



Celebrate Local Government Week, April 8-12

Plan Events to Engage Residents, Promote Township Government

Townships have a lot to be proud of, and Pennsylvania Local Government Week is the perfect time to show residents what your community has accomplished and help them learn more about their local government.

This special week, held each year, focuses attention on the need for strong, independent, and active local governments and recognizes the valuable contributions of their elected officials.

Consider adopting a resolution to declare April 8-12 Local Government Week in your township. Start planning now to invite citizens, schools, civic groups, business leaders, and the

news media to help celebrate and perhaps learn how they can play a more active role in the community.

The options are limited only by your imagination. Host an open house at the township building, work with schools to teach students about local government, or hold special events to honor township officials and community volunteers.

Following are some ideas to consider for involving your residents in Local Government Week.

Work with area schools

✓ Transform your local high school into a municipal building for a day. Township officials can meet with students, hold an informational “open house,” and even conduct the regular meeting of the board of supervisors (*advertising any change of venue as required by the Sunshine Law*).

✓ Set up assembly programs and classroom presentations on the importance of local government.

✓ Organize field trips to the township’s municipal building for a tour of the facilities and a discussion on township government.

We want to hear about your township’s Local Government Week activities

Is your township planning special events for Local Government Week? Tell the *Township News*, and you could help inspire others!

Send details and photos of your event(s) to *Pa. Township News*, 4855 Woodland Drive, Enola, PA 17025, telephone (717) 763-0930, ext. 127, fax (717) 763-9732, or email to glinn@psats.org.



How to engage the next generation of leaders

✓ Sponsor Local Government Week poster and/or essay contests.

✓ Invite several students to be “Supervisors for a Day.”

✓ Prepare a booklet to help students understand how local government works.

✓ Encourage teachers to take students to a township supervisors meeting to see how decisions are made and how citizens participate.

✓ Re-enact an old-fashioned annual meeting at which township supervisors and students can wear period costumes and discuss the kinds of issues local officials decided in the “good old days.”

✓ If your township has a local cable TV channel, sponsor an educational show on local government featuring students, board members, and other community leaders discussing local government issues.

Hold an open house or local government fair

✓ Invite civic groups, business leaders, and township residents to the municipal building for an open house and question-and-answer session with the board of supervisors.

✓ Make sure township employees are on hand to greet visitors and talk about their jobs.

✓ Highlight major projects, new programs, and any efforts by the township to save taxpayer dollars.

✓ Display township equipment and attach the purchase price and year of each to help residents recognize where their tax dollars are going — and how thrifty the township is with their money.

✓ Offer tours of township facilities

Local Government Week is the perfect time to reach out to the next generation of municipal leaders. Township supervisors might want to approach the local high school and offer to give a presentation on township government, especially to civics or social studies classes.

If the school district requires community service or senior projects, the township can encourage students to fulfill the requirement by working at the township to get a first-hand look at local government operations.

Supervisors could also invite students to attend a board of supervisors, planning commission, or parks and recreation board meeting, along with Local Government Week events at the municipal building. Encourage them to “shadow” a township official or employee for a day to see what their job entails.

When planning Local Government Week events in your township, be sure to include activities that will engage and teach young people about local government. Someday, they might be filling your shoes.



such as police departments and parks. Consider setting up outdoor displays and having music and entertainment.

✓ Invite local and state legislators, distinguished citizens in the community, and other special guests.

✓ Notify the local media well in advance so they can cover the event.

Honor community leaders

✓ Plan an official ceremony or testimonial dinner to honor a township

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official, employee, or volunteer who has shown outstanding dedication to local government and made significant contributions to the township.

- ✓ Honor the selected individual with a plaque, certificate, or award.
- ✓ Contact your local newspaper about doing a feature story on the award recipient.

Encourage media coverage

- ✓ Notify local newspapers and radio and television stations of your plans to observe Local Government Week at least one week before the event.
- ✓ Find out your local paper's deadlines and get information to them on time.
- ✓ Use your township newsletter, website, and social media to let township residents know about your Local Government Week activities. ♦

Local Government Excellence Awards recognize innovation, cooperation

State officials will recognize townships and their leaders for their innovative and cooperative efforts during the presentation of the Governor's Awards for Local Government Excellence during Local Government Week in April.

The ceremony, which will be held **Wednesday, April 10, 2019**, in Harrisburg, is attended by local government officials from across the commonwealth and supported by PSATS and other local government associations.

Nine categories of awards are presented: building community partnerships, innovative planning and sound land use practices, responding to adversity, intergovernmental cooperation, promoting community/economic revitalization, information technology, innovative community/governmental initiatives, health and wellness initiatives, fiscal accountability, and best management practices.

Awards are also presented to individuals who are nominated by local government organizations.

For more information, call the center toll-free at (888) 223-6837 or go to dced.pa.gov/governors-awards-for-local-government-excellence.

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