

CREATING NEW BOUNDARIES AND NEW POLLING LOCATIONS

As per the Michigan Department of State Bureau of Elections-Election Officials' Accreditation Study Guide, dated June 2011, the following consists of the steps to create new precinct boundaries and establish new polling locations:

1. **Precinct Boundary Requirements.** Michigan law stipulates that all precincts shall:
 - a. Be composed as nearly as practical of compact and contiguous territory;
 - b. Have clearly defined and clearly observable boundaries consisting of:
 - A named road or street;
 - A road or highway that is part of the federal, state primary or state secondary road system;
 - A river, stream or drainage feature that is 40 feet or more in width;
 - A natural or constructed permanent physical feature that is shown on an official county, city or township map issued by the Department of Transportation or a United States geological survey topographical map;
 - An apartment building, a dormitory or other permanent multiple-unit housing structure;
 - As advised by the Department of Information Technology's Center for Geographic Information (CGI), a village or school district boundary line can be used to define a precinct boundary line.
2. **Precinct Size Limits and Voting Station Minimums.** Each precinct must not contain more than 2,999 registered voters. At least one voting station must be provided at the polling location for every 300 registered voters in a precinct and the number must be exceeded when and where appropriate.
3. **In a township, the approval of all precinct boundary lines (or alterations) and the establishment of precincts must be granted by resolution of the local election commission. Steps for dividing or rearranging precincts are as follows.**
 - a. The Election Commission adopts a resolution to divide or rearrange a precinct using the criteria as defined under election precincts and must record its proceedings as follows:
 1. Specified the number of precincts rearranged or divided.
 2. Describe the boundaries of each precinct.
 - b. The Clerk must notify the County Clerk immediately following the adoption of the resolution to divide or rearrange with the following information:
 1. A copy of the resolution taking action to affect the change.
 2. A copy of the new boundaries (mapped).
 3. The number of registered voters in each precinct.
 - c. The Clerk must forward to the Bureau of Elections for QVF and Street Index Updates the following (this will ensure that QVF is properly programmed to effect the change);
 1. Map showing the NEW precinct boundaries.
 2. Map showing the OLD precinct boundaries.
 3. A copy of the resolution taking action to effect the change.
 4. Index with changes from QVF.
 5. Send to:
Amanda Fedewa
Bureau of Elections
430 W. Allegan St.
1st floor Austin Building
Lansing, MI 48918

- d. Notify all registered voters of precinct changes by first class mail and QVF “in-box” processing of new voter registration card. (An updated Voter Identification Card must be issued to each voter affected by a precinct reassignment.)
- e. Post a notice of change in two public places in each precinct affected by the change showing the new boundaries and precincts (on Election Day or as soon as possible and leave up until Election Day).

Sample Resolution for Permanent Precinct Changes

GEORGETOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP ELECTION COMMISSION

Resolution to Permanently Divide, Rearrange or Consolidate Elections Precincts

Resolution No. 110822-01

WHEREAS, Section 116-1954-XXVIII, Election Precincts, of the Michigan Election Law, Public Act 116 of 1954, MCL 168.654 to 168.661, provides for township Election Commissions to divide, rearrange or temporarily consolidate election precincts; and

WHEREAS, The Township of Georgetown has determined that permanently dividing, rearranging or consolidating the Precincts as shown on the [Map](#) is appropriate:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Georgetown Charter Township Election Commission hereby directs the Township Clerk to divide, rearrange and consolidate the current precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 resulting in the following newly created precincts: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 as shown on the [Map](#) titled “New Voter Precincts Option 1.”

The foregoing resolution offered by Election Commission Member _____, and second offered by Election Commission Member _____.

Upon roll call vote the following voted yes: _____

Upon roll call vote the following voted no: _____

The Clerk declared the resolution adopted.

