Michigan Township INSIGHTS

Sept. 25, 2026

Sept. 30 deadline for fire equipment/gear grant applications



Townships only have until Sept. 30 to apply for the state Fire Equipment Grant Program, which provides funding to local units of government for the purchase of fire equipment for all firefighters and/or fire gear for on-call, part-time or volunteer firefighters. To request access to the electronic application, visit the Michigan Electronic Signature Solution. Grant expenditures must be incurred between Oct. 1, 2025, and Sept. 30, 2030.

Reminder: Term of office begins Dec. 1 for township officials elected in November

The term of office for township officials elected in the Nov. 3 election will begin at noon on Dec. 1 following the official's election. Public Act 19 of 2026 changed the start of the term of office from Nov. 20 to Dec. 1, and applies to officers elected after Dec. 31, 2024. Additionally, an individual elected cannot take the oath of office until the results of the election have been certified by the appropriate board of canvassers.

Bill would remove private deed restrictions on commercial property

Legislation to create the "Dark Store Prevention Act" was approved by the Senate Local Government Committee this week. Senate Bill 960, sponsored by Sen. Veronica Klinefelt (D-Eastepointe) and supported by MTA, would allow local governments to bring action to vacate a private restriction or covenant from an abandoned, blighted property zoned for retail use. Currently, large retailers can place deed restrictions on their buildings so that other retailers cannot purchase or lease. If a large retailer shuts down with such a restriction, a building can sit vacant. Under the bill, the local government could file a complaint to bring an action to remove these restrictions from the commercial property, and the court would have to strike the restriction or covenant, if specific conditions apply. The bill next will be considered by the full Senate.



UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

September & October Regional Meetings & UP North Summit:
- **Sept. 29-30**, Harris
- **Oct. 7**, Thompsonville
- **Oct. 8**, Spring Lake
- **Oct. 13**, Gaylord

Oct. 14: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar Taxation Trouble Spots

Nov. 24 & Dec. 2: Treasurers' Guide to Tax Collection
- **Nov. 24**, Gaylord
- **Dec. 2**, Lansing

ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS

ACRISURE
www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakes

MI Par Plan
MICHIGAN TOWNSHIP PARTCIPATING PLAN
www.theparplan.com/

MERS
Municipal Employees' Retirement System
www.mersofmich.com

* Adna Technologies



Lake level assessment fee change seeks to protect PILT

Currently, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) utilizes funding earmarked for townships and counties to pay lake level assessment fees. Under a bill supported by MTA and reported by the House Government Operations Committee this week, the DNR would no longer be permitted to do so. House Bill 6105, sponsored by Rep. Tom Kunse (R-Clare), would eliminate the ability for the DNR to use funds intended to pay townships and counties for tax-reverted, recreation, swamp, forest and other DNR lands through payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) agreements. The bill moves to the House floor for a vote by the chamber.

Bill requiring DNR to grant municipal requests for lakes without public access advances

This week, the Senate Local Government Committee reported Senate Bill 526, sponsored by Sen. Jeremy Moss (D-Bloomfield Twp.) and supported by MTA, to expand local control of lakes without public access. SB 526 would amend Part 801 (Marine Safety) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to approve a local government request for a special rule on a body of water if the request were supported by 75% or more of the properties with riparian rights. The bill only applies to bodies of water controlled by the requesting local government that do not have public access. SB 526 now moves to the full Senate for further consideration.



Member review and input sought for 2027 legislative issues

MTA-member township officials can review and provide input on the MTA legislative policy platform. The legislative policy objectives—reviewed, updated and approved annually—guide the Association's government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review the current 2026-2027 Policy Platform and share any proposed additions and revisions by Monday,

* Bauckham, Thall, 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

MTA QUICK LINKS

Answer Center
Training
Advocacy
Classifieds
Community Connection
Webcasts
Store
Township Governance Academy
Allied Service Providers
NATaT

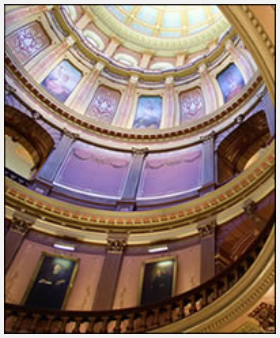
Nov. 23. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA policy committees and will be presented at the 2027 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our 2027 Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

STC offers December MCAT course

The State Tax Commission (STC) is accepting applications for the December 2026 Michigan Certified Assessing Technician (MCAT) program to be held on Dec. 3-4, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., in Port Huron. The exam will be held on Dec. 7 at 9 a.m. at the same location. Completed applications must be received by the STC no later than Nov. 25. Contact GastW@michigan.gov with questions.



House legislative committee public comment changes



The procedure for members of the public to submit written testimony and position cards electronically for House committee proceedings has recently changed. Individuals wishing to share a written position with House legislative committees for inclusion in the public record who are unable to be physically present in Lansing must now submit their comments through a new online portal. When the notice for a scheduled committee is posted, online portal access for each item on the meeting's agenda is available. The implementation of the new portal means that submission of testimony and position cards via email will no longer be accepted. This does not affect the ability of members to testify virtually at committee meetings if approved by the chair; the change applies to written comments only. Written comments and position cards are accepted in person by the clerk of the committee for anyone attending a meeting in Lansing.

