

**91<sup>st</sup> Annual TACA Conference**  
**Moody Gardens Hotel & Convention Center | Galveston | June 1-4, 2025**  
**Lightsabers of Leadership – Illuminating the Way Forward**

**Saturday, May 31**

3-6 p.m. Board Meeting (*Vine*)

**Sunday, June 1**

11 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration and Information Desk Open (*Convention Registration*)

11 a.m.-5 p.m. TACA Welcome Table (*Convention Registration*)

1-2 p.m. Program Committee Meeting (*Vine 2*)

1-5 p.m. **New Tax Assessor-Collector Orientation** (*Vine 1*)  
*Speakers: Hon. Tammy McRae, Tax Assessor-Collector and Past President, Montgomery County*  
*Hon. Randy Riggs, Tax Assessor-Collector and Past President, McLennan County*  
*Moderator: Hon. Cheryl Gaskamp, Tax Assessor-Collector, Washington County*  
This session is required for all new tax assessor-collectors during the first 90 days of taking office. It provides information on the basic operations of a county tax office, where additional resources can be obtained, and on the rules and regulations that are state-mandated. Tax assessor-collectors are considered new if still in their first term of office.

1-5 p.m. **Advanced Session – Team Building** (*Floral Hall*)  
*Speakers: Tiffany Seward, Director of Communications, Travis County*  
*Stacy Spruell, Director of Business Services, Travis County*  
*Moderator: Hon. Terrie Pendley, Tax Assessor-Collector, Real County*  
Come learn to unite your team as one force, learning to collaborate across the galaxy's challenges and strengthen the bonds that drive collective success. Through strategic exercises, you'll master the art of communication, decision-making and adaptability, ensuring your team is ready for any mission that comes your way. By the end, you'll be a cohesive unit, equipped to face even the most perilous adventures with unwavering trust and shared purpose. **This is a TACA-approved course for certification. Additional fee required.**

2-4 p.m.                   **Title Fraud Series – Motor Vehicle Fraud II** (*Ivy*)  
*Speakers: Andrea Berlocher, Manager of County Compliance Section, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV)*  
*Mary Lou Cardenas, Lead Compliance Specialist, TxDMV*  
*Moderator: Hon. Ruben Gonzalez, Tax Assessor-Collector and TACA Director, El Paso County*  
This session will provide instructions for detecting vehicle fraud, including title, odometer and tax fraud.  
**This is a TACA-approved course for certification.**

3-4 p.m.                   TxDMV Liaison Committee Meeting (*Vine 2*)

5:5:30 p.m.               Awards Committee Meeting (*Vine 1*)

7:30-10:30 p.m.       Bingo! (*Moody Ballroom*)

**Monday, June 2**

8-8:30 a.m.               By-Laws Committee Meeting (*Expo Hall A1*)

8-8:30 a.m.               Security Committee Meeting (*Expo Hall A2*)

8-9 a.m.                   Continental Breakfast (*Expo Hall Foyer*)

8 a.m.-5 p.m.           Registration and Information Desk Open (*Convention Registration*)

9-9:30 a.m.               **Welcome and Greetings** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Greetings by Hon. Shay Luedeke, TACA President and Tax Assessor-Collector, Bell County*  
*Invocation by Hon. Mike Dowd, Tax Assessor-Collector, Navarro County*  
*Presentation of Colors by Galveston County Sheriff's Office*  
*Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag and Pledge to the Texas Flag by Hon. Melissa Leonard, Tax Assessor-Collector, Brazos County*

9:30-11 a.m.             **Scoring in the Red Zone: The Force Within** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Speaker: Spencer Tillman, College Football Analyst, Fox Sports 1 and Former NFL Player*  
In this high-stakes session, participants will explore the critical moments that define successful leadership when the pressure is on. Much like a quarterback in the final minutes of a game, leaders must make crucial decisions, inspire confidence, and execute with

precision. Learn how to navigate challenging situations, rally your team, and take action when the stakes are highest, ensuring you score big and lead your team to victory in the most intense moments.

11-11:10 a.m. Break (*Expo Hall Foyer*)

11:10 a.m.–noon **From Chaos to Calm – Creating a Successful Organization** (*Expo Hall A1*)

*Speaker: Hon. Cheryl E. Johnson, Tax Assessor-Collector, Galveston County*

*Moderator: Hon. Kristen Spies, Tax Assessor-Collector, Blanco County*

The Galveston County Tax Office was once a leader in disorganization, but today it is a role model for outstanding performance and efficiency. Its successes are believed to be the result of the development of properly written and consistently executed policies and procedures. A policy can take your office from chaos to calm, creating structure and eliminating confusion. Learn how and when to write policies that will provide for rational and uniform decision-making in the day-to-day operations of your office while fostering an environment conducive to success, growth and ethical conduct.

