

“Keep doing what you are doing. I’ve lived in multiple states, and you guys, by far, do the best job of helping us.”

- March 2026 CLGE Participant

YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR SUCCESS



The heart of our agency is our role as a trusted advisor and partner for your organization. The goal of this program is for local officials to take the knowledge and skills gained from these classes back to their respective governments and agencies and apply them to make a positive difference.



Project Management



Legal Updates



Media Communication

**October 28-29, 2026 • In-Person and Livestream
Pennington Biomedical Research Center • C.B. Pennington Conference Center
6400 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70808**

About the Center for Local Government Excellence

Our Mission

Founded in 2015, the **Center for Local Government Excellence** provides local officials and staff with practical skills to improve government operations, service quality, and audit effectiveness. The program focuses on real workplace issues and offers replicable solutions, supports professional development, and encourages engagement with Legislative Auditor personnel and peers.

Registration

CLGE is a **complimentary** training provided by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor. Since the event is livestreamed, participants can attend in-person in Baton Rouge or virtually, whichever best fits their schedule and learning style. Click [HERE](#) to register or visit our website at lla.la.gov/clge. Course materials will be posted on the CLGE website when they are available. Prior to the training, registrants will be provided a link to the live broadcast. *Questions?* Call Liz Martin at (225) 339-3995 or email clge@lla.la.gov.

CPE and CLE Certifications

This training qualifies for a maximum of **8 hours** of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credit, which for CPAs is based on verified actual education hours attended on an individual course basis in accordance with Louisiana State Board of CPAs rules. Everyone with verified attendance of at least one session will receive a CPE transcript, and all transcripts will be emailed several weeks after the workshop.

The Louisiana State Bar Association has approved this workshop for a maximum of **8 hours** of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit. In-person attendees will receive the Course Attendance Form at the workshop. Livestream attendees must check the box requesting CLE when signing into the broadcast to receive the Course Attendance Form with instructions via email. All records are maintained for five years.

Who Should Attend?

Anyone responsible for managing, utilizing, or accounting for public funds, such as:

- Elected officials
- Members of governing bodies such as councils, police juries, school boards, and other boards and commissions
- Department heads
- Accountants and others who perform accounting, finance, and budgeting functions
- Clerks
- Purchasing agents and staff
- Administrative staff
- Auditors and contract accountants
- Consultants and advisors to local governments

The Center for Local Government Excellence programs benefit officials and employees new to government and serve as a refresher for long-time public servants.



Strong leadership makes strong government.

Effective leadership in local and state government requires more than managing people. It means setting expectations, communicating effectively, promoting accountability, managing resources responsibly, and navigating challenges with confidence.

This October, LLA's **FREE CLGE workshop** will focus on practical skills that help leaders succeed. From **project management and sound financial practices to communicating with the media**, these sessions will provide tools and strategies you can take back to your organization and put to work right away.

7:30 – 8:20 a.m.

Log-In Opens for Livestream Attendees;
In-Person Registration/Coffee and Pastries

8:20 – 8:25 a.m.

Welcome by Legislative Auditor Michael J. “Mike”
Waguespack, CPA

8:25 – 8:30 a.m.

Welcome and Program Overview by Judith Dettwiller, CPA,
CIA, MBA, Director of Local Government Services

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Project Management: Defining Project Goals, Meeting Project Deadlines, and Overcoming Project Constraints

Kelly Russell, PMP

*Manager of Construction Auditing, LLA Recovery
Assistance Services*

Project Management is the process of taking an established goal and creating a system of schedules, resources, and fiscal limitations to accomplish the goal by a specific deadline.

9:30 – 9:40 a.m.

Break

9:40 – 10:40 a.m.