Del South, Georgetown Township Clerk

Sample Resolution for Temporary Precinct Changes

GEORGETOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP ELECTION COMMISSION

Resolution to Temporarily Consolidate Elections Precincts including:

For the *(General or Primary)* **Election on** *(Month, Day, Year)*]

Resolution No. (XX)

WHEREAS, Section 116-1954-XXVIII, Election Precincts, of the Michigan Election Law, Public Act 116 of 1954, MCL 168.654 to 168.661, provides for township Election Commissions to divide, rearrange or temporarily consolidate election precincts; and

WHEREAS, The Township of Georgetown has determined that *(dividing, rearranging, or temporarily consolidating)* Precinct(s) __, __, __ *(describe existing precinct(s) by number and location)* is appropriate *(“for this election” if consolidating)* because *(describe the reason(s) for dividing, rearranging or temporarily consolidating)*;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Georgetown Charter Township Election Commission hereby directs the Township Clerk to *(divide, rearrange or temporarily consolidate)* Precinct(s) __, __, __ *(describe existing precinct(s) by number and location)*, *(into or resulting in)* the following Precinct(s) __, __, __ *(describe the resulting precinct(s) by number and location)* *(If a temporary consolidation, include “for the [General or Primary] Election on [month, day, year]”)*.

The foregoing resolution offered by Election Commission Member _____, and second offered by Election Commission Member _____.

Upon roll call vote the following voted yes: _____

Upon roll call vote the following voted no: _____

The Clerk declared the resolution adopted.

(Name), Clerk *(signature)*

4. **Notice to Voters.** An updated Voter Identification Card must be issued to every voter affected by the following. A notice should be attached including details of all changes and directions to find each new precinct polling location.
- A permanent voting district change;
 - A new precinct or polling location;
 - A new Congressional, State Senate, State House or County Commissioner District.

Sample language to notify voters of precinct changes

**GEORGETOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE TO VOTERS**

This notice includes important information for voters in Georgetown Charter Township. New precinct lines have been drawn due to the new census information with the Township's increased population in certain areas, the new County Commission districts lines, and the Township's desire to be financially responsible with taxpayer money.

Please note the attached Voter ID card listing your new precinct and polling location which has changed. You were previously in precinct _____ and voted at the polling location ____.

Your new precinct is _____ and your new polling location (where you go to vote) is _____, located at _____. For all future elections, please vote at your new polling location.

If questions, please call the Township Office at 616-457-2340.

Georgetown Township Clerk

5. **Establishing Polling Places.** The Township Board is responsible for determining the location of polling places, as per MCL 168.662. An agreement with the facility is recommended.
- a. Whenever possible, a polling place must be located in a publicly owned or controlled facility such as a school building, fire station or police station.
 - b. If it is necessary to establish a polling place in a building other than a publicly owned or controlled facility, the building must be owned or controlled by an organization that is "exempt from federal income tax pursuant to section 501(c) other than 501(c)(4), (5) or (6) of the internal revenue code of 1986.
 - c. As an exception to the above, a polling place may be established in a "profit or nonprofit residence or facility in which 150 persons or more aged 62 or older reside or at an apartment building or complex in which 150 persons or more reside.
 - d. All polling places must be fully accessible to the elderly and handicapped. If necessary, the use of temporary ramps and signs designating handicap parking spaces may be employed on Election Day to ensure access.
 - e. A polling place may NOT be established in a building that is owned by a business, individual, firm, organization, etc. that has established, directs, controls or financially supports the administration of a Political or Independent Committee registered under the Campaign Finance Act. This prohibition extends to a building owned by a subsidiary of a corporation or the local of a labor organization if the parent corporation or labor organization has established, directs, controls or financially supports the administration of a Political or Independent Committee.

- f. The same polling place may be used to accommodate up to six precincts if convenient and practicable (each precinct must have its own precinct board).
- g. A polling place **may not be established, moved or abolished less than 60 days** before an election unless the polling place has been “damaged, destroyed, or rendered inaccessible or unusable as a polling place.”
- h. The clerk must notify all registered voters of the polling place change by both first class mail and QVF “in-box” processing of a new voter registration card.
- i. The process is as follows:
 - 1. The Township Board approves a suitable polling place for each precinct.
 - 2. The clerk notifies the County Clerk immediately following the approval of a suitable polling place by the Township Board.
 - 3. The clerk must make all necessary changes in the QVF by following the instructions in Chapter 9 of the QVF Manual. It is important to make these QVF changes because Michigan citizens use the Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC) website to guide them to the proper polling place. The information for this website is taken directly from the QVF system.
 - 4. Notices are mailed by first class to the registered voters of the affected precincts of the polling place change.
 - 5. Notices of the change are posted in two public places in each precinct affected by the change showing the new polling places (as soon as possible and up to and including Election Day).
 - 6. An updated Voter Identification Card is issued to each voter affected by a voting district change or polling place change.

6. The municipality is responsible to provide street names to the State of Michigan Qualified Voter File (QVF) (Amanda at the Bureau of Elections).