### **Navigating the Cyber Galaxy: Defending Your Digital Empire From Intergalactic Threats** (*Expo Hall A2*)

*Speaker: Brandon Lewis, Process Improvement Specialist, BIS Consultants*

*Moderator: Hon. Karen Lane, Tax Assessor-Collector and TACA Director, Madison County*

In this session, you'll embark on a mission to explore the vast universe of cybersecurity, learning how to protect your systems from the ever-growing threats lurking in the digital cosmos. Just like a skilled starship crew defends against intergalactic dangers, you'll discover essential strategies and tools to safeguard your data, networks and sensitive information from cyber invaders. By the end of the session, you'll be equipped to navigate the cyber galaxy with confidence, ensuring your operations stay secure in the face of emerging threats.

**Tax Assessor-Collectors Connections** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speaker: Connie Rose, Director of Education, McCreary Veselka Bragg & Allen, P.C.*

*Moderator: Hon. Melissa Leonard, Tax Assessor-Collector, Brazos County*

In this session, tax assessor-collectors will embark on a journey to discover the key contacts within state and local agencies—vital allies in the galaxy of county operations. Like a skilled Jedi navigating the cosmos, you'll learn how to forge strong alliances and collaborate with these agencies to maintain order and ensure smooth operations. By the end, you'll be equipped with the knowledge and resources to build powerful connections, ensuring your success in the ever-evolving world of Texas government agencies.

- Noon-1:30 p.m. Sponsors Appreciation and Education Certificate Presentation Luncheon (*Moody Ballroom*)
- 1:30-3:20 p.m. Exhibit Hall and TACA Store Open (*Expo Hall B*)
- 1:30-2 p.m. Exhibit Hall Break (*Expo Hall B*)
- 2-2:50 p.m. **Texas Association of Counties Services Overview** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Speaker: Hon. Susan M. Redford, Executive Director, Texas Association of Counties*  
*Moderator: Hon. Shay Luedeke, Tax Assessor-Collector, TACA President and TAC Board of Directors Liaison, Bell County*  
The Texas Association of Counties (TAC) stands as a powerful ally to county governments, offering vital support in advocacy, education and legal wisdom to guide them through the ever-shifting galaxy of governance. TAC equips counties to navigate the challenges of the political universe and ensure prosperity for their people. Through connections, resources and cutting-edge technology, TAC helps counties evolve, thriving in the ever-expanding frontier of local leadership.
- 2:50-3:20 p.m. Exhibit Hall Break (*Expo Hall B*)
- 3:20-4:10 p.m. **Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Update** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Speaker: Taliea Pocaigue, Tax Analyst and Training Specialist, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts*  
*Moderator: Hon. Kathy Phillips, Tax Assessor-Collector, Montague County*

In this session, participants will receive the latest updates from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, your trusted guide through the complex universe of state finance. Like a seasoned pilot navigating through hyperspace, you'll learn about new rules, regulations and tools that will help you stay ahead of the curve in the galaxy of public accounting. Prepare to leave with the knowledge and strategies to navigate the ever-changing landscape and ensure your mission is a success.

4:10-5 p.m.

**Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV): Navigating H.B. 718** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speakers: Roland D. Luna, Deputy Executive Director, TxDMV*

*Monique Johnston, Motor Vehicle Division Director, TXDMV*

*Annette Quintero, Vehicle Titles & Registration Division Director, TxDMV*

*Corrie Thompson, Enforcement Division Director, TxDMV*

*Moderator: Hon. Becky Robles, Tax Assessor-Collector and TACA Secretary, Tom Green County*

TxDMV will outline the strategies employed to successfully implement H.B. 718, providing insights into the steps taken and the challenges faced. Attendees will also gain a clear understanding of what to expect starting July 1 and the ongoing developments in the implementation process.

5-5:30 p.m.

Legislative Committee Meeting (*Expo Hall A1*)

5-5:30 p.m.

Elections Committee Meeting (*Expo Hall A2*)

Free Evening

**Tuesday, June 3 – Wear Your TACA Shirt Day**

7:30-8:30 a.m.

Past Presidents' Breakfast (*Monarch Room – Café in the Park*)

8-8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast (*Expo Hall B*)

8 a.m.-3:50 p.m.

Exhibit Hall and TACA Store Open (*Expo Hall B*)

8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Registration and Information Desk Open (*Convention Registration*)

8:30-9:20 a.m.

