



# COUNTY OFFICIALS E-NEWS

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

October 2016 | Volume 85

## CTAS Welcomes Joe Griffin New Property Assessment Consultant



Joe Griffin is joining CTAS on October 24th to become one of our two new Property Assessment Consultants. Joe comes to us with over 18 years of property assessment experience. Joe has worked for the Metro Nashville Davidson County Property Assessor’s office for three years where he is currently the Assessments Manager. Prior to working for Davidson County, Joe worked as a manager for the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury’s Division of Property Assessments. He earned the designation of Tennessee Master Assessor in 2005, and he received the TNAAO Award of Excellence in 2011. In 2012, he was awarded the IAAO designation of Assessment Administration Specialist. Joe earned his Bachelor of Business Arts in Business Management with a minor in General Business/Marketing from Austin Peay in 1993.

Joe will fill the first of two Property Assessment Consultant positions at CTAS ([Apply here!](#)). Once the second position has been filled, Joe will be covering the western half of the state. We will provide a new map of the Property Assessment Consultant areas after we have filled the second position.

We hope you will join us in welcoming Joe. Keep an eye on your email and our website for the new Property Assessment Consultant service area map.

## IRS Releases Draft Affordable Care Act Forms for 2016

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has released draft versions of the Affordable Care Act reporting forms for 2016. The forms and instructions are located at <http://www.irs.gov/draftforms>.



The IRS is also accepting suggestions on how to make the reporting process more user friendly. Those comments can be submitted to the IRS on the “Comment on Tax Forms and Publications” page at <http://www.irs.gov>.

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## FEMA Announces Assistance to Firefighter Grant Funding

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recently released information about FY 2016 Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) Funding.

The FY 2016 AFG open application period: **8AM ET OCTOBER 11 through 5PM ET NOVEMBER 18**

- [FY 2016 Application Workshop Schedule](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Application Guidance Materials](#)



The following AFG related documents are now available:

- [FY 2016 Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Grant Writing Workshop](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Grant Application Get Ready Guide](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Narrative Get Ready Guide](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Self-Evaluation - Operations and Safety](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Self-Evaluation - Vehicle Acquisition](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Application Checklist](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG Cost Share Calculator](#)
- [FY 2016 AFG FAQs](#)

### Upcoming Training Opportunities

**All classes 8:30 am - 12:30 pm Local Time**

#### County Government Disaster Preparedness & Recovery

- October 25 - Jackson, Jackson Energy Authority
- October 26 - Murfreesboro, DoubleTree Hotel
- November 15 - Johnson City, Carnegie Hotel
- November 16 - Knoxville, UT Conference Center *\*Parking fee covered for Locust Street Garage*

#### Ethics

- October 20 - Jackson-Madison County Regional Health

#### C.O.A.T. Conference Murfreesboro Embassy

- November 9 - November 11 - Murfreesboro Embassy Suites

#### COCTP Annual Renewal

November 30 - December 2 - Franklin Drury Plaza Hotel

**REGISTRATION WILL OPEN 10/17/16**

**Recertification Credit Only!**



### TRAINING CALENDAR

CTAS Training | [ctas.training@tennessee.edu](mailto:ctas.training@tennessee.edu)  
(615) 532-3555 Office | (615) 523-2033 Fax

## County Spotlight Crockett County



**County Seat: Alamo**  
**Population: 14,586**  
**County Government Consultant:**  
**Mike Galey**  
[mike.galey@tennessee.edu](mailto:mike.galey@tennessee.edu)

Crockett County is named after one of the most famous Tennesseans: Davy Crockett. He was an American folk hero, frontiersman, soldier, and politician. Davy Crockett was the U.S. House Representative for Tennessee's 12th district from 1833-1835. Crockett County was formed 35 years after his death in the Battle of Alamo, an event in the Texas Revolution in 1836.

In 1847, Alamo, the county seat of Crockett County, was known as Cageville. Cageville's first merchant serves as its namesake: Licurgus Cage. By 1845 the town had been laid out, and in 1869 the name Alamo replaced Cageville as a memorial to Davy Crockett. Alamo was incorporated in 1911.

In 1858-59 the Memphis, Clarksville and Louisville Railroad built a line through the eastern half of what later became Crockett County. The presence of the tracks led to the creation of the new towns of Gasden, Fruitvale, and Bells. After the Louisville and Nashville Railroad assumed control of the earlier line in the mid-1870s, freight and passenger trains hummed through Crockett County on a daily basis.

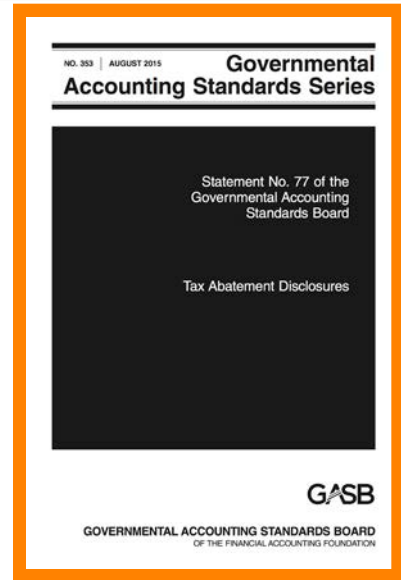
For more information, visit:  
<http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org>

## GASB Statement 77 - Tax Abatement Disclosures

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 77 in August 2015 which requires governments that offer tax abatements to report certain aspects of those agreements.

