

Jan. 9, 2026

Attend MTA's 2026 Capital Conference

[Register today](#) for MTA's 2026 Capital Conference—**Tuesday, March 17** in Lansing. This is an opportunity to get ahead of what's coming, understand the laws taking effect, and learn how new state-level proposals could impact your township. Learn about pending election law changes, updates on PA 233 and pending litigation, housing and zoning proposals, new grant programs, potential property tax reform, and more! You'll also be able to connect with lawmakers and state department officials, allowing you to engage on issues affecting your individual township and get direct access to resources that can benefit your community. **Join us in Lansing on March 17!** Together, we can be effective. Additional information can be found on [MTA's website](#).



New USPS postmark rule

At the end of 2025, [a new rule promulgated by the U.S. Postal Service](#) took effect, seeking to clarify postmark practices. The rule does not alter USPS postmark practices. Rather, it is intended to make clear that the postmark will reflect the date an envelope is first processed by an automated USPS sorting machine—not the date that the piece of mail was dropped off at a USPS facility mail box. The postmark date could be several days after the mail was put in a USPS mail box. To guarantee a specific postmark date, USPS recommends that residents request a manual local postmark at a post office or USPS retail location (which is free) or purchase a certificate of mailing. Townships may wish to share information with their residents for instances when postmark is acceptable for receipt, such as certain tax exemption forms delivered to the assessor. The rule also has potential impacts for military and overseas voters (MOVE). Under the Michigan Constitution, MOVE ballots are counted as long as the ballot is postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the appropriate election official within six days after the election. Townships are urged to encourage their MOVE voters returning their ballots through the mail to return their ballot as soon as possible to account for mail delays, as well as the possibility of a delayed postmark.

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UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

Jan 13-14: Hone your [board leadership skills](#) at MTA's Winter Academy in Frankenmuth, with sessions including:
**Board Roles & Relationships
**How Boards Make Decisions
**At Your Service: Meeting Township Needs

Jan 21: *Now You Know* Lunchtime Webinar [P&Z: NIMBY is Not an Option, Now What?](#)

February [Board of Review Trainings](#): Registration is now open for online, in-person, and advanced options.

March 17: [2026 MTA Capital Conference](#)

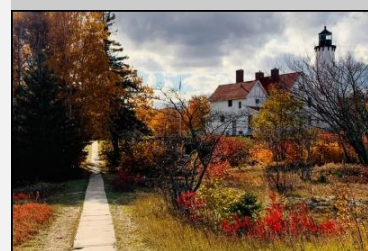
Registration is now open for [MTA's 2026 Annual Educational Conference & Expo](#), April 20-23 at the Grand Traverse Resort

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TECH SUPPORT FOR MUNICIPALITIES****(734) 338-8658** **info@black-rock.tech**www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakeswww.mersofmich.com[* Bauckham, Thal, Seeber Kaufman & Koches PC](#)[* Consumers Energy](#)[* Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC](#)[* Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC](#)[* Hartleb Agency](#)[* ITC Holdings Corp.](#)[* Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler, P.C.](#)[* Mika Meyers, PLC](#)**Annual asset forfeiture report deadline**

Every township is required to file an annual asset forfeiture report online with the Michigan State Police by Feb. 27, 2026, even if the local unit has no forfeitures to report. The report summarizes the local unit's activities regarding the forfeiture of property under the Public Health Code (controlled substances), Identify Theft Protection Act, the Revised Judicature Act and Public Nuisance Act. Any property seized after Feb. 1, 2016, and forfeited (finalized) in 2025 must be described in Section C of the [online survey](#). The 2026 Asset Forfeiture Report and 2026 Asset Forfeiture Report Instructions can be found [here](#). If you fail to complete the survey by Feb. 27, your township will be listed in the 2026 Asset Forfeiture Report as having failed to properly report the information required under the law. Questions on the report should be directed to peacockb@michigan.gov or (517) 449-2985.

Federal ADA website compliance rules impact state Treasury filings

The state Department of Treasury has [shared information](#) on how submissions to the department will be impacted by upcoming federal website accessibility standard requirements. Local units will be required to ensure all public-facing digital content meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, including websites, PDFs, forms and mobile applications. Meeting these requirements often involves reviewing existing materials, updating workflows and coordinating across departments. Beginning April 24, 2026, all documents and digital content submitted to Treasury must comply with the updated rules. This applies to reports such as audited financial statements, forms and other digital materials provided by or on behalf of state and local governments. Treasury will share additional information and implementation details as federal timelines move closer. More information can be found in the [ADA Fact Sheet: New Rule on the Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps Provided by State and Local Governments](#). MTA has shared information on the new federal requirements in a [November 2024 Township Focus cover story](#) (turn to page 20) and a 2025 Annual Conference session ([view the presentation here](#)). Next month's *Township Focus* cover story will further explore these standards, and an educational session will also be held at our [2026 Annual Conference](#).

