

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD, NJ
ORDINANCE NO. 3-2024**

**AMENDING THE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ESTABLISH A NEW
CHAPTER 46, ENTITLED “MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS”, AND
ESTABLISHING AND IDENTIFYING RESTRICTED AREAS TO
SAFEGUARD RECORDS AND PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, City of Northfield officials and employees are entrusted with the responsibility to maintain and safeguard public records that consist of or contain information deemed confidential pursuant to applicable federal, State or local law; and

WHEREAS, to ensure compliance with such laws, including the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (“OPRA”) set forth at N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. and its statutorily defined responsibilities, the maintenance and custody of specific records are required; and

WHEREAS, municipal officials assigned this responsibility include, but are not limited to the Municipal Clerk, Police Chief, Chief Financial Officer, Finance and Facilities Supervisor, Payroll Specialist, Deputy Municipal Clerk, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor, Construction Code Officials, Technical Assistant, Superintendent of Public Works, Chief and or Captain of the Fire Department, and Business Administrator; and

WHEREAS, due to this responsibility to maintain and safeguard records, reports, documents and information in municipal offices, records may not be available for immediate public viewing since they may contain personal information, phone numbers, social security numbers, medical data, and other confidential and protected information; and

WHEREAS, securing these records maintains the integrity of this information and when an OPRA request is received, and it is determined that a requestor is entitled to the records, the records can be released individually and redacted as required by law; and

WHEREAS, securing and keeping these records confidential will support a safe workplace while balancing the right of public access in City Hall; and

WHEREAS, we cannot expect our municipal employees to physically intervene to protect a record, or other City assets or personal belongings, and creating restricted secure areas with clear signage will help deter persons from collecting records that they are not entitled to receive without following the applicable legal process required by law.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Common Council

of the City of Northfield, County of Atlantic and State of New Jersey as follows:

SECTION 1. Part 1: Administrative Legislation, of the Code of the City of Northfield, is hereby amended to establish Chapter 46 entitled “Municipal Buildings”, to read as follows in its entirety:

Chapter 46 Municipal Buildings

§46-1 Restricted Areas Established to Safeguard Records and Property

A. Purpose. While the general public may be permitted to access Municipal buildings during regular business hours, the intent of this Chapter is to safeguard public records that may contain confidential or protected information or may be exempt from disclosure under the Open Public Records Act or other applicable laws, as well as other City assets, and personal belongings, and to ensure a safe workplace by restricting access to workstations and work areas where such records, assets and personal belongings are maintained.

B. Restricted Areas. Certain municipal office areas in City Hall, the Fire Department and the Police Department, all located at 1600 Shore Road, and the Department of Public Works offices, located at 775 West Mill Road, Northfield NJ, have been secured and are closed to the public for the purposes set forth in this section, including protecting documents, digital data and other written, copied or printed materials that may contain confidential information that is protected by the federal, State or local laws, as well as other City assets and personal belongings. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following locations:

- Office of the Mayor
- Finance Office
- Municipal Clerk’s Office
- Construction/Building Department
- Mail & Supply Rooms
- Server Room
- Tax Assessor Office
- Tax Collector Office
- Vault and Storage Areas
- Utility Closets
- Ambulance Quarters
- Department of Public Works
- Fire Department Administration Office
- Police Department (except for lobby area)

§46-2 Signage. The City of Northfield shall post signage outside of restricted areas and offices that read, “Authorized Personnel Only” or “Private” or such other language, in the sole and absolute discretion of the City of Northfield, as needed to achieve the level of safety and security needed to permit the City of

Northfield to maintain and safeguard public records or other City assets or personal belongings that consist of or contain information deemed confidential or protected pursuant to any federal, State or local law.

§46-3 Violations. Any unauthorized person who violates any provision of this chapter shall be subject to either an ordinance violation up to the maximum penalties provided in Part 1, General Legislation, Chapter 1, General Provisions, Article II, General Penalty, of this Code at the discretion of the municipal court judge, or criminal prosecution under N.J.S.A. 2C-18-3.

SECTION 2. If any portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent portion, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

SECTION 3. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are repealed as to such inconsistencies.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage and publication in the manner according to law.

Mary Canesi, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Erland Chau
Mayor

The above Ordinance was passed on first reading at a Regular Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Northfield, New Jersey on the 20th day of February 2024, and will be taken up for a second reading, public hearing, and final passage at a meeting of said council held on the 12th day of March 2024, in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, New Jersey.

First Reading: February 20, 2024
Publication: February 27, 2024
Final Reading: March 12, 2024
Publication: March 19, 2024