COUNTY OFFICIALS CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM

THE UNIVERSITY *of* TENNESSEE **ur**

COUNTY TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE SERVICE

COUNTY OFFICIALS CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM

The COCTP is sponsored by the University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service in cooperation with the Tennessee County Services Association and the County Officials Association of Tennessee

What is COCTP?

The County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP) is a comprehensive training program administered by the University of Tennessee (UT) County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS).

The COCTP program is designed to provide specialized, technical and managerial training to elected officials and their employees in order to help them run their office more effectively. It also offers a comprehensive knowledge of the inner workings of county government. CTAS believes that a broader understanding of the mechanics of county government will afford COCTP graduates a better knowledge of the county as an entity, which will help them to better serve their constituency. Graduates of the COCTP will obtain a thorough understanding of county government and be designated with the title of Certified Public Administrator.

What are the program benefits?

Earning a COCTP certification will prove invaluable to you professionally and personally. No other program in the nation provides the following to its county employees:

- A salary supplement for full-time elected officials (including Clerk and Masters)
- A comprehensive program with courses custom designed for the county government employee
- An occasion to truly network with innovative colleagues
- A chance to learn and use the latest approaches in county government
- An opportunity to significantly impact county government

COCTP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In order to fulfill the requirements of the COCTP you must complete the following:

CORE CLASSES
4 Courses (out of 10)

ELECTIVE CLASSES
40 credits

TENNESSEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW *Score of 70 or above*

EXIT EXAM
Score of 70 or above

CAPSTONE EVENT
3-day training program

CORE CLASSES

Core classes are each four-hour classroom instructed sessions. These job-specific, technical training courses aid county government officials in performing their jobs and efficiently administering county services. Efficient county government administration requires a thorough knowledge of county services, highly developed financial skills, and a keen awareness of the legal environment in which county officials work.

Participants must complete four of the 10 core classes.

Core classes include:
- **Audit**
- **Capital Budgeting**
- **Debt Management**
- **Ethics**
- **Financial Issues**
- **Legal Issues – for each Elected Office**
- **Operating Budget**
- **Personnel**
- **Purchasing**
- **Risk Management**

These courses are offered in East, Middle and West Tennessee.

COCTP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ELECTIVE CLASSES

These courses aid county government officials in better managing their staff and serving the public. Effective county administrators manage change, lead people, build coalitions, and are results driven. Therefore, many management and leadership courses are offered as electives. You can also take additional core classes as elective credits. You must earn 40 credits in this category in order to fulfill the elective component. Again, courses selected under this category are based on your need and/or desire.

These courses are offered in a classroom setting and online. All online classes are one credit.

TENNESSEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW

This is an online class using the CTAS electronic library, e-Li, to complete a 100-question test. This class provides you with a broad understanding of county government in Tennessee. You must receive a score of 70 percent or higher to receive credit for this course.

EXIT EXAM

The exit exam tests your understanding of county government and services, legal issues, and county finances. After all class requirements are met, participants will be required to pass a 50-question closed book exam with a score of at least 70 percent. The questions for the exit exam are directly related to information covered in the Tennessee County Government Overview course.

CAPSTONE EVENT

After passing the exit exam, participants are invited to attend the Capstone Event, a three-day training program. This is an intensive and highly personalized event that focuses on working together with other county officials from across the state. The purpose of the Capstone Event is to provide you the opportunity to demonstrate the leadership and management skills gained through participation in the COCTP. In order to participate in the Capstone Event participants must successfully complete the core and elective classes, the Tennessee County Government Overview course and pass the exit exam. At the conclusion of the three-day event, you will be designated by the University of Tennessee as a **Certified Public Administrator.**

Re-certification

The final component of the COCTP is certification renewal. In order to retain the designation of Certified Public Administrator, you are required to complete 16 hours of continuing education each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). There is a $100 per year recertification fee due on September 1 of each year. The fee is valid for one year. There are several ways you can earn the required 16 hours:

- **Attend a CTAS Renewal Conference - offered regionally in Jackson, Knoxville and Nashville**
- **Attend classroom training provided by CTAS throughout the year**
- **Take training through other sources including national, state, local, and professional associations.**
- **Take training offered at your county association meetings**
- **Take training sessions offered by private sector organizations**
- **Take online training**

Rollover Hours

Rollover hours are designed to allow COCTP participants to use the extra hours earned in the previous fiscal year to supplement hours in the current fiscal year. If you have earned more than the 16 required hours in the previous year, the additional hours can be rolled into the current fiscal year up to 8 hours. The rollover period is from February 15th – May 15th, and can be reported on the CTAS training webpage.

FEE STRUCTURE

$300 Enrollment Fee
This fee is paid to enroll in the COCTP. There is an Enrollment Invoice on the CTAS Training webpage www.ctas.tennessee.edu. Select Training and it is located under the Forms section.

$300 Capstone Fee
This is a one-time fee paid to attend the Capstone Event. You will receive a letter from CTAS notifying you of your eligibility, which will include the invoice for the event.

$100 Recertification Fee
This fee is assessed on a yearly basis to all officials and employees who obtain the Certified Public Administrator designation. It is valid for one year and must be paid by September 1st of each year.

COCTP QUICK FACTS

Who can participate in the COCTP?

The COCTP was designed for elected and appointed county office holders. However, any county employee may attend COCTP training classes.

Do I have to pay a fee to attend COCTP classes?

No, a fee is not required of any county official or employee to attend COCTP classes. However, if you desire to pursue the designation of Certified Public Administrator, fees do apply.

How do I get a copy of my transcript?

