



Office of the State Auditor

Summer 2020

CTAS News and Notes

Small City & Town Accounting System (CTAS)

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Call, fax, or e-mail your CTAS questions. If no one is immediately available, we will respond the next workday.

CTAS 2020 Released

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) is pleased to announce that CTAS 2020 is now available through the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES).

CTAS 2020 includes updated Federal and Minnesota tax tables, updated withholding calculations for the new 2020 Form W-4, and the addition of information on paystubs to comply with Minnesota's new wage theft law.

If your entity purchased CTAS 8, CTAS 2018 or CTAS 2019, there is no additional cost to download and use CTAS 2020.

Before downloading CTAS 2020, please check to make sure your computer has Microsoft Windows 8, 8.1, or 10, and that all updates have been installed. The minimum computer requirements for CTAS 2020 are located on our CTAS webpage at:

https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/ctas/docs/CTAS_Requirements.pdf

To download CTAS 2020, log into SAFES at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/SAFES/>

and click on the CTAS tab.

Review and choose the CTAS download most appropriate for your entity (Web or Offline installer) based on the descriptions provided. If you do not have SAFES access, please send an e-mail to:

SAFES@osa.state.mn.us

Written instructions for downloading and installing CTAS 2020 from SAFES can be found at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctastraining>

State Auditor's E-Update

Each week, the OSA e-mails the State Auditor's E-Update, which provides information and highlights events related to local government financial activities, including CTAS news and information on reporting.

To view recent E-Updates and sign up to receive the E-Update each week, go to:

www.auditor.state.mn.us

Once you're there, find the "Latest News" tab at the top of the page and click on the "E-Updates" link.

CTAS 2020 Tax Tables

The 2020 payroll tax tables are available on the CTAS webpage at:
<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctas>

The 2020 tax tables are already included in CTAS 2020. If you are using another version of CTAS and need to upload the 2020 tax tables, they can be entered into the CTAS program by two methods:

- 1) Import from the OSA website
- 2) Import from file

See Chapter 15, Tax Tables in the CTAS User Manual for detailed instructions at:
https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/ctas/CTAS_Manual/CTASUserManualChapter15.pdf

CTAS Files Submissions

Submissions from CTAS Versions 2018, 2019, or 2020 will only be accepted. The OSA does not provide support for CTAS Version 7 or CTAS Version 8 and will not accept year-end financial reporting forms prepared with these versions. If you are still using Version 7 or 8, you will need to either upgrade to the most current version of CTAS or download the Local Government Reporting Form for 2019 reporting from SAFES.

CTAS Version 7 users, who have not purchased an upgrade and want to submit the year-end financial reporting forms via CTAS, must purchase an upgrade. CTAS Version 8 users, do not need to purchase the upgrade. They can log into SAFES and install CTAS 2020. Order forms for CTAS are available on our website at:
https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/ctas/docs/CTAS_Order_Form.pdf

Documents and videos with instructions for downloading and installing CTAS can be found at:
<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctastraining>

IMPORTANT: Remember to back up your data using an external storage device such as a USB thumb drive or CD before upgrading your CTAS system. Step-by-step instructions for backing up CTAS data can be found in Chapter 10 (pages 10-14 and 10-15) of the CTAS User Manual on the OSA's website at:
https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/ctas/CTAS_Manual/CTASUserManualChapter10.pdf

The CTAS Helpline is Available to Help You

Call, fax, or e-mail your CTAS questions. If no one is immediately available, we will respond the next workday.

Call:

(651) 296-6262

Fax:

(651) 296-4755

E-mail:

CTAS@osa.state.mn.us

CTAS Known Issues

The Known Issues webpage is a current list of known CTAS issues identified by CTAS users. After each issue, you'll find a suggested temporary solution to the issue. At least once a year, we work towards fixing the known issues.

We encourage you to visit this page on our website regularly as you continue to use CTAS to see if any new issues have been added. The link to the CTAS Known Issues webpage is:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctasknownissues>

If you discover any issues that are not currently listed, please submit them to ctas@osa.state.mn.us . We will work to correct these issues in the next CTAS update.

Using CTAS Chart of Accounts and the Wizard Tool

The OSA recommends that all CTAS users follow the CTAS Chart of Accounts. The Chart of Accounts can be located under the "CTAS Documents" heading on the CTAS page of the OSA website at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctas>

CTAS makes it easy to add a Fund, Account Number, and/or Object Code by using the program's "Wizard". The Wizard is a tool in the program that asks a series of questions, then generates a Fund Number, Account Number, or Object Code. Be sure to refer to the CTAS Chart of Accounts before creating new Funds, Accounts, or Object Codes.

Step-by-step instructions and screenshots for using the Wizard to set up new Funds, Accounts, and Object Codes a located in Chapter 8 of the CTAS Manual, which can be found at:

https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/ctas/CTAS_Manual/CTASUserManualChapter08.pdf

See pages 7, 21, and 34.

Important Reporting Dates:

Due March 31:

Town Financial Reporting Form – Cash Basis of Accounting

City Financial Reporting Form – Cash Basis of Accounting

City Financial Statements Audited or Unaudited – Cash Basis of Accounting

CTAS User Manual

Most questions we receive from users can be quickly answered in the CTAS User Manual. The Manual includes step-by-step instructions and screenshots. The CTAS User Manual is available on our web- site at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctasmanual>.

