

GFOAz 2026 January Training (5 CPEs) | AGENDA

8:00 AM | Registration Opens

9:00 - 9:50 AM | Building Safer, Smarter, and More Efficient Local Governments: Practical Strategies for Finance Leaders | *1 CPE*

Local governments are under increasing pressure to deliver more services with fewer resources, all while maintaining transparency, security, and compliance. Finance officers are at the center of this transformation – responsible not only for managing budgets but also for driving operational efficiency, safeguarding financial systems, and enabling smarter decision-making. Whether you're navigating workforce shortages, legacy systems, or compliance complexity, this presentation will provide tools and insights to help finance leaders lead with confidence and innovation. This session will explore practical strategies to help local governments become safer, smarter, and more efficient. We'll cover how to leverage data analytics for better forecasting, implement automation to streamline finance processes, strengthen cybersecurity to protect critical systems, and build resiliency for future challenges. Attendees will leave with actionable steps – both quick wins and long-term strategies – that can be applied to improve operations and reduce risk.

Speaker:
Shauna Woody-Coussens, *National Practice Leader, Public Sector Advisory Services, Forvis Mazars*

10:00 - 10:50 AM | Cybersecurity and its Impact on Government Entities | *1 CPE*

In an era of increasingly sophisticated cyber threats, this session will delve into the evolving landscape of cybersecurity, highlighting how artificial intelligence is transforming both defense mechanisms and attack strategies. The session will also address the rise in cyber payment fraud and offer practical strategies for enhancing cyber resilience, including cyber hygiene, incident response preparedness, and employee training.

Speaker:
Justin Ellerman, *Executive Director, Head of Cyber Client Advisory Cyber Human Defense, Wells Fargo*

11:00 - 11:50 AM | Managing Employees – Effective Performance Management | *1 CPE*

Join this interactive session where we'll dive into the ways we make our lives harder when dealing with performance challenges and how small changes can make a big impact.

Speaker:
Brenna Ramy, *Senior Manager, Abdo*



12:00 - 12:50 PM | Lunch

1:00 - 1:50 PM | Stay Exempt and Stay Calm: What Every Debt Issuer Should Know | *1 CPE*

This session will discuss tax law and IRS compliance before and after bond issuance as well as the role of bond/tax counsel. Topics include arbitrage - yield restriction and rebate, post-issuance compliance and IRS activity and best practices. The presenters will also provide tools on how issuers can best comply with these rules, and the types of conversations they should have with bond counsel about these matters.

Speakers:
Jennifer Cosper, *Partner, Squire Patton Boggs*
Erika Coombs, *Business/Finance Officer, Maricopa County IDA*

2:00 - 2:50 PM | Best Travel Practices - Is Your Travel Program Built for the Modern Governmental Staffer or Stuck in the Past? | *1 CPE*

Most organizations struggle with outdated policies that lead to confusion, exposure, and wasted spend. This session provides the high-level essentials needed to build and manage a high-performing travel program. We will navigate common pitfalls such as “bleisure” travel, new travel risk factors and show you how to leverage modern technology and cross-functional partnerships to drive seamless compliance.

Speaker:
Alex Chin, *Administrative Analyst, Tempe*

3:00 PM | Concludes