



CALLED TO SERVE '26 WINTER CONFERENCE

STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER
JANUARY 14–16, 2026

REGISTRATION

Register and find additional details at [REGISTER.ARML.ORG](https://register.arml.org).

For more information contact: events@arml.org

- \$350 Member registration October 1 through January 13.
- \$150 spouses and significant others.
- \$600 Nonmember registration through December 31.
- No refunds will be available after December 31.
- On-site registration increases by \$50 starting January 14- \$400 Member, \$650 Nonmember.
- Registrations made via telephone will not be accepted. All registrations must be processed online with a credit card.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

ACCRTA (Arkansas City Clerks Records and Treasurers Association) will hold a **New Clerk Orientation** in the Arkansas ballroom of the Marriott at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 14 and a silent auction in the Exhibition Hall.

****NEW**** Partner up on Wednesday, January 14, from 2–3 PM for a high-energy **Trivia showdown** in the Exhibition Hall centered around the Civilpedia handbook. Questions cover key topics from its five core areas: municipal government, municipal finance, human resources, planning and zoning, and the Freedom of Information Act. Plan to showcase your knowledge, learn alongside your peers, and walk away with some great giveaways.

Plan to join us at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, January 14, for the **Joint City, County and Local Affairs Committee** meeting in the Marriott.

Wednesday's **Delta Dental Happy Hour**, Thursday morning **City of Little Rock Breakfast**, and Thursday's **FARCO Happy Hour** as well as popcorn and refreshments will all be served in the Exhibition Hall along with live content and podcast recordings.

Opening Night Dinner will be a buffet dinner in the Wally Allen Ballroom with live music entertainment and plenty of seats for everyone.

On Thursday, January 15, municipal IT directors and IT staff have been invited to a special **Information Technology training**. Email jmelton@arml.org for additional details.

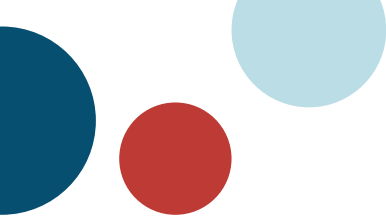
Celebrate your municipalities achievements at the **Arkansas Business Trendsetter City** and the **EngageAR Volunteer Community of the Year Awards** luncheon at 12 p.m. on Thursday, January 15 in the **Wally Allen Ballroom**. Tickets are included in Member & Nonmember registration but can be purchased separately for those not attending the conference by emailing events@arml.org.

General Wesley Clark will address us at the **Inspire Breakfast** on Friday, January 16 in the Marriott Ballrooms.

Sponsor & Exhibitor information is available at [REGISTER.ARML.ORG](https://register.arml.org). As our Exhibition Hall continues to grow in popularity, sponsoring is the best way to secure a preferred booth location.

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AGENDA

Times and locations are a work in progress and may change prior to the event. Stay tuned for updates made to [REGISTER.ARML.ORG](https://register.arml.org) as we get closer to the event.

Wednesday, January 14

10 a.m. ACCRTA New Clerk Orientation, Arkansas Ballroom

1-5 p.m. Check-in open

1-6 p.m. Exhibition Hall open

1 p.m. Municipal Workers Compensation Board of Trustees Meeting, Manning Room, Marriott

2 p.m. Exhibition Hall Popcorn & Trivia

Team up for a high-energy trivia showdown centered around testing and showcasing your municipal knowledge. Questions cover key topics from its five core areas of Civilpedia: municipal government, municipal finance, human resources, planning and zoning, and the Freedom of Information Act.

3- 4:30 p.m. Joint City, County and Local Affairs Committee, Marriott Ballroom

We encourage you to join us at this meeting of the Arkansas Legislature's Joint City, County and Local Affairs committee as they discuss important issues facing Arkansas cities and towns.

