



Leading The Way

2025 OTA Winter Conference Workshop Recording Descriptions



1, 2, or 3 Employees? HR Compliance Made Easy

Townships often have limited HR resources but still need to comply with complex employment laws. Attendees will learn simplified HR compliance for townships, covering key areas like payroll, benefits, and labor laws.

Adult-Use Marijuana & Hemp: Updates and Impacts for Townships

As Ohio moves forward with legalized Adult-Use marijuana and an expanded hemp industry, townships must navigate evolving regulations, zoning concerns, and community impacts. Review the implications for local governments, see an overview of recent legislative changes, and explore best practices for crafting policy.

Agricultural Land Preservation

Preserving farmland is essential for many townships, but it can be a challenge in the face of development pressures. Explore tools and strategies to protect agricultural lands, including zoning techniques, agricultural conservation easements, and state programs.

Alternative Paving Techniques

This session will focus on the overlay, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of existing roadways. Attendees will gain a better understanding of the use of some non-traditional construction materials that are well-suited for the township roadway network, including cold mix paving and asphalt recycling will be discussed. The attendees will leave this session understanding where and when to use the construction materials and methods to extend the monies the township has for pavement reconstruction.

Campaigning Beyond the Campaign

In this discussion, we will be exploring what it takes to run an effective campaign. From fundraising, brand building, data, and targeted marketing, we will dive into the do's and don'ts of running an effective local campaign. Additionally, explore campaigning after the campaign, including continuing your personal brand, public engagement, and communications with a focus on implementing your agenda and building a culture of trust in your community.

Cemetery Landscape Maintenance & Management

Proper cemetery maintenance is essential for honoring the past and keeping township properties looking their best. Let's go over best practices for landscaping, headstone care, and general upkeep. Learn how to create a long-term maintenance plan that balances aesthetics and cost.

Chart of Accounts: Knowing Which Fund to Use (FIA) (CPIM)

Understanding the township's chart of accounts is crucial for proper financial management. Join us to learn how to allocate revenue and expenses to the correct funds, ensuring compliance with state laws and financial transparency. You'll leave with practical tips for avoiding common pitfalls in fund accounting.

Communication Techniques To Avoid Sunshine Law Violations (FIA)

Ohio's Sunshine Laws require transparency in government meetings and communications, but compliance can be tricky. This session will offer practical strategies for communicating with the public while staying within the bounds of the law. Avoid common mistakes and ensure your township's meetings and records are accessible.

Composing a Complete Zoning Record

Accurate zoning records are essential for defending township decisions. Attorneys from Brosius, Johnson & Griggs will teach you how to maintain a complete and comprehensive zoning record, from meeting minutes to documentation of public notices.

Containing Healthcare Costs

Healthcare costs can be a significant burden for townships. Review strategies to contain healthcare expenses while providing quality coverage for employees. Learn about alternative insurance plans, wellness programs, and cost-sharing techniques to reduce your township's healthcare spending.

Cost-Effective Ways to Level Cemetery Markers

Township cemeteries often require regular maintenance, including the leveling of markers. Explore cost-effective methods for maintaining cemetery grounds and headstones.

Creative Funding Sources to Provide Requested Services (FIA) (CPIM)

As demand for township services grows, so does the need for creative funding solutions. Explore grants, partnerships, and non-traditional funding sources that can help townships meet the needs of their communities. Leave with actionable ideas to enhance your township's financial stability.

DORAs 101

Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas (DORAs) allow alcohol consumption in public spaces under specific regulations. Explore how townships can establish DORAs, the legal considerations involved, and how they can boost local economic development.

Engaging With Your Legislators

2025 marks the start of the 136th General Assembly (GA), which includes 29 new legislators. This session will review the OTA's 136th GA legislative priorities, hot button issues expected to be tackled by the GA this year, and ways YOU can engage your legislators to support township issues.

Enhancing Township Green Spaces: Trends and Techniques

Explore the latest trends in landscaping, community gardens, and creating multipurpose green spaces that serve diverse community needs, from fitness trails to pollinator gardens.

First Responder Wellness Resources

First responders face significant stress and mental health challenges. Discuss strategies for supporting the well-being of your township's firefighters, EMS personnel, and police officers. Learn about available resources and programs to promote mental health and prevent burnout.

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Following Zoning Protocol to Reduce Legal Action

Proper zoning procedures can prevent costly legal battles. Highlight best practices for following zoning protocols, ensuring that township decisions are legally defensible.

