

Chapter 504: LIMITED HOME RULE GOVERNMENT

504.01 Procedure for adopting limited home rule government.

A township that meets the qualifications of this section may adopt a limited home rule government in the manner provided in this section.

(A)

(1) If a township has a population of at least two thousand five hundred but less than five thousand in the unincorporated territory of the township, a limited home rule government under which the township exercises limited powers of local self-government and limited police powers may be adopted if all the following apply:

(a) The electors of the unincorporated territory of the township petition the board of township trustees to adopt limited home rule government;

(b) The petition has been signed by ten per cent of the electors of the unincorporated territory of the township, as determined by the total number of votes cast in that territory for the office of governor at the most recent general election for that office;

(c) The board of township trustees appoints a township administrator under division (A)(2) of section [505.031](#) of the Revised Code; and

(d) The total amount certified in the official certificate of estimated resources or in an amended official certificate of estimated resources for the township under section [5705.36](#) of the Revised Code is at least three million five hundred thousand dollars for the most recently concluded fiscal year.

If the conditions enumerated in this division have been met, the board shall adopt and certify to the board of elections a resolution directing the board of elections to submit to the electors of the unincorporated territory the question whether the township should adopt a limited home rule government. The question shall be voted upon at the next general election occurring at least ninety days after certification of the resolution to the board of elections.

(2) If a township has a population of at least five thousand but less than fifteen thousand in the unincorporated territory of the township, the board of township trustees, by a majority vote, may adopt a resolution causing the board of elections to submit to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township the question of whether the township should adopt a limited home rule government under which it exercises limited powers of local self-government and limited police powers, as authorized by this chapter. The question shall be voted upon at the next general election occurring at least ninety days after certification of the resolution to the board of elections.

(3) If a township has a population of fifteen thousand or more in the unincorporated territory of the township, the board of township trustees, after at least one public hearing, may do either of the following:

(a) By a unanimous vote, adopt a resolution establishing a limited home rule government under which the township exercises limited powers of local self-government and limited police powers as authorized by this chapter. The resolution shall become effective thirty days after the date of its adoption unless within that thirty-day period there is presented to the board of township trustees a petition, signed by

a number of registered electors residing in the unincorporated area of the township equal to at least ten per cent of the total vote cast for all candidates for governor in that area at the most recent general election at which a governor was elected, requesting the board of township trustees to submit the question of establishing a limited home rule government to the electors of that area for approval or rejection at a special election to be held on the day of the next primary or general election occurring at least ninety days after the petition is presented. Each part of the petition shall meet the requirements specified in section [3501.38](#) of the Revised Code. Upon timely receipt of the petition, the board of township trustees shall adopt a resolution causing the board of elections to submit to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township the question of whether the township should adopt a limited home rule government.

(b) By a majority vote, adopt a resolution causing the board of elections to submit to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township the question of whether the township should adopt a limited home rule government under which it exercises limited powers of local self-government and limited police powers, as authorized by this chapter. The question shall be voted upon at the next general election occurring at least ninety days after certification of the resolution to the board of elections.

(4) If a township meets the population requirements of division (A)(2) or (3) of this section, the electors of the unincorporated area of the township may petition the board of township trustees to adopt a resolution causing the board of elections to submit to the electors the question of whether the township should adopt a limited home rule government. Upon receipt of a petition signed by ten per cent of the electors of the unincorporated area of the township, as determined by the total number of votes cast in that area for the office of governor at the most recent general election for that office, the board of township trustees shall adopt the resolution. The question shall be voted upon at the next general election occurring at least ninety days after the certification of the resolution to the board of elections.

(B) If the population of the unincorporated territory of any township that adopts a limited home rule government under division (A)(3) or (4) of this section is fifteen thousand or more, the township shall be called an "urban township."

(C) Except as otherwise provided in division (A)(1) of this section, townships with a population of less than five thousand in the unincorporated territory of the township are not permitted to adopt a limited home rule government.

Amended by 131st General Assembly File No. TBD, HB 413, §1, eff. 9/28/2016.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 29, HB 48, §1, eff. 7/2/2010.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999; 2007 SB36 02-29-2008

504.02 Election for adopting limited home rule government.

(A) After certification of a resolution as provided in division (A) of section [504.01](#) of the Revised Code, the board of elections shall submit the question of whether to adopt a limited home rule government to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township, and the ballot language shall be substantially as follows:

"Shall the township of (name) adopt a limited home rule government, under which government the board of township trustees, by resolution, may exercise limited powers of local self-government and limited police powers?"

..... For adoption of a limited home rule government

..... Against adoption of a limited home rule government"

(B)

(1) At least forty-five days before the election on this question, the board of township trustees shall have notice of the election and a description of the proposed limited home rule government published in a newspaper of general circulation in the township once a week for two consecutive weeks or as provided in section [7.16](#) of the Revised Code, and shall have the notice and description posted in five conspicuous places in the unincorporated area of the township.

(2) If a board of elections operates and maintains a web site, notice of the election and a description of the proposed limited home rule government shall be posted on that web site for at least thirty days before the election on this question.

(C) If a majority of the votes cast on the proposition of adopting a limited home rule government is in the affirmative, that government is adopted and becomes the government of the township on the first day of January immediately following the election.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No. 28, HB 153, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2011.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999; 06-01-2006; 2007 SB36 02-29-2008 .

504.021 Board of township trustees.

As used in this chapter, except for its use in sections [504.01](#) and [504.02](#) of the Revised Code, a "board of township trustees" means only a board of township trustees of a township that adopts a limited home rule government under this chapter.

Effective Date: 09-21-2006 .