5-6 p.m. Delta Dental Happy Hour, Exhibition Hall

Join us for happy hour where attendees, exhibitors and sponsors can network. Members and guests will receive two drink tickets courtesy of Delta Dental.

6-7:30 p.m. JTS Opening Night Dinner, Wally Allen Ballroom,

Enjoy a buffet dinner accompanied by live music entertainment and the American Fidelity Signature Cocktail. While there will be no formal program, guests will be welcomed by Arkansas Municipal League President and Greenwood Mayor Doug Kinslow, Executive Director Mark Hayes, and Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott.

7:45 p.m. Stephens Dessert Reception, Capital Hotel

End the evening at the elegant Capital Hotel where Stephens invites you to enjoy a dessert reception.

Thursday, January 15

7:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. Check-in open

7:30 a.m.- 6 p.m. Exhibition Hall open

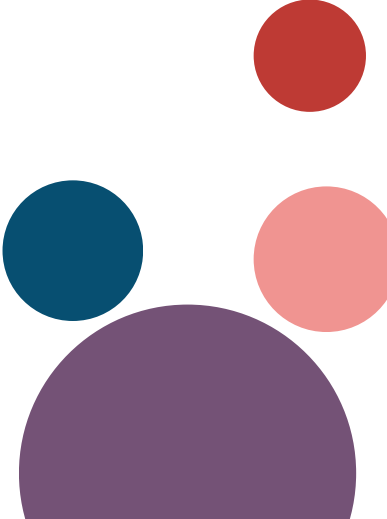
7:30- 8:45 a.m. City of Little Rock Breakfast, Exhibition Hall

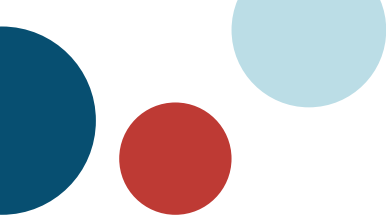
8 a.m.-5 p.m. ACAA CLE, Drew Room, Statehouse Convention Center

8:15-8:45 a.m. Voluntary Prayer Session, Fulton Room

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9- 10:15 a.m. Opening General Session 1; Regulatory Rethinking: Called to Serve with Purpose, Governor's Hall IV

Following a welcome from Mayor Kinslow and the Presentation of Colors and National Anthem, John Wilkerson will lead this discussion examining the ways that the 2025 Arkansas legislative session placed significant emphasis on land use policy, signaling a shift in how local governments and state agencies approach regulatory frameworks. Wilkerson will provide an overview of recent and anticipated legislative developments and introduce the concept of a "Regulatory Rethinking" a movement aimed at modernizing codes to better support economic growth and community development. This renewed focus on policy and planning invites municipal leaders to think critically about how regulation can be both responsive and visionary. Participants will gain insight into how intentional leadership, participation in the legislative process and collaboration can create more forward-looking Arkansas cities and towns.

10:30- 11:20 a.m. or 11:50 First Round Breakout Sessions- 50 or 80 minutes (Descriptions on pages 5 & 6)

1. Building Inspectors, Firefighters, and the Safety of Your Municipality (80 minutes)
2. Audit-Ready: Best Practices for Municipal Audit Success (80 minutes)
3. Inside City Hall: Navigating Roles, Responsibilities & Real-World Scenarios (50 minutes)

12 p.m.-1:30 p.m. Trendsetter City and Volunteer Community of the Year Awards Luncheon sponsored by the Wyndham Riverfront, Wally Allen Ballroom, Statehouse Convention Center

We're excited to honor the exceptional efforts of Arkansas municipalities at the ABPG Trendsetter City Awards and the EngageAR Volunteer Community of the Year Awards. Members and sponsors are invited to this sit-down, plated lunch. Exhibitors are welcome to purchase lunch tickets for \$50 at check-in. Thank you Wyndham Riverfront for making this lunch possible.

