



July 22, 2024

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# Elections - Historical Notes

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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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Table of Contents

<b>Elections - Historical Notes .....</b>	<b>3</b>
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# Elections - Historical Notes

## **Districts - Reapportionment**

The acts listed below have affected the civil districts in Lauderdale County, but are no longer operative regarding elections.

1. Public Acts of 1835-36, Resolution No. 4, appointed a commission composed of Joseph Whitson, Isaac M. Steel, Benjamin Porter, Wm. Calhoun, and \_\_\_\_\_ [sic] Givens, to lay off the districts for the newly established Lauderdale County.
2. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 122, established and laid off the 10th Civil District in Lauderdale County.

## **Elections**

The following is a listing of acts for Lauderdale County which affected the elective process, but which have been superseded or repealed. They are listed here for historical and reference purposes. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Public Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 2, provided that the Tipton County Sheriff or Coroner, or their deputies, would hold the initial election in Lauderdale County for Justices of the Peace, Constables, Sheriff, Trustee, County Court Clerk, Circuit Court Clerk, Register of Deeds, and all other officers as prescribed by the act. After this initial election, elections would be held by those who were designated under the act to hold regular county elections.
2. Acts of 1842 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 1, apportioned the free white male voters of the State into 25 senatorial districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 23rd Senatorial District along with the counties of Madison, Haywood and Tipton, with the votes to be counted at Brownsville. Lauderdale County would elect one of the 75 State Representatives jointly with Tipton County. This act was repealed by Public Acts of 1978, Chapter 597.
3. Acts of 1842 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 7, divided the state into eleven U. S. Congressional Districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 10th District along with the counties of McNairy, Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby, Tipton, Haywood and Dyer.
4. Public Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, divided the state into eight U. S. Congressional Districts. Lauderdale County was placed in the 7th District along with the counties of Henderson, Benton, Henry, Weakley, Obion, Dyer, Gibson and Carroll.
5. Public Acts of 1871, Chapter 146, provided that Lauderdale County would elect one State Representative. Lauderdale, Haywood and Dyer Counties were placed in the 22nd Senatorial District to elect one State Senator.
6. Acts of 1872 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, divided Tennessee into nine U. S. Congressional Districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 8th District along with the counties of Madison, Crockett, Haywood, Dyer, Gibson, Weakley, Obion and Lake.
7. Public Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, divided the state into ten U. S. Congressional Districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 9th District along with the counties of Weakley, Obion, Lake, Dyer, Gibson, Crockett, Haywood and Tipton.
8. Public Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 5, fixed the number of Senators in the General Assembly at 33 and the number of Representatives at 99.
9. Public Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 6, placed Lauderdale, Haywood and Crockett Counties in the 30th Senatorial District to elect one of the 33 State Senators. Lauderdale County would elect one State Representative alone.
10. Public Acts of 1882 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 27, divided the state into ten U. S. Congressional Districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 9th District along with the counties of Weakley, Gibson, Crockett, Haywood, Dyer, Obion and Lake.
11. Public Acts of 1890 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 25, required that voters be registered at least twenty days before election in counties over 70,000 in population (later reduced to apply to midsize counties) and in towns and Civil Districts over 2,500 in population before they would be allowed to vote.
12. Public Acts of 1891, Chapter 131, apportioned the state into ten U. S. Congressional Districts, placing Lauderdale County in the 9th District along with the counties of Weakley, Gibson, Crockett, Haywood, Dyer, Obion and Lake.
13. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, provided that Lauderdale County would elect one State

Representative and share another with Tipton, Haywood, Shelby, Fayette and Hardeman Counties. Lauderdale County was placed in the 30th Senatorial District along with Dyer and Haywood Counties, to elect one State Senator.

14. Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, created ten U. S. Congressional Districts in the state, placing Lauderdale County in the 9th District along with the counties of Weakley, Gibson, Crockett, Haywood, Dyer, Obion and Lake.
15. Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, provided that Lauderdale, Dyer and Crockett Counties constituted the 29th Senatorial District, and Lauderdale County would elect one Representative alone and one jointly with Tipton County.
16. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 751, amended Public Acts of 1890 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 25, to exempt Lauderdale County from the voter registration law.
17. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 803, required each voter in Lauderdale County to be registered before being allowed to vote in any election thereafter held in the County, civil district, ward, or voting precinct. This law was repealed three months later by Private Acts of 1935 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 86.
18. Private Acts of 1963, Chapter 69, provided that any person serving as an election official in Lauderdale County would be paid \$7 per day for their services. This act has been superseded by general law found at T.C.A. §§ 2-4-108 and -109.
19. Private Acts of 1969, Chapter 95, would have made elections of county-wide officers in Lauderdale County subject to a run-off election when no candidate received a majority of the votes cast. This act failed to receive local approval and never went into effect.

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