

APPENDIX 9

THE CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL TRAINING & TECHNOLOGY

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PURPOSE

Every four years, some 3,000 local elected officials are given responsibility by the citizenry for the formulation, adoption, and implementation of public policy in Mississippi's 82 counties and 297 municipalities. In the last several elections, approximately half of the individuals elected to serve as a member of a local governing authority office have never held public office. In addition, some 2,000 major appointed county and municipal officials assist the governing authorities in the provision of services to the citizens.

These elected and appointed local government officials need information about their duties and responsibilities when they are new and need continuing education and technical assistance throughout their term of office to stay current. Local government law and practice changes with each session of the Legislature.

The Center for Governmental Training & Technology (CGT) is a unit of the Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES). For some thirty years the CGT has been a leader in the development and implementation of educational programs for county and municipal officials, has provided technical assistance to local units of government, and has provided specialized publications for local government officials.

The CGT serves the educational needs of the following associations of local government officials: Mississippi Association of Supervisors, Mississippi Municipal League, Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys, Municipal Clerks and Tax Collectors Association of Mississippi, Mississippi Chancery Clerks Association, Mississippi Association of County Administrators/Comptrollers, Building Officials Association of Mississippi, Mississippi Assessors and Collectors Association, Mississippi Chapter of International Association of Assessing Officers, and the Mississippi Association of County Engineers. The Center works with these associations to plan and implement a variety of educational programs, seminars, and workshops.

In cooperation with the State Department of Audit and the State Tax Commission, the CGT manages legislatively-mandated certification programs for county purchase clerks, receiving clerks, inventory control clerks, and tax assessors and manages professional education programs for county supervisors and county administrators. The Center's Certification Program for Municipal Clerks-Tax Collectors and the Mississippi Education and Certification Program are nationally-recognized. The CGT has assisted the Office of the Secretary of State in coordinating a training program for county and municipal election officials.

The Center also works in the area of leadership development providing training programs for citizens and local government officials. Several hundred individuals have received intensive training in principles of leadership, communications, community development, and the organization and operation of state and local government.

CGT staff provide technical assistance to counties and municipalities in such areas as general management, financial administration, personnel administration, leadership development, economic development, community facilities and services, and solid waste management. Technical assistance is provided on a “time available” basis.

Through these activities, the Center assists local government officials, local units of government, and associations of local government in their efforts to improve governance at the grassroots and delivery of services to the citizens of Mississippi. The CGT does not take an advocacy role in the business, legislative, or political affairs of the local governments or local government associations with which it works.

EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS

Annual educational efforts of the CGT include the following:

- ▶ Conduct some 50 different programs, which vary from half-day workshops to two-week schools, in some 75 separate locations. The combined attendance at these programs exceeds 5,000 local government officials.
- ▶ Conduct special orientation programs for newly-elected county and municipal officials, which included distribution of the CGT’s publications on county and municipal government.
- ▶ Award, in cooperation with the Mississippi Clerks and Collectors Association, the Certified Municipal Clerk designation to some municipal clerks, tax collectors, and deputies who complete the exam-based Certification Program for Municipal Clerks and Collectors. At any given time some 125 municipal clerks, tax collectors, and deputy municipal clerks, representing over 75 different municipalities, will be working toward certification.
- ▶ Award advanced professional designations to Assessor and Appraiser Education Program participants entitling them to annual salary supplements of up to \$3,500. Currently, some 400 County Assessors and staff members are active in this program with combined salary supplements exceeding \$850,000.
- ▶ Award professional certification to county purchase clerks, receiving clerks, or inventory control clerks who successfully complete the Professional Certification Program for County Purchase, Receiving, and Inventory Control Clerks which is conducted in cooperation with the Office of the State Auditor.
- ▶ Conduct the Master Municipal Clerks Program, an advanced education/certification program for graduates of the Certification Program for Municipal Clerks and Collectors.