2 p.m.- 2:50 p.m. Second Round Breakout Sessions (Descriptions on pages 5 & 6)

4. Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership: Settlement Implementation and Local Impact, Exhibition Hall Stage
5. Rules in Play: Parliamentary Procedure Showdown
6. Data-Driven Safety: Leveraging Evidence-Based Practices to Protect law enforcement officers and Communities
7. Your Municipality's Water and Sewer Infrastructure: New Opportunities from ANRC

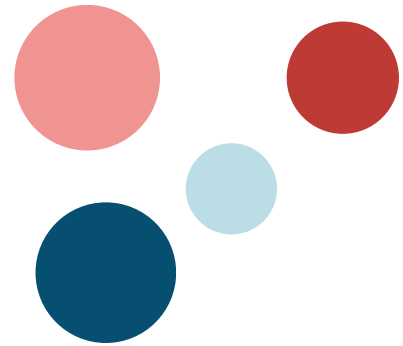
3- 3:50 p.m. Third Round Breakout Sessions (Descriptions on pages 5 & 6)

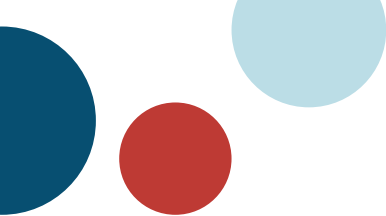
7. Municipal Budgets from Start to Finish: A Practical Guide
8. Funding the Future: Municipal Revenue Strategies
9. Navigating Act 371: New Pathways for District Court Funding

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4- 5 p.m. General Session 2; Issue 3: Called to Serve Through Progress, Governor's Hall IV

Public service often means leading change that outlasts a single term. Following the passage of SJR 15, Arkansas cities and towns are poised for transformative growth. Mark Hayes, Senator Jonathan Dismang and Representative Howard Beaty will discuss the impact of the constitutional amendment and how the creation of Economic Development Districts could reshape local economies. Drawing on successful models from surrounding states, this session will explore how local leaders can turn legislative momentum into long-term progress, driving investment, strengthening partnerships, and creating a more prosperous future for Arkansas.

**** NEW** 5-6 p.m. FARCO Happy Hour, Exhibition Hall**

Join us for happy hour where attendees, exhibitors and sponsors can network. Members and guests will receive two drink tickets courtesy of FARCO Construction.

Dinner on your own

Friday, January 16

8 a.m.-5 p.m. CLE, Drew Room, Statehouse Convention Center

8-10 a.m. General Session 3 Inspire Breakfast, Marriott Ballrooms

In a time of division, the highest form of public service is listening, leading, and fostering trust. After "Know Before You Go" reminders from Mark Hayes, General Wesley Clark will lead a compelling conversation on restoring civility and common ground in American public life. Through his work with Renew America Together, General Clark promotes civic education, respectful dialogue, and informed leadership. Attendees will be introduced to key initiatives including SERVE (a framework for civility), TRUST (addressing disinformation), and the Civility Leadership Institute, which offers practical tools to strengthen civic engagement and build bridges across communities. This session embodies what it means to be Called to Serve with integrity, empathy, and respect.

Arkansas Passport game prizes will be drawn at breakfast but you must be present to win.

Majority of the Attendees on the road by 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m. Municipal Health Board Meeting, Manning Room, Marriott

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JANUARY 15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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Building Inspectors, Firefighters, and the Safety of Your Municipality (10:30 a.m.)



Building inspectors are a critical line of defense in protecting both property and lives. Join John Wilkerson, AJ Gary, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), Rogers Mayor Greg Hines, and Michael Archdeacon from the City of Cabot to explore how code enforcement and structural integrity directly impact firefighter safety. Learn how proactive inspections and interagency collaboration can reduce fire risks and improve emergency response outcomes in your municipality.

Data-Driven Safety: Leveraging Evidence-Based Practices to Protect Officers and Municipalities (2 p.m.)

