

Promoting better county government through direct assistance to county officials and their associations



Disclosures of Interest:

Due January 31, 2014

All elected local public officeholders and all candidates for a local public office are required under the Comprehensive Governmental Ethics Reform Act of 2006 to file a Statement of Disclosure of Interests (Form SS-8005) with the Tennessee Ethics Commission. This requirement also applies to officials who were appointed to fill a vacancy in an elected public office. It does not apply to office holders who are regularly appointed to their positions, such as appointed county highway superintendents or clerk and masters.

The deadline for current office holders is January 31. New candidates must file within 30 days of the qualifying deadline. Incumbents running for the same office are exempt from filing within 30 days of the qualifying deadline, according to Drew Rawlins, executive director of the state Bureau of Ethics & Campaign Finance.

Where Should the Statement Be Filed?:

Electronic filing: To file electronically for the first time, go to <https://apps.tn.gov/conflict/>, click on "Sign Up," and follow directions to set up a TN.GOV account with your unique authorization code. After setting up your TN.GOV account, go to <https://apps.tn.gov/conflict/> and log in as a returning user to file your Statement of Interests. If you have previously filed electronically, go to https://apps.tn.gov/conflict and log in to file your report. If you do not remember your Username and Password, call 615-313-0300, and press "1" for technical support to retrieve that information.

Paper Filing: To file on paper, go to www.tn.gov/sos/tec/forms/ss-8005.pdf to print the form and instructions. Complete your Statement in its entirety. Mail the completed form to the Tennessee Ethics Commission, 404 James Robertson Parkway, Suite 104, Nashville, TN 37243. Your Statement of Interests is not considered filed until received by the Commission.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the Commission's office at: (615) 741-7959 or e-mail at ethics.counsel@tn.gov.

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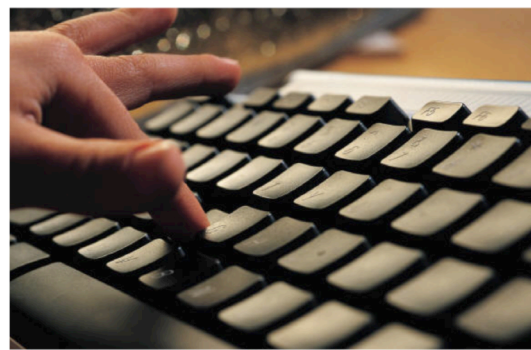
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Workers' Compensation Reform Act

Bonnie Jones, human resources consultant at the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, presented the following article in the MTAS Municipal E-News (January 2014, Issue 55).

Effective July 2014, Tennessee's new Workers' Compensation Reform Act goes into effect. The new law is considered favorable to employers and involves a more efficient claims resolution process and lower administrative costs, and it also establishes a panel of judges that will take cases out of the crowded courts. The reform comes as a response to complaints with the current system, increased interest in private employers opting out, and perceptions of complications, red tape, and structure of workers' compensation benefits. Some say the current process does not provide a framework to efficiently get employees back to work in a timely manner.



For employees, they will see faster treatment, more expeditious handling of disputes and claims, and hopefully a faster return to work. The new law changes the definition of an injury and puts additional requirements on physicians' being sure there is a reasonable degree of medical certainty - as opposed to speculation or possibility - that the injury is Workers' Compensation qualified.

In the new legislation only one panel of physicians is required, and each provider must be willing to treat workers' compensation patients. The new division can enforce penalties for panels that are improper and are not following rules of panel development. Another change for employers is that cities will now be allowed to communicate with treating physicians, whereas, right now there is a signed waiver required before this can occur.

For more information about this reform, visit http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/wc_2013_ReformAct.shtml.



Henry County

County Seat: Paris

Population: 31,876

Field Consultant:

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Do you know what a barrage balloon is? During World War II, barrage balloons tethered with metal cables were used in London to defend against low-level aircraft attack by damaging the aircraft on collision with the cables. We didn't end up using barrage balloons much in this country, but the U. S. Army built an entire barrage balloon training center in Henry County, Tennessee. It was called Camp Tyson, and the base was built from scratch in only a matter of months by as many as 8,000 construction workers.

After the war Camp Tyson was shut down. A business called the H. C. Spinks Clay Co. bought most of the base, and it has mined clay there since. Clay dug out of the ground on the old site of Camp Tyson is used for ceramics, rubber, sealant, and many other things.

For more information, visit

<http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org>

PUBLIC CHAPTERS EFFECTIVE 1/1/2014

There were several laws passed in 2013 with an effective date of January 1, 2014, that may be of interest to county officials. Summaries of these acts can be found on the [General Assembly's website](#).

The full text of these acts (and all other acts passed by the General Assembly since 1997) are available on the [Secretary of State's website](#).



COUNTY GOVERNMENT DAY 2014

February 11-12, 2014

Doubletree Hotel Nashville Downtown

(Note: new location!)

315 4th Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37219-1693

Phone: 615-244-8200



County Government Day is approaching fast and it has never been more important to be involved. The Tennessee General Assembly goes into session on January 14 with County Government Day falling on February 11 & 12. It is critical for county officials to let legislators know how certain bills affect local governments and County Government Day is a chance to do that.

This year will be slightly different because of a location change. **County Government Day will take place at the Doubletree Hotel Nashville Downtown.** As in past years, the first day of County Government Day will be board meetings and memberships meetings of the various affiliate associations. The second day is the COAT/TCSA Breakfast and General Session. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House have been invited to speak so it is important they know county officials are involved. Also the County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) will provide a training opportunity after the breakfast titled, "Advocacy & The Legislature."

To register, please print the document below and fax it to 615-532-3769 or scan and email to tcsa.robertson@tncounties.org. The agenda has not been finalized but will be sent as soon as it becomes available.

Upcoming Events

CTAS Training | Events Calendar

February 11-12 – County Government Day – (Doubletree Hotel Nashville Downtown)

February 18, 19, 20, 25, 27 – County Financial Issues (Various locations)

March 4, 5, 11, 12 – Writing Quality Job Descriptions (Various locations)

County Mayor Duties and Responsibilities under T.C.A. §67-5-2507

The role of the county mayor when the county purchases land at a tax sale was discussed at the December meeting of the Association of County Mayors. The following list outlines the mayor's duties:

Delinquent Tax Sale - County as Purchaser

- If the county purchases land at a tax sale, the county mayor takes charge of it and, during the statutory one-year redemption period, must preserve the land from waste.
- At the end of the redemption period, the county mayor is to arrange the sale of the land as expeditiously and advantageously as possible, working with a committee of four county commissioners to place a fair price on each tract of land.
- The land must be sold to the party making the highest and best offer, but in no event shall any tract of land be sold for an amount less than the total amount of the taxes, penalty, cost and interest.
- If it appears that it is impossible to sell any tract of land for this amount, the county legislative body may grant permission to offer the land for sale at some amount to be fixed by the county legislative body.
- Whenever the sale of a tract of land is arranged by the county mayor, the deed cannot be executed and the sale does not become final until 10 days after the publication in a newspaper published in the county of a notice of the proposed sale, the name of the purchaser and the terms, conditions and price.
- If during the 10 days anyone increases the offer made for the land by 10 percent or more, the party making the first offer must be notified and a day fixed when both parties can appear and make offers.
- The tract of land must be sold to the party making the highest and best offer.

For more information or questions, please contact your County Government Consultant or CTAS directly at 615-532-3555.



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County Officials E-News is published monthly to bring important information to county officials. For any questions or comments about the newsletter, please send Liz Gossett, CTAS E-Media & Information Specialist, an email at liz.gossett@tennessee.edu.