

12.0600

**CODE/ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT
TOWNSHIP OF GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
ord. no. 243 eff. June 16, 1996**

An Ordinance to establish a municipal ordinance violations bureau for the Charter Township of Grand Haven.

THE TOWNSHIP OF GRAND HAVEN, OTTAWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN,
ORDAINS:

12.0601 Sec. 1 NAME

This Ordinance shall be known and referred to as the "Grand Haven Charter Township Municipal Ordinance Violations Bureau Ordinance."

12.0602 Sec. 2 DEFINITIONS

As used in this Ordinance:

1. "Act" means Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as amended.
2. "Authorized Township Official" means a police officer, a Code Enforcement Officer, or other personnel of the Charter Township of Grand Haven authorized by this Ordinance or any Ordinance to issue municipal civil infraction citations or municipal civil infraction violation notices. (ord. no. 549 eff. May 10, 2017)
3. "Bureau" means the Charter Township of Grand Haven Municipal Ordinance Violations Bureau as established by this Ordinance.
4. "Municipal civil infraction" means an act or omission that is prohibited by any Ordinance of the Township, but which is not a crime under the Ordinance, and for which civil sanctions, including, without limitation, fines, damages, expenses and costs, may be ordered, as authorized by Chapter 87 of Public Act 236 of 1961 as amended. A municipal civil infraction is not a lesser included offense of a violation of a Township Ordinance that is designated as a crime.
5. "Municipal civil infraction action" means a civil action in which the defendant is alleged to be responsible for a municipal civil infraction.
6. "Municipal civil infraction citation" means a written complaint or notice prepared by an authorized township official, directing a person to appear in court regarding the occurrence or existence of a municipal civil infraction violation by the person cited.

4. A citation for a municipal civil infraction signed by an authorized Township official shall be treated as made under oath if the violation alleged in the citation occurred in the presences of the official signing the complaint and if the citation contains the following statement immediately above the date and signature of the official: "I declare under the penalties of perjury that the statements above are true to the best of my information, knowledge and belief".
5. An authorized Township official who witnesses a person commit a municipal civil infraction shall prepare and subscribe, as soon as possible and as completely as possible, an original and required copies of the citation.
6. An authorized Township official may issue a citation to a person if:
 - A. Based upon investigation, the official has reasonable cause to believe that the person is responsible for a municipal civil infraction; or
 - B. Based upon investigation of a complaint by someone who allegedly witnessed the person commit a municipal civil infraction, the official has reasonable cause to believe that the person is responsible for an infraction and if the prosecuting attorney or Township attorney approves in writing the issuance of the citation.
7. Municipal civil infraction citations shall be served by an authorized Township official as follows:
 - A. Except as provided by Section 4.7.B., an authorized Township official shall personally serve a copy of the citation upon the alleged violator.
 - B. If the municipal civil infraction action involves the use or occupancy of land, a building or other structure, a copy of the citation does not need to be personally served upon the alleged violator, but may be served upon an owner or occupant of the land, building or structure by posting the copy of the land or attaching the copy to the building or structure. In addition, a copy of the citation shall be sent by first-class mail to the owner of the land, building or structure at the owner's last known address.

12.0605 Sec. 5 MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION CITATIONS; CONTENTS

1. A municipal ordinance citation shall contain the name and address of the alleged violator, the municipal civil infraction alleged, the place where the alleged violator shall appear in court, the telephone number of the court, and the time at or by which the appearance shall be made.

2. Further, the citation shall inform the alleged violator that he or she may do one of the following:
 - A. Admit responsibility for the municipal civil infraction by mail, in person, or by representation, or by the time specified for appearance.
 - B. Admit responsibility for the municipal civil infraction "with explanation", by mail, by the time specified for appearance or, in person, or by representation.
 - C. Deny responsibility for the municipal civil infraction by doing either of the following:
 - 1) Appearing in person for an informal hearing before a judge or district court magistrate, without the opportunity of being represented by an attorney, unless a formal hearing before a judge is requested by the Township.
 - 2) Appearing in court for a formal hearing before a judge with the opportunity of being represented by an attorney.
 - D. The citation shall also inform the alleged violator of all of the following:
 - 1) That if the alleged violator desires to admit responsibility "with explanation" in person or by representation, the alleged violator must apply to the court in person, by mail, by telephone, or by representation within the time specified for appearance and obtain a scheduled date and time for an appearance.
 - 2) That if the alleged violator desires to deny responsibility, the alleged violator must apply to the court in person, by mail, by telephone, or by representation within the time specified for appearance and obtain a scheduled date and time to appear for a hearing, unless a hearing date is specified on the citation.
 - 3) That a hearing shall be an informal hearing unless a formal hearing is requested by the alleged violator or the Township.
 - 4) That at an informal hearing the alleged violator must appear in person before a judge or district court magistrate, without the opportunity of being represented by an attorney.
 - 5) That at a formal hearing the alleged violator must appear in

person before a judge with the opportunity of being represented by an attorney.