**Deputy Session: Information Exchange with the Regional Service Centers** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speakers: Sarah Balderas, Regional Manager – Waco, TxDMV  
Stephanie Hoffart, Regional Operations Manager – South Houston, TxDMV*

*Moderator: Cydney Norton, Chief Deputy, Randall County*

Join the Rebel Alliance for a crucial deputy session where VTR staffers will share vital intel on key frontline topics such as bonded titles and the latest updates on redrawing the county service map, including the addition of new strategic locations. This session is designed to ensure that our forces stay aligned and informed across all regions of the galaxy. Prepare to receive tactical updates and engage in valuable information exchanges with the regional service centers to strengthen our unified efforts.

8:30-10 a.m. TACA Business Meeting (*Expo Hall A1*)

9:20-9:40 a.m. Exhibit Hall Break (Deputies) (*Expo Hall B*)

9:40-10:30 a.m. **Deputy Session: Cash Handling Best Practices** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speakers: Sharon Carlson, Chief Deputy, Comal County*

*Monica Goodall, Assistant Chief Deputy, Comal County*

*Moderator: Cydney Norton, Chief Deputy, Randall County*

This session will guide tax office deputies through the ways of handling cash with the precision of a Jedi, ensuring accuracy, security, and adherence to the galaxy's regulations. Learn how to manage cash transactions like a skilled pilot navigating the stars—keeping records flawless and safeguarding against the dark side of fraud and errors. By the end of the session, deputies will have mastered the art of reconciling cash, ensuring transparency and maintaining financial balance across the empire.

10-10:20 a.m. Exhibit Hall Break (TACs) (*Expo Hall B*)

10:20-11:30 a.m. TACA Business Meeting (continued) (*Expo Hall A1*)

10:35-11:25 a.m. **Deputy Session: How to Provide Great Service to Difficult Customers** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speakers: Christina Benedict, Property Tax Director, Dallas County*

*Cici Garcia, Taxpayer Relations Director, Dallas County*

*Ellen Hays, Motor Vehicle Director, Dallas County*

*Ashley Richard, Accounting Director, Dallas County*

*Moderator: Peggy McCormick, Chief Deputy, Dallas County*

In this session, you'll learn the art of handling difficult customers with the calm wisdom of a Jedi, turning challenging encounters into opportunities for resolution. Like a skilled negotiator in a galaxy of diverse personalities, you'll master techniques to de-escalate conflict, build rapport, and provide exceptional service even in the toughest situations. By the end, you'll be ready to navigate any customer interaction with grace, ensuring that every encounter ends in harmony, no matter the obstacles.

11:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. Installation of Officers Luncheon (*Moody Ballroom*)

1:25 p.m. TAC Photo (*Garden Cay Staircase*)

1:30-2:20 p.m. **VIT & SIT** (*Expo Hall A1*)

*Speaker: James Guest, Partner, Linebarger Attorneys at Law*

*Moderator: Hon. Marcela Thormaehlen, Tax Assessor-Collector, San Patricio County*

This session will provide an in-depth overview of vehicle inventory taxation, including the various factors that affect taxation rates and the specific regulations governing this process. Additionally, participants will gain insight into special inventory taxation guidelines and exemptions, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of how to navigate these complex tax considerations.

**The Force of Security: Protecting Your Office From Threats and Danger** (*Expo Hall A2*)

*Speaker: Hon. Paul Edinburgh, Constable, Galveston County*

*Moderator: Hon. James Angerstein, Tax Assessor-Collector, Houston County*

This session will provide essential strategies for maintaining a secure office environment, focusing on identifying potential threats and implementing effective security measures. Participants will learn best practices for protecting sensitive information, securing physical spaces, and responding to emergencies. By the end of the session, attendees will be equipped with the knowledge to enhance office security and ensure the safety of staffers, visitors and assets.

**Ethics for County Tax Assessor-Collector – Part 1** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speaker: Jim Lambeth, Capital Partner, Linebarger Attorneys at Law*

*Moderator: Hon. Ann Saxon, Tax Assessor-Collector, Yoakum County*

County tax assessor-collectors, deputies and their staff members must continually work to promote an ethical environment in the county tax office to avoid negative perceptions. This course defines ethics and reviews basic terms, ethical conduct and consequences of unethical behavior. **This course is approved for advanced designation credit. You must attend both parts to receive advanced designation credit.**

2:30-3:20 p.m.

**Texas Secretary of State Update** (*Expo Hall A1*)

*Speakers: Tiffany Owens-Shabazz, Education Specialist Trainer, Texas Secretary of State*

*Lena Proft, Senior Staff Attorney, Texas Secretary of State*

*Moderator: Hon. Kim Rinn, Tax Assessor-Collector, Austin County*

This session will provide an update from the Texas Secretary of State's Office regarding voter registration updates and how and when you can use Chapter 19 funds.

