HALFMOON TOWNSHIP
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION 2026-27

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF HALFMOON TOWNSHIP, CENTRE COUNTY, PA, ESTABLISHING A CITIZEN INQUIRY, COMPLAINT, AND FEEDBACK POLICY FOR HALFMOON TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Halfmoon Township ("Township") is charged with the responsibility of governing the affairs of the Township and ensuring the efficient administration of municipal operations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of establishing establishes a consistent and transparent process for receiving, documenting, tracking, and responding to public inquiries, concerns, and suggestions; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desires to establish a formal policy clarifying staff responsibilities, promote accountability, improve communication, and ensure residents receive consistent and professional responses when interacting with the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors finds that the adoption of a formal Citizen Inquiry, Complaint & Feedback Policy is in the best interest of the Township and its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Halfmoon Township Board of Supervisors, on the 12th day of November 2026, adopts Resolution 2026-27, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth at length.

RESOLVED and adopted this 12th day of November 2026.

ATTEST:

Amy M. Smith
Secretary

TOWNSHIP OF HALFMOON:

Patricia C. Hartle
Chair

{Seal}

POLICY FOR CITIZEN QUESTIONS, COMPLAINTS, AND FEEDBACK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent process for receiving, documenting, assigning, responding to, and following up on citizen questions, complaints, and feedback received by Halfmoon Township.

This policy is intended to promote clear communication, timely responses, accountability, and consistent handling of citizen concerns while ensuring that matters are directed to the appropriate Township staff member or governing body.

2. Scope

This policy applies to citizen questions, complaints, concerns, and feedback received through various communication methods, including:

- Township office visits and telephone calls.
- Emails and written correspondence.
- Public comment periods at Board of Supervisors and Board-appointed committee meetings.
- The Township's formal complaint form.
- Township website, social media, or other communication platforms, where applicable.
- Other direct communications with Township officials or employees.

3. General Policy

The Township shall make reasonable efforts to acknowledge, document, and respond to citizen questions, complaints, and feedback in a professional, courteous, and timely manner.

All communications shall be handled in a fair and consistent manner, regardless of the source of the communication or the individual receiving it.

The Township Secretary shall serve as the central point of coordination for tracking citizen communications and ensuring that matters are directed to the appropriate staff member or Board, as applicable.

5. Procedures

A. Receipt of Citizen Communications

All Township employees and officials who receive a citizen question, complaint, or feedback shall ensure that the communication is directed to the Township Secretary for appropriate documentation and handling.

Communications received during public meetings shall be handled in accordance with Section 5.D of this policy.

When a communication requires immediate attention due to a potential threat to public safety, property, or essential Township operations, the receiving employee shall promptly notify the appropriate Township official or emergency service, as applicable.

B. Formal Complaints

1. Citizens shall be encouraged to submit formal complaints using the Township's established complaint form.
2. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Township Secretary shall:
    - Record the complaint in the Citizen Communication Log.
    - Confirm receipt of the complaint when contact information is provided.
    - Review the complaint and determine the appropriate staff member or official to address the matter.
    - Forward the complaint to the responsible staff member or official.
    - Track the complaint through resolution or closure.
3. The responsible staff member shall review the complaint, conduct any necessary investigation, and provide a response or status update to the Township Secretary.
4. The Township Secretary or responsible staff member shall ensure that the citizen receives a response or status update, as appropriate.
5. Complaints involving personnel matters, legal issues, potential litigation, or other sensitive matters shall be referred to the appropriate Township official or Solicitor for guidance.
6. Anonymous complaints may be documented and reviewed as appropriate. The Township may be unable to provide a response or conduct a complete investigation if sufficient information is not available.

C. Citizen Communication Log

The Township Secretary shall maintain a Citizen Communication Log to document and track communications requiring follow-up.

The log should include, as applicable:

- Date received.
- Citizen's name and contact information, if provided.
- Method of communication.
- General subject or description of the question, complaint, or feedback.
- Date referred to the responsible staff member.
- Name of the responsible staff member or official.
- Status of the matter.
- Date of response or follow-up.
- Summary of the response or action taken.
- Date closed.

The log shall be maintained in accordance with applicable Township recordkeeping and retention requirements.

D. Questions and Feedback Received During Public Meetings

Questions, concerns, and feedback received during public comment periods at Board of Supervisors or Board-appointed committee meetings shall be documented and handled as follows:

1. **Documentation:** Questions and concerns requiring follow-up shall be noted, including the name of the citizen, if provided, the subject of the inquiry, and any relevant details.
2. **Assignment:** The Township Secretary shall identify the appropriate Township employee or official responsible for addressing the question or concern.
3. **Email Response:** Questions requiring follow-up shall be addressed by email by the appropriate Township staff member or official, when contact information is available.

