

# CERTIFIED FINANCE OFFICER NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 2 • October 2025

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 Website Reminder
- 4 CCFO/CMFO Graduates
- 6 Successful Connections
- 7 Clean Audit Cities & Counties
- 8 CTAS/MTAS Website
- 9 Training Opportunities



**Cordell Hull Building**  
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243  
Phone: 615-401-7841  
Fax: 615-741-6216



## The Value of Financial and Compliance Audits: Making Government Work Better

Jim Arnette, Director  
Division of Local Government Audit

When people hear the word “audit,” they might think of stress, scrutiny, and inconvenience. In reality, an audit is a tool for improvement and accountability. Many of you have probably heard the old joke: “Hi, we’re the auditors, and we’re here to help.” While that line usually gets a laugh, it truly reflects the spirit of what auditors are supposed to do. At the Comptroller’s Office, our mission is simple: “make government work better.” Financial and compliance audits are one of the most important ways we can achieve that mission. Audits should not be about finding something wrong but used to help local governments improve, protect their resources, and serve citizens more effectively.

The Division of Local Government Audit has a big responsibility. By statute, we are required to annually audit:

- All 95 counties
- 342 incorporated municipalities, and
- Roughly 1,700 additional entities such as boards, commissions, authorities, utility districts, human resource agencies, development districts, internal school funds, charter schools, special school districts, and nonprofits that receive state or federal funding

Our office directly audits 91 of the state’s 95 counties. Given our lack of resources, to meet our audit mandates, we rely on CPA firms to audit municipalities and all the other local

government related entities. These CPA audits are performed as part of a three-party contract between the Comptroller's Office, the local government entity, and the CPA firm. This process ensures accountability, consistency, and independence, while allowing us to meet our audit requirements.

So, how do financial and compliance audits help us “make government work better”? Well, audits serve three important purposes:

### ***1. Provide Accountability to Citizens***

Taxpayers deserve to know that their money is being spent appropriately, efficiently, and for the purposes intended. An independent audit provides transparency and assurance that public funds are being properly managed.

### ***2. Improved Financial Management***

Audits don't just highlight problems, they include recommendations that local officials can use to strengthen internal controls, reduce waste, and prevent fraud. For instance, an audit might identify issues such as improper segregation of duties or outdated policies and procedures. Correcting these types of issues can help local governments operate more effectively.

### ***3. Compliance with Laws and Regulations***

Local governments receive substantial state and federal funding, and with those funds, they often come attached with a lot of “strings” or compliance requirements. Audits verify that those funds are used appropriately and that governments are following both state statutes and grant requirements.

In summary, audits are tools that build public confidence and help local government leaders make better-informed decisions.

To provide consistency, credibility, and reliability, our audits are conducted in accordance with professional standards established by:

- The Government Accountability Office (GAO) through the Yellow Book, which governs government auditing
- The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), which sets professional standards for auditors, and
- The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), which establishes accounting and financial reporting principles for state and local governments

Without these standards, one local government's financial report might look very different from another's, making comparisons and oversight difficult. Standards ensure that every audit, whether conducted by our office or by a CPA firm, is performed the same and the resulting audit reports

look the same. They also help maintain the public's trust that financial information is accurate and that issues are identified and addressed appropriately.

Preparation is a key factor in how smoothly an audit goes, and this is where professional certification programs add significant value. The CMFO and CCFO programs are designed to help equip finance officers with the knowledge and tools they need to manage public resources effectively. As program graduates, you learned about governmental accounting, financial reporting, internal controls, and laws governing local government finances.

When finance officers are well-trained, audits become more efficient and beneficial. Financial statements are more accurate, internal controls are stronger, and compliance risks are lower. These finance officer certification programs don't just help local governments prepare for their audits, they help them improve their overall financial health and sustainability.

Your audits should never be viewed as an adversarial process. Our goal as auditors is not to "catch" local governments doing something wrong, but to provide an independent assessment that leads to improvement. That's why the old joke about auditors being "here to help" is true. Audits create a partnership between state oversight, local governments, and citizens. They ensure taxpayer resources are used wisely, identify areas for improvement, and promote transparency. This partnership is essential to keeping government strong, effective, and accountable.

If the mission of the Comptroller's Office is to "make government work better," then audits are one of the most important ways we achieve that mission. They are not about finding fault. They are about finding solutions.

So, the next time auditors walk through your door and say, *"Hi, we're the auditors, and we're here to help,"* remember: it's not a punchline. It's a promise!

