



Posting of Charters Required

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal 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 municipal 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 MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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The Internet is the most useful tool for promoting effective democracy since Gutenberg's printing press. As our communities rely increasingly on the Internet as their primary source of information, our consideration of web sites as a primary repository of public information is critical to an informed electorate. For years federal and state governments have taken steps to require an increasing amount of public and governmental information be accessible via the Internet. There are now similar requirements for local governments.

Recognition of this by the Tennessee Legislature occurred with the passage of Public Chapter No. 808, T.C.A. § 5-1-127. This act requires each Tennessee municipality and county to post its charter of incorporation on a website maintained by the municipality or county. If no such website is maintained, the charter must be posted on the Tennessee Secretary of State's website. Additionally, within three months following any changes or revisions to the charter, the electronic language posted on the website shall be corrected by the municipality or county to reflect such changes or revisions. If your charter has been sent to the secretary of state, their office is not required to keep it current, your city should send a copy of any amended charter to the secretary of state as soon as possible.

A local charter is the legislatively granted foundation of every local government. Being the expression of municipal power and responsibility, it is imperative that every resident have unfettered access to a charter's contents. Charters are open to public inspection under our state's open records laws. T.C.A. §§ 10-7-501 *et seq.* Logistically, this should pose no significant expenditure of time or resources to city personnel. There are currently electronic copies of the charters of every Tennessee city posted on the MTAS website.

If your city does not maintain its own website and you need assistance posting your charter on the secretary of state's website, please contact Robert Greene, publications liaison, at (615) 253-4571 or robert.a.greene@state.tn.us [1].

Links:

[1] <mailto:robert.a.greene@state.tn.us>

DISCLAIMER: The letters and publications written by the MTAS consultants were written based upon the law at the time and/or a specific sets of facts. The laws referenced in the letters and publications may have changed and/or the technical advice provided may not be applicable to your city or circumstances. Always consult with your city attorney or an MTAS consultant before taking any action based on information contained in this website.

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