Getting Along to Better Serve Your Constituents (FIA)

As Ohio's chief compliance officer, the Auditor of State's mission is to make government more efficient, effective, and transparent. To achieve this, it is essential that state and local officials work together seamlessly, maintaining checks and balances that protect taxpayer interests. This workshop, presented by the Auditor of State's Office, will provide an in-depth look at how government teams can enhance their collaboration and performance to serve Ohioans better.

Getting the Most Life Out of Your Gravel and Chip Seal Roads

Maintaining gravel and chip seal roads can be challenging, but with the right techniques you can extend their life and reduce maintenance costs. Learn best practices for road grading, drainage, and resurfacing.

Giving a Kick-Butt Financial Presentation (FIA) (CPIM)

Presenting complex financial data to trustees, residents, or stakeholders can be challenging. This workshop will teach you how to simplify data, create compelling visuals, and deliver clear, impactful presentations. Enhance your public speaking skills and confidently communicate your township's financial status.

Handling Unexpected Disruptions to Township Operations

When a key township official suddenly resigns or passes away, it can disrupt operations and create immediate leadership challenges. We will delve into strategies for handling unexpected vacancies, including succession planning, interim appointments, and effective transitions. Develop to maintain stability and continuity in your township's services during times of sudden personnel changes.

How the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association Can Help Your Township Fire Chief

The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association offers numerous resources to support township fire departments. This presentation details how the OFCA can assist your fire chief with training, operational guidance, and leadership development. Learn about the benefits of membership and how to access essential support.

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How to Properly Clean and Reset Headstones

Maintaining township cemeteries includes the careful cleaning and resetting of headstones to preserve their historical value. Follow step-by-step instructions for cleaning headstones safely, preventing damage, and restoring older stones to their original condition.

How Your Township Can Mitigate Damage and When to File a Claim

This session will cover how to assess and mitigate damage, file insurance claims, and recover from loss. Learn best practices for protecting township assets and responding to emergencies.

Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is unsightly and leads to environmental hazards and costly cleanup efforts. Discuss regulations that apply to illegal dumping in your township and possible strategies for preventing and addressing illegal dumping in your township, including enforcement, community engagement, and clean-up programs.

Indigent Burials: Working with Funeral Homes

Townships are legally obligated to provide burial services for indigent residents. Learn the legal requirements and how to work with funeral homes to provide respectful, cost-effective services.

Investment Outlook: Today's Market & Investment

Environment (FIA) (CPIM)

RedTree Investment Group will provide information for decision-makers on investing funds in today's markets. Join a discussion on changes in the economic environment and its related changes in the fixed-income markets.

JobsOhio Update (FIA) (CPIM)

JobsOhio is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to driving economic development in Ohio. Discover how townships can collaborate with JobsOhio to attract new businesses, create jobs, and enhance economic growth.

Large & Small Scale Community Solar

Solar energy is becoming a viable option for both large and small townships. Learn about the benefits, costs, and implementation challenges of community solar projects.

Leading Your Community Through Social Media

In today's digital age, social media is a powerful tool for building, leading, and growing communities. This interactive workshop will teach you how to effectively harness social media platforms to engage your community, inspire meaningful conversations, and drive positive change. Participants will learn key strategies for content creation, audience engagement, and brand building across various social media platforms.

Legislative Updates Impacting Fiscal Duties (FIA) (CPIM)

Recent legislative changes can have a big impact on township fiscal duties. New laws and regulations affect budgeting, financial reporting, and tax policies. Stay ahead of the curve by learning what's changed and how to adapt your processes accordingly.

Let's Make a Deal: Collective Bargaining for Townships (FIA) (CPIM)

Understanding collective bargaining is crucial if you work in a unionized setting. This session will review the process, impasse procedures, and typical strategies. It will also provide an overview of what is happening at the bargaining table in the current environment and an update on recent SERB decisions.

Levy Campaigns: Tips for Success at the Ballot

Running a successful levy campaign requires careful planning and strategic communication. This session will guide you through creating an effective message, engaging voters, and ensuring your levy passes.

Limited Home Rule Government: What, Why, & How

Limited Home Rule offers townships more authority in certain areas, but it's not for everyone. This session will explain what Limited Home Rule is, the pros and cons, and how to implement it if your township qualifies.

