

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-01

**HELLAM TOWNSHIP
YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

AN ORDINANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR FIREARM TARGET PRACTICE AREAS

§ 490-117-1 Purpose.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide for the safety of all persons and the protection of all property in Hellam Township with respect to firearm target practice and to foster an environment where firearm users are employing the best practices for resident safety. For purposes of this Ordinance, the term “firearm” shall include (a) any “firearm” as defined by the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act (18 Pa.C.S. 6101 et seq., and (b) any muzzle-loaded rifle or other weapon and any weapon, long-barreled or otherwise, that discharges a bullet or other projectile using ignited black powder.

§ 490-117-2 Backstops.

- A. All target practice areas or places where firearms are used for target practice shall have a proper backstop, where fired rounds are prevented from passing more than ten feet beyond the target, constructed or placed as hereinafter set forth.
- B. A natural hillside or a man-made earthen berm may be used as a backstop. Trees or wooded areas may not be used as a backstop, as a projectile can find its way through trees and can be deflected beyond the target range.
- C. If a hillside or man-made earthen berm is not present, a barrier must be constructed and deployed in accordance with the following provisions before an area may be used as a target practice area.
 - (1) The backstop shall have a minimum height of six feet and a minimum width of six feet.
 - (2) The backstop shall be made of any material that will stop fired bullets, including dirt, sand, or milled wood. The backstop cannot be made of a material that would cause a bullet to ricochet, such as tires, stones, logs or cement. Steel may be used, but only if the steel backstop is angled downward at a forty-five-degree angle so that any ricochet will cause the bullet to deflect straight down into the ground.
 - (3) The backstop must be of sufficient depth to stop any projectile that may be used at the target practice area or target practice area. The necessary depth will be dependent on the material used for the backstop, with a minimum depth of four feet if dirt, sand, or wood is used.

§ 490-117-3 Targets.

- A. Targets must be placed no less than two feet and no more than five feet off the ground. The top of the backstop must be at least four feet above the target. Therefore, if a target is placed five feet off the ground, the backstop must have a height of at least nine feet.
- B. Targets can be made from any material that will allow the bullet to penetrate in or through the material.
- C. Target must be placed directly in front of and centered with the backstop.

§ 490-117-4 **Location.**

- A. Target shooting is permitted on property owned by the shooter and at formally organized gun clubs, provided the location meets the requirements for backstops and targets, as set forth above, and the setback requirements set forth below. Invited guests of the property owner are also allowed to shoot, provided the same requirements are met.
- B. The target shall be set at a clear distance from any residential building, human work area, or domesticated animal ranging area.
- C. Both the target and firing stand must be set back at least 50 feet from the property line in any direction.
- D. The firing stand shall not be within any structure/residence.

§ 490-117-5 **Shooter Conduct.**

- A. At all times when a target practice area is active, there must be at least one responsible adult present.
- B. At no time shall any shooter under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance be permitted on an active target practice area/target practice area. Consumption of either alcohol or a controlled substance while engaged at a target practice area/target practice area is prohibited.
- C. All firearms must be clear of ammunition before shooters retrieve their targets. No person shall be permitted to enter the area between the shooting stand and targets while any person has a loaded firearm.
- D. No loaded firearm shall ever be pointed in any direction except toward the ground or toward a target protected by a backstop.
- E. No person shall fire at any object except for the target(s) protected by the barrier(s).
- F. All persons shooting a firearm shall make sure that their target is clear, including behind and beside the target, before discharging a firearm.
- G. Each shooter must be competent to load, unload, fire and clean his/her weapon.
- H. All individuals participating or observing target practice in a target practice area shall wear protective hearing and eye gear.
- I. Target practice shooting may only be conducted ½ hour after sunrise and must be concluded ½ hour before sunset.

§ 490-117-6 **Exceptions.**

The following acts shall not constitute a violation of this chapter:

- A. The discharge of a firearm by a law enforcement officer or military personnel acting within the line of duty, including, but not limited to, active operations, training exercises, and ceremonies.
- B. The discharge of a firearm in self-defense as legally permitted pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- C. The discharge of a firearm to the extent it is regulated by the Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code.

§ 490-117-7 **Interpretation of provisions.**

- A. Nothing in this chapter shall be read or interpreted to conflict with the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act.
- B. Nothing in this chapter shall be read as regulating the lawful ownership, possession, transfer, or transportation of firearms, ammunition, or ammunition components when carried or transported for purposes not prohibited by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- C. Each discharge of a firearm in violation of the provisions of this Ordinance shall constitute a separate violation hereunder.

§ 490-117-8 **Violations and Criminal Penalties.**

Any person who violates any provision of this Ordinance commits a summary offense and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than \$600 nor more than \$1,000 for each separate offense, and, in default of the payment of such fine, may be sentenced to imprisonment for 90 days for each separate offense. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be enforced by (a) the Hellam Township Police Department or (b) by employees of the Township authorized to conduct inspections or investigations, who, for purposes of this Ordinance, are hereby declared to be law enforcement officers authorized to issue or file citations for summary violations under this Ordinance, and the Hellam Township Police Department and the Board of Supervisors are each hereby authorized to prosecute these offenses. For purposes of this section, a summary offense may be prosecuted before any District Justice with jurisdiction over Hellam Township. There is no accelerated rehabilitative disposition authorized for a summary offense.

ENACTED and ORDAINED by the Board of Supervisors of Hellam Township, York County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session assembled, this ___ day of ___, 20__.

TOWNSHIP OF HELLAM

Attest:

Board of Supervisors

Corina Mann, Secretary

David Cox, Chairman