

## **NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP BUILDING ACCESS AND VISITOR POLICY**

### **I. PURPOSE**

Northfield Township strives to maintain the security of its facilities through strict control of building access. All employees, elected officials, and other authorized individuals needing regular access to the Township building will be provided with the proper building access. Restricting unauthorized access to visitors helps maintain safety standards for all, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, protects against theft, ensures the security of equipment, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances.

Public access to areas within enclosed facilities owned, controlled, and/or leased by Northfield Township may be restricted depending on whether such areas are classified as “designated public forum”, “limited designated public forum”, or “nonpublic forum”.

Certain spaces are intended for the use of Township employees in the conduct of their business in order to help maintain the confidentiality of residents’ personally identifiable information. Other spaces are primarily intended for the use of Township employees in the conduct of their business but may from time to time be utilized for the convening of public meetings.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this policy, the following terms have the following definitions:

Township property — Northfield Township buildings, grounds, Township owned, controlled, and/or leased property; the Northfield Township Food Pantry property; vehicles used for township purposes; and location(s) used for township meetings, events, or other township-sponsored events or activities.

Visitor — any individual other than an active township employee or current township official.

Public Forum — Any area that has a long-standing tradition of being used for the general public to access and gather to express ideas, exchange views, and exercise the right to speech.

Limited Public Forum — Any area that is voluntarily created for expressive activity for a specific subject.

Nonpublic Forum — Any area not specifically designated as a public forum or a limited public forum.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

- A. All visitors to the township property, including former employees and employees who are out on any type of leave, are required to report to the main entrance, sign in, and receive permission to remain on the Township property. All visitors must sign a visitor’s log. Persons on Township property without permission will be directed to leave and refusal to comply may be subject to criminal prosecution.

- B. Visitors wishing to use the restroom are required to be escorted by a Township employee to and from the restroom.
- C. Any individual wishing to confer with an employee of the Township should contact the employee directly to make an appointment. Individuals wishing to meet with a Township elected or appointed official may make an appointment directly with the official or by scheduling a meeting with the assistance of a Township employee in a manner prescribed by the Township Administrator.

#### **IV. NONPUBLIC & LIMITED PUBLIC FORUMS**

Public access to areas within enclosed facilities owned, controlled, and leased by the Township may be restricted depending upon whether such areas are classified as “public forum”, “limited public forum”, or “nonpublic forum”. How areas within enclosed facilities owned, controlled, and leased by the Township are classified is based on their intended use. For example, there are certain areas that are intended primarily for the use of Township employees in the conduct of their business; there are certain areas which, while primarily intended for the use of Township employees in the conduct of their business, may from time to time be utilized for the convening of public meetings; there are certain limited areas which may be open to the public while engaging in legitimate business with Township officers or employees; and there may be certain areas which are primarily intended for the convening of public meetings.

The office spaces, work areas, and conference rooms in the Township are hereby declared to be nonpublic forums unless or until a public meeting is convened and where such areas would be subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1, *et seq.* All Township employees’ work areas that are designated by appropriate signage as work areas shall be considered nonpublic forums. All visitors are prohibited from entering Township employee work areas unless they have an appointment and are escorted by a Township employee to such forum.

All other areas of the Township Building shall be considered limited public forums and only visitors who are present to engage in public business with the Township officers or employees shall be authorized. A visitor shall not be within a nonpublic forum or limited public forum without authorization. An unauthorized person found to be within a nonpublic or limited public forum of the Township building shall be considered a trespasser.

The Township Administrator or his/her designee, is hereby authorized to manage public access to enclosed Township owned, controlled, and/or leased property. In the performance of such responsibilities, the Township Administrator, subject to approval by the Supervisor, shall have the authority to identify which areas are to be considered a designated public forum, limited public forum, or nonpublic forum, if not otherwise stated in this policy.

#### **V. VISITOR CONDUCT**

The Township expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on township property or at a township event.

**A. Audio and Video Recording with the Township**

Audio and/or video recording any person without his/her explicit consent anywhere inside of the Township building except during duly noticed public meetings, or as otherwise approved by the Supervisor or his/her designee is strictly prohibited. Except as otherwise approved by the Supervisor or his/her designee, audio and/or video recording may only be conducted within the Township Board meeting room if a Township Board or other public meeting is occurring, and any room, or office within which said activity has been authorized by law.

Any person found to be conducting audio and/or video recording except as authorized herein must cease doing so immediately if any visitor, Township employee, or Township official expresses his/her desire not to be recorded.

This rule does not apply to audio and/or video recording performed by authorized law enforcement personnel engaged in the performance of their official duties. Nor does this rule apply to the Township's ability to maintain and use video security recording devices on its property and otherwise in a manner provided by law.

**B. Audio and Video Recording During a Public Meeting**

Pursuant and subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act and Northfield Township Ordinance Number 2021-07-13 including as they may be amended from time to time, audio and/or video recording of public meetings must be undertaken in a quiet and orderly manner so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting, block the view of any person attending the public meeting, or block any aisle, row, ingress, or egress.

**C. Every visitor of the Township is expected NOT to engage in the following behavior:**

1. Behave in an unsafe manner, or use vulgar or obscene language;
2. Bring any object that can be reasonably considered a weapon, or that looks like a weapon or any dangerous device, except as permitted by law;
3. Damage or threaten to damage another's property;
4. Violate any federal, Illinois law or any Township or other local ordinance;
5. Impede, delay, disrupt, or adversely affect any Township function, including conduct which interferes with Township employees or Township officials in the performance of their duties, or interferes with the proper use of the Township facility by others;
6. Engage in abusive or harassing behavior, including the use of obscene language and gestures;

7. Blocking entrances, exits, fire exits, access areas, or otherwise interfere with the provision of services, general public safety, or the use of Township property;
8. Tamper with or unauthorized use of building or facility systems or devices, including electrical, plumbing, locks, doors, or cameras;
9. Pose or affix to Township property without permission from the Township Administrator, or his/her designee, any signs, leaflets, posters, flyers, pamphlets, brochures, and written, pictorial or graphic material of any kind;
10. Enter upon any portion of Township premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Board;
11. Violate other Township policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized Township employee or Township Official;
12. Any act which could result in a substantial risk of harm to persons or property.

## **VI. ENFORCEMENT**

- A.** If an unauthorized or suspicious individual is observed on or in any Township building or facility, employees should immediately notify their supervisor or, if necessary, call the police immediately.
- B.** Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy, or acts in a manner that violates federal, state, or local law (including any other Township ordinance and policy) may be ejected from township property and may be subject to criminal prosecution.