- ▶ Assist the Office of the Secretary of State with implementation of training programs for county and municipal election officials.
- ▶ Conduct workshops for tax collectors in collaboration with the State Tax Commission, the Office of the State Auditor, and the Mississippi Assessors and Collectors Association.
- ▶ Develop and implement leadership programs for citizens and governmental officials.
- ▶ Develop and conduct specialized educational programs to address current issues important to local governments.
- ▶ Develop and maintain web sites for the Mississippi Association of Supervisors (MAS), the MAS Minority Caucus, the Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys, and the Mississippi Municipal Clerks and Tax Collectors Association.

STAFF

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: While the specifics of the questions differ, all questions ultimately can be reduced to “How can I find current information about the organization and operation of municipal or county government in Mississippi? My local library has nothing published since the 1960s.”

Answer: The CGT publishes the most current information about the organization and operation of county and municipal government in its *County Government in Mississippi, 2nd Edition, Revised and Expanded* and its *Municipal Government in Mississippi, 2nd Edition, Revised and Expanded*. These

publications are issued in traditional book form which may be ordered from the CGT and in an electronic version which may be accessed from the CGT web site.

Question: Who should be contacted to request technical assistance for a county or city?

Answer: Contact any of the CGT staff .

Telephone	(662) 325-3141
Fax	(662) 325-8954
E-mail	cginfo@ext.msstate.edu
Web Site	www.ext.msstate.edu/departments/cgt
Mailing Address	Box 9643 Mississippi State, MS 39762-9643
Physical Address	Bost Extension Center, Suite 405 Mississippi State University Mississippi State, Mississippi

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

- ▶ *Municipal Government in Mississippi, 2nd Edition, Revised and Expanded*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 2001. This publication, edited by P.C. McLaurin, Jr. and Michael T. Allen, provides the general public, governmental officials at all levels, and the professional community the most up-to-date and comprehensive information about Mississippi municipal government that is available today. This extensive volume is available in traditional book form and can be viewed or downloaded chapter-by-chapter from the CGT web site.
- ▶ *County Government in Mississippi, 2nd Edition, Revised and Expanded*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 2000. This publication, edited by P.C. McLaurin, Jr. and Michael T. Allen, provides the general public, governmental officials at all levels, and the professional community, the most up-to-date and comprehensive information about Mississippi county government that is available today. This extensive volume is available in traditional book form and can be viewed or downloaded chapter-by-chapter from the CGT web site.
- ▶ *A Handbook for County Board Attorneys in Mississippi*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 2000. This publication is authored by Benjamin E. Griffith, Esquire, Bolivar County Board Attorney. The book covers the organization and operation of county government in Mississippi through a discussion of applicable federal and state law and regulations. It is designed for use by an attorney for a board of supervisors but

contains information about county government of interest to anyone wishing information about the law and practice of county government in Mississippi. This volume is available in traditional book form and can be viewed or downloaded chapter-by-chapter from the CGT web site or that of the Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys, which is maintained by the CGT.

- ▶ *Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys Membership Manual and Directory*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 2000. This publication contains the operating by-laws and a directory of members of the Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys. This volume is available in traditional book form and can be viewed or downloaded from the CGT web site or that of the Mississippi Association of County Board Attorneys, which is maintained by the CGT.
- ▶ *Mississippi Appraisal Manual*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 1998. This publication, written and compiled by staff of the Property Appraisal Division of the Mississippi State Tax Commission with the assistance of the CGT covers the law and practice of property appraisal in Mississippi for purposes of valuation for the levying of ad valorem taxes.
- ▶ *Municipal Audit and Accounting Guide*, Mississippi State, MS: Center for Governmental Training & Technology, 1993. This publication, written and compiled by staff of the Technical Assistance Division of the Office of the State Auditor with the assistance of the CGT covers the accounting procedures, policies, and forms prescribed by the Office of the State Auditor for use by all municipalities in Mississippi.