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County Bank Accounts

Dear Reader:

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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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County Bank Accounts

Reference Number: CTAS-1839

The county legislative body is authorized to adopt a resolution to contract with a bank or banks making the highest and best bid or bids to pay interest on daily balances of the county's funds. The county legislative body may also appoint a finance committee composed of the county mayor, the county trustee and three of its members. T.C.A. § 5-8-201(a)(1).

Prior to contracting with any bank, the trustee is required to take bids from banks and then file an analysis of the bids with the county clerk who shall provide a copy of the trustee's report to each member of the county legislative body on or before its next meeting. The trustee's report shall recommend the bank making the highest and best bid or bids to pay interest on daily balances of the county's funds. T.C.A. § 5-8-201(a)(2).

The finance committee is vested with the authority to formulate, make and sign a contract on behalf of the county with a bank upon the terms and conditions specified in the bid. The contract must be approved by the county mayor, and attested by the county clerk, with the county seal attached. Such contract is binding on the county. T.C.A. § 5-8-202.

If the county finance committee does not contract with a bank or other financial institution, the county trustee may contract with a bank or banks or other financial institutions for deposit, safekeeping, and earning of interest on daily balances of the county's funds, according to the same terms as are required by T.C.A. § 5-8-202 for the county finance committee. Additionally, the county trustee is authorized to enter into such agreements with banks and other financial institutions as necessary for the maintenance of collateral to secure the daily balances of the county's funds on deposit with banks or other financial institutions. T.C.A. § 5-8-201(c).

At least once every four years and not less than once every term of office, the county trustee is required to evaluate whether the county's contract with the bank should be rebid. The trustee is required to obtain proposals from at least two banks or other financial institutions and then prepare a written evaluation of the proposals. The evaluation must be preserved for a period of not less than three years. T.C.A. § 5-8-201(d).

Collateralization of County Funds. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 5-8-201(b), the county shall require any financial institution that becomes a depository of the county's funds to secure the funds as provided in a collateral pool created under Title 9, Chapter 4, Part 5, or in the same manner and under the same conditions as state deposits under Title 9, Chapter 4, Parts 1 and 4. See Op. Tenn. Atty. Gen. 09-146 (August 3, 2009).

County Officials Bank Accounts

Reference Number: CTAS-1844

Every county official handling public funds is required to maintain an official bank account in a bank or banks within this state. Within three days after the receipt of any public funds, the official must deposit the funds in the official's official bank account. T.C.A. § 5-8-207(a)(1). A violation of T.C.A. § 5-8-207 is a Class C misdemeanor.

The requirement to maintain an official bank account does not apply to the chief administrative officer (CAO) of the county highway department because T.C.A. § 54-7-113(a) provides that all "funds received by any person for the county for road or highway purposes shall be promptly deposited with the county trustee and shall be expended only upon a disbursement warrant drawn on the trustee in accordance with law. Op. Tenn. Atty. Gen. 85-088 (March 22, 1985).

All disbursements of public funds shall be made by consecutively prenumbered warrants or consecutively prenumbered checks drawn on the county official's official bank account or bank accounts. T.C.A. § 5-8-207(b).

The requirement to maintain an official bank account shall not prohibit a county official handling public funds from maintaining a petty cash fund in an account sufficient for the transaction of the official business of the county official's office. T.C.A. § 5-8-207(a)(3).

Collateralization of Funds. Each county official maintaining an official bank account is authorized to enter into such agreements with banks and other financial institutions as necessary for the maintenance of collateral to secure the funds on deposit. All funds deposited with a bank or other financial institution shall be secured by collateral in the same manner and under the same conditions as state deposits under Title 9, Chapter 4, Parts 1 and 4, or as provided in a collateral pool created under Title 9, Chapter 4, Part

5. T.C.A. § 5-8-207(a)(1) and (2).

Application to Schools. The provisions of T.C.A. § 5-8-207 do not apply to county school officials because of the more specific provisions of T.C.A. §§ 49-2-103 and 49-2-110. The latter statutes are more specific and therefore control. See *Watts v. Putnam County*, 525 S.W.2d 488, 492 (Tenn.1975). Op. Tenn. Atty. Gen. 85-088 (March 22, 1985).

Bank Account for Property Tax Collections

Reference Number: CTAS-1845

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 67-5-1801(c), the county trustee may designate a bank and/or the branches that are located within the county to act as a collection agent for the trustee and accept the deposit of county and municipal property taxes. The county trustee is authorized to establish an account with the bank for such purpose, which shall be restricted to the deposit of county and municipal property taxes.

Sheriff's Confidential Bank Account

Reference Number: CTAS-1848

The sheriff may maintain a confidential bank account in accordance with state regulations for use in undercover investigative drug enforcement operations. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 39-17-420(a)(1), cash transactions related to undercover investigative operations of county drug enforcement programs shall be administered in compliance with procedures established by the comptroller of the treasury. The comptroller's guidelines, *Procedures for Handling Cash Transactions Related to Undercover Investigative Operations of County and Municipal Drug Enforcement Programs*, have the authority of law. See also T.C.A. § 53-11-415.

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