

**AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE REMOVAL OF  
DISTRUPTIVE MEETING ATTENDEES PURSUANT TO I.C. 5-14-1.5-3.3  
AND ADOPTING REASONABLE RULES AND POLICIES**

Ordinance No. 14 of 2025

**Recitals**

**WHEREAS**, the County Council for Starke County, Indiana (the “**Council**”), is responsible for the performance of various fiscal responsibilities for Starke County, Indiana (the “**County**”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Council believes that proper order and decorum are necessary for the proper and effective conduct of all attendees at any public meeting, in order to effectuate the business of the Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council wishes to formally establish and set forth reasonable rules and policies for the governing of the conduct of all meetings open to the public pursuant to Ind. Code § 5-14-1.5-3.3; and

**WHEREAS**, these rules and policies may be modified, from time to time, by the Council, so long as they are properly posted in a visible area at the entrance of the meeting location, and/or if oral public comment is taken, an announcement is made informing the public of the rules and policies as set forth herein.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council of Starke County, Indiana, that the following Ordinance Providing for the Removal of Disruptive Meeting Attendees Pursuant to I.C. 5-14-1.5-3.3 and Adopting Reasonable Rules and Policies, is hereby adopted as follows:

**Section I.**  
**Establishment**

1. The Recitals are incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this Ordinance.

2. **Enabling Statute.** This Ordinance shall be construed in accordance with Ind. Code § 5-14-1.5-3.3 and Ind. Code § 34-13-3-3-(a), and any conflict existing thereby shall be resolved in favor of these enumerated statutes. The Council adopts this Ordinance for the purposes of the effective operation of County government and in order to facilitate efficient and respectful meetings, while still allowing for public comment, if applicable.

3. **Rules of Behavior Regarding Public Meetings.** Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part of and incorporated into this Ordinance by reference, shall be the Rules of Behavior Regarding Public Meetings. For purposes of Ind. Code § 5-14-1.5-3.3(f), Exhibit A shall be the “rules and policies” required to be posted at the entrance to the meeting location. These rules and behaviors may be modified and adjusted, from time to time, upon a majority vote by the Council.

Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to prevent the Council from adopting (by majority vote) special rules and policies for any specific meeting, so long as the public is made aware of the new rules and policies at the outset of the meeting and prior to any public comment, if applicable.

**Section II.**  
Definitions

1. As used in this Ordinance, “attendee” means a member of the public who is physically present at a meeting of the County Council.
2. As used in this Ordinance, “meeting” shall mean any public meeting, public hearing, or any other meeting where the public may attend and is subject to the Indiana Open Door Law.

**Section III.**  
Effective Date

1. **Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall be established as of the date of passage of this Ordinance, and shall be of perpetual existence, or until this Ordinance is duly repealed.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2025,  
upon 2/3 vote of the Council.

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL OF STARKE COUNTY, INDIANA**

APPROVED:

OPPOSED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Todd Leinbach, President

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Todd Leinbach, President

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Norman “Bruce” Bennett, Member

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Norman “Bruce” Bennett, Member

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Dave Pearman, Member

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Dave Pearman, Member

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Howard Bailey, Member

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Howard Bailey, Member

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Bill Crase, Member

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Bill Crase, Member

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Kay Gudeman, Member

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Kay Gudeman, Member

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Cassandra Hine, Member

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Cassandra Hine, Member

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michaelene Houston, Auditor  
Starke County, Indiana

## Exhibit A

### **Rules of Behavior Regarding Public Meetings for the Starke County Council.**

The members of the County Council ("Council") desire to foster open and honest discussions during public meetings and as such have adopted the following Rules of Behavior Regarding their Meetings:

1. Individuals presenting items to the Council shall address their responses to the Council and shall not answer or direct questions to or from the public unless that member of the public is recognized by the presiding officer and asked to speak.
2. No individual shall speak unless recognized by the presiding officer or a member of Council - This shall include agenda and non-agenda items.
3. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated and shall be grounds for immediate removal, notwithstanding Section 9 of these Rules of Behavior.
4. No one shall impugn the character of any other individual.
5. Outbursts and talking over individuals during their presentation or comment will not be tolerated.
6. Public Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person, unless otherwise stipulated by the presiding officer prior to acceptance of public comment(s).
7. No one may grant their time or any additional time to another citizen.
8. The Council may or may not choose to respond to all citizens comments and concerns during a meeting or any time thereafter.
9. If any person(s) violates these Rules of Behavior the presiding officer shall halt the meeting and instruct the violator that their conduct violates the Rules of Behavior. If a person commits a second violation of these rules the presiding officer shall halt the meeting and instruct the violator that their conduct violates these rules, and any further violations will lead to their immediate removal from the meeting. If the person violates these rules a third time they shall be asked to leave the meeting, immediately and will not be allowed back into the meeting. If the person does not leave the meeting, immediately, the presiding officer shall ask a security officer attending the meeting to escort the person out of the meeting.
10. Nothing in these Rules of Behavior shall be construed or prevent a law enforcement or other security officer from immediately removing an attendee from a meeting if: (i) removal of the attendee is necessary to maintain order or ensure the safety of another person; (2) the attendee commits a criminal offense; or (3) the attendee violates the rules or policies governing the conduct of the meeting as adopted by the Council.