



May 01, 2025

Qualifications-Sheriff

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Qualifications-Sheriff

Reference Number: CTAS-36

In addition to the general qualifications of officeholders specified in T.C.A. § 8-18-101, the sheriff, in all counties, except those with a metropolitan form of government in which law enforcement powers have been assigned to some other official, must have the following specific qualifications:

1. Be a citizen of the United States;
2. Be at least 25 years of age prior to the date of qualifying for election;
3. Be a qualified voter of the county and a resident of the county for one full year prior to the date of the qualifying deadline for running as a candidate for sheriff;
4. Have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent in educational training as recognized by the Tennessee state board of education;
5. Not have been convicted of or pleaded guilty to or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any misdemeanor crime of domestic violence or any felony charge or violation of any federal or state laws or city ordinances relating to force, violence, theft, dishonesty, gambling, liquor or controlled substances;
6. Be fingerprinted and have the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) make a search of local, state and federal fingerprint files for any criminal record. Fingerprints are to be taken under the direction of the TBI. It is the responsibility of the TBI to forward all criminal history results to the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission for evaluation of qualifications;
7. Not have been released, separated or discharged from the armed forces of the United States with a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge, or as a consequence of conviction at court martial for either state or federal offenses;
8. Have been certified by a Tennessee licensed health care provider qualified in the psychiatric or psychological field as being free from any impairment, as set forth in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association at the time of the examination, that would, in the professional judgment of the examiner, affect the applicant's ability to perform an essential function of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation;
9. Have at least three (3) years of full-time experience as a POST commission certified law enforcement officer in the previous ten (10) years or at least three (3) years of full-time experience as a state or federal certified law enforcement officer with training equivalent to that required by the POST commission in the previous ten (10) years; provided that any person holding the office of sheriff on May 30, 2011 shall be deemed to have met this requirement (does not apply in Davidson County); and
10. Not have been convicted of or pleaded guilty to or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge or violation of any federal or state laws relating to controlled substance analogues.

T.C.A. § 8-8-102(a). See *also* Rules of the Tennessee Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission, Rule 1110-2-.03 (2). Any full-time deputy employed after July 1, 1981, and any person employed or utilized as a part-time, temporary, reserve, or auxiliary deputy or as a special deputy after January 1, 1989, must meet certain minimum standards similar to those required for sheriffs. T.C.A. § 38-8-106.

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