

Michigan Press Association
Core Messages on Public/Legal Notices

Along with the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act, public notice requirements help hold government officials accountable to the people they are elected to serve.

- In states where public notice requirements are removed, research shows citizens are less aware of government actions, and attendance at public meetings decreases.
- Public notice requirements make actions and decisions by government officials transparent to the people they serve and help prevent corruption and abuse of power.
- Michigan's long-standing accountability measures protect democracy, build trust and help governments more effectively serve their constituents.

Public notice requirements play a critical role in helping Michigan citizens learn about and weigh in on important tax proposals, zoning changes, new ordinances, and proposed property developments that may affect them and their family.

- Public notices in newspapers provide Michiganders with access to information they need to participate in the decision-making process in their communities, including election information and key public meetings.
- Public notice requirements provide an accessible way to access critical information that allows Michiganders to monitor, evaluate and weigh in on decisions, policies and the actions of elected officials, and they provide a permanent record of government activity.
- These requirements offer easy access to information about important issues, including tax increases, zoning changes and new local ordinances.

Michigan lawmakers must prioritize transparency and keep in place accountability measures that foster an informed and engaged electorate.

- Efforts to remove public notice requirements are widely criticized by government transparency groups as a means for elected officials to obscure their actions from the public.
- Transparency and accountability measures like public notice requirements are essential in a healthy democracy where elected officials act in the public interest rather than for personal or political gain.
- With Michigan consistently ranking among the worst states in the U.S. for government transparency, state lawmakers should focus on improving transparency, not making it worse.

Publishing legal notices in newspapers informs Michiganders about actions that could impact their rights, property and finances, and helps protect them from fraud.

- Legal notices publicize government actions and court decisions, including property foreclosures, to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Newspapers are widely accessible and create a record of notices that helps ensure legal procedures are followed and provides an opportunity for the public to respond.
- Noticing requirements in Michigan help protect residents from scams and fraud that could cause long-term financial damage, identity theft and legal complications.