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Navigating Ohio's Prevailing Wage Law (FIA) (CPIM)

Ohio's prevailing wage laws can be tricky for township projects, especially when contracting out services. Join to define the legal requirements, reporting obligations, and best practices for ensuring compliance. Avoid fines and legal issues by staying up to date on prevailing wage rules.

Obtaining Police Coverage in Your Township

Many townships rely on external police departments or sheriffs for law enforcement services. Review the process of obtaining police coverage, negotiating contracts, and ensuring adequate protection for your community. Explore options for improving safety and law enforcement presence in your township.

Offering Employees a Deferred Comp Program

A deferred compensation plan can be an attractive benefit for township employees. Examine how these programs work, their tax advantages, and how to implement one for your township. Offering competitive benefits is crucial for attracting and retaining skilled employees.

OH Emergency Medical Services Updates

Keeping up with the latest changes in emergency medical services (EMS) is crucial for townships. Explore updates on new EMS regulations, equipment, and training requirements. Stay informed about how these changes impact your township's emergency response capabilities.

OP&F and OPERS Update (FIA) (CPIM)

Pension plans like OP&F (Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund) and OPERS (Ohio Public Employees Retirement System) are critical for township employees. Gain notable updates for township employers.

Open Space Program (FIA) (CPIM)

Since the 1990s, Ohio Revised Code 5705.19(HH) has empowered townships to preserve open space through dedicated real estate tax levies. Townships can leverage this law to acquire land and development easements, enhancing community green spaces and protecting valuable natural resources. Learn about the benefits, funding strategies, and long-term planning required to maintain open space for future generations.

OUPS: Protecting the Township From Digging Utility Lines

Digging near utility lines can lead to dangerous accidents and costly repairs. This session will explain the Ohio Utilities Protection Service (OUPS) process and how townships can prevent digging-related incidents and avoid liability.

Park Grants Available to Townships (FIA) (CPIM)

Funding for township parks can be hard to come by, but there are several grant opportunities available. Attendees will get an overview of state and federal grants for parks and tips for applying maximizing funding.

Playground Safety

Ensuring playgrounds are safe for children is a priority for any township. An overview of safety standards, inspections, and maintenance practices to prevent accidents and injuries will be shared. Whether you're planning a new playground or maintaining an existing one, learn how to create a safe and fun environment for kids.

Preparing Employees to Drive Township Vehicles

Township employees often need to drive official vehicles, but are they properly trained and prepared? Review the legal and safety requirements for township vehicle use, including CDL requirements, defensive driving, and vehicle maintenance.

Records Retention: Where to Begin! (FIA) (CPIM)

Managing township records can be daunting, but proper retention is key to staying compliant with Ohio's public records laws. This session will guide you through the creation and implementation of a records retention policy. Learn how to organize, store, and dispose of records in a way that meets legal requirements and simplifies township operations.

Recruiting Future Township Leaders

Succession planning is critical to the long-term success of any township. Obtain strategies for identifying, mentoring, and recruiting the next generation of township leaders. Learn how to engage your community and inspire future trustees, fiscal officers, and zoning officials.

Repurposing Distressed Sites for Solar Development

Explore how to turn these unused spaces into productive solar energy sites. Learn about the financial, environmental, and development considerations involved in repurposing land for solar projects.

Required Resolutions for Townships (FIA)

Township trustees must pass various resolutions to comply with state law, but knowing which ones are mandatory can be confusing. Outline the key resolutions in Title 5 that are required when utilizing those sections of the Ohio Revised Code. Ensure your township is legally compliant by understanding these essential resolutions.

Resolution vs. Motion (FIA)

Does this decision need to be made by motion or resolution? What are the proper procedures for taking action in an open meeting? Review the differences between a resolution and a motion, when to use each, and other proper procedures for township meetings.

Road Rights-of-Way: Township Responsibilities

Understanding your township's rights and responsibilities regarding road rights-of-way is key to proper maintenance and development. Attendees will learn how to clarify the legal aspects of rights-of-way, including property disputes, road widening, and utility installations.

Shaping A Preservation Program at the Township Level

Join the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to discuss how HB 315 will allow townships to shape a preservation program to preserve their important historic heritage. Learn more about the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the opportunities available to townships with increased interest in historic preservation.

State Fire Marshal Updates

The State Fire Marshal's office will cover recent changes in fire code, grant opportunities, and fire prevention programs. Learn how your township can enhance fire safety and effectively collaborate with state agencies to protect your community.

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Successfully Recruiting BZA & ZC Members: How to Get Them to Say YES!