The Manual includes chapters on setting up your CTAS system; the Accounting Modules (Receipts, Claims, Disbursements, Budget, Financial Reports, Chart of Accounts, Administration, etc.); Payroll; Investments; Indebtedness; and Program Support.

SAFES Usernames and Passwords

We want to thank all of the entities who use the State Auditor’s Form Entry System (SAFES) to download and submit their forms and documents to the OSA. If you are a SAFES user, here are helpful hints when using SAFES:

- Each SAFES user must have a username and password. Others should not know or use your password. If you need a SAFES username, please send an e-mail to SAFES@osa.state.mn.us with your entity name, your name, position, public mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address. We will e-mail you your username so you can request a password.
- Your SAFES e-mail address or username can be used to reset passwords. For security, you should use an e-mail address that only you have access to. You should not use a shared e-mail address such as an entity’s e-mail address as your SAFES e-mail.
- The contact information you provide to us is considered public. The OSA will be required to provide your contact information if a data request is made for it. Please keep this in mind when choosing the contact information you provide to us.

Important Reporting Dates:

Due June 30:

Town Financial Reporting Form – in Accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

Town Audited Financial Statements – GAAP Basis of Accounting

City Financial Reporting Form – GAAP Basis of Accounting

City Audited Financial Statements – GAAP Basis of Accounting

Electronic Fund Transfer Payments

Some local governments receive multiple Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) payments from the State. The payments are generated by Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB).

Each local government can log into MMB’s website to view EFT payment information. Local governments can also sign up for e-mail alerts indicating when payments are made, the amounts, and the type of payment. The MMB EFT phone number is 651-201-8106, and their e-mail is: efthelpline.mmb@state.mn.us.

There are many benefits to receiving electronic fund payments from the State, including assuring that checks do not get lost or that you will not have to go out in a snowstorm to pick up or deposit a check. EFT’s also eliminate the confusion over which year a deposit should be recorded.

Audit Requirements for Cities and Towns

Not all cities and towns have the same audit requirements. Audit requirements can vary depending on a variety of factors, including the population of the city or town, whether the clerk and treasurer positions are combined, and whether the city or town is above or below the current audit revenue threshold.

Please review audit requirements to make sure your entity is in compliance. Audit requirements can be found on the OSA website at: <https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=faq>.

Reminder: Report Change of Officers

When the person filling the role of a Clerk or Treasurer for local government changes, the local government is responsible for contacting the OSA to update this information as soon as possible. Reminder notices or other important information may not reach the correct individuals if the change is not reported.

To report a change of officers, send an e-mail to GID.OSA@osa.state.mn.us . In the subject line, please put “Change in Contact Information” and provide us with only work/public contact information, such as e-mail, mailing address, and telephone number.

CTAS Checks

The vendors listed here offer checks that work with CTAS. The OSA does not recommend vendors, but offers this resource for your CTAS check printing needs.

Tammy & Shaun Stottler
American Solutions for Business
19562 Halwood Road
Glenwood, MN 56334
Phone: (320) 634-3344
Fax: (320) 634-0287
tstottle@americanbus.com

Amanda Kramer
American Solutions for Business
11963 State Highway 9
Herman, MN 56248
Phone: (320) 763-5535
akramer@americanbus.com

Lonny Duenow
Victor Lundeen Corp.
126 W. Lincoln Avenue
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Phone: (218) 736-5433
Phone: (800) 346-4870
lonny@victorlundeens.com

Bob Closser
Government Forms & Supplies
390 E. Tyrone Street
Le Center, MN 56057
Phone: (844) 224-3338
bclosser@frontiernet.net

These vendors also offer window envelopes for mailing checks printed with CTAS.

COVID-19 Update

Please see the OSA’s Home page on our website containing COVID-19 Updates. Also, we are watching to see how CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) funding sent to the State will be disbursed to local governments. We will be sending out information in the future as to where to code CARES funding and disbursements.

Additional Communication Platform for CTAS Information

Since 1999 the CTAS Newsletter has provided information and updates pertaining to the CTAS program. We will continue to provide CTAS updates through our Newsletters. However, this summer we will start adding limited CTAS information in the OSA’s weekly E-Updates. This change will allow us to communicate pertinent information regarding the CTAS program faster and more frequently to users.

We will continue to e-mail CTAS users directly for future releases as well as communicate releases in the CTAS Newsletters and E-Update.

Another great source of information is the OSA’s CTAS webpage. This webpage contains everything you need to know about CTAS. The OSA is working on updating our website. As part of this update, we will be reaching out to our CTAS users testing group for ways to improve and update the CTAS webpage. The CTAS webpage is located at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctas>

If you are currently not receiving E-Updates, click on the link below to register <https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/Public/Form.aspx?fid=1784230&ac=e07o>.

Once on the State Auditor’s E-Update page, select the “Sign-up for the State Auditor’s E-Update” link to begin receiving E-Update.

**Office of the
State Auditor
Government
Information
Division****Contact Us at Your Convenience**

A number of CTAS users conduct town or city business in the evening or on weekends when the CTAS Helpline is not available. By using the CTAS e-mail, CTAS@osa.state.mn.us, a response to your question will generally be sent to you the next business day.

Also, the CTAS page on the OSA website has information that is accessible 24/7 that may help answer your questions. To view the page, please go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ctas>.

Website:

www.auditor.state.mn.us

Call:

(651) 296-6262

Fax:

(651) 296-4755

E-mail:

CTAS@osa.state.mn.us