4. **Coordination:** The Township Secretary shall coordinate the assignment and track the response to ensure that the matter is addressed.
5. **Board Matters:** Questions involving policy decisions, matters requiring Board action, or issues outside the authority of Township staff shall be referred to the Board of Supervisors for consideration, as appropriate.
6. **Meeting Minutes:** The meeting minutes shall reflect public comments and any required follow-up in accordance with applicable meeting procedures and recordkeeping requirements. The minutes are not required to reproduce the full discussion or the subsequent email response.

A question raised during a public meeting does not automatically require Board action. Staff may provide an informational response when the matter falls within their assigned responsibilities and authority.

E. Questions and Feedback Received Outside of Public Meetings

Questions and feedback received by telephone, email, in person, or through other direct communication methods shall be documented when they require additional research, coordination with staff or other parties, or follow-up.

Social media platforms, including Facebook, shall not be considered an official communication tool for submitting or tracking citizen questions, complaints, or feedback. Citizens shall direct communications directly with Township staff through the established communication methods so that questions and feedback can be properly documented, assigned, addressed, and followed up on.

The Township Secretary shall:

1. Record the communication in the Citizen Communication Log, as appropriate.
2. Identify the responsible staff member or official.
3. Forward the communication for review and response.
4. Track the matter until a response is provided or the matter is otherwise closed.

Routine questions that can be answered immediately by the receiving employee may be addressed without additional tracking, unless follow-up is necessary.

F. Response and Follow-Up

The Township shall make reasonable efforts to provide an initial acknowledgment within three business days of receiving a communication requiring follow-up.

The responsible staff member should provide a substantive response within five (5) business days, when reasonably possible. If the nature, complexity, or volume of the inquiry requires additional time, the responsible staff member may request an extension. The staff member shall provide the Township Secretary with the reason for the extension and an anticipated response date. The citizen shall be notified of the delay and provided with an estimated timeframe for receiving a response.

If additional research, investigation, coordination, or Board action is required, the responsible staff member shall provide a status update to the citizen when appropriate and advise of the anticipated next steps.

These timeframes are administrative goals and are not intended to establish a legal deadline or guarantee resolution within a specific period.

The Township Secretary shall monitor outstanding communications and follow up with responsible staff members as necessary to ensure that responses are provided.

A matter may be closed when:

- A response has been provided.
- The requested information or action has been completed.
- The matter has been referred to the appropriate authority and the citizen has been advised.
- Reasonable attempts to obtain additional information or contact the citizen have been unsuccessful.
- No further Township action is appropriate or possible.

The reason for closing a matter shall be documented when appropriate.

6. Board of Supervisors Review and Reporting

The Township Secretary shall provide the Board of Supervisors with quarterly summaries of citizen communications, including:

- The general types of questions, complaints, and feedback received.
- Matters requiring Board consideration or direction.
- Outstanding matters requiring additional attention.
- Recurring concerns or issues that may warrant policy or operational review.

Reports shall be prepared in a manner that protects confidential information and complies with applicable public meeting and recordkeeping requirements.

Individual communications shall be brought to the Board's attention when Board action, policy direction, or other Board involvement is necessary.

7. Confidentiality and Records

Citizen communications and related records shall be handled in accordance with applicable Pennsylvania law, including public records, records retention, and open meeting requirements.

The Township shall not guarantee confidentiality unless authorized by law. Personal or sensitive information shall be handled appropriately and shared only as necessary for Township business.

8. Responsibilities

Township Secretary

- Serve as the central point of coordination for citizen communications.
- Maintain the Citizen Communication Log.
- Route communications to the appropriate staff member or official.
- Monitor outstanding matters and coordinate follow-up.
- Provide summaries to the Board when appropriate.

Responsible Township Staff Member or Official

- Review assigned questions, complaints, and feedback.
- Conduct necessary research or investigation.
- Provide responses and status updates.
- Communicate any matter requiring Board action or additional direction.

Board of Supervisors

- Establish policy and provide direction on matters within its authority.
- Consider communications requiring Board action.
- Review recurring concerns and operational issues as appropriate.

9. Review and Amendment

This policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Board of Supervisors and may be amended as necessary to improve communication, accountability, and Township operations.