New youth employment process rollout on Oct. 2

The youth employment permit process is shifting from local schools to an online, statewide system on Oct. 2. Employers will be required to register with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) through the new Youth Employment Permit Portal (YEPP) before hiring minors. The portal allows employers and minors to complete the process at any time and offers a simple process for employers to notify LEO when a minor's employment ends.

Permits issued prior to the implementation of YEPP will still be valid. Learn more about the switchover and register today on the YEPP webpage.

Arts & Culture grants available

Townships are among those eligible for the Michigan Arts & Culture Council (MACC) Experience Support grant program, which provides arts and culture-related project funding to Michigan organizations for which arts and culture is not the primary focus of the organization's mission. The program offers grants for operational support, project support, facilities/equipment improvements, arts education, professional development and field trips. Applications are due Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. MACC is hosting virtual office hours to answer questions, and provide clarity on grant guidelines and support for navigating the submission process, on Oct. 1, 1 to 3 p.m.; Oct. 14, 10 a.m. to noon; and Oct. 20, noon to 2 p.m. For additional questions, reach out to MACC staff.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant opportunity

Townships are eligible to apply for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) Acres for America program 2027 conservation grants. Program funding is available for projects that permanently conserve large-scale habitats for fish, wildlife and plants through voluntary land acquisitions and perpetual conservation easements. Interested townships should contact todd.hogrefe@nfwf.org to share project concepts and receive feedback prior to submitting a pre-application. Pre-applications are due Oct. 19, and full proposals by Dec. 2.

Plan ahead for a smooth transition to the MiUI unemployment system

The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) will launch the MiUI information system on Nov. 9, and township employers can take steps today to transition to the new system. Two specific benefit-related roles can now be assigned, including Edit Claims Forms Mailing and Edit Benefit Charges, either to the employer themselves or a third-party administrator where applicable. Addressing these permissions now will help avoid delays when the system launches, particularly for employers that use separate third-party administrators for tax and benefit functions. A quick reference guide and step-by-step instructions are available to activate accounts and interact within the MiUI system. Employers may also complete the approval process to electronically submit Employer Filed Claims (EFC) via MiUI (required to be mailed with the current MiWAM system). Following submission of a memorandum of understanding and UIA approval, employers can begin electronically submitting EFCs when MiUI benefit functions go live.

Reminders for clerks

- **Expiration of federal retention period for the November 2024 election.** The 22-month election

material retention period required by federal law for the 2024 general election expired on Sept. 22. Prior to destroying election materials, clerks should confer with their township legal counsel on any pending litigation or Freedom of Information Act requests that impact record preservation.

- **Notice of registration and establishment of early voting regions in QVF.** The notice of registration for the November election must be posted in a newspaper of general circulation no later than Oct. 5. A sample notice is available in the state Bureau of Elections's (BOE) eLearning Center. Clerks coordinating an early voting region should complete the establishment of their region(s) and sites in the early voting module under "Elections" in the Qualified Voter File (QVF) by Oct. 5.
- **October training opportunities.** Registration is open for the following 40- to 45-minute BOE training sessions, each held at noon:
  - Processing AV Ballots: Oct. 1
  - Absent Voters at the Polls: Oct. 6
  - Election Day Electronic Pollbook: Oct. 13
  - Emergency Backup Procedures: Oct. 14
  - 0-14 Day Voter Registration: Oct. 15
  - Closing the Polls: Oct. 20
  - Election Night Reminders (Receiving Boards): Oct. 22
  - Absent Voter Ballot Grace Periods: Oct. 27

Township leaders can apply for Michigan Political Leadership Program

Township officials can apply until Oct. 2 for the Michigan Political Leadership Program, which aims to help create good public policy for the state of Michigan. Through the program, from Michigan State University, a diverse group of 24 individuals engage in a public policy and leadership curriculum. The 10-month program incorporates practical politics, public policy analysis and process, personal leadership development, and effective governance. The program prepares these emerging leaders for entry into public life as candidates for office, government officials and citizen activists in the affairs of their communities and the state of Michigan. Find application qualifications and requirements, and apply online, here. Considerable financial resources and time are donated to support each fellowship, which is valued at approximately $12,000. Accepted fellows are asked to pay an administrative fee of $1,500 to participate in this program.

MTA's October webinar tackles taxation trouble spots



Tackle the top tax-collection challenges that treasurers face in our one-hour *Now You Know* webinar, *Taxation Trouble Spots*, held live **Oct. 14 at noon**. You'll get practical tips on tax bill requirements, summer deferments, property tax

administration fees and more. Click here to register online now. Looking for a deeper dive? Catch our full-day *Treasurers' Guide to Tax Collection* coming to Gaylord Nov. 24 and Lansing on Dec. 2. Learn more about these in-person events here.

Federal updates for week of Sept. 22

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



MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

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