Recruiting members for your Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and Zoning Commission (ZC) can be tough. Obtain strategies for attracting qualified candidates, engaging your community, and ensuring a smooth appointment process.

The Anatomy of an Arbitration for Townships (FIA) (CPIM)

For unionized townships, understanding how arbitration works and developing a workable strategy are both crucial to increasing your odds of success. Walk through various types of arbitrations, such as contract interpretation, past practice, termination, and gain tips on preparing your case and helpful language in the collective bargaining agreement to increase your odds of arbitration success.

The Pros and Cons of Forming a Fire District

Forming a fire district can streamline services and reduce costs, but it's not without challenges. Explore the pros and cons of establishing a fire district, including financial, legal, and operational considerations.

The Public's Rights at Public Meetings and on Social Media

Public participation in government is essential, but it can also lead to disruptions if not managed properly. Let's define the public's rights during meetings and on social media and how townships can balance transparency with order. Develop policies that protect both free speech and the integrity of township operations.

The Role of the County Budget Commission in Setting Millage (FIA) (CPIM)

With high property tax valuations impacting townships across Ohio, many budget commissions are reacting by scrutinizing fund balances and, in some cases, refusing to levy authorized millage. Explore how the county budget commission assesses millage rates, the implications of rising property values, and strategies for working with the commission to ensure your township receives adequate funding without accumulating excessive fund balances.

The Unique Property and Liability Insurance Needs of Ohio Townships

Townships have unique exposures that differ from private businesses. This session will explain specific ways to address those needs through strategic coverage solutions. It will also touch on the differences between traditional insurance and intergovernmental pooling.

Tools Townships Can Use to Spur Economic Development

Economic development is vital for township growth and sustainability. Learn about tools and strategies, such as tax incentives, public-private partnerships, and grant programs, to attract businesses and investments.

Township Fiscal Officer Duties (FIA) (CPIM)

Fiscal officers play a vital role in township operations, from budgeting to payroll management. This workshop will provide a comprehensive look at their responsibilities, including financial reporting, compliance with state laws, and ensuring the fiscal health of the township. Gain a deeper understanding of the essential functions that keep townships running smoothly.

Township Zoning and Solar Facilities

Ohio townships now have the authority to adopt zoning regulations for solar facilities under 50 MW. Attendees will uncover why a township may want to consider solar zoning regulations, then will address zoning approaches, procedures, and development standards for solar regulations.

Tree Maintenance: Responsibilities & Innovations

Proper tree maintenance enhances community aesthetics and safety. Discuss the township's role in tree care, legal responsibilities, and innovative approaches to maintaining public trees.

UAN 101 (FIA) (CPIM)

The Uniform Accounting Network (UAN) is a powerful tool for township fiscal officers. This introductory session will teach you the basic features and functions of the UAN system, from entering financial data to generating reports. Perfect for new users or those needing a refresher on this essential accounting platform.

UAN Update (FIA) (CPIM)

This session will focus on the latest updates to the UAN system, including new features, reporting capabilities, and troubleshooting tips. Learn how to make the most of recent enhancements to streamline your township's financial management.

Understanding Certificate of Revenues and Tax Receipts (FIA) (CPIM)

Townships rely heavily on accurate projections of revenue for budgeting and planning. This session will explain the Certificate of Estimated Resources and how it relates to tax receipts. Leave with skills to interpret, track, and report revenue data to ensure sound fiscal management.

Utilizing the Provisions of HB 315

This session will dive into the recently passed House Bill 315, focusing on its provisions and the practical applicability by townships. Learn how this legislation could affect your township's governance, operations, or finances. Stay informed about upcoming changes and how to prepare for them.

Utilizing the UAN Cemetery Module (FIA) (CPIM)

The Uniform Accounting Network (UAN) includes a cemetery module to help townships manage burial records and finances. Get an in-depth look at how to use the module efficiently, from entering burial data to generating reports.

Vehicle Speed Limits on Township Roads: A Township's Role

Setting and enforcing speed limits on township roads can prevent damage and improve safety. This session will explain how townships can establish appropriate limits, monitor compliance, and work with law enforcement to enforce regulations.

Work Zone Safety

Ensuring safety in work zones is critical for township employees and the public. Learn best practices for setting up and managing safe work zones on township roads, including signage, traffic control, and worker training.

Zoning Law Update

Come review and discuss recent zoning court cases, laws, and other regulations that could affect your township.