The most effective method to view and/or print your transcript is from the CTAS website: www.ctas.tennessee.edu, select Training from the menu across the top of the page, then sign into the Solution Point Training Center and view transcript on the left menu. If you have not received a username and password, select register in the Solution Point Training Center and you will receive an email containing your username and password.

When does recertification begin and end?

Once you become a Certified Public Administrator, you must recertify by taking 16 hours of training every fiscal year, July 1- June 30.

Can I get recertification credit from training I receive from sources other than CTAS?

Yes. Recertification credit may be earned by taking other training programs. If you believe you have attended something that may count as recertification credit, go to the CTAS website at www.ctas.tennessee.edu, select the Training link from the main menu across the page and then select Recertification Form under forms at the left side of the page. Complete the information and fax it to CTAS at (615) 532-3659. Your request is approved unless you are notified by CTAS.

When am I eligible to go to the Capstone Event?

Participation in the Capstone Event is by invitation only. This invitation will be extended to you once you have met the following criteria:

1. **Completed 4 of 10 core classes**
2. **Completed 40 credits of elective classes**
3. **Completed the County Government Overview course**
4. **Passed the COCTP exit exam with a score of 70 percent or better.**
5. **Paid the Capstone fee**

When and where are the Capstone Events held?

Capstones are usually scheduled in the months of April, May and June. Capstones are held at Montgomery Bell State Park, but this is subject to change.

COCTP QUICK FACTS

How do I register to attend COCTP classes?

You may register for classes by logging into the Solution Point Training Center on the CTAS website at www.ctas.tennessee.edu and select Training from the menu across the page. In Solution Point click on the Register for a Class link at the top of the page. You will be able to view all available classroom and online classes. If you do not have a username and password, select register in the Solution Point Training Center and you will receive an email containing your username and password.

Do I have to complete all core classes before I complete elective classes or vice versa?

No, you may take core or elective classes in any order.

What happens to my certification if I fail to recertify?

Participants will be required to: Successfully complete the County Government Overview course, and earn the hours they lack for the prior recertification cycle(s), and earn the required 16 hours for the current recertification cycle by June 30.

What happens to my certification if I leave my elected office or government service?

Officials who leave office will be put into an inactive status. If they return to office they will be required to (1) pay the recertification fee, (2) successfully complete the 50 question COCTP exit exam, and (3) earn the 16 hours for the current recertification cycle by June 30. Officials will then be reinstated as Certified Public Administrators.

Does COCTP credit count toward a college degree?

No. Courses taken through COCTP will not count toward a degree at the University of Tennessee. Check with your local college to determine whether or not certificate credits count toward one of its degree-seeking programs.

Can I receive COCTP credit for academic courses or training that I have taken elsewhere?

No. College courses or training outside of COCTP will not be accepted. However these credits do apply for recertification credits, up to 8 hours.

Can I earn CEU credits for COCTP course work?

Yes, all courses offered in the COCTP curriculum are approved for CEU credit, unless specifically noted.

COCTP QUICK FACTS

If I receive a wait-listed registration confirmation for a class I want to attend, what should I do?

If your registration confirmation indicates that your status is wait-listed for a course, then we reached the seating capacity for that course at that particular location. Should space become available for that class CTAS will contact you. With the exception of certain courses offered at various conferences, most COCTP courses are offered at two or more sites across the state, feel free to register for the same course at another location.

If I have a conflict with a program date in my region, can I attend an open enrollment class outside of my region?

Yes, you are not limited to attending open enrollment classes in your region.

I took classes years ago but have been inactive in COCTP; does the previous credit I received still count toward certification?

Yes, if you paid the enrollment fee.

Do the training courses require you to pass a test to receive credit?

The core classes do require you to take a test and receive a score of 70 percent or better in order to receive credit.

When is testing done for the COCTP exit exam?

Testing for the COCTP exit exam is scheduled each year after January 1. Customers will receive a letter from CTAS informing them of the exam dates and locations.

PROGRAM TRACKING CHART

CATEGORY	REQUIREMENT	STATUS
CORE CLASSES	**4 of 10 core classes must be completed.** Core classes include: • Audit • Capital Budgeting • Debt Management • Ethics • Financial Issues • Legal Issues – for each Elected Office • Operating Budget • Personnel • Purchasing • Risk Management *All classroom sessions*	
ELECTIVE CLASSES	**40 credits must be completed in this category.** • **Classroom or online**	
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW	**Online course about county government operations using e-Li**	
EXIT EXAM	**50 questions with a score of 70% or above**	
CAPSTONE EVENT	**Attendance at the 3-day program**	

COCTP ENROLLMENT FORM

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

County: _____   Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

A $300 enrollment fee is required for all county officials who wish to obtain the designation of Certified Public Administrator (CPA) in the County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP). This is a one-time fee and is used to maintain the participant's training history and for course materials.

❑ Check enclosed *(make payable to the University of Tennessee)*

❑ Purchase order number *(attach purchase order)* _____

Mail this completed registration form and your payment to

>   The University of Tennessee
>   County Technical Assistance Service
>   Attention: COCTP
>   226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 400
>   Nashville, Tennessee 37219

If paying by purchase order, you may fax your registration form to (615) 532-3659.

For Title VI compliance, we ask for voluntary disclosure of the following information:

Gender: ❑ Male ❑ Female   Race: ❑ Caucasian ❑ African American ❑ Other *(please specify)* _____

❑ The University of Tennessee will seek to accommodate all persons with disabilities. If you require auxiliary aids, special services, or other accommodations, please check here. Someone from our office will contact you.

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