

# Labor Negotiations

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## Municipal Management Workshop Series: General Management

Over the past decade and accelerated by post-pandemic retirements, vacancies have substantially increased for key positions such as Business Administrators and Managers. As a result, many dedicated individuals have stepped into these key municipal positions, and the formidable task of navigating New Jersey's laws, regulations, and procedures without formal training.

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities has partnered with NJ Community Solutions to provide a new educational program that will teach individuals about the practical side of managing municipalities. Workshops will begin in early 2024, and a schedule will be posted soon.

The Municipal Management Workshops are a series of three-hour practical educational sessions. Each session will be held in person in small class sizes to provide opportunities to learn, discuss and question key aspects of managing a municipality. The first series will cover a broad range of issues, including financial and personnel management; managing public works and public safety, including police and fire; organizational management, including departments; council and community relations; and lastly insurance management, municipal audits, and ethics.

**Session 1.** Financial management is one of the fundamental activities of any organization. Understanding how the budget is assembled and managed is important to all decision-makers who run local governments. New Jersey requires all municipalities to have a Certified Financial Officer. The position is essential but for administrators and governing body members, and others in the organization, it is important to understand general management and planning the finances of the municipality.

Later in the year we will offer a series on financial management that will go much deeper into this subject matter. We will cover a number of key personnel issues that administrators should be aware of. As with financial management, later in the year we'll be offering a series on personnel management and Labor Relations.

**Session 2.** Two of the largest departments in any municipality are the public works and police departments. Management of these departments is paramount to providing good service to the taxpayers. We will also discuss fire department management. While some communities have volunteer Fire Department or districts, management of various methods

of fire protection has its unique challenges. This session will cover general practical management practices that will help you guide these departments and avoid pitfalls for newly appointed administrators or elected officials.

**Session 3.** This covers covers managing health departments, uniform construction code offices, planning and zoning, and the municipal clerks office. All of them have unique aspects and are generally managed by state certified department heads. Critical to this management is not to perform the work of these key positions but to ensure they are managed properly and understand exactly what they do.

**Session 4.** This covers what generally is not covered anywhere else and that is how to nurture the relationship between the administration of the town and the elected governing body. All too often, the administration of the town and the expectations of the governing body do not match up. This session offers some tips on how to nurture that relationship and ensure that the policies of the governing body are implemented as they are envisioned. Further, and perhaps more importantly, we will discuss managing expectations of elected officials. Again, there is a separate series offered later in the year that will take a much deeper look and discussion into the relationships that the administration of a town should have with elected Officials and the community in general.

**Session 5.** The last session in this series covers three particular areas of operations. Insurance: how to manage costs, how joint insurance is arranged, and how to anticipate increasing costs. The annual audit: from this document key information needed to financially manage and plan is paramount to any good governance. And finally, ethics: we will discuss policies, both legislatively in place and those needed to guard against bad acts.

The Municipal Management Workshop series is open to all interested individuals looking to expand their knowledge about key administrative functions within a municipality. The program is designed for flexibility and affordability of instruction, providing options to select single workshops, choose a particular series based on an area of concentration, or the full 5-part series. Each series will be offered throughout the year in northern, central, and southern New Jersey as demand dictates.

For session dates, times, location, and registration, go to [www.njlm.org](http://www.njlm.org), for links to this information. 📌

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