



# COUNTY OFFICIALS E-NEWS

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

**AUGUST 2016 Volume 83**

## **EEOC Task Force on Harassment in the Workplace Issues Final Report**

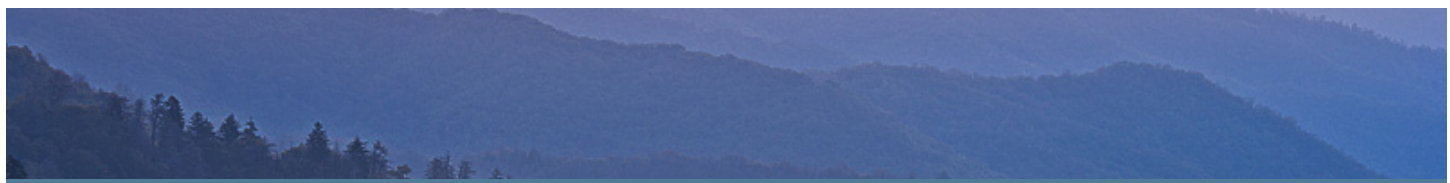
In 2015, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) created the Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace. The focus of the task force was on understanding and preventing workplace harassment. The task force issued its final report on June 20, 2016.

The task force found that even though it has been 30 years since the U.S. Supreme Court first held that workplace harassment is an actionable form of discrimination under Title VII, workplace harassment remains a persistent problem. Almost one-third of the approximately 90,000 charges received by the EEOC in 2015 included workplace harassment, including harassment based on sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and pregnancy), race, disability, age, national origin, color, and religion. Workplace harassment often goes unreported. Employers have compelling business reasons to stop and prevent harassment, in the form of avoidance of legal costs as well as intangible costs in the form of decreased productivity and increased turnover. Last year, the EEOC recovered \$164.5 million for workers alleging harassment.

How can employers prevent harassment in the workplace? The task force found that it takes leadership and accountability to create and foster a workplace culture in which harassment is not tolerated. While training is essential, the task force noted that the training done over the last 30 years has often been ineffective as a prevention tool because it is too focused on avoidance of liability, and therefore the training must change. The report discusses several new models for training that show promise, including bystander intervention training and workplace civility training.

The final report includes recommendations and helpful tools to aid in (1) designing effective policies; (2) developing training; (3) implementing complaint, reporting and investigative procedures; (4) creating an organizational culture where harassment is not tolerated; (5) ensuring that employees are held accountable; and (5) assessing workplace risk factors for harassment.

The full report can be viewed here: [https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task\\_force/harassment/upload/report.pdf](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/upload/report.pdf)



### *In This Issue...*

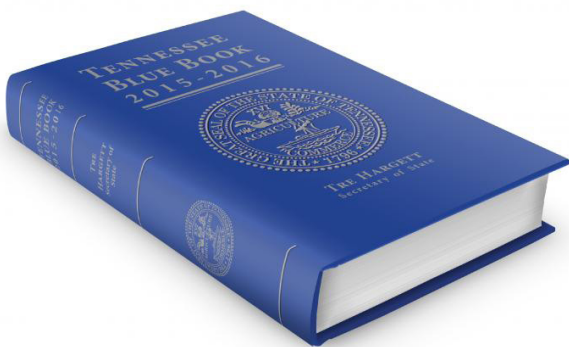
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## Reminder: August 31st Budget Deadline is Quickly Approaching

For those counties that have not yet passed a budget for fiscal year 2016-17, please be aware there is a new budget deadline effective this year. Under Public Chapter 1080, effective May 20, 2016, if the county legislative body and the county school board fail to agree on an education budget by August 31st, then an education budget will be set by operation of law. The budget which will go into effect by law will be equal to the minimum budget required to comply with the local match and maintenance of effort provisions of the BEP.

If this occurs in a county for three consecutive years, the education budget for the third year will include a three percent increase in the required local funding amount for schools unless the LEA failed to comply with the applicable budgetary timeline.

The August 31st deadline applies to counties operating under the General Law, the County Budgeting Law of 1957, the County Financial Management System of 1981 and the Local Option Budgeting Law of 1993. There is, however, an exemption for Shelby, Davidson, Knox and Hamilton counties. Public Chapter 1080 made other revisions to the budget laws, including enacting a budget timeline, which will go into effect on January 1, 2017. CTAS will provide further information on those changes in the coming weeks.



### Did you know the Tennessee Blue Book is available online?

Check it out on the Secretary of State's website here:

<http://sos.tn.gov/products/division-publications/2015-2016-tennessee-blue-book>

## County Spotlight Knox County



**County Seat: Knoxville**

**Population: 432,2261**

**County Government Consultant:  
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James White, a Revolutionary War veteran, purchased approximately 5,000 acres and built White's Fort between the location where two creeks, First and Second, meet the Tennessee River. At the time, this settlement was built on land claimed by the Cherokee nation.

William Blount was appointed by President George Washington to be governor of Tennessee in 1790. In the summer of 1791, Blount negotiated the Treaty of Holston with a group of Cherokee chiefs at White's Fort. Blount later renamed White's Fort to Knoxville. When Tennessee became a state in 1796, Knoxville became the first state capital.

The University of Tennessee began in 1794 in Knox County as Blount College. UT's early history included being one of the first co-educational institutions, having no sports teams, and teaching the "classics" such as Latin, Greek, logic, and philosophy.

For more information, please visit:

[www.tnhistoryforkids.org](http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org)



### Upcoming Training Opportunities

Date/Time	Title	Location
August 22-23	County Officials Orientation Program for Assessors and Highway Officials	Franklin – Drury Plaza Hotel
September 13 8:30am-12:30pm EDT	Environmental Programs from the County Perspective	Johnson City – Carnegie Hotel
September 14 8:30am-12:30pm EDT	Environmental Programs from the County Perspective	Knoxville – Institute for Public Service
September 14-16	Court Clerks Conference	Montgomery Bell State Park
September 20 8:30am-12:30pm CDT	Environmental Programs from the County Perspective	Jackson – Jackson Energy Authority
September 21 8:30am-12:30pm CDT	Environmental Programs from the County Perspective	Murfreesboro – Doubletree Hotel
October 12-14	TCSA Fall Conference & Trade Show	Nashville – Opryland Resort and Conference Center

Register online at [CTAS Training](#).

**CTAS** County Technical Assistance Service  
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County Officials E-News is published every month 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](mailto:liz.gossett@tennessee.edu).