

The County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development are offering the state's first economic development training program for county officials.

CTAS recently joined forces with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development to offer a new online training program, which earns communities points for achieving the Governor's Three Star Program certification. The Three Star Program assists communities in their efforts to achieve excellence in community and economic development. A community must meet basic criteria for certification, including having an active economic development organization and a five-year strategic plan that addresses basic components such as community leadership, health care, existing industry retention and expansion, and education. There are currently 87 certified Three Star communities (83 county programs, 4 city programs) in Tennessee.

The Three Star Program is awarding 100 points in the Visionary Development category to each Three Star community in which the County Mayor/Executive and 25 percent of the county legislative body earn 10 hours of training through CTAS. The eligible courses are the Tennessee County Government Handbook and the new Basic Principles of Economic Development course. The Basic Principles of Economic Development will be offered online and in the classroom, and will provide a global perspective of economic development, explaining how it is measured, how it is changing, and what communities must focus on to be economically competitive. There is a one-time \$100 enrollment fee for the CTAS Three Star certification program.

For more information, contact CTAS at (615) 532-3555 or e-mail Patricia Burke at patricia.burke@tennessee.edu.

CTAS Three-Star Certification Program

What is CTAS Three-Star Certification?

This program is a joint effort between The University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. Counties that meet the requirements of the certification program will be awarded 100 points in the Visionary Development component of the Tennessee Three-Star Program.

How does a county earn the 100 points?

When the County Mayor/Executive, and at least 25% of the county legislative body, completes the training program, CTAS will notify the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The Department of ECD will take the necessary steps to incorporate the 100 points into your Tennessee Three-Star program.

What are the requirements?

The County Mayor/Executive, and at least 25% of the county commission, must earn ten (10) hours of training from CTAS. There are 2 courses that meet this training requirement: (1) the Tennessee County Government Handbook (8 hours) and (2) the Basic Principles of Economic Development course (2 hours).

Is there a fee for this program?

There is a \$100 enrollment fee for the CTAS Three-Star Certification program. This is a one-time fee and is used to help defray the cost of maintaining the official's training transcript and certification status. {**Note:** This fee is waived for any county official who is already enrolled in the County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP)}.

What if an official has completed the COCTP?

If an official has earned the designation of *Certified Public Administrator* in the COCTP, they only need to take the Basic Principles of Economic Development course.

How long does the certification last?

The county remains certified as long as the County Mayor/Executive is certified and remains in office and 25% of the county commission active membership is certified. If a commissioner who is certified leaves office, another commissioner must become certified to replace him or her.

When Does The CTAS Three-Star Certification Begin?

Officials may take the Tennessee County Government Handbook course immediately. The Basic Principles of Economic Development course will be "on-line" on March 14, 2007.

How Does An Official Get Started?

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