



November 08, 2024

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# Limiting Risks

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website ([ctas.tennessee.edu](http://ctas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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## Limiting Risks

Reference Number: CTAS-1156

Be aware that there is a danger of theft, vandalism, or damage by negligence inherent in allowing a member of the public access to government records. There is a profitable market out there for certain historical manuscripts. Across the country, government records are disappearing from government offices and reappearing for sale in antique stores, flea markets, speciality shops, or Internet auction sites. To prevent theft or vandalism, someone from your office should supervise the person accessing the records or, at a minimum, the person accessing the records should be required to examine them in an open area where abuse of the records or attempted thefts will be noticed. If county records have been lost in the past and are discovered in someone's possession, the Tennessee Code, in Section 39-16-504, grants statutory authority to counties to initiate judicial proceedings to reclaim lost, stolen, or otherwise misappropriated records.

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