



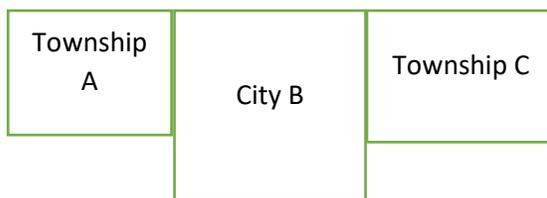
Combining Boards of Review

As has been discussed in other Topics, P.A. 660 provides a statutory framework to ensure proper assessing in order to guarantee the highest quality assessments for taxpayers as well as local units. The Act defines the requirements for a local unit to be determined to be in substantial compliance with the General Property Tax Act, provides timetables for audits as well as follow up audits and provides a process for bringing a local unit into compliance if they remain non-compliant after a follow up review (also known as the designated assessor).

The Act also made changes to the way Boards of Review operate including requiring training and allows for Boards of Review to be combined across contiguous local units:

The governing bodies of 2 or more contiguous cities or townships may, by agreement, appoint a single board of review to serve as the board of review for each of those cities or townships for purposes of this act. The provisions in subsections (1) to (5) should serve as a guide in determining the size, composition, and manner of appointment of a board of review appointed under this subsection. (MCL 211.28(6))

In order for Boards to combine and act as a single Board of Review, several conditions must be met. First, the local units must be contiguous. Contiguous is defined as local units that touch or abut each other, this can be on the side, top, bottom or corner. Can three local units be “chained” and act as a single Board of Review? Yes, in this situation you may have three local units in this configuration:



The City Council or Township Board of each local unit must agree and take formal action to approve to combine their Boards of Review. As long as all local units involved agree and take formal action to approve, the units can combine to operate as a single Board of Review.

In our three local unit example above, this would require the appointment of a single Board of Review made up of three members. Using the provisions of MCL 211.28(1) to (5) as a guide, at least 2/3 of the members must be taxpayers of local units A, B and/or C. The following three examples are used to demonstrate some, but not all, of the possible scenarios for a single Board of Review:

- Example 1: Combined Board of Review has one member from Township A, one member from City B and one member from Township C
- Example 2: Combined Board of Review has two members from Township A and one member from City B
- Example 3: Combined Board of Review has one member from City B, one member from Township C and one member that is not a taxpayer of any of the combined local units

The combined Board of Review must also follow these requirements:

- Members appointed to the Combined Board of Review shall serve for terms of 2 years beginning at noon on January 1 of each odd-numbered year.
- A member of the township board is not eligible to serve on the board or to fill any vacancy. A spouse, mother, father, sister, brother, son, or daughter, including an adopted child, of the assessor is not eligible to serve on the board or to fill any vacancy.
- At least 2 members of a 3-member board of review shall be present to conduct any business or hearings of the Combined Board of Review.
- If 3, 6, or 9 electors are appointed, the membership of the Combined Board of Review must be divided into Board of Review committees consisting of 3 members each.
- Not more than 2 alternate members may be appointed for the same term as regular members of the Combined Board of Review.