is now available! Read this month's cover story, *Cemeteries as a community asset*, to learn more about trends and opportunities that can enhance this important local service. We share a recap of our *UP North Summit*, and our feature discusses life and safety hazards related to recreational marijuana facilities. "Hello, MTA ... ?" explores how to navigate the transition with new board members after the November election and "Financial Forum" explains best practices for managing capital assets.



Get a handle on the hottest issues facing

your township's fire department

Providing emergency and fire protection may be one of the more complicated (and critical!) services your township provides, making it crucial to stay on top of today's issues. MTA can help! Join us on Sept. 10 in Frankenmuth or Sept. 12 in Cadillac for [Emerging Issues in Emergency Services](#), a full-day class examining essential issues in EMS. Get an update from the state fire marshal, learn about the impact of battery storage systems and electric vehicles, plus hear expert tips for stress management, recruitment and retention of the new generation and more. Space is still available, but time is running out! [Learn more here](#) or [register online now](#).

MTA office closed Sept. 2

MTA's office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2, for Labor Day and will resume normal office hours on Sept. 3. MTA wishes everyone a safe holiday weekend.

Michigan Townships Association | 512 Westshire Drive | Lansing, MI 48917 US

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