



# TEMA TEAM UPDATE

November 2023 – Volume 2, Issue 8

## HOW LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMEN ASSIST IN EMERGENCIES



Imagine the temperature being too hot or cold due to a HVAC malfunction, being given bed baths because of water and pipe issues, or prolonged power outages and malfunctioning or unfueled generators. For anyone, these types of misfortunes would be a grievance, but for the residents of Tennessee's nearly 700 long-term care facilities, these types of emergencies can impact them particularly hard. This, coupled often with staff shortages within the facilities, creates a greater need for long-term care

ombudsmen to engage with residents, their loved ones and staff to support a system of better care, especially as it relates to emergency preparedness and response.

It's not uncommon for an ombudsman to be one of the first to learn of an issue in a long-term care facility, like the temperatures, power outages, or water issues. In these instances, ombudsmen work closely with staff to understand the issue, and if necessary, communicate concerns to the Tennessee Health Facilities Commission.

In extreme cases, like emergency evacuations or relocations, ombudsmen are involved with local teams to ensure that residents and family members are being provided timely information, that behavioral and cognitive needs of residents are considered and attended to during the process, and they also follow up with residents post-transition to make sure they have access to their trust accounts, ensure their belongings were transferred, and to also just simply be a face the residents know in an uncertain time.

If someone you know is in a long-term care facility, you may wonder what questions would be good to ask facility staff as it relates to emergencies. Teresa Teeple, a Tennessee Long-Term Care Ombudsman, recommends asking:

- What is the facility's emergency plan for evacuation and for sheltering in place?
- How does the facility discuss the plan with the residents?
- How and when will family members be notified about evacuation plans?
- Are there enough staff to carry out the evacuation plan during all shifts?
- How will information about the resident and supplies such as medications be transported?
- Are there contracts in place with transportation and other facilities to provide housing for displaced residents?

The State Office contracts with each of the state's nine Area Agencies on Aging and Disability for the provision of services at the local level. Ombudsman services are free and confidential and are available statewide. To learn more about the ombudsman program and their services, visit: [www.tn.gov/aging/ombudsman](http://www.tn.gov/aging/ombudsman).

# REGIONAL UPDATES

## West Region

- West Region continues to support several federally declared disasters and SBA declared disasters.
- West Region held its quarterly directors meeting, guest speakers included Matt Heckard, Matt Bush, and provided attendees with updates on exercises, training, and EMPG requirements.
- West Region DCs worked with the swift water evaluation team to assess Madison County Fire in the swift water credentialing. The region also participated in a three state Coast Guard exercise in Hardin County, a Medical exercise with TN State Guard at Lavinia Training center, and a Medical Surge exercise with Shelby County Healthcare Coalition.

## Middle Region

- Middle Region taught one HMT0 course, three HMA courses, one SAR 101 course, one MERRTT course, one Lithium course, one G402 course, and two G300 courses.
- One district coordinator attended and Hazmat conference in Knoxville.
- Two DCs assisted in East Region with a GPS Landnav class.

## East Region

- East DCs, with assistance from Middle DCs, taught a GPS / LandNav in Monroe.
- DC Michelle Matson represented the East Region at the E-Plan conference.
- DCs taught and assisted local instructors with multiple ICS classes and an HMT0 in Sevier.
- DC Caleb Lawson helmed the quarterly Directors Meeting.

## Southeast Region

- The Southeast Region has been supporting various exercises and training events. The region conducted a full-scale active shooter exercise at the VW automotive plant in Chattanooga with the support of TEMA, Hamilton County representatives, and the participation of all VW of Chattanooga employees. This is the first time this kind of exercise has ever been done in the country.
- The region helped to support a FEMA-contaminated person-graded exercise in Bradley County with the TEMA TVA staff.
- The region also completed the SAREX with the guard as well as a TEMA RAD class in Coffee County.





# TRAINING AND MORE

- November 27-December 1, L0950 All-Hazards Incident Commander
- November 27-December 8, H310 TEMA Hazmat Team Operations Course
- December 5 - 7, L0973 All-Hazards Finance Section Chief
- December 5, G715: Damage Assessment - Blount County
- December 7, G191: ICS/EOC Interface - Loudon County
- December 11 - 12, G 386 Mass Fatalities Incident Response (24 hrs.)
- December 11 - 15, SAR201 Managing Search Operations
- December 12 - 13, G300-Intermediate Incident Command Systems for Expanding Incidents
- December 14 - 15, G400- Advanced Incident Command System (ICS), Command and General Staff
- December 19 - 20, G400 Advanced Incident Command System for Command and General Staff ( 16 hrs.)



## 2024 FEMA Basic Academy

Tennessee will once again be offering the FEMA Basic Academy in 2024 at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). If you are applying for the entire suite of five courses that make up the Basic Academy, only one application is required. If you are needing to make up a course(s), you will need to send in an application for each individual course. For more information, contact [TEMA.Training@tn.gov](mailto:TEMA.Training@tn.gov).