- E. The citation shall contain a notice in boldfaced type that the failure of the alleged violator to appear within the time specified in the citation or at the time scheduled for a hearing or appearance is a misdemeanor and will result in entry of a default judgment against the alleged violator on the municipal civil infraction.

12.0606 Sec. 6 MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS BUREAU

- 1. **BUREAU ESTABLISHED.** The Township hereby establishes a Municipal Ordinance Violations Bureau ("Bureau") as authorized under Section 8396 of the Act to accept admissions of responsibility for municipal civil infractions in response to municipal civil infraction violation notices issued and served by authorized Township officials, and to collect and retain civil fines and costs as prescribed by this Ordinance or any other Ordinance.
- 2. **LOCATION; SUPERVISION; EMPLOYEES; RULES; AND REGULATIONS.** The Bureau shall be located at Grand Haven Charter Township Hall, and shall be under the supervision and control of the Township Superintendent. The Township Superintendent, subject to the approval of the Township Board, shall adopt rules and regulations for the operation of the Bureau and appoint any necessary qualified Township employees to administer the Bureau.
- 3. **DISPOSITION OF VIOLATIONS.** The Bureau may dispose only of municipal civil infraction violations for which a fine has been scheduled and for which a municipal civil infraction violation notice (as compared with a citation) has been issued. The fact that a fine has been scheduled for a particular violation shall not entitle any person to dispose of the violation at the Bureau. Nothing in this Chapter shall prevent or restrict the Township from issuing a municipal civil infraction citation for any violation or from prosecuting any violation in a court of competent jurisdiction. No person shall be required to dispose of a municipal civil infraction violation at the Bureau and may have the violation processed before a court of appropriate jurisdiction. The unwillingness of any person to dispose of any violation at the Bureau shall not prejudice the person or in any way diminish the person's rights, privileges, and protection according by law.
- 4. **BUREAU LIMITED TO ACCEPTING ADMISSIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY.** The scope of the Bureau's authority shall be limited to accepting admissions of responsibility for municipal civil infractions and collecting and retaining civil fines and costs as a result of those admissions. The Bureau shall not accept payment of a fine from any person who denies having committed the offense or who admits responsibility only with

explanation, and in no event shall the Bureau determine, or attempt to determine, the truth or falsity of any fact or matter relating to an alleged violation.

5. **MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION VIOLATION NOTICES.** Municipal civil infraction violation notices shall be issued and served by authorized Township officials under the same circumstances and upon the same persons as provided for citations as provided in Section 4.6 and 4.7 of this Chapter. In addition to any other information required by this Code or other Ordinance, the notice of violation shall indicate the time by which the alleged violator must appear at the Bureau, the methods by which an appearance may be made, the address or telephone number to the Bureau, the hours during which the Bureau is open, the amount of the fine scheduled for the alleged violation, and the consequences for failure to appear and pay the required fine within the required time.
6. **APPEARANCE; PAYMENT OF FINES AND COSTS.** An alleged violator receiving a municipal civil infraction violation notice shall appear at the Bureau and pay the specified fine and costs at or by the time specified for appearance in the municipal civil infraction violation notice. An appearance may be made by mail, in person, or by representation.
7. **PROCEDURE WHERE ADMISSION OF RESPONSIBILITY NOT MADE OR FINE NOT PAID.** If an authorized Township official issues and serves a municipal ordinance violation notice and if an admission of responsibility is not made and the civil fine and costs, if any, prescribed by the schedule of fines for the violation are not paid at the Bureau, a municipal civil infraction citation may be filed with the district court and a copy of the citation may be served by first class mail upon the alleged violator at the alleged violator's last known address. The citation filed with the court does not need to comply in all particulars with the requirements for citations as provided by Sections 8705 and 5709 of the Act, but shall consist of a sworn complaint containing the allegations stated in the municipal ordinance violation notice and shall fairly inform the alleged violator how to respond to the citation.

12.0607 Sec. 7 SCHEDULE OF CIVIL FINES ESTABLISHED

1. A schedule of civil fines payable to the Bureau for admissions of responsibility by persons served with the municipal ordinance violation notices is hereby established. The fines for the violations listed shall be as follows, unless a particular ordinance establishing a particular civil infraction establishes other fines, in which case the other fines shall control:

OFFENSE/VIOLATION	
A. Failure to comply with any provision of any Township	\$50.00 <u>150.00</u> FINE

Ordinance which provides that a violation thereof is a civil infraction

- B. First repeat offense ~~\$250.00~~400.00 FINE
- C. Second (or any subsequent) repeat offense ~~\$500.00~~700.00 FINE
(amend by ord. no. 619 eff. January 15, 2024)
- 2. A copy of the schedule, as amended from time to time, shall be posted at the Bureau.
(amend. by ord. no. 517 eff. July 7, 2013)

12.0608 Sec. 8 SEVERABILITY

The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

12.0609 Sec. 9 EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance was adopted by the Township Board on May 13, 1996. This Ordinance shall be effective on June 16, 1996.
(ord. no. 243 eff. June 16, 1996)