504.03 Election for terminating limited home rule government.

(A)

(1) If a limited home rule government is adopted pursuant to section [504.02](#) of the Revised Code, it shall remain in effect for at least three years except as otherwise provided in division (B) of this section. At the end of that period, if the board of township trustees determines that that government is not in the best interests of the township, it may adopt a resolution causing the board of elections to submit to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township the question of whether the township should continue the limited home rule government. The question shall be voted upon at the next general election occurring at least ninety days after the certification of the resolution to the board of elections. After certification of the resolution, the board of elections shall submit the question to the electors of the unincorporated area of the township, and the ballot language shall be substantially as follows:

"Shall the township of (name) continue the limited home rule government under which it is operating?"

..... For continuation of the limited home rule government

..... Against continuation of the limited home rule government"

(2)

(a) At least forty-five days before the election on the question of continuing the limited home rule government, the board of township trustees shall have notice of the election published in a newspaper of general circulation in the township once a week for two consecutive weeks or as provided in section [7.16](#) of the Revised Code, and shall have the notice posted in five conspicuous places in the unincorporated area of the township.

(b) If a board of elections operates and maintains a web site, notice of the election shall be posted on that web site for at least thirty days before the election on the question of continuing the limited home rule government.

(B) The electors of a township that has adopted a limited home rule government may propose at any time by initiative petition, in accordance with section [504.14](#) of the Revised Code, a resolution submitting to the electors in the unincorporated area of the township, in an election, the question set forth in division (A)(1) of this section.

(C) If a majority of the votes cast under division (A) or (B) of this section on the proposition of continuing the limited home rule government is in the negative, that government is terminated effective on the first day of January immediately following the election, and a limited home rule government shall not be adopted in the unincorporated area of the township pursuant to section [504.02](#) of the Revised Code for at least three years after that date.

(D) If a limited home rule government is terminated under this section, the board of township trustees immediately shall adopt a resolution repealing all resolutions adopted pursuant to this chapter that are not authorized by any other section of the Revised Code outside this chapter, effective on the first day of January immediately following the election described in division (A) or (B) of this section. However, no resolution adopted under this division shall affect or impair the obligations of the township under any security issued or contracts entered into by the township in connection with the financing of any water supply facility or sewer improvement under sections [504.18](#) to [504.20](#) of the Revised Code or the authority of the township to collect or enforce any assessments or other revenues constituting security for or source of payments of debt service charges of those securities.

(E) Upon the termination of a limited home rule government under this section, if the township had converted its board of township trustees to a five-member board before September 26, 2003, the current board member who received the lowest number of votes of the current board members who were elected at the most recent election for township trustees, and the current board member who received the lowest number of votes of the current board members who were elected at the second most recent election for township trustees, shall cease to be township trustees on the date that the limited home rule government terminates. Their offices likewise shall cease to exist at that time, and the board shall continue as a three-member board as provided in section [505.01](#) of the Revised Code.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No. 28, HB 153, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2011.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 29, HB 48, §1, eff. 7/2/2010.

Effective Date: 09-26-2003; 06-01-2006

504.04 Exercise of powers under limited home rule government.

(A) A township that adopts a limited home rule government may do all of the following by resolution, provided that any of these resolutions, other than a resolution to supply water or sewer services in accordance with sections [504.18](#) to [504.20](#) of the Revised Code, may be enforced only by the imposition of civil fines as authorized in this chapter:

(1) Exercise all powers of local self-government within the unincorporated area of the township, other than powers that are in conflict with general laws, except that the township shall comply with the requirements and prohibitions of this chapter, and shall enact no taxes other than those authorized by general law, and except that no resolution adopted pursuant to this chapter shall encroach upon the powers, duties, and privileges of elected township officers or change, alter, combine, eliminate, or otherwise modify the form or structure of the township government unless the change is required or permitted by this chapter;

(2) Adopt and enforce within the unincorporated area of the township local police, sanitary, and other similar regulations that are not in conflict with general laws or otherwise prohibited by division (B) of this section;

(3) Supply water and sewer services to users within the unincorporated area of the township in accordance with sections [504.18](#) to [504.20](#) of the Revised Code;

(4) Adopt and enforce within the unincorporated area of the township any resolution of a type described in section [503.52](#) or [503.60](#) of the Revised Code.

(B) No resolution adopted pursuant to this chapter shall do any of the following:

(1) Create a criminal offense or impose criminal penalties, except as authorized by division (A) of this section or by section [503.52](#) of the Revised Code;

(2) Impose civil fines other than as authorized by this chapter;

(3) Establish or revise subdivision regulations, road construction standards, urban sediment rules, or storm water and drainage regulations, except as provided in section [504.21](#) of the Revised Code;

(4) Establish or revise building standards, building codes, and other standard codes except as provided in section [504.13](#) of the Revised Code;

(5) Increase, decrease, or otherwise alter the powers or duties of a township under any other chapter of the Revised Code pertaining to agriculture or the conservation or development of natural resources;

(6) Establish regulations affecting hunting, trapping, fishing, or the possession, use, or sale of firearms;

(7) Establish or revise water or sewer regulations, except in accordance with section [504.18](#), [504.19](#), or [504.21](#) of the Revised Code.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as affecting the powers of counties with regard to the subjects listed in divisions (B)(3) to (5) of this section.

(C) Under a limited home rule government, all officers shall have the qualifications, and be nominated, elected, or appointed, as provided in Chapter 505. of the Revised Code, except that the board of township trustees shall appoint a full-time or part-time law director pursuant to section [504.15](#) of the Revised Code, and except that a five-member board of township trustees approved for the township before September 26, 2003, shall continue to serve as the legislative authority with successive members serving for four-year terms of office until a termination of a limited home rule government under section [504.03](#) of the Revised Code.

(D) In case of conflict between resolutions enacted by a board of township trustees and municipal ordinances or resolutions, the ordinance or resolution enacted by the municipal corporation prevails. In case of conflict between resolutions enacted by a board of township trustees and any county resolution, the resolution enacted by the board of township trustees prevails.