For a summary of this standard, effective for financial periods beginning after December 15, 2015, please visit the [GASB website here](#).

You may also [view the statement in its entirety](#) on the GASB website.



## 2017 Per Diem Rates are Now Available

The General Services Administration has released the FY 2017 federal per diem rates for the continental United States (“CONUS rates”). For the Tennessee rates, please see the table below:

Primary Destination (1, 2)	County (3, 4)	Max lodging by Month (excluding taxes)	M&IE (5)
Standard Rate	Applies for all locations without specified rates	\$91	\$51
Brentwood/Franklin	Williamson	\$121	\$59
Chattanooga	Hamilton	\$100	\$64
Knoxville	Knox	\$96	\$59
Memphis	Shelby	\$113	\$59
Nashville	Davidson	\$161 (6)	\$59

### Footnotes

- 1 Traveler reimbursement is based on the location of the work activities and not the accommodations, unless lodging is not available at the work activity, then the agency may authorize the rate where lodging is obtained.
- 2 Unless otherwise specified, the per diem locality is defined as “all locations within, or entirely surrounded by, the corporate limits of the key city, including independent entities located within those boundaries.”
- 3 Per diem localities with county definitions shall include “all locations within, or entirely surrounded by, the corporate limits of the key city as well as the boundaries of the listed counties, including independent entities located within the boundaries of the key city and the listed counties (unless otherwise listed separately).”
- 4 When a military installation or Government-related facility (whether or not specifically named) is located partially within more than one city or county boundary, the applicable per diem rate for the entire installation or facility is the higher of the rates which apply to the cities and/or counties, even though part(s) of such activities may be located outside the defined per diem locality.
- 5 *Meals and Incidental Expenses*, see [Breakdown of M&IE Expenses](#) for important information on first and last days of travel.
- 6 The Max Lodging for Nashville-Davidson County will be \$151 for months of July and August 2017.



## Voting Leave – Can Tennesseans Leave Work to Vote?

While federal law does not require employers to provide employees time off for voting, a slight majority of states provide some form of voting leave for their citizens. State voting leave laws vary in the amount of time the employee must be allowed off work, whether the time off is paid, and what notice must be provided the employer. Alternatively, many states have no voting leave laws.

Tennessee is one of the states that clearly believes voting is the cornerstone of a democracy. Our long standing voting leave statute is T.C.A. § 2-1-106. This law provides that any person who is entitled to vote in an election held in Tennessee is entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off from work, up to three hours, in order to vote during the time the polls are open in the county where the employee is a resident.

The law provides that the employer may specify the hours during which the employee may be absent, and the employee is required to apply for voting leave to the employer before noon of the day before the election. The law further provides that the employee cannot be penalized or suffer a reduction in pay due to the absence.

There is one exception however to the voting leave requirement—if the employee’s work period begins three or more hours after the opening of the polls or ends three or more hours before the closing of the polls, then the employer is not required to allow any time off from work.

For county officials and department heads, it’s important to note that election days are legal holidays in Tennessee under T.C.A. § 15-1-101 on which all public offices of this state may be closed. Additionally, the voting leave statute sets the minimum requirements for voting leave. A private employer or county may provide for more time off than is required under state law. Check your personnel policy. Leave policies for all county offices are filed in the office of the county clerk.



## Renewal Conference

November 30 - December 2

Franklin - Drury Plaza Hotel  
1874 W. McEwen Drive  
Hotel reservations: 1-800-325-0720

Visit [ctas.tennessee.edu](http://ctas.tennessee.edu) to register & for more information.

**For Recertification Credit Only!**





## Event Recap: In Case You Missed It

Each month, we will offer a review of events that county officials may not have been able to attend. When possible, we will also note if any event may be offered in the future.

### CTAS Training Review

#### Environmental Programs from the County Perspective

- Taught by Kim Raia, CTAS Environmental Consultant

Counties are responsible for implementing a number of state and federal environmental programs. Environmental regulations protect human health and welfare and can impact community and economic development. This class summarized the major environmental programs that impact Tennessee Counties and provide examples of how these programs are planned, budgeted, and implemented.



*Kim Raia, CTAS Environmental Consultant, teaches county officials about environmental programs and issues.*

#### Ethics

- Taught by Stephen Austin, CTAS Legal Consultant

As a county official, do you know how to avoid conflicts of interest and ethics violations? Avoiding conflicts of interest and ethical violations is critical in today's political climate. This class highlighted conflicts of interest and ethics laws and the penalties for violating them.

We will be offering this Ethics class for Core Credit again on **Thursday, October 20 in Jackson**. Register today to reserve your spot!

### Missed These Classes?

To sign up for CTAS training classes as part of the County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP), please visit our Training webpage at <http://ctas.tennessee.edu/content/training>. We offer classes on a variety of topics including budgeting, personnel, office management, and general county government operations.



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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).