**Missed a previous newsletter?**

**Have a question about CPE guidelines?**

**Need to log into an existing account?**



**Visit [www.comptroller.tn.gov](http://www.comptroller.tn.gov) for more information.**





# CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES



CHRISTINA ALEXANDER  
STACY ALEXANDER  
BRANDON ANDREWS  
KRISTEN ANDREWS  
JANET BAILEY-CANADA  
CHERI BAKER  
CODY BAKER  
AMY BALLON  
GORTRIA BANKS  
REGINA BARNETT  
ZACH BAY  
WILLIAM BEASLEY  
RALPH BECK  
LAURA BELL  
LELIA BELL  
CONNIE BIRDWELL  
MANDY BLAKELY  
AMY BOWMAN  
ANDREA BOYD  
VERNETIA BOYD  
TERRI BOYT  
LORI BRACKINS  
ARIANA BROOKS  
MADONNA BROWE  
CHRISTAINE BROWN  
DANIELLE BROWN  
MICHELLE BROWN  
AMANDA BRYANT  
BRITTANY BRYANT  
JAMES BUCK  
ZACHARY BUDD  
MARCUS BULLOCK  
SHANNON BURGDORF  
JONATHAN BURRIS  
KIRSTEN BUTTRUM  
DEBORAH BYRUM  
DONNA BYRUM  
DINISHIA CALLOWAY

MERIBETH CARPENTER  
JENNIFER CARROLL  
MARIA CAULDER  
SHANNON CAYWOOD  
DEBORAH CHISM  
KYNDALL CLARK  
NATHAN CLOUSE  
KELLY CLOYD  
DORINA COGGINS  
NICOLE COLEMAN  
MARY COLLINS  
ROSS COLONA  
ELISE COMBS  
LEIGH ANN COMBS  
SHAWN COOK, SR.  
CHARLES COOPER, JR.  
REGINA COPELAND  
HOLLY COX  
MARTI CRABTREE  
SHERRY CRAWFORD  
RONDA CROFT  
KRYSTEN DAVENPORT  
TRACEY DAVENPORT  
JENNIFER DAVES  
ANTHONY DELK  
DANIELLE DIXON  
NICHOLAS DODSON  
JULIE DOUGLAS  
ALEXIS DOUGLASS  
LORI DRIVER  
LINDA EARNEST  
JOHN EASON  
JOSEPH EATON  
SANDY EATON  
AVA ELSAGHIR  
JUSTIN ETLING  
LEIGHA FEATHERSTONE  
AMY FERRARI

BRITTANY FOX  
VICTORIA FRANKLIN  
ZAC FULLERTON  
KEANNA GIPSON  
BARBARA GMEREK  
TRACI GRAHAM  
TYLER GUSTAFSON  
MICHELLE HALCOMB  
DONNA HALE  
HOUSTON HAMBLIN  
BARRY HAMMOCK  
CANDI HARBER  
CHELSEA HARDIMAN  
JASON HARDY  
LISA HARRIS  
MICHAEL HARRIS  
SARAH HARRIS  
MARIA HAWTHORNE  
EMMA HAYSE  
JENNIFER HEMMELGARN  
CHRISSY HENDERSON  
DEREK HENDERSON  
MARY HEWITT  
JASON HILLIS  
RORY HINSON  
HEIDI HOFFNER  
KIMBERLY HOLLONSIDE-KNISLEY  
CARRIE HOOD  
TAMMY HOPPER  
CHARITY HOWELL  
BRIAN JACKSON  
ELIZABETH JEFFERSON  
KIERSTIE JENSEN  
FELICIA JOHNSON  
STACY JOHNSON  
CIARA JONES  
LATONYA JONES  
PIPER JONES



# CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES



CHRISTIAN KERLEY  
STEPHANIE KEY  
ALYSSA KIMBRO  
LESLIE KNIGHTEN  
VIJAY LAL  
MICHELLE LANE  
MARY LANGFORD  
DAVID LANNOM, JR.  
PAULA LAXTON  
TABITHA LEE  
JILL LEWIS  
ANGEL LOUDEN  
ANTHONY MAPLES, II  
PAMELA MARKS  
HARLEY MARTIN  
RACHAEL MATHIS  
LORI MAZE  
NICK MCBRIDE  
NIKKI MCCASLIN  
JUDY MCCURRY  
AJOI MCFARLAND  
TAMMARA MCGEE  
MELISSA MCINTOSH  
RACHELL MCKINNEY  
RACHAEL MEFFORD  
DAVID MERRIWEATHER  
SHANE MICHAELSON  
SHANNON MILES  
AMANDA MILLER  
LESLIE MILLIGAN  
ELESIA MILLRANEY  
MELANIE MITTELSTEADT  
AMANDA MONTGOMERY  
FELISHA MOORE  
MARY CHELSEY MOORE  
STACIE MOORE  
KELLIE MORGAN  
TAMONICA MOSS  
HEIDI MURRAY