Effective Date: 09-05-2001; 05-06-2005; 08-17-2006; 2007 SB97 01-01-2008 .

504.05 Imposition of civil fines.

The board of township trustees may impose a civil fine for a violation of a resolution adopted pursuant to this chapter, and may graduate the amount of the fine based on the number of previous violations of the resolution. No fine shall exceed one thousand dollars. Any resolution that imposes a fine shall clearly state the amount of the fine for the first and for subsequent violations.

Effective Date: 09-17-1991 .

504.06 Citations for violation of township resolutions.

(A) Peace officers serving the township pursuant to section [504.16](#) of the Revised Code may issue citations to persons who violate township resolutions adopted pursuant to this chapter. Each citation shall contain provisions that:

- (1) Advise the person upon whom it is served that the person must answer in relation to the violation charged in the citation within fourteen days after the citation is served upon the person;
- (2) Indicate the allowable answers that may be made and that the person will be afforded a court hearing if the person denies in the person's answer having committed the violation;
- (3) Specify that the answer must be made in person or by mail to the township fiscal officer;
- (4) Indicate the amount of the fine that arises from the violation.

(B) A peace officer who issues a citation for a violation of a township resolution shall complete the citation by identifying the violation charged and by indicating the date, time, and place of the violation charged. The officer shall sign the citation, affirm the facts that it contains, and without unnecessary delay file the original citation with the court having jurisdiction over the violation. A copy of a citation issued pursuant to this section shall be served pursuant to the Rules of Civil Procedure upon the person who violated the resolution. No peace officer is entitled to receive witness fees in a cause prosecuted under a township resolution adopted pursuant to this chapter.

Effective Date: 09-17-1991; 12-20-2005 .

504.07 Answer to citation.

(A)

(1) A person who is served with a citation pursuant to division (B) of section 504.06 of the Revised Code shall answer the charge by personal appearance before, or by mail addressed to, the township fiscal officer, who shall immediately notify the township law director. An answer shall be made within fourteen days after the citation is served upon the person and shall be in one of the following forms:

(a) An admission that the person committed the violation, by payment of any fine arising from the violation. Payment of a fine pursuant to division (A)(1)(a) of this section shall be payable to the fiscal officer of the township and deposited by the fiscal officer into the township general fund.

(b) A denial that the person committed the violation.

(2) Whenever a person pays a fine pursuant to division (A)(1)(a) of this section or whenever a person answers by denying the violation or does not submit payment of the fine within the time required by division (A)(1) of this section, the township fiscal officer shall notify the court having jurisdiction over the violation.

(B) If a person answers by denying the violation or does not submit payment of the fine within the time required by division (A)(1) of this section, the court having jurisdiction over the violation shall, upon receiving the notification required by division (A)(2) of this section, schedule a hearing on the violation and send notice of the date and time of the hearing to the person charged with the violation and to the township law director. If the person charged with the violation fails to appear for the scheduled hearing, the court may hold the person in contempt, or issue a summons or a warrant for the person's arrest pursuant to Criminal Rule 4. If the court issues a summons and the person charged with the violation fails to appear, the court may enter a default judgment against the person and require the person to pay the fine arising from the violation.

(C) The court shall hold the scheduled hearing in accordance with the Rules of Civil Procedure and the rules of the court, and shall determine whether the township has established, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the person committed the violation. If the court determines that the person committed the violation, it shall enter a judgment against the person requiring the person to pay the fine arising from the violation.

If the court determines that the township has not established, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the person committed the violation, the court shall enter judgment against the township whose resolution allegedly was violated, shall dismiss the charge of the violation against the person, and shall assess costs against the township.

(D) Payment of any judgment or default judgment entered against a person pursuant to this section shall be made to the clerk of the court that entered the judgment, within ten days after the date of entry. All money paid in satisfaction of a judgment or default judgment shall be disbursed by the clerk as required by law, and the clerk shall enter the fact of payment of the money and its disbursement in the records of the court. If payment of a judgment or default judgment is not made within this time period, execution may be levied, and such other measures may be taken for its collection as are authorized for the collection of an unpaid money judgment in a civil action rendered in that court. The municipal or county court shall assess costs against the judgment debtor, to be paid upon satisfaction of the judgment.

(E) Any person against whom a judgment or default judgment is entered pursuant to this section and any township against which a judgment is entered pursuant to this section may appeal the judgment or default judgment to the court of appeals within whose territorial jurisdiction the resolution allegedly was violated. An appeal shall be made by filing a notice of appeal with the trial court and with the court of appeals within thirty days after the entry of judgment by the trial court and by the payment of reasonable costs as the court requires. Upon the filing of an appeal, the court shall schedule a hearing date and notify the parties of the date, time, and place of the hearing. The hearing shall be held by the court in accordance with the rules of the court. Service of a notice of appeal under this division does not stay enforcement and collection of the judgment or default judgment from which appeal is taken by the person unless the person who files the appeal posts bond with the trial court, in the amount of the judgment, plus court costs, at or before service of the notice of appeal.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the judgment on appeal of the court of appeals is final.

Effective Date: 09-17-1991; 12-20-2005 .

504.08 Enforcement of resolution.

To enforce a township resolution adopted under this chapter, a board of township trustees may authorize the township law director to do any of the following:

- (A) File for injunctive relief if the violation of the resolution is a matter of health or safety;
- (B) File for a lien upon the property of a violator if the violation relates to the use of the property and if the violator has failed to pay a fine imposed pursuant to section [504.07](#) of the Revised Code within ten days after the judgment imposing the fine has become final. The unpaid fine shall be entered on the tax duplicate and is a lien upon the property from and after the date of entry and shall be collected as other taxes, returned to the township, and placed in the township general fund.
- (C) Take any measure for the collection of an unpaid money judgment that is authorized by division (D) of section [504.07](#) of the Revised Code.

