



County Technical Assistance Service  
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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# Department of Finance

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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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# Department of Finance

Reference Number: CTAS-905

This act creates a department of finance to administer the finances of the county for all funds handled by the county trustee. The department of finance is under the supervision of a director of finance and subject to the policies and regulations adopted by a county financial management committee. Generally the finance department is responsible for purchasing, accounting, budgeting, payroll, cash management, and other fiscal matters of the county. T.C.A. § 5-21-103. The specific provisions setting out the functions of the finance department can be found in the following statutes:

- Budgeting—T.C.A §§ 5-21-110 through 5-21-114.
- Accounting and Fiscal Procedures— T.C.A. §§ 5-21-115 and 5-21-116.
- Payroll Account—T.C.A. § 5-21-117.
- Purchasing—T.C.A. §§ 5-21-118 through 5-21-120.
- Conflict of Interest/Improper Gifts—T.C.A. § 5-21-121.
- Compensation of Committee Members—T.C.A. § 5-21-122.

# Financial Management Committee

Reference Number: CTAS-906

Under this system there is a county financial management committee. The committee consists of the county mayor, supervisor of highways, director of schools, and four (4) members elected by the county legislative body. The four elected members need not be members of the county legislative body. T.C.A. § 5-21-104 (b). The financial management committee establishes and approves policies, procedures, and regulations implementing a sound and efficient financial system for administering the funds of the county. T.C.A. § 5-21-104 (e). The county legislative body, by resolution, either may create the following committees or it may authorize the financial management committee to assume functions of any or all of the following special committees: (1) budget committee, (2) investment committee, and (3) purchasing committee. T.C.A. §§ 5-21-104 (e) and 5-21-105.

# Director of Finance

Reference Number: CTAS-907

The finance director oversees the operation of the department of finance and installs and maintains a purchasing, payroll, budgeting, accounting, and cash management system for the county. T.C.A. § 5-21-107.

Appointment/Dismissal—The finance director is appointed by the financial management committee (no approval required), and is considered for all purposes an employee of the county. The financial management committee may dismiss the director, subject to the approval of the county legislative body. T.C.A. § 5-21-106.

Qualifications—The finance director must have a minimum of a bachelor of science degree, with a minimum of 18 quarter hours in accounting; however, the committee may select a person who does not have the foregoing qualifications if the person has at least two years of acceptable experience in a related position or an equivalent number of related courses. T.C.A. 5-21-106.

Surety Bond—The finance director must have a blanket bond in the amount not less than \$100,000 for the faithful performance of the director's duties and of the employees of the department. The premium for this bond is paid from funds appropriated to the finance department for this purpose. T.C.A. § 5-21-109.

Compensation of Director of Finance—The financial management committee establishes the compensation of the director of finance with the approval of the county legislative body T.C.A. § 5-21-106(c).

Personnel—The finance director is authorized to hire personnel for the finance department within the amounts provided in the budget. Written job requirements for department personnel are to be

recommended by the director and approved by the financial management committee. T.C.A. § 5-21-107(d). A person employed by the finance department is to be recommended by the finance director and approved by the financial management committee to serve as deputy director of finance. The person employed for this position performs the duties and responsibilities that are assigned by the finance director. T.C.A. § 5-21-108.

Duties of the Director of Finance—The following are duties of the finance director which are related to purchasing and which apparently are to be performed by the finance director regardless of whether a separate purchasing agent is appointed under the act:

- Accepting requisitions by the department, agency, or official and if such supplies are not currently on hand, transmitting the requisition to the purchasing agent. T.C.A. § 5-21-119(b)(6).
- Verifying budget appropriations before authorizing a purchase. T.C.A. § 5-21-119(b)(6).
- Approving invoices for payment that are properly authorized and do not exceed the unencumbered balance of the allotments or appropriations against which they are chargeable. T.C.A §§ 5-21-115(b)(2) and 5-21-119(b)(6).
- Paying invoices and obligations of the county as provided by the statutes. T.C.A. § 5-21-119(b)(6).
- Issuing disbursement warrants for approved obligations. T.C.A. § 5-21-115(b)(3).
- Establishing a system of preaudit of invoices, purchase orders, or other documents, including a comparison with any encumbrance document previously posted or filed authorizing the obligation. T.C.A § 5-21-115(b)(2).

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