ROBERT MYNHIER  
JAMIE NAVE  
MICHELLE NEIL  
JANNIKA NEWSOM  
JASON NIX  
JOHN OSBORNE, III  
TRACY PAGAN  
ERIC PEARSON  
CHAD PERRY  
CHRISTAL PETTIGREW  
REBECCA PIPPENGER  
HEATHER POWELL  
JORDAN PRICE  
JOHN PRINCE  
SARAH PRITCHARD  
MABEL QUICK  
JESSICA RAY  
KRISTEN RIEMANN  
OLIVIA RITTER  
LIJAH ROBINSON  
KATHERINE ROWDEN  
JULIE RUNYON  
TERRI RUSSELL  
AMANDA SCALF  
WAYNE SCHOENHEIT  
TERESA SCOTT  
JENNIFER SHAFFER  
ANGELIE SHANKLE  
TONYA SHANNON  
BARBARA SHULTS  
EUGENIA SIMS  
HEATHER SLATTON  
ELLEN SMITH  
JIMMY SMITH  
LAURA SMITH  
EMILY SPITZER  
BECCI STEED  
DELIAH STEELE  
CYNTHIA STEWART

LINDSEY STREET  
STACY STRICKLAND  
ERIKA SUGARMON  
WILLIE TAPP  
ANGELA TAYLOR  
SARAH TAYLOR  
FELECIA TEASLEY  
KATHERINE TENG  
KAYLA THELEN  
BARBARA THOMAS  
KIMBERLY THOMAS  
SHELBY THOMAS  
MICHAEL THOMPSON  
JAMES TIPTON  
MARK TORBETT  
JACKIE TURNIPSEED  
JODI TYLER  
PATRICIA UNDERWOOD  
LEAH VEST-HOLLOWAY  
JAMIE VICKERS  
EMILY WALKER  
LAKESHA WALKER  
KARA WATERS  
ASHLEY WEBB  
JENNIFER WEBB  
LINDA WELLS  
ANNABELLE WESTMORELAND  
SHIRLEY WHALEY  
BRETT WHITE  
DIANNE WHITE  
NANCY WHITE  
KIMBERLY WIGGINS  
WONDER WILLIAMS  
NICHOLAS WILSON  
ROBERT WILSON  
TANYA WILSON  
CHRISTOPHER WOOD  
TONI YOUNG



# SUCCESSFUL CONNECTIONS

A state & local government partnership program

OPEN TO ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS  
COUNTIES, CITIES, UTILITY DISTRICTS & AUTHORITIES

1.5 HOURS CPE CREDIT  
AVAILABLE

(CMFO, CCFO)  
BY REQUEST WHEN  
REGISTERING

**Session Focus:**  
Cybersecurity:  
Tactical Plans & Risk  
Management

**24 OCT 2025**  
**11:30AM CT**

193 POLK AVE, SUITE D  
NASHVILLE, TN 37219



ZOOM ALSO AVAILABLE

**Moderated by Nathan Abbott**, Assistant  
Director, Division of Local Government Audit,  
Comptroller of the Treasury

Panel Members:

- **Bruce Collier**, President, Local Government Corporation
- **James Cornelius**, Security Manager, Technology Solutions, Comptroller of the Treasury
- **Doug Lukonen**, Finance Director, Maury County
- **Cody York**, Chief Information Officer, Rutherford County



**REGISTER NOW**

# FINANCIAL YEAR 2024 HIGHLIGHT: CLEAN AUDIT CITIES & COUNTIES

*As we prepare to issue the Financial Year 2025 audits, we wanted to highlight the cities and counties who had no findings on their FY 24 audits.*