Effective Date: 09-17-1991 .

504.09 Proceedings of township board.

A board of township trustees shall determine its own rules and order of business and keep a journal of its proceedings. Notwithstanding section [507.04](#) of the Revised Code and anything to the contrary in section [504.04](#) of the Revised Code, the board may designate, by majority vote, any person to keep its journal and take the minutes of board meetings. A majority of the members of the board constitutes a quorum.

Effective Date: 03-31-2003 .

504.10 Form and reading of resolutions.

Each resolution of a board of township trustees adopted pursuant to this chapter shall be introduced in written form by a member of the board. The form and style of resolutions shall be determined by the board. Each resolution shall contain only one subject, which shall be expressed in its title, except that appropriation measures may contain the various subjects, accounts, and amounts for which moneys are appropriated, and except that resolutions that are codified or recodified are not subject to the limitation of containing only one subject.

Each resolution shall be read by title only, unless a motion is passed by a majority vote of the members of the board requiring that it be read in full. Each resolution shall be read on two separate days. The board may, by a majority vote of its members, dispense with the requirement that a resolution be read on two separate days, and authorize the adoption of a resolution upon its first reading.

Effective Date: 09-17-1991 .

504.11 Voting on resolutions.

(A) The vote on the question of passage of a resolution provided for in section 504.10 of the Revised Code or a motion related to that resolution shall be taken by yeas and nays and entered on the journal, and the resolution or motion shall not be passed without concurrence of a majority of all members of the board of township trustees, except that each emergency resolution under that section shall require the affirmative vote of all of the members of the board for its enactment. If an emergency resolution fails to receive the required vote for passage as an emergency measure but receives the necessary majority for passage as a nonemergency resolution, it shall be considered passed as a nonemergency resolution. Except as otherwise provided in division (B) of this section, a resolution shall become effective thirty days after it is filed with the township fiscal officer. Each emergency resolution shall determine that the resolution is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, or welfare and shall contain a statement of the necessity for the emergency. Each resolution shall be authenticated by the signature of the township fiscal officer, but the failure or refusal of the fiscal officer to sign a resolution shall not invalidate an otherwise properly enacted resolution.

(B) Each resolution appropriating money, submitting a question to the electorate, determining to proceed with an election, or providing for the approval of a revision, codification, recodification, or rearrangement of resolutions, or publication of resolutions in book form shall take effect, unless a later time is specified in the resolution, ten days after it is filed with the township fiscal officer. Emergency resolutions shall take effect immediately.

(C) Each resolution shall be recorded in a book, or other record prescribed by the board, established and maintained for that purpose. The township fiscal officer or a duly authorized deputy to the fiscal officer shall, upon the request of any person and upon the payment of a fee established by the board, certify true copies of any resolution, and these certified copies shall be admissible as evidence in any court.

(D) The procedures provided in this section apply only to resolutions adopted pursuant to a township's limited home rule powers as authorized by this chapter.

Effective Date: 06-14-2000; 12-20-2005; 09-21-2006 .

504.12 Revision or amendment of resolutions.

No resolution and no section or numbered or lettered division of a section shall be revised or amended unless the new resolution contains the entire resolution, section, or division as revised or amended, and the resolution, section, or division so amended shall be repealed. This requirement does not prevent the amendment of a resolution by the addition of a new section, or division, and in this case the full text of the former resolution need not be set forth, nor does this section prevent repeals by implication. Except in the case of a codification or recodification of resolutions, a separate vote shall be

taken on each resolution proposed to be amended. Resolutions that have been introduced and have received their first reading or their first and second readings, but have not been voted on for passage, may be amended or revised by a majority vote of the members of the board of township trustees, and the amended or revised resolution need not receive additional readings.

The board of township trustees of a limited home rule township may revise, codify, and publish in book form the resolutions of the township in the same manner as provided in section [731.23](#) of the Revised Code for municipal corporations. Resolutions adopted by the board shall be published in the same manner as provided by sections [731.21](#), [731.22](#), [731.24](#), [731.25](#), and [731.26](#) of the Revised Code for municipal corporations, except that they shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the township. The fiscal officer of the township shall perform the duties that the clerk of the legislative authority of a municipal corporation is required to perform under those sections.

The procedures provided in this section apply only to resolutions adopted pursuant to a township's limited home rule powers as authorized by this chapter.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No. 28, HB 153, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2011.

Effective Date: 03-31-2003; 12-20-2005

504.13 Building and standard codes - effect of county adoption of building and standard codes.

(A) Except as provided in division (B) of this section, the board of township trustees of a township that adopts a limited home rule government may adopt, by resolution, building codes and other standard codes promulgated by the state, or any department, board, or other agency of the state, or any code prepared and promulgated by a public or private organization that publishes a model or standard code, including, but not limited to, a plumbing code, electrical code, refrigeration machinery code, piping code, boiler code, heating code, air conditioning code, or any code pertaining to fire, fire hazards, and fire prevention. Any codes adopted pursuant to this section shall be adopted in the manner provided for in section [505.75](#) of the Revised Code and shall be made available as required in section [505.76](#) of the Revised Code.

(B)

(1) No township that adopts the limited home rule form of government shall adopt a code described in division (A) of this section in any county that has adopted a code dealing with the same matter to be regulated.

(2) If a board of township trustees in a township that adopts a limited home rule government adopts a code described in division (A) of this section and the board of county commissioners of the county in which the township is located subsequently adopts a code dealing with the same matter to be regulated, the code adopted by the board of township trustees shall be of no effect one year after the effective date of the code adopted by the board of county commissioners or at an earlier date, as determined by the board of township trustees.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999 .