- **Week 1** | January 22-26: L101 Foundations of Emergency Management
- **Week 2** | March 11-15: L102 Science for Disasters and L103 Planning Emergency Operations
- **Week 3** | April 15-19: L146 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Training Course and L105 Public Information Basics

# HUMAN RESOURCES CORNER

## Meet our New Team Members

**Josh Wickham** – Resiliency Administrator

**Carma Sharp** – Executive Assistant to CoS and Assistant Directors

**Frank Ragains** – Fleet Specialist, Mission and Support

## Notes:

Sick Leave Bank enrollment is over and for those who are newly enrolled (and for those who have already been participating) it may be important to know how to utilize the bank if needed!

To become a Sick Leave Bank member, you must first apply for a Sick Leave Bank Grant. Follow the path below path in Edison to fill out the Withdrawal Request Application:

***Navigator> HCM> Self Service> Time Reporting> Sick Leave Bank> Request Withdraw> Start a New Request***

The Withdrawal Request Application must be submitted no earlier than two (2) weeks prior to, but no later than thirty (30) workdays after expiration of all sick, compensatory, and annual leave.

Additionally, the Medical Certification form must be submitted by the employee's medical provider via fax to the SLB Office at 615-532-3209 OR via secure email to [SLB.Sickbank@tn.gov](mailto:SLB.Sickbank@tn.gov).

A member may receive a maximum of 90 days within a 12 month period from the bank as a result of a personal or minor child's illness, injury, accident, disability, medical condition, or quarantine or a condition related to, resulting from, or recurring from a previously diagnosed condition for which the bank granted sick leave.

For more information and forms, visit the [Sick Leave Bank \(tn.gov\)](https://tn.gov) webpage.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Charlie Hall

## GET TO KNOW CHARLIE



## CHARLIE HALL

Southeast Region Administrator  
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency

**How long have you been with TEMA?** I started with the agency in June of 2006. So almost 18 years.

**What is your favorite part of working at our TEMA?** Working with the people. I enjoy getting to meet new people and form lasting relationships.

**How long have you worked in Emergency Management?** Counting my law enforcement career, I've been in EM for 41 years.

**What are you most proud of in your career so far?** Building the Southeast Region. It has been a very rewarding experience getting the honor of building a region from the ground up.

**What do you like most about the work we do here at TEMA?** I love being able to help the citizens of our great state!

**What is one thing that you wish people knew about your job?** That it is truly a 24-hour, 7 days a week, 365 days a-year commitment.

**How has your role evolved over time since you have been with TEMA?** I started as an Ops officer, then moved into a District Coordinator, and am now a Regional Director.

**What are your goals for the future short-term or long-term?** To continue to assist the Southeast region to flourish and excel.

**Do you have an interesting story or mission you would like to share?** I've been a part of so many missions during my time here. However, the one thing that stands out in all of them is the good people that I've met in every single one of them. I think everyone should take advantage of those opportunities to grow their network.

**What piece of advice would you give to your younger self?** Patience truly is a virtue.



## GET TO KNOW TOMMY



## TOMMY SNEED, JR.

Chief Compliance Officer and Director of Special Investigation  
Tennessee Department of Revenue

**How long have you been with the State and how long have you been an ESC?** 30 years in April – ESC 8 years

**Outside of your role as an ESC, what responsibilities do you have within your Agency or Department?** I am over Internal Audit and Special Investigations. Special Investigations is a law enforcement organization that conducts criminal investigations of tax evasion and vehicle registration fraud. The section also performs regulatory functions related to rebuilt motor vehicles, tobacco, beer, petroleum, and hemp-derived cannabinoid.

**What do you enjoy the most about being an ESC?** I enjoy being part of a team that can come together to help in any crisis. TEMA reminds me of a quote from Peter Drucker, “The task of leadership is to create an alignment of strengths in ways that make weaknesses irrelevant.” It is fascinating how TEMA connects unique talent to need. Revenue primarily fills a recovery role, but we also have unique abilities in vehicle identification, which were very useful during the Christmas Day Bombing investigation and to support the Waverly flood victims.

**What are the biggest challenges facing ESCs today and in the future?** Passing the required FEMA classes [chuckle]. I was lost my first year, just trying to understand the language (especially all the acronyms). I can speak Revenue Tax Language, but ESCs need to be experts in their agency’s abilities and need to know emergency response theory. I really like the framework Dustin Dunn has implemented to hold us accountable for learning and engagement. I wish I would have invested in the training earlier.

**Taking it all in, what words of wisdom, advice would you pass on to new ESCs?** One of the first things I remember Director Sheehan saying is (something to the affect), “It’s better to make a friend now than introduce yourself when you need something.” At the foundation of the success of TEMA is authentic relationships. My advice would be to move out of your comfort zone and meet people.



*A monthly publication for employees and friends of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency with information on the agency's activities, staff, and emergency management work.*

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