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BOARD OF REVIEW

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**[CLICK HERE FOR DATES, TIMES
& LOCATIONS THIS FEBRUARY!](#)**

Treasury's next Chart Chat webinar is Jan. 15

Join the state Department of Treasury's next Chart Chat webinar on Jan. 15 at 2 p.m. The webinar, designed for elected officials and municipal finance and accounting staff, will provide important updates and information on accounting and auditing topics, measuring local government fiscal health, and the uniform chart of accounts. Questions can be submitted prior to the webinar on the [registration](#) page.

Take the Michigan Green Communities Challenge now!

The [Michigan Green Communities \(MGC\) Challenge](#) reporting period is open now through May 1 for local governments to share

their sustainability efforts taken in 2025. The MGC Challenge is an annual sustainability recognition program that serves as a guide to help communities embed environmental sustainability into their operations, policies and programs. Communities taking actions to expand sustainable practices can earn certification and gain access to resources, including a network of local leaders and environmental experts, by completing the free challenge. Learn more on the [Michigan Green Communities website](#) and a [new FAQ document](#). MTA is a Michigan Green Communities partner.



No tax on overtime: Key details for the public sector

The IRS has [published guidance](#) for employees to deduct qualified overtime compensation from federally taxable income, also known as "no tax on overtime," beginning in 2025. This new temporary deduction will have significant implications for local governments as governmental entities are one of the largest employers nationwide and adhere to a combination of federal, state and local regulations on overtime pay. To assist, the Government Finance Officers Association has compiled a list of [frequently asked questions](#), as well as links to federal resources in [one place](#) and an [employee navigator](#) for the overtime deduction.

AARP livable communities grant program

Local governments can apply for [AARP's Community Challenge grant program](#) until March 4. The program has three tiers of grants with no required match for different projects that benefit residents, particularly those age 50 and

older, in the areas of transportation, public spaces, housing, digital literacy and disaster resilience. [An informational webinar](#) on the program is scheduled for Jan. 27 at 2 p.m. For more details on eligible projects and application instructions, visit the [AARP Community Challenge FAQ](#).

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LARA announces new Mobile Home Section

A new Mobile Home Section has been established within the state Bureau of Construction Codes to centralize licensing, inspection and regulatory oversight of Michigan's mobile home industry, including coordination with local governments. Centralizing these functions is intended to strengthen oversight and improve service for residents, licensees and local partners by improving response times for citizen complaints, strengthening oversight of underperforming and unlicensed parks, providing a single, consistent point of contact, enhancing coordination with state agencies and local governments, and supporting regulatory compliance. Questions can be submitted to LARA-BCC-AIR@michigan.gov or (517) 241-9313.

Coastal Management Grant deadline extended

The application deadline for the Fiscal Year 2027 [Coastal Management Grant Program](#) has been extended to Jan. 30. Eligible projects include port and harbor revitalization, efforts to minimize coastal hazards, restoration and protection of healthy coastal ecosystems for public use, and stormwater solutions. The grant requires a one-to-one match and will operate on a reimbursement basis. Application instructions and further information about eligible activities are available on the [grant program website](#).

Circuit Rider Program: Technical assistance for rural water systems

The USDA Office of Rural Development has announced the solicitation for the FY 2026 [Circuit Rider Program: Technical assistance rural water systems](#). The grants will provide technical assistance to rural water systems that are experiencing day-to-day operational, financial or managerial issues. Eligible applicants are public bodies that have rural water systems and the legal authority to own and operate water facilities, and serve areas with a population of 10,000 or fewer. No match is required and there is a rolling application period. To initiate the application process, the applicants must contact their [local Rural Development Office](#).

Upcoming webinars on materials management siting, composting

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is hosting several upcoming webinars for local leaders.