The Municipal Legal Defense Program (MLDP) partnership with Benchmark Analytics is helping Arkansas cities and towns identify effective, evidence-based practices in law enforcement. Brie Gibson, Chief David Ewing of Russellville, and Hope City Manager JR Wilson will share how data is being used to guide officer training, reduce liability, and build safer, more trusting relationships between police and those they serve.

Your Municipality's Water and Sewer Infrastructure: New Opportunities from ANRC (2 p.m.)

Arkansas Natural Resources Commission's (ANRC) Debra Dickson and AML's Caran Curry will take an in-depth look at current funding opportunities for water and sewer projects across the state. This session will spotlight the new State ANRC Grant, which requires projects to be shovel-ready and begin construction within one year of award. Learn how to position for success under the newly published rules and requirements, and get practical guidance on meeting the readiness criteria.

Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership: Settlement Implementation and Local Impact (2 p.m.)

The Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership (ARORP) continues to guide municipalities through the implementation of national settlement funds. Mark Hayes and Kirk Lane will provide updates on form submissions, funding timelines, and how cities can access resources to support prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts. Learn how to align your local strategy with ARORP's mission to combat the opioid crisis.

Navigating Act 371: New Pathways for District Court Funding (3 p.m.)

Act 371 has reshaped how Arkansas municipalities manage District Court funding, requiring new procedures for collecting and disbursing uniform court costs and filing fees. Caleb Alexander-McKenzie, Taylor Handford, Association of Arkansas Counties (AAC), and Kristin Clark, Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) will explain the law's impact on local government operations and offer practical guidance for transitioning from legacy systems to this new funding model.

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JANUARY 15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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FOUNDATIONS TRACK

Inside City Hall: Navigating Roles, Responsibilities & Real-World Scenarios (10:30 a.m.)

Step into the dynamic world of municipal governance in this interactive session designed for new and seasoned officials alike. Through engaging role-play, real-world case studies and facilitated discussions, participants will explore the distinct yet interconnected duties of mayors, city council members, city clerks, recorders and treasurers. Whether you're newly elected or a veteran official looking to sharpen your skills, this session will strengthen your impact in public service.

Rules in Play: Parliamentary Procedure Showdown (2 p.m.)

Join Kim Jones, Director of the Municipal Clerks Institute, for a lively, game-show-style session that puts your parliamentary procedure skills to the test. Through rapid-fire trivia, role-play, and real-world scenarios, participants will explore the importance of policy and procedure and explore structured meeting transparency and legal compliance, motions, quorums, and other foundational rules, and the important roles municipal officials play.

Funding the Future: Municipal Revenue Strategies (3 p.m.)

Where does the money come from, and how can cities and towns make the most of it? Join League attorney Bill Mann for a deep dive into the diverse and often misunderstood world of municipal revenue. Through real-world examples, interactive discussion, and expert insights, this session will equip municipal officials with the tools to make informed, strategic decisions about funding their communities, with a special focus on sales taxes, A&P commissions and business licensing.

FINANCE TRACK

These breakout sessions are specifically geared toward municipal officials and employees who are involved in municipal finance matters, including clerks, treasurers, recorders, finance directors, mayors, and city council members. Get your finance chops sharpened in preparation for the upcoming AML 8-hour finance training required by the legislature later this year.

Audit-Ready: Best Practices for Municipal Audit Success (10:30 a.m.)

This session offers a practical roadmap to help your municipality prepare for a smooth and successful audit. Using the top 10 audit findings from Arkansas as a guide, we'll explore common challenges, how to avoid them, and proactive steps to strengthen your financial practices. We'll also discuss the potential negative impacts of delayed audits or repeated findings.

Municipal Budgets from Start to Finish: A Practical Guide (3 p.m.)

This breakout will walk through the full municipal budgeting process, from structure and revenue forecasting to expense categories and timelines. Learn how to build a compliant, transparent budget aligned with Arkansas law, including key deadlines, required approvals, and best practices for planning and communication.