Begin with the End in Mind: Managing Grants for a Clean Closeout

Ginger Moses, CPA

*Chief Operating Officer, Office of Community
Development, Division of Administration*

Every grant is easy to start and hard to finish. The difference between a clean closeout and a year of audit findings is decided long before the grant ends — it is built into how the grant is designed, spent, and reported from day one. In this session, the State of Louisiana’s Office of Community Development shares the lifecycle discipline it uses to keep the largest CDG-DR grant portfolio in the country — 12 CDBG Disaster Recovery and Mitigation grants totaling more than \$20 billion — audit-ready at every stage. Using that portfolio as a lens, we walk the four stages of the grant lifecycle — Design, Implementation, Tracking & Reporting, and Closeout — grounding each in the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and in real federal monitoring practice, and translating each into practical, scalable habits any local government can apply to a grant of any size. Every principle connects to a common federal audit finding it prevents. Participants leave with a clear mental model — “complete every stage with closeout in mind” — and a short checklist of systems and tools that make compliance the path of least resistance.

10:40 – 10:50 a.m.

Break

10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Closing the Books with Confidence

Jeffrey H. Maxwell, CPA

Partner, Heard, McElroy and Vestal

Sound bookkeeping throughout the year is the foundation of strong financial management, an efficient year-end close, and a successful audit. This session will focus on practical accounting and bookkeeping processes for local governments, including maintaining accurate records, reconciling accounts, supporting account balances, organizing documentation, and completing key year-end closing procedures. We will also discuss common issues that lead to audit adjustments or findings, and the steps governments can take to prevent them. Attendees will leave with practical best practices to strengthen financial processes, enhance accountability, streamline the year-end close, and be better prepared when auditors arrive.

11:50 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:20 – 3:30 p.m.

Legal Updates & Current Issues

Jenifer Schaye, CFE, LLA General Counsel

Angela M. Heath, LLM, CFE, Senior Attorney

Patrick Virgadamo, CFE, Senior Attorney

During these sessions, the LLA’s General Counsel and Senior Attorneys will discuss legislative updates. In addition, they will discuss current issues which are important to local government. They will review Attorney General (AG) opinions and court cases which are impacting and may impact local government. They will suggest practical ways to avoid regulatory and legal violations.



Helpful LLA Resources

[Legal FAQs](#)
[Previous Legal Questions](#)
[LLA Legal Minute](#)

[Legislative Updates](#)
[Use of Public Dollars](#)

7:30 – 8:25 a.m.

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8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Navigating Situational Conflict and Addressing Challenging People

Michelle Boullion, PhD, CPLP, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

*Assistant Dean of Alumni Relations & Engagement;
Director, LSU Executive Education; LSU100; LSU-EBV
Accelerate; LSU-CFP; E.J. Ourso College of Business, LSU*

Conflict with coworkers or clients is inevitable, testing even the most patient professionals. This session delivers practical tools to manage disruptive, resistant, or emotionally charged situations. Learn how to diffuse difficult behaviors, navigate tough conversations, and protect your professional relationships.

9:30 – 9:40 a.m.

Break

9:40 – 10:40 a.m.

Best Practices for Local Governments When Communicating with the Media

Alisha Prather, MS

Director, Louisiana, Harris, DeVille & Associates

Karen M. Rowley, PhD

LLA Senior Communications Manager

What happens when the inevitable phone call or email message comes from a member of the media? Should you respond? Should you ignore it? This session will focus on best practices to help you develop a strategy to handle media requests, determine what to say and what not to say, and make the most of the opportunity to share your information.

10:40 – 10:50 a.m.

Break

10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Managing Your Personal Brand

Thomas “Tommy” J. Karam, PhD

*Distinguished Instructor, Department of Marketing & Flores
MBA Program, LSU*

This course will help you understand ways in which you can manage your personal brand in the various situations you face both professionally and personally. Learn valuable tips that help make your personal brand “more better.”



“I would like to applaud your team again for a great session. The information being provided is across the board invaluable. I look forward to the next one.”

- March 2026 CLGE Participant



What are you waiting for? To register for this dynamic and informative program, [click here!](#)

Photos courtesy of pixabay.com.

For our in-person attendees, dress is business casual. Coffee, water, and snacks will be available each morning. Lunch will be on your own each day.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact Liz Martin at (225) 339-3995 or clge@lla.la.gov.