



Township Clerk's Role & Responsibilities

The Clerk's duties and responsibilities center around statutorily assigned functions, most of which are administrative. Although many of the Clerk's duties are carefully detailed by state law and do not permit much personal discretion, the Clerk is a member of the township board with a vote equal to the other members. Thus, the Clerk votes on the questions of budget, personnel appointments, zoning and all other matters that come before the township board.

The Clerk typically has a lot of contact with township residents. Requests for all types of information – from meeting places and dates to absentee ballots – residents come to the Clerk's office in person and by telephone, letter, fax and email. Whether residents think of the township board as open or closed, friendly and inviting or hostile to the public, depends in part on policies and practices set by the Clerk. The Clerk, then, plays a significant role in establishing the atmosphere in which the board conducts the business of serving its residents.

Hours

In addition to numerous other duties, Michigan law requires the Township Clerk to carry out three major responsibilities involving township recordkeeping, financial operations and elections. The Clerk will need to work regular and consistent office hours each week. Michigan Township Association and Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks offer training to assist the clerk in being qualified and prepared for the tasks required. With the passing of Proposal 2 in 2022, many election laws have changed which will require addition duties and time commitment. The Clerk's hours vary at different times to allow for the current requirements.

Board Member

The Clerk is elected every four years at the time of the Presidential Election and serves as a voting member of the Township Board, with responsibilities including but not limited to:

- Producing and keeping minutes for the Township Board meetings.
- Publishes and posts legal notices.
- Adopting Township policies
- Adopting Township ordinances
- Approving the budget

Election Administration

The Clerk administers all elections in Eaton Township. The Clerk plans, organizes, and oversees election activities including but not limited to:

- Processing of absentee ballots
- Preparing voting machines
- Supplying precincts with necessary supplies for election day
- Proofing ballots
- Training Election Inspectors
- Issuing, validating, and certifying petitions for local candidates and issues
- Relocation of precinct boundaries

Voter Registration

The Clerk maintains the voter registration files, which includes but is not limited to:

- Registering new voters
- Making address/name changes to current voters
- Canceling voters when they move out of the jurisdiction or become deceased
- Issuing voter ID cards to all voters
- Maintaining Voter Master Cards with signatures of all registered voters
- Updating voter history for all voters after each election

Financial Records

Under State Statute the Clerk is responsible for keeping a record of the expenditures made for the Township. The Clerk's office processes accounts payable, payroll, and general ledger.

Records Management

The Clerk is the official custodian of Township records, books and documents such as oaths, bonds, ordinances, and resolutions. The Clerk is also responsible for producing and keeping minutes for the Township Board meetings. The Clerk's Office maintains records in accordance with the State of Michigan Record Retention Schedule. The Clerk's Office also publishes and posts legal notices.

Cemetery

The Township Clerk shall maintain records concerning all burials and issuance of burial permits separate and apart from any other records of the Township, and the records shall be open to public inspection during reasonable office hours. Sale of Burial Rights in Cemetery Lots or Burial Spaces.

FOIA Coordinator

The Clerk is the official coordinator of Freedom of Information Act (FIOA) requests. All requests are processed through the Clerk's office, regardless of which department may gather the information.

Notary Public

The Clerk's Office provides Notary Public Service at no charge to Eaton Township residents and business owners.

This is not a total and complete description of Township Clerk. Other responsibilities could be required at various times.