



December 22, 2024

Accounting under General Law

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (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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Accounting under General Law

Reference Number: CTAS-698

The state comptroller of the treasury, with the approval of the governor, is required to devise a modern and effective bookkeeping and accounting system to be used by all county officials and agencies handling the revenues of the state or its political subdivisions, and is to prescribe the minimum standards required under that system. T.C.A. § 5-8-501. Each county and agency of the county is required to meet these standards; if it fails to do so, the county is obligated to pay the actual cost of auditing above the standard fee prescribed in T.C.A. § 9-3-210 (the standard fee is \$0.36 per person in the county with an annual 3% increase beginning July 1, 2017). T.C.A. §§ 5-8- 502, 5-8-503. Each department must file an annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30 with the county mayor and the county clerk, who provides copies to members of the county legislative body. T.C.A. § 5-8-505. The report must be filed before the first Monday in September upon a form provided by the comptroller. T.C.A. § 67-5-1902. There is no longer a publication requirement for these financial reports.

There are also some specific statutorily required accounting procedures for certain county offices and departments. Accounting procedures for the county mayor are found in T.C.A. § 5-6-108; for the county education department, see T.C.A. §§ 49-2-203 and 49-2-301; and for the county highway department, see T.C.A. § 54-7-113.

Under T.C.A. § 9-2-102, counties that are subject to the comptroller's audit requirements and that handle public funds must have their official accounting records closed and available for audit no later than two months after the close of the fiscal year.

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