504.14 Filing initiative and referendum petitions.

In a township that adopts a limited home rule government, resolutions may be proposed by initiative petition by the electors in the unincorporated area of the township and adopted by election by these electors, and resolutions adopted by the board of township trustees may be submitted to these electors for their approval or rejection by referendum, under the same circumstances and in the same manner as provided by sections [731.28](#) to [731.40](#) of the Revised Code for municipal corporations, except that both of the following apply:

(A) Initiative and referendum petitions shall be filed with the township fiscal officer, who shall perform the duties imposed under those sections upon the city auditor or village clerk.

(B) Initiative and referendum petitions shall contain the signatures of not less than ten per cent of the total number of electors in the unincorporated area of the township who voted for the office of governor at the most recent general election for that office in that area of the township.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999; 12-20-2005 .

504.15 Law director of township.

(A) Unless the board of township trustees acts as authorized by division (B) of this section, in each township that adopts the limited self-government form of township government, the board of township trustees shall appoint a full-time or part-time township law director, who shall be an attorney licensed to practice law in this state. The board of township trustees shall set the salary of the township law director. The township law director shall be the legal advisor to the board of township trustees, the township administrator, and all other township officers, and any of them may require written opinions or instructions from the township law director in matters connected with their official duties. Subject to division (E) of section [503.52](#) of the Revised Code, the township law director shall prosecute and defend all suits and actions that any such officer or board directs or to which an officer or board is a party, and the township law director shall prosecute any violation of a township resolution, as provided in this chapter. The township law director shall review all resolutions as to form prior to their introduction by a township trustee. Additional legal counsel may be employed as provided in division (B) of section [309.09](#) of the Revised Code.

(B) The board of township trustees may enter into a contract with the prosecuting attorney of the county to have the prosecuting attorney serve as the township law director, with the consent of the board of county commissioners.

(C) Nothing in this section confers any of the powers or duties of a prosecuting attorney under section [309.08](#) of the Revised Code upon a township law director.

(D) Nothing in this section limits or affects the operation of division (E) of section [503.52](#) of the Revised Code.

Effective Date: 11-06-1996; 08-17-2006 .

504.151 Appointments by township law director.

Subject to section [2921.421](#) of the Revised Code, a township law director appointed under section [504.15](#) of the Revised Code may appoint, as an assistant law director, prosecutor, clerk, stenographer, or other employee, a person who is an associate or partner of, or who is employed by, the township law director, assistant law director, or prosecutor in the private practice of law in a partnership, professional association, or other law business arrangement.

Effective Date: 03-02-1994 .

504.16 Police protection.

- (A) Each township that adopts a limited home rule government shall promptly do one of the following:
- (1) Establish a police district pursuant to section [505.48](#) of the Revised Code, except that the district shall include all of the unincorporated area of the township and no other territory;
 - (2) Establish a joint police district pursuant to section [505.482](#) of the Revised Code;
 - (3) Contract pursuant to section [311.29](#), [505.43](#), or [505.50](#) of the Revised Code to obtain police protection services, including the enforcement of township resolutions adopted under this chapter, on a regular basis;
 - (4) Designate one or more police constables under Chapter 509. of the Revised Code.
- (B) A township that has taken an action described in division (A) of this section before adopting a limited home rule government need not take any other such action upon adopting that government.
- (C) The requirement that a township take one of the actions described in divisions (A)(1), (2), and (3) of this section does not prevent a township that acts under division (A)(1) or (2) of this section from contracting under division (A)(3) of this section to obtain additional police protection services on a regular basis.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No.28, HB 153, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2011.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999 .

504.17 Acts prior to establishment of limited home rule.

The establishment of a limited home rule government does not affect any act done, ratified, or affirmed, or any contract or other right or obligation accrued or established, or any action, prosecution, or proceeding, civil or criminal, pending at the time this change in government takes effect. The establishment of a limited home rule government does not affect any cause of action, prosecutions, or proceedings existing at the time it takes effect. Rights that attach to any act of the township, and actions, prosecutions, or proceedings may be prosecuted and continued, or instituted and prosecuted against, by, or before the department having jurisdiction or power of the subject matter to which the right, action, prosecution, or proceedings pertain.

All rules and orders lawfully promulgated prior to the establishment of a limited home rule government in the township continue in force and effect until amended or rescinded in accordance with this chapter.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999 .

504.18 Supplying water or sewer services.

- (A) As used in this section and in sections [504.19](#) and [504.20](#) of the Revised Code, "water supply facilities" means all buildings, facilities, and pipelines acquired, constructed, or operated by or leased to a township, or to be acquired, constructed, or operated by or leased to a township, that the board of township trustees considers necessary for the storage, transportation, or treatment of water resources

and the operation of facilities that supply water, together with all property rights, easements, and interests in real or personal property that may be required for the operation of the facilities.

(B) For the purpose of supplying water or sewer services to users within the unincorporated area of the township, the board of township trustees may provide a supply of water or sewer services by contract with any municipal corporation, county sewer district, or regional water and sewer district or any person, firm, or private corporation furnishing a public water supply or sewer services within or outside the township.

(C) To pay all or any part of the costs of a water supply or sewer services under this section or section [504.19](#) of the Revised Code, the board of township trustees by resolution may levy special assessments upon lots and lands in the township benefiting from the water supply facilities or sewer improvements and may issue unvoted securities in anticipation of the levy or collection of those special assessments in accordance with Chapter 133. of the Revised Code. At the discretion of the board, assessments may be levied by one of the following methods:

- (1) By a percentage of the tax value of the property assessed;
- (2) In proportion to the benefits that result from the improvements;
- (3) By the front footage of the property bounding and abutting the improvements.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999 .

