

SEA 270: Important Changes Affecting Township Consolidation in Indiana

By [Baker Tilly](#)

Understanding the New Rules for Township Mergers and Reorganizations [Senate Enrolled Act \(SEA\) 270](#) introduces new requirements for township consolidation and reorganization across Indiana. The legislation is designed to adjust township structures to better meet community needs, promote more efficient local governance, streamline local government operations, reduce administrative inefficiencies, and improve service delivery for residents.

For township and county leaders, these changes may require significant planning and coordination over the next several years. Because restructuring local government operations can take significant time, early planning and coordination with neighboring townships and municipalities is strongly recommended.

Which Townships are Affected by SEA 270?

SEA 270 primarily impacts designated townships. A designated township is one that receives four or more points under the state's evaluation system, which assesses factors related to governance and administrative structure.

These changes do not apply to:

- Townships located in a county with a consolidated city (such as Marion County), or
- Townships that have already begun consolidation with another township or governmental unit by June 30, 2027.

New Requirements

Designated townships must take one of two actions:

1. Merge with Another Township

Designated townships may be required to merge with another township. Under the law, the merger must include at least one township with fewer than four points, known as a recipient township. This structure is intended to balance administrative responsibilities and resources between the merged entities.

2. Reorganize with a Municipality

A designated township may reorganize with a municipality instead of merging if:

- 80% or more of the township's boundaries coincide with a municipality, and
- At least 51% of the township population lives within the municipality's corporate limits.

In these cases, township functions may be reorganized into the municipal government structure.

Key Deadline for Township Consolidation

All township mergers required under SEA 270 must take effect no later than Jan. 1, 2029.

After mergers or reorganization is finalized, each county must retain at least two townships.

What SEA 270 Means for Township, Municipal, and County Leaders

The new law may affect multiple aspects of local government operations, including:

- Township governance structures
- Elected offices, staffing and administrative structure
- Financial management and property tax administration
- Service delivery such as fire protection and emergency services
- Township assistance programs
- Intergovernmental agreements

Proactive planning can help townships evaluate options, maintain service continuity, and ensure a smooth transition if consolidation is required. Waiting until the deadline approaches could limit your options and negotiating position.

Recommended Next Steps for Townships

Townships and counties should consider:

- Confirming their SEA 270 designation status
- Reviewing township boundaries and population data
- Identifying potential merger or reorganization partners
- Assessing financial and operational impacts
- Consulting legal and advisory professionals to evaluate compliance strategies
- Communicating with municipal and community stakeholders early

Taking these steps now can help townships maintain flexibility and avoid last-minute decisions as the 2029 deadline approaches.

Need Help Navigating SEA 270?

Understanding how SEA 270 applies to your township — and identifying the most strategic path forward — requires careful analysis. [Contact us](#) to discuss how SEA 270 affects your community and what steps you should take next.



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