

Changes for Voters Coming to Williamstown Township

Submitted by Williamstown Township Clerk, Robin Cleveland and published in the Williamston Enterprise on May 1, 2022

Every ten years a United States Census is conducted, which results in each state going through apportionment and then redistricting. Redistricting is the process of adjusting voting districts within the state based on the Census result. In Michigan, redistricting is now done by an Independent Redistricting Commission and the process recently took place and was finalized at the state level.

In Williamstown Township, there are many changes to voting district numbers this year. The Congressional district for the Township will become District 7 (formerly District 8, currently held by Elissa Slotkin). The Michigan Senate district will become District 28 (formerly District 24, currently held by Tom Barrett). The Michigan House District will become Districts 75 and 73 (formerly District 69, currently held by Julie Brixie). The Ingham County District will become District 15 (formerly District 13, currently held by Randy Schafer). These changes take effect immediately after the May 3rd election and will remain the same for the next ten years.

In addition to these changes, the two voting precincts in Williamstown Township have been reconfigured. Instead of the precincts being divided by Zimmer Rd., the dividing line between the precincts will be Sherwood Rd. All voters living South of Sherwood Rd. and those with even-numbered addresses who live on Sherwood Rd. will become Precinct 1. All voters living North of Sherwood Rd. and those with odd-numbered addresses who live on Sherwood Rd. will become Precinct 2. As a result, approximately half of the Township voters will move to a different voting precinct. The polling locations will be changing as well. Precinct 1 will now vote at St. Katherine's Church at 4650 Meridian Rd. (just North of Sherwood Rd.) Precinct 2 voters will now vote at the Township Hall at 4990 Zimmer Rd. (at Zimmer and Germany Rds.).

The reason for the precinct changes is to cut down on the number of ballot styles needed during an election. Having many ballot styles can cause confusion among voters and election workers, so cutting down on the number of ballot styles will make the election easier to administer, more accurate, and less confusing for voters. Williamstown Township has four school districts within its borders, Haslett, Okemos, Perry, and Williamston. Having this many school districts can cause numerous ballot styles within each precinct. With this change, Precinct 1 will only have Williamston Schools (our largest school district), so less ballot styles will be needed there.

Whenever there are district or precinct number changes, the Township Clerk's office is required to send a new Voter Identification/Information Card to each voter affected by the change(s). Making these changes at the same time saves Township money by needing only one mailing. Williamstown Township has more than 4530 voters.

Beginning May 1st, voters will begin receiving their new card. All Township voters should have their Voter Identification/Information Card no later than the end of May. These cards are generally sent in order by last name, so voters should not be alarmed if their neighbor gets one but they have not yet received their card. The Voter Identification/Information Card is useful for determining in which districts a person will vote to help voters prepare for an upcoming election. You do not need to show this card to vote (it cannot be used as ID) but it could be good to have it with you when you vote in the August 2nd State Primary until you are sure about where you will be voting. You will still need to show your photo ID, per State rules.

If you have any questions about voting, please contact the Williamstown Township Clerk's office at (517) 655-3193 or visit our website at www.williamstowntownship.com. You can find out more about your precinct and polling location by going to www.michigan.gov/vote. If you prefer to vote Absentee instead of coming to the polling location, you can contact the Clerk's office and ask to be put on the Permanent Absentee Voter List (you can take yourself off this list by contacting the Clerk's office as well).