



OFFICE OF
OPEN RECORDS COUNSEL



ANNUAL REPORT



March 2026

Jason E. Mumpower
Comptroller of the Treasury



Toni Chadwick
Open Records Counsel

Governor Lee and Members of the 114th General Assembly:

My name is Toni Chadwick, and it is an honor to continue serving as Tennessee's Open Records Counsel.

This report is prepared in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-4-603(b)(1) and provides an overview of the Office of Open Records Counsel's activities from February 7, 2025 through February 6, 2026.

The Office of Open Records Counsel continues to assist citizens and local government officials with issues surrounding access to public records and meetings of governing bodies. During the past year, the office resolved more than 1,100 inquiries pertaining to the State's public records and open meetings laws.

In October 2025, the office released its annual [Legislative Update](#) and updated its database of Exceptions to the Tennessee Public Records Act to reflect several new or amended exceptions passed during the First Regular Session and First Extraordinary Session of the 114th General Assembly. The searchable database of exceptions is available at tncot.cc/exceptions.

In October 2025, the office also provided six free training seminars across the state. These sessions covered public records and open meetings requirements and were open to government officials, members of the media, and the public. The training sessions were popular with each seminar averaging 74 attendees and most reaching, or nearly reaching, capacity. As a result of this interest, the office plans to offer the training again in 2026.



In addition to the statewide training, the office conducted 18 training sessions for various government entities and professional associations. These included the Cleveland Police Department, Tennessee Archives Institute, Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association, Nashville Bar Association, Municipal Court Clerk's Conference, and County Technical Assistance Service.

In November 2025, the Office of Open Records Counsel welcomed a new Assistant General Counsel, Elizabeth McCabe. Elizabeth and I look forward to continuing to make government work better by assisting and educating public officials and citizens with respect to Tennessee's public records and open meetings laws. Please contact our office if we can assist you.

Toni Chadwick
Open Records Counsel

HISTORY OF THE OFFICE

The 104th General Assembly enacted the Sunshine in Government Improvement Act of 2006, which created a special joint committee to study open government laws. The committee was charged with determining whether there was a need for revisions to Tennessee's open government laws.

In 2007, the 105th General Assembly appropriated funding for the Office of Open Records Ombudsman, which opened in the fall of 2007 under the purview of the Comptroller of the Treasury. In the following year, based on the recommendations of the special joint committee, the General Assembly amended the Tennessee Public Records Act and provided statutory authority for the Office of Open Records Counsel by enacting Public Chapter 1179, Acts of 2008.

Today, the Office of Open Records Counsel strives to make government work better by helping citizens and government officials better understand Tennessee's laws on public records and open meetings through educational outreach, resources posted on the office's website, and direct communication and interaction with citizens and government officials across the state.

OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

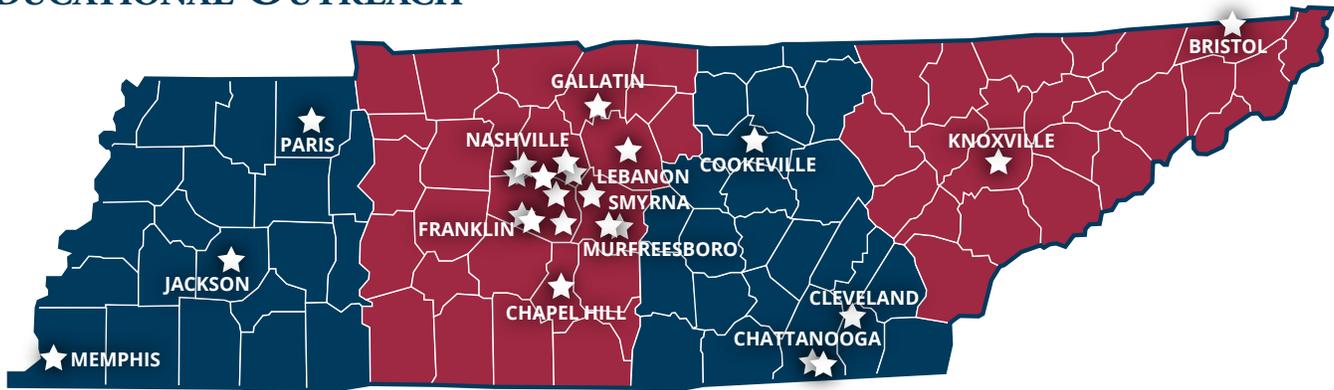
The Office of Open Records Counsel is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a point of contact for questions and concerns regarding public records and open meetings;
- Assist citizens and public officials with requests for public records;
- Promote education and awareness of Tennessee's public records and open meetings laws;
- Collect data on open meetings inquiries and problems;
- Issue informal advisory opinions; and
- Develop forms, schedules, policies, and guidelines for open record requests.





EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH



GROUP	LOCATION	DATE
Cookeville Police Department	Cookeville	January 30
911 Directors Association	Franklin (Virtual)	February 20
Hamilton County	Chattanooga	April 3
Municipal Court Clerk's Conference	Franklin	April 11
Tennessee Archives Institute	Nashville	April 14
Gallatin City Officials	Gallatin	June 4
Wilson County	Lebanon	June 10
Cleveland Police Department	Cleveland (Virtual)	June 17
City of Smyrna	Smyrna	July 23
Murfreesboro City Employees	Murfreesboro	July 25
Appointed and Elected Clerks Conference	Paris	September 17
NBA CLE for Governmental Attorneys	Nashville	September 24
Tennessee Duck River Development Agency	Chapel Hill	September 29
Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association	Murfreesboro	October 3
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Knoxville	Knoxville	October 3
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Memphis	Memphis	October 7
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Jackson	Jackson	October 8
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Nashville	Nashville	October 15
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Bristol	Bristol	October 22
Office of Open Records Counsel Roadshow - Chattanooga	Chattanooga	October 24
Advisory Committee on Open Government	Nashville	November 13
County Technical Assistance Service	Nashville	November 13
AGA Nashville Chapter	Nashville	December 1
Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association	Nashville	December 9

Frequently asked questions regarding the Tennessee Public Records Act and Tennessee Open Meetings Act are available on the Office of Open Records Counsel website at

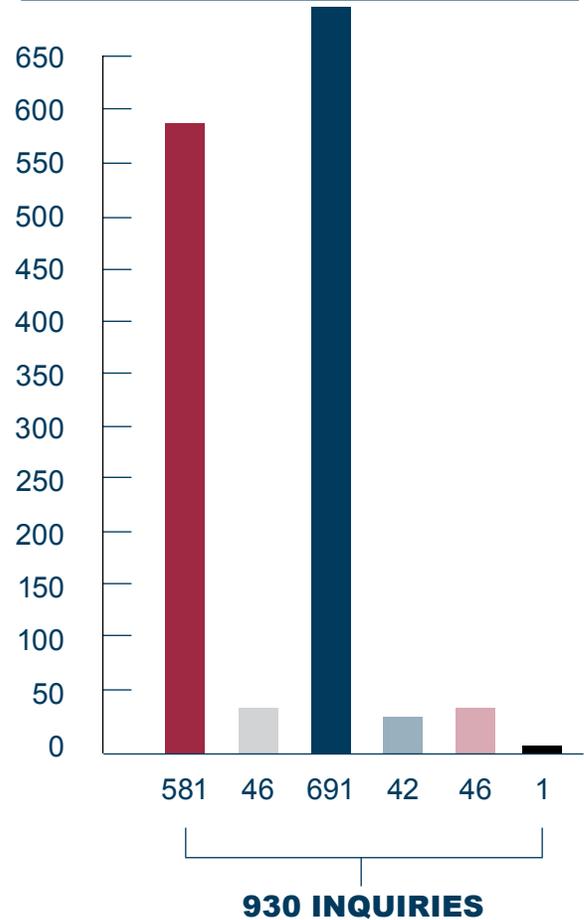
www.comptroller.tn.gov/openrecords

OPEN MEETINGS INQUIRY STATISTICS

For the period of February 7, 2025 through February 6, 2026

INQUIRIES BY CATEGORY	
Open Records	930
Open Meetings	121
Records/Meetings	54
Public Records	168
Mediation Request	9
Presentation/Training Request	38
Other	87
TOTAL	1407

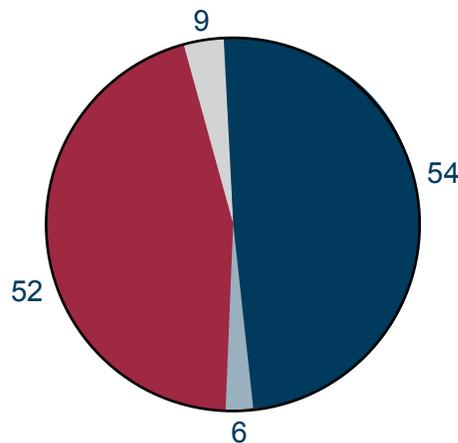
ALL INQUIRIES BY AFFILIATION



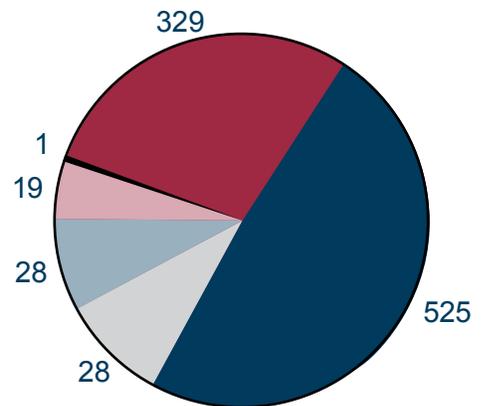
AFFILIATION KEY

- CITIZENS
- MEDIA
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- STATE GOVERNMENT
- OUT OF STATE
- UNKNOWN

MEETINGS INQUIRIES BY AFFILIATION



RECORDS INQUIRIES BY AFFILIATION



Toni Chadwick | *Open Records Counsel*
Elizabeth McCabe | *Assistant General Counsel*

Office of Open Records Counsel
Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury
Cordell Hull Building
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Nashville, TN 37243



Office: 615.401.7891
E-mail: Open.Records@cot.tn.gov



*For additional information about the
Office of Open Records Counsel
and other related resources, visit:
www.comptroller.tn.gov/openrecords*