**May the Laws Be With You: A Jedi's Guide to Employment Law!**

(*Expo Hall A2*)

*Speaker: Halie Bever, Human Resources Consultant, Texas Association of Counties*

*Moderator: Hon. Marcela Thormaehlen, Tax Assessor-Collector, San Patricio County*

In a galaxy not so far away, Supervisors and Elected Officials must navigate the ever-changing forces of employment laws. Will you stand with the light side—ensuring fair treatment, compliance, and strong policies—or risk falling to the dark side of lawsuits, violations, and workplace chaos? Join us for a fun interactive Kahoot game sure to provide Jedi's like you the tools needed to succeed.

**Ethics for County Tax Assessor-Collector – Part 2** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speaker: Jim Lambeth, Capital Partner, Linebarger Attorneys at Law*

*Moderator: Hon. Ann Saxon, Tax Assessor-Collector, Yoakum County*

County tax assessor-collectors, deputies and their staff members must continually work to promote an ethical environment in the county tax office to avoid negative perceptions. This course defines ethics and reviews basic terms, ethical conduct and consequences of unethical behavior. **This course is approved for advanced designation credit. You must attend both parts to receive advanced designation credit.**



- 3:20-3:50 p.m. Exhibit Hall Break (*Expo Hall B*)
- 3:50-4:40 p.m. **TxDMV Vision & Updates: Past, Present and Future** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Speakers: Charles Bacarisse, Chair, TxDMV*  
*Daniel Avitia, Executive Director, TxDMV*  
*Roland D. Luna, Deputy Executive Director, TxDMV*  
*Wendy Barron, Chief Information Officer, TxDMV*  
*Annette Quintero, Vehicle Titles & Registration Division Director, TxDMV*  
*Corrie Thompson, Enforcement Division Director, TxDMV*  
*Moderator: Hon. Dawn Vieth, Tax Assessor-Collector and TACA Vice President, Archer County*  
Hear about TxDMV's organizational update, reflecting on where the agency has been and the lessons learned along the way. TxDMV division directors will also offer an operational update, discussing key initiatives on the horizon such as RTS modernization, the RSC expansion project, and long-range facility planning and findings.
- 6-9 p.m. Evening event featuring The Spazmatics! (*Moody Ballroom*)  
*dinner provided*

### **Wednesday, June 4**

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. New Board Meeting and Breakfast (*Garden Cay*)
- 8-8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast (*Expo Hall B*)
- 8-11 a.m. Exhibit Hall and TACA Store Open (*Expo Hall B*)
- 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Registration and Information Desk Open (*Convention Registration*)
- 8:30-9:20 a.m. **Managing First Amendment Audits** (*Expo Hall C*)  
*Speaker: Hon. David Whitis, Law Enforcement Consultant II, Texas Association of Counties*  
*Moderator: Hon. Octivia Guzman, Tax Assessor-Collector, Orange County*  
In a galaxy not so far away, a new social movement known as First Amendment Audits is sweeping across the land, and Texas is no exception. Such auditors — mysterious figures who often refuse to reveal their identities and who sometimes provoke conflict — seek

to test the boundaries of free speech and public access, challenging those who serve the public. This session will guide you through the audit process, helping you understand its true intent, while exploring the laws and constitutional rights these auditors wield. Learn the strategies, policies and responses that can help you navigate these encounters, avoid becoming the villain in a viral video, and ensure you're prepared to protect your duties and your legal standing in the face of these modern challenges.

9:20-9:40 a.m. Exhibit Hall Break (*Expo Hall B*)

9:40-11:10 a.m. **Legislative Update** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Panelists: Denise Davis, Partner, Davis Kaufman PLLC*

*Davis Hairston, Legislative Consultant, Texas Association of Counties*

*Moderator: Hon. Larry Gaddes, Tax Assessor-Collector and TACA*

*Legislative Committee Chair, Williamson County*

This session will cover the key legislative bills that passed in the recent legislative session and their impact on local governments. Participants will gain an in-depth understanding of the new laws, including their implications for county operations, policies and services. By the end of the session, attendees will be equipped with the knowledge to navigate these changes and ensure compliance with the latest legislative updates.

11:10-11:30 a.m. Break (*Expo Hall Foyer*)

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. **Truth-in-Taxation Update** (*Expo Hall C*)

*Speaker: Connie Rose, Director of Education, McCreary Veselka Bragg & Allen, P.C.*

*Moderator: Hon. Christina McMurray, Tax Assessor-Collector, Randall County*

This session will serve as a summary of the truth-in-taxation process and will facilitate a refresher on truth-in-taxation and discuss the ETR and RTR worksheets, the best place to get data, and how to work with your entities to be successful.