504.19 Adopting general plan of water supply or sewer services.

(A) The board of township trustees may prepare and adopt a general plan of water supply or sewer services. After the general plan has been approved by the board, the board immediately shall notify the board of county commissioners if territory served by a county water supply facility or a county sewer district includes territory to be covered by the plan, the legislative authority of a municipal corporation that operates a water supply or sewer system in any of the territory to be covered by the plan, and the board of trustees of any existing regional water and sewer district that includes any territory to be covered by the plan, of the township's intention to provide water supply or sewer services and shall describe the area where the township proposes to provide water supply or sewer services. The notified board of county commissioners, legislative authority of a municipal corporation, and board of trustees of the regional water and sewer district then have thirty days from the date of notification to comment and object in writing to the township's provision of water supply or sewer services. An objection may be based on one or more of the following:

- (1) The county, municipal corporation, or special district already provides the proposed water supply or sewer services to the area to be served.
- (2) The county, municipal corporation, or special district has in its service plan provisions to provide the proposed water supply or sewer services in the future to the proposed area within a reasonable period of time.

Within fifteen days after receiving objections, the board of township trustees may request in writing submitted to the objecting party that the issue of the township's provision of the proposed water supply or sewer services be mediated. The mediation shall be performed either by the Ohio commission on dispute resolution and conflict management or by having each party select a mediator

and having those two mediators select a third mediator who, together with the other two mediators, shall conduct the mediation.

Within forty-five days after the request for mediation is submitted, any mediation shall be completed, and any agreements reached between the parties shall be filed in writing with the parties. Thereafter, the respective governing boards may adopt the agreements, making those agreements binding on the parties, or, if one or more of the agreed-upon points is rejected, that rejection shall be considered a final decision of a governing board for purposes of Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code, and the board of township trustees may file an appeal under that chapter regarding its provision of the proposed water supply or sewer services. In addition to any findings of the court provided in section [2506.04](#) of the Revised Code, the court may determine that the county, municipal corporation, or special district has not met the criteria specified in divisions (A)(1) and (2) of this section and, therefore, the township may provide its proposed water supply or sewer services or, in the alternative, may determine that the township could provide the proposed water supply or sewer services more expediently than the county, municipal corporation, or special district with no substantial increase in cost to the users of the water supply or sewer services and, therefore, order that the township may provide its proposed water supply or sewer services.

(B) Once the board has approved a general plan of water supply or sewer services under division (A) of this section, the board shall hire an engineer to prepare detailed plans, specifications, and estimates of the cost of the improvements, together with a tentative assessment of the cost based on the estimates. The tentative assessment shall be for the information of property owners and shall not be certified to the county auditor for collection. The detailed plans, specifications, estimates of cost, and tentative assessment, as prepared by the engineer and approved by the board, shall be preserved in the office of the board and shall be open to inspection of all persons interested in the improvements.

(C) Once it has been determined under division (A) of this section that a township may provide its proposed water supply or sewer services, the board may appropriate for the use of the township any public or private land, easement, rights, rights-of-way, franchises, or other property within or outside the township required by it for the accomplishment of its purposes. Except as provided in division (D) of this section, the appropriation shall be according to the procedure set forth in sections [163.01](#) to [163.22](#) of the Revised Code. The engineer hired by the board may enter upon any public or private property for the purpose of making surveys and examinations necessary for the design or examination of water supply or sewer facilities. No person shall forbid or interfere with the engineer or the engineer's authorized assistants entering upon property for these purposes. If actual damage is done to property by the making of a survey and examination, the board shall pay the reasonable value of the damage to the owner of the property damaged, and the cost shall be included in the assessment upon the property benefited by the improvement.

(D)

(1) For purposes of this division, either of the following constitutes a public exigency:

(a) A finding by the director of environmental protection that a public health nuisance caused by an occasion of unavoidable urgency and suddenness due to unsanitary conditions compels the immediate construction of sewers for the protection of the public health and welfare;

(b) The issuance of an order by the board of health of a health district to mitigate or abate a public health nuisance that is caused by an occasion of unavoidable urgency and suddenness due to

unsanitary conditions and compels the immediate construction of sewers for the protection of the public health and welfare.

(2) If a board of township trustees of a township that has adopted a limited home rule government is unable to purchase property for the purpose of the construction of sewers to mitigate or abate the public health nuisance that is the subject of a finding of the director or an order of the board of health, the board of township trustees may adopt a resolution finding that it is necessary for the protection of the public health and welfare to appropriate property that the board considers needed for that purpose. The resolution shall contain a definite, accurate, and detailed description of the property and the name and place of residence, if known or with reasonable diligence ascertainable, of the owners of the property to be appropriated.

The board of township trustees shall fix in its resolution what it considers to be the value of the property to be appropriated, which shall be the board's determination of the compensation for the property and shall be supported by an independent appraisal, together with any damages to the residue. The board shall deposit the compensation so determined, together with an amount for the damages to the residue, with the probate court or the court of common pleas of the county in which the property, or a part of it, is situated. Except as otherwise provided in this division, the power to appropriate property for the purposes of this division shall be exercised in the manner provided in sections [163.01](#) and [163.22](#) of the Revised Code for an appropriation in time of public exigency. The board's resolution and a written copy of the independent appraisal shall accompany the petition filed under section [163.05](#) of the Revised Code.

(E) As soon as all questions of compensation and damages have been determined for any water supply facilities or sewer services improvement project, the board shall cause to be made an estimated assessment, upon the lots and lands to be assessed, of such part of the compensation, damages, and costs of the improvement as is to be specially assessed according to the method specified by resolution of the board. The schedule of the assessments shall be filed with the township fiscal officer for the inspection of interested persons. Before adopting the estimated assessment, the board shall cause written notice to be sent to the owners of all lots and lands to be assessed that the assessment has been made and is on file with the township fiscal officer, and the date when objections to the assessment will be heard. Objections shall be filed in writing with the board before the date of the hearing. If any objections are filed, the board shall hear them and act as an equalizing board, and may change the assessments if, in its opinion, any change is necessary to make the assessments just and equitable. The board shall adopt a resolution approving and confirming the assessments as reported to or modified by the board.