---

|                |                  |                |                    |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| ARLINGTON      | FARRAGUT         | LOUISVILLE     | RIDGESIDE          |
| ATHENS         | FRIENDSVILLE     | MADISONVILLE   | RIPLEY             |
| ATOKA          | GALLATIN         | MAYNARDVILLE   | ROCKWOOD           |
| BARTLETT       | GALLAWAY         | MC EWEN        | ROCKY TOP          |
| BELLE MEADE    | GATLINBURG       | MC MINNVILLE   | SAULSBURY          |
| BRENTWOOD      | GOODLETTSVILLE   | MEDINA         | SEVIERVILLE        |
| BULLS GAP      | GREENBACK        | MILAN          | SMYRNA             |
| CAMDEN         | GREENBRIER       | MILLINGTON     | SODDY-DAISY        |
| CARYVILLE      | GREENEVILLE      | MORRISON       | SOMERVILLE         |
| CHAPEL HILL    | GREENFIELD       | MOSHEIM        | SPARTA             |
| CHATTANOOGA    | GRUETLI-LAAGER   | MOUNT PLEASANT | SPENCER            |
| COLLEGEDALE    | HARROGATE        | MT. JULIET     | SPRING CITY        |
| COLLIERVILLE   | HENDERSON        | MUNFORD        | SPRINGFIELD        |
| COLUMBIA       | HENDERSONVILLE   | MURFREESBORO   | STANTONVILLE       |
| COOKEVILLE     | HENRY            | NEWPORT        | SWEETWATER         |
| CROSSVILLE     | HOHENWALD        | NIOTA          | TAZEWELL           |
| DANDRIDGE      | HUNTINGDON       | OAK HILL       | THOMPSON'S STATION |
| DAYTON         | JEFFERSON CITY   | OBION          | THREE WAY          |
| DICKSON        | KINGSTON         | PALMER         | TRACY CITY         |
| DYERSBURG      | KNOXVILLE        | PARIS          | UNICOI             |
| EAGLEVILLE     | LAFAYETTE        | PETERSBURG     | VIOLA              |
| ELIZABETHTON   | LA FOLLETTE      | PIGEON FORGE   | VONORE             |
| ENGLEWOOD      | LAKELAND         | PITTMAN CENTER | WALDEN             |
| ESTILL SPRINGS | LAKESITE         | PLAINVIEW      | WATAUGA            |
| ETOWAH         | LAWRENCEBURG     | PULASKI        | WHITWELL           |
| FAIRVIEW       | LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN | RED BANK       | WOODBURY           |

---

**BEDFORD  
CAMPBELL  
CANNON  
DICKSON  
GRAINGER**

**HOUSTON  
LOUDON  
PUTNAM  
ROBERTSON  
SCOTT**

**SEVIER  
STEWART  
UNICOI  
WEAKLEY**

Have a question?  
Not sure who to contact?

***Certified County Finance Officer (tn.gov)***  
***Certified Municipal Finance Officer (tn.gov)***

---



**Reminder:**  
CPE hours must be  
earned by December 31st

---

Connect with your  
area consultant

[ctas.tennessee.edu](https://ctas.tennessee.edu)  
[mtas.tennessee.edu](https://mtas.tennessee.edu)





# Upcoming Training Opportunities

## CPE Provider Training Classes and Conferences

(The following list is not a preapproval or endorsement of the provider organizations. For any questions regarding online CPE courses, please refer to the CMFO Policies and Procedures Manual.)

ACFE (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners)  
<http://www.acfe.com/>

TGA (Tennessee Gas Association)  
<http://www.tngas.org/>

ACPEN (Accounting CPE Network)  
<https://www.acpen.com/>

TCMA (Tennessee City Management Association)  
<http://www.tncma.org/>

AGA (Association of Government Accountants)  
(CGFM)  
<http://www.agacgfm.org/>

TGFOA (Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association)  
<https://tgfoa.org/>

AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants)  
<https://www.aicpa-cima.com/cpe-learning>

TSCPA (Tennessee Society of Certified Public Accountants)  
<http://www.tscpa.com>

Checkpoint Learning CPESay  
<https://checkpointlearning.com/CPESolutions/CPE-for-CPAs>

TVPPA (Tennessee Valley Public Power Association, Inc.)  
<http://www.tvppa.com>

CTAS  
<http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/training>

Tyler Technologies  
<http://www.tylertech.com/>

GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association)  
[http://www.gfoa.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=49](http://www.gfoa.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=49)

Western CPE  
<http://www.westerncpe.com/>

MTAS  
<https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/training>

NASACT (National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, & Treasurers)  
<http://nasact.org/>

