The MTAS publications provided on this website are archival documents intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered as authoritative. The content contained in these publications may be outdated, and the laws referenced therein may have changed or may not be applicable to your city or circumstances.

For current information, please visit the MTAS website at: mtas.tennessee.edu.

Recommended Citation
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_mtastech/73
CITY RECORDER CERTIFICATION UPDATE

Compiled by
Margaret Norris
Municipal Management Consultant

Overview
In 1994, Chapter 648 of Public Acts of 1994 added a law that required municipal clerks and recorders to become certified by completing 100 hours of education. The legislation also required that the certification be maintained by obtaining 18 hours of continuing education every three years. This law can now be found in Tennessee Code Annotated 6-54-120.

Who Must Comply?
Any municipality with a population of 1,500 or greater (according to the 1990 or any subsequent federal census) that employs an officer or employee responsible for the duties of a municipal clerk or recorder—taking and preserving minutes, serving as custodian of records, providing and certifying copies, etc.—must have at least one certified person. Of course, a municipality may have more than one certified clerk or recorder. All such employees who were serving when the law went into effect had until July 1, 1998 to become certified. Any clerk or recorder hired after the law went into effect must become certified within four years.

Are There Any Exceptions?
The exceptions are:
• Any clerk or recorder in a municipality of less than 1,500 population;
• Any municipal clerk or recorder who is licensed (and required to maintain the license) to practice law in Tennessee;
• Any appointed city manager or administrator who possesses a Master of Arts degree in public administration.

Also exempt from the initial certification requirement is any person who has served as both a city judge and city recorder for at least 25 years. Notwithstanding these exceptions, any city or town may, by ordinance, require the clerk or recorder to obtain certification, even if it is exempted under the population requirements (fewer than 1,500 residents).

What Does It Take To Become Certified?
To become certified, a person must either obtain a certificate from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) or must complete a minimum of 100 credit hours of applicable education.
What Does It Take To Retain Certification?
Those who are already certified must attend at least 18 hours of continuing education courses every three years.

How Do I Earn The Credit Hours?
• You can receive 25 credit hours toward initial certification if you have an Associate of Arts or Science degree.
• You can receive 50 credit hours toward initial certification if you have a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree. (You may receive the 50 credit hours only one time, even if you hold more than one degree.)
• Attend the Municipal Clerks Institute at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) that is coordinated by the Tennessee Association of Municipal Clerks and Recorders (TAMCAR). The institute lasts two and one-half days and gives you 17.5 credit hours. Institutes are offered each spring and fall, and scholarships are available when local funding limitations or policies might otherwise prevent participation.
• Attend the Academy for Advanced Education at MTSU that is coordinated by TAMCAR. The Academy is offered each fall in conjunction with the Institute; scholarships are available when local funding limitations or policies might otherwise prevent participation.
• Attend the International Institute of Municipal Clerks annual conference held every year in May.
• Attend City University seminars offered by the University of Tennessee’s MTAS, and receive four hours credit per half-day class. A different course is offered each month in locations across the state.
• Attend seminars conducted by the Tennessee Municipal League Risk Management Pool. These courses are typically offered regionally and last four hours.
• Attend the Local Government Leadership Program offered by the University of Tennessee’s Institute for Public Service (IPS), and receive 12 hours credit for the three-day seminar.
• Attend job related-seminars offered by private organizations. (Credit hours may vary.)
• Complete online self-teaching computer programs approved by the secretary of state. (Credit hours may vary.)

How Do I Apply For Credit Hours?
Whether you are applying for the initial certificate or continuing education credits, you should contact the Division of Business Services for an application. Request form number SS-4507, appropriately titled “Application for Certification of Municipal Clerks and Recorders and Continuing Education Credit.” You can reach the division at:
312 Eighth Avenue North
6th Floor, Snodgrass Tower
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: (615) 741-3699
Fax: (615) 741-7310
E-mail: services@mail.state.tn.us.

For more information, contact your MTAS Municipal Management Consultant or one of the following:

International Institute of Municipal Clerks
8331 Utica Avenue, Suite 200
Rancho Cucamonga, California 91730
Phone: (909) 944-4162
Fax: (909) 944-8545
Message center: (800) 251-1639
E-mail: hq@iimc.com
Web site: www.iimc.com

Municipal Technical Advisory Service
Ms. Sally Thierbach
120 Conference Center
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-4105
Phone: (865) 974-0411
Fax: (865) 974-0423
E-mail: thierbachs@tennessee.edu
Web site: www.mtas.utk.edu

Tennessee Municipal League Risk Management Pool
Mr. Michael Fann, Director of Loss Control
5100 Maryland Way
Brentwood, TN 37027
Phone: (800) 624-9698 toll free, (615) 371-0049
Fax: (615) 377-3067
E-mail: MemberServices@tmlrmp.org
Web site: www.tmlrmp.org
Tennessee Association Municipal Clerks and Recorders (TAMCAR)
Ms. Janice Casteel, President
City Recorder, City of Cleveland
P.O. Box 1519
Cleveland, Tennessee 37364-1519
Phone: (423) 472-4551
Fax: (423) 559-3302
E-mail: jcasteel@cityofclevelandtn.com

Ms. Judy Simerson, Incoming TAMCAR President (September 2002)
City Clerk, City of Germantown
1930 Germantown Road South
Germantown, Tennessee 38138
Phone: (901) 757-7200
Fax: (901) 757-7292
E-mail: JSimerson@ci.germantown.tn.us

Middle Tennessee State University
Municipal Clerk Institute & Academy for Advanced Education
Ms. Valerie R. Avent, Program Coordinator
Division of Continuing Studies and Public Service
113 Cope Administration Building
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132
Phone: (615) 898-5651, (615) 898-2462
Fax: (615) 898-3593
E-mail: vavent@mtsu.edu
Web site: www.mtsu.edu/~learn

If You Need More Help

Call the MTAS Answer Line to receive quick answers to short questions: (888) 667-6827 (MTAS).
Or, visit our Web site at www.mtas.utk.edu.

The Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is a statewide agency of The University of Tennessee’s Institute for Public Service. MTAS operates in cooperation with the Tennessee Municipal League to provide technical assistance services to officials of Tennessee’s incorporated municipalities. Assistance is offered in areas such as accounting, administration, finance, public works, ordinance codification, and wastewater management.

MTAS Technical Bulletins are information briefs that provide a timely review of topics of interest to Tennessee municipal officials. Bulletins are free to Tennessee local, state, and federal government officials and are available to others for $2 each.

MTAS OFFICES

Knoxville (Headquarters)
Phone: (865) 974-0411
Fax: (865) 974-0423

Johnson City
Phone: (423) 854-9882
Fax: (423) 854-9223

Nashville
Phone: (615) 532-6827
Fax (615) 532-4963

Jackson
Phone: (731) 423-3710
Fax: (731) 425-4771

Martin
Phone: (731) 587-7055
Fax: (731) 587-7059

The University of Tennessee does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status in provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. This policy extends to both employment by and admission to The University.

The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or disability in its education programs and activities pursuant to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Inquiries and charges of violation concerning Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) or any of the other above referenced policies should be directed to the Office of Diversity Resources (DRES), 2110 Terrace Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3560, telephone (865) 974-2498 (V/TTY available) or (865) 974-2440. Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the Office of Human Resources, 600 Henley Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-4125.