(F) The resolution levying the assessments shall apportion the cost among the benefited lots and lands in the manner provided by the board by resolution. The board shall certify the amounts to be levied upon each lot or parcel of land to the county auditor, who shall enter the amounts on the tax duplicate, to be collected as other taxes. The principal shall be payable in not more than forty semiannual installments, as determined by the board. Any assessment in the amount of twenty-five dollars or less, or of which the unpaid balance is twenty-five dollars or less, shall be paid in full and not in installments, at the time the first or next installment otherwise would become due and payable. Assessments are a lien upon the respective lots or parcels of land assessed from the date of adoption of the resolution under division (E) of this section. If bonds are issued to pay the compensation, damages, and the costs of an improvement, the principal amount of the assessment shall be payable in such number of semiannual installments and in such amounts as the board determines to be

necessary to provide a fund for the payment of the principal of and interest on the bonds and shall bear interest from the date of the issuance of the bonds and at the same rate as the bonds.

(G) Any owner of property to be assessed for any water supply facilities or sewer services improvement project, or other person aggrieved by the action of the board in regard to any water supply facilities or sewer services improvement project, may appeal to the court of common pleas, in the manner prescribed by Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code.

(H) When collected, the assessments shall be paid by the county auditor by warrant of the county treasurer into a special fund in the township treasury created for the purpose of constructing, improving, maintaining, and operating water supply facilities or sewer improvements. The board may expend moneys from the fund only for the purposes for which the assessments were levied.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999; 05-06-2005; 12-20-2005 .

504.20 Construct, maintain, improve, repair, operate, and pay costs of water supply facilities or sewer improvements.

(A) For the purpose of supplying water and providing sewer services to users within the unincorporated area of the township under a plan adopted pursuant to section [504.19](#) of the Revised Code, the board of township trustees by resolution may acquire, construct, maintain, improve, repair, operate, and pay all or any part of the costs of water supply facilities or sewer improvements. If the best interests of the township and the users of the water supply facilities or sewer services so require, the board may sell or otherwise dispose of a water supply facility or sewer improvement.

(B) To cover the costs of acquiring, constructing, maintaining, improving, repairing, or operating a water supply facility or sewer improvement, the board may issue general obligation bonds of the township in accordance with Chapter 133. of the Revised Code, for which the full faith and credit of the township shall be pledged.

(C) For the purpose of paying costs of constructing or otherwise improving a water supply facility or sewer improvement and paying debt service charges on voted or unvoted securities of the township issued for those purposes, and for paying costs of operating, repairing, and maintaining a water supply facility or sewer improvement, the board may charge, alter, and collect rents and other charges for the use of services of a water supply facility or sewer improvement, which rents and charges if not paid when due may be certified by the township fiscal officer to the county auditor, who shall place the same on the tax duplicate to be collected as other taxes. Those rents and charges are a lien on the property served from and after the date of entry by the county auditor on the tax duplicate.

(D) The costs of constructing or otherwise improving a water supply facility or sewer improvement may include any of the following:

- (1) The purchase price of real estate or any interest in real estate;
- (2) The cost of preliminary and other surveys;
- (3) The cost of preparing plans, specifications, profiles, and estimates;
- (4) The cost of printing, serving, and publishing notices and any required legislation;
- (5) The cost of all special proceedings;

- (6) The cost of labor and material, whether furnished by contract or otherwise;
- (7) Interest on bonds or notes issued in anticipation of the levy or collection of special assessments;
- (8) The total amount of damages resulting from the project that are assessed in favor of any owners of lands affected by the project and any interest on those damages;
- (9) The cost incurred in connection with the preparation, levy, and collection of the special assessments, including legal expenses incurred by reason of the project;
- (10) All contract construction costs;
- (11) Incidental costs connected with the project.

(E) The board may adopt, amend, rescind, publish, administer, and enforce rules for the construction, maintenance, operation, protection, and use of water supply facilities and sewer services, that are considered necessary and advisable. The rules shall not be inconsistent with the laws of the state or the rules of the environmental protection agency. The board may enforce the rules by mandamus, injunction, or other legal remedy.

Effective Date: 09-20-1999; 12-20-2005 .

504.21 Rules governing soil erosion or water degradation from nonfarm development.

(A) The board of township trustees of a township that has adopted a limited home rule government may, for the unincorporated territory in the township, adopt, amend, and rescind rules establishing technically feasible and economically reasonable standards to achieve a level of management and conservation practices that will abate wind or water erosion of the soil or abate the degradation of the waters of the state by soil sediment in conjunction with land grading, excavating, filling, or other soil disturbing activities on land used or being developed in the township for nonfarm commercial, industrial, residential, or other nonfarm purposes, and establish criteria for determination of the acceptability of those management and conservation practices. The rules shall be designed to implement the applicable areawide waste treatment management plan prepared under section 208 of the "Federal Water Pollution Control Act," 86 Stat. 816 (1972), 33 U.S.C.A. 1228, as amended, and to implement phase II of the storm water program of the national pollutant discharge elimination system established in 40 C.F.R. Part 122. The rules to implement phase II of the storm water program of the national pollutant discharge elimination system shall not be inconsistent with, more stringent than, or broader in scope than the rules or regulations adopted by the environmental protection agency under 40 C.F.R. Part 122. The rules adopted under this section shall not apply inside the limits of municipal corporations, to lands being used in a strip mine operation as defined in section [1513.01](#) of the Revised Code, or to land being used in a surface mine operation as defined in section [1514.01](#) of the Revised Code.