- **Siting for materials management facilities:** Counties are currently developing the first round of materials management plans required by state law, which must include a zoning process for new materials management facilities. On Jan. 22 at 10:30 a.m., a [webinar](#) for county and municipal officials will cover how to create a siting process that prioritizes community needs while meeting statutory requirements. Attendees can hear from other planning entities drafting their materials management plans and strategize with industry experts and EGLE staff to answer any questions.
- **Regulating composting activities:** Composting can be a helpful tool in communities by diverting methane-producing waste from landfills and allowing organic material to break down without greenhouse gas production by directly depositing moisture and nutrients into soil. EGLE's next Local Leaders [webinar](#) on Jan. 21 at 10 a.m. will cover different composting methods and EGLE's regulations to help officials find the right role for composting in their community.

UIA reschedules MiUI launch

Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) has rescheduled the [MiUI Tax Go Live for 2026](#). The new system is intended to speed tax reporting by employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) and enhance customer experience while incorporating anti-fraud practices. For now, employers and TPAs will continue to use [MiWAM](#) for all tax and benefit functions, including filing quarterly wage reports and payments for the fourth quarter of 2025. These are to be submitted in MiWAM by the end of the day on January 26, 2026. Visit [MiUI University](#) for upcoming editions of the MiUI Minute newsletter for more information.

Reminders for clerks

USPS postmark rule. The U.S. Postal Service promulgated a new rule effective Dec. 24, 2025, clarifying postmarks. In Michigan, absent voter ballots must be *received* by their clerk on Election Day, not postmarked, so the new postmark rule will not affect most voters; the only potential impact in Michigan will be for MOVE voters. (*See article above for more information.*)

2026 early voting plans and agreements. Each municipality is required to have at least one early voting (EV) site for statewide and federal elections. In 2026, this applies for the August primary and November general election. The following are 2026 EV deadlines:

- **March 2:** County clerk must notify municipal clerks if they intend to offer early voting through a county agreement.

- **March 9:** Municipal clerks must inform their county clerk if they will conduct EV as a single municipality, or enter into a municipal or county agreement.
- **April 1:** County and municipal agreements must be finalized and signed.
- **April 6:** Single municipalities and municipal agreement coordinators must submit EV plans to their county clerk.
- **April 16:** Counties submit their municipalities' EV plans to the secretary of state.

Video surveillance requirement. Beginning Jan. 1, 2026, municipalities must use video monitoring of all drop boxes during the 75 days before each election. This requirement now applies to all drop boxes, regardless of when they were purchased or installed.

Electronic orders and requests. Return postage for absent voter ballot applications and return envelopes reimbursement claim forms are now available in state Bureau of Elections [eLearning Center](#), Electronic Orders and Requests.

Registration is now open for the township event of the year



Join us as we embark on the **Pathway to the Future** at

[MTA's 2026 Conference & Expo](#),

coming to the Grand Traverse Resort on April 20-23. With 50 expert-led [educational sessions](#) addressing the challenges facing townships today and an expo with 100+ municipal vendors, this event brings you the knowledge, tools and connections needed to serve your community with confidence and competence. Whether you're a first-time attendee or a seasoned official, this event will empower you to lead with purpose. Remember, you must first [register for Conference](#) in order to book [housing](#) when reservations open on Jan. 27! [Download the full brochure here](#) or [register online now](#).

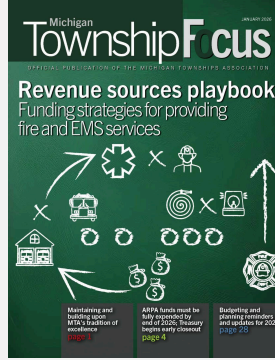
State parks request help finding seasonal workers

Michigan state parks and recreation areas require over a thousand seasonal workers for operation and maintenance each summer. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is looking for help amplifying their recruitment efforts. Interested adults can complete a short [online interest form](#) to learn more about the multitude of openings.

Read the January issue of Township Focus—online now!

[Your January issue of Township Focus is here!](#) Our cover story, "Revenue sources playbook: Funding strategies for providing fire and EMS services," explores the variety of township options for providing fire protection & emergency medical services—and how to fund it—based on each township's unique needs & circumstances. Our feature story

provides an overview of updates and considerations that could impact township administrative and budget planning for 2026. This issue's "Hello, MTA...?" column dives into data center concerns and major things townships should consider when planning and zoning for this emerging, and often controversial, land use. In "Financial Forum," learn about filing W-2s and 2026 payroll updates. In this issue, you'll also find the [2026 MTA Annual Conference & Expo](#) registration brochure, including all the details about the township event of the year. Conference registration is now open!



Federal updates for week of Jan. 5

Check out the National Association of Towns and Townships [Weekly Legislative Update](#) for the latest on federal actions impacting townships.



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