The rules adopted under this section may require persons to file plans governing erosion control, sediment control, and water management before clearing, grading, excavating, filling, or otherwise wholly or partially disturbing one or more contiguous acres of land owned by one person or operated as one development unit for the construction of nonfarm buildings, structures, utilities, recreational areas, or other similar nonfarm uses. If the rules require plans to be filed, the rules shall do all of the following:

- (1) Designate the board itself, its employees, or another agency or official to review and approve or disapprove the plans;
- (2) Establish procedures and criteria for the review and approval or disapproval of the plans;
- (3) Require the designated entity to issue a permit to a person for the clearing, grading, excavating, filling, or other project for which plans are approved and to deny a permit to a person whose plans have been disapproved;
- (4) Establish procedures for the issuance of the permits;
- (5) Establish procedures under which a person may appeal the denial of a permit.

Areas of less than one contiguous acre shall not be exempt from compliance with other provisions of this section or rules adopted under this section. The rules adopted under this section may impose reasonable filing fees for plan review, permit processing, and field inspections.

No permit or plan shall be required for a public highway, transportation, or drainage improvement or maintenance project undertaken by a government agency or political subdivision in accordance with a statement of its standard sediment control policies that is approved by the board or the chief of the division of soil and water resources in the department of natural resources.

(B) Rules or amendments may be adopted under this section only after public hearings at not fewer than two regular sessions of the board of township trustees. The board shall cause to be published, in a newspaper of general circulation in the township, notice of the public hearings, including time, date, and place, once a week for two weeks immediately preceding the hearings, or as provided in section [7.16](#) of the Revised Code. The proposed rules or amendments shall be made available by the board to the public at the board office or other location indicated in the notice. The rules or amendments shall take effect on the thirty-first day following the date of their adoption.

(C) The board of township trustees may employ personnel to assist in the administration of this section and the rules adopted under it. The board also, if the action does not conflict with the rules, may delegate duties to review sediment control and water management plans to its employees, and may enter into agreements with one or more political subdivisions, other township officials, or other government agencies, in any combination, in order to obtain reviews and comments on plans governing erosion control, sediment control, and water management or to obtain other services for the administration of the rules adopted under this section.

(D) The board of township trustees or any duly authorized representative of the board may, upon identification to the owner or person in charge, enter any land upon obtaining agreement with the owner, tenant, or manager of the land in order to determine whether there is compliance with the rules adopted under this section. If the board or its duly authorized representative is unable to obtain such an agreement, the board or representative may apply for, and a judge of the court of common pleas for the county where the land is located may issue, an appropriate inspection warrant as necessary to achieve the purposes of this section.

(E)

(1) If the board of township trustees or its duly authorized representative determines that a violation of the rules adopted under this section exists, the board or representative may issue an immediate stop work order if the violator failed to obtain any federal, state, or local permit necessary for sediment

and erosion control, earth movement, clearing, or cut and fill activity. In addition, if the board or representative determines such a rule violation exists, regardless of whether or not the violator has obtained the proper permits, the board or representative may authorize the issuance of a notice of violation. If, after a period of not less than thirty days has elapsed following the issuance of the notice of violation, the violation continues, the board or its duly authorized representative shall issue a second notice of violation. Except as provided in division (E)(3) of this section, if, after a period of not less than fifteen days has elapsed following the issuance of the second notice of violation, the violation continues, the board or its duly authorized representative may issue a stop work order after first obtaining the written approval of the prosecuting attorney of the county in which the township is located if, in the opinion of the prosecuting attorney, the violation is egregious.

Once a stop work order is issued, the board or its duly authorized representative shall request, in writing, the prosecuting attorney to seek an injunction or other appropriate relief in the court of common pleas to abate excessive erosion or sedimentation and secure compliance with the rules adopted under this section. If the prosecuting attorney seeks an injunction or other appropriate relief, then, in granting relief, the court of common pleas may order the construction of sediment control improvements or implementation of other control measures and may assess a civil fine of not less than one hundred or more than five hundred dollars. Each day of violation of a rule or stop work order issued under this section shall be considered a separate violation subject to a civil fine.

(2) The person to whom a stop work order is issued under this section may appeal the order to the court of common pleas of the county in which it was issued, seeking any equitable or other appropriate relief from that order.

(3) No stop work order shall be issued under this section against any public highway, transportation, or drainage improvement or maintenance project undertaken by a government agency or political subdivision in accordance with a statement of its standard sediment control policies that is approved by the board or the chief of the division of soil and water resources in the department of natural resources.

(F) No person shall violate any rule adopted or order issued under this section. Notwithstanding division (E) of this section, if the board of township trustees determines that a violation of any rule adopted or administrative order issued under this section exists, the board may request, in writing, the prosecuting attorney of the county in which the township is located, to seek an injunction or other appropriate relief in the court of common pleas to abate excessive erosion or sedimentation and secure compliance with the rules or order. In granting relief, the court of common pleas may order the construction of sediment control improvements or implementation of other control measures and may assess a civil fine of not less than one hundred or more than five hundred dollars. Each day of violation of a rule adopted or administrative order issued under this section shall be considered a separate violation subject to a civil fine.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No. 28, HB 153, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2011.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 9, HB 1, §101.01, eff. 7/17/2009.

Effective Date: 05-06-2005 .

504.24 Off-street parking facilities.

(A) A board of township trustees of an urban township, as defined in section [504.01](#) of the Revised Code, may lay out, establish, construct, maintain, and operate, within the unincorporated territory of the township, off-street parking facilities for motor vehicles. For this purpose, the board may acquire by purchase, gift, devise, exchange, lease, or sublease any existing off-street parking facilities or any real estate or interest in real estate required for the construction of the parking facilities. In addition, the board may exercise the power of eminent domain in the manner provided by sections [163.01](#) to [163.22](#) of the Revised Code.

(B) Land acquired by a township under this section is not tax exempt, except if any township owns and operates parking facilities used exclusively for a public purpose and charges no fee for the privilege of parking in such a facility, the facilities are tax exempt.

Added by 131st General Assembly File No. TBD, HB 413, §1, eff. 9/28/2016.