



County Technical Assistance Service  
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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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## Elections - Historical Notes

The following is a listing of acts for Jackson County which affected the elective process, but which have been superseded or repealed.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. Acts of 1803, Chapter 24, set up the electoral districts in Tennessee for the election of the President and Vice-President of the United States. Jackson, Smith, Wilson, and Sumner were in the Fourth Electoral District to choose one elector between them.
2. Acts of 1803, Chapter 76, made it lawful for the inhabitants living above the ridge which divides the Obeds and Roaring Rivers in Jackson County to meet and hold elections for Governor, the General Assembly, the U.S. Congress, and the President and Vice-President of the country at the house of Jacob Meeks.
3. Acts of 1807, Chapter 69, authorized the people of Jackson County to hold two elections to be conducted by the Sheriff of the county, one at the house of William Shaw and the other at Peterson's Ferry on the south side of the Cumberland River, both to take part in all the elections. It would also be lawful for the militia companies in southeast Jackson County to meet on election days at William Shaw's and select their field officers. It was lawful for all living above Roaring River on the south side of the Cumberland River, and all the inhabitants of Jinnings Creek, and above, on the north side of the Cumberland River to meet at Peterson's Ferry to vote for the various offices.
4. Acts of 1807, Chapter 74, established the electoral districts for the Presidential election to be held on the second Thursday in November, 1808, the sheriffs of the various counties to hold the same in the places mentioned. The Fourth Electoral District contained the counties of Smith, Jackson, Overton, White, Sumner, Wilson, Warren, and Franklin. The votes would be counted at Carthage and, if a tie resulted, the Sheriff would decide who was elected. The Sheriff was prohibited from voting in his county.
5. Acts of 1809, Chapter 1, stated that elections would be held on the last Thursday and Friday in April, 1809, to elect 3 Representatives to the U.S. Congress from Tennessee, one from the Washington District, one from Hamilton District, and one from the combined Winchester, Robertson, and Mero Districts. The polls in the Winchester District would be counted in Carthage on the first Monday in May.
6. Acts of 1811, Chapter 57, stated that the separate election, formerly held at the house of William Shaw, in Jackson County, shall hereafter be held at the house of Joseph Shaw, and the election formerly held at Peterson's Ferry, shall hereafter be held at Bennett's Ferry, and the second section of the Acts of 1807, Chapter 69, which authorized these elections is hereby specifically repealed.
7. Acts of 1812, Chapter 5, set up eight Electoral Districts for the election of the President to be held on the first Thursday in November, 1812. The Fourth Electoral District was composed of the counties of Rhea, Bledsoe, Overton, White, Warren, Franklin, and Jackson, and their votes would be counted at Sparta. The electors would get \$2.50 per day and two dollars and fifty cents for each twenty-five miles travel expenses. The Sheriff would appoint three impartial citizens to be judges of the election.
8. Acts of 1812, Chapter 27, divided Tennessee into six U.S. Congressional Districts. The 4th District has in it the counties of Smith, Sumner, Wilson, and Jackson and would elect one representative.
9. Acts of 1812, Chapter 57, apportioned the State for the General Assembly into twenty Senatorial Districts and forty Representative Districts. Overton, Jackson, and White Counties would elect one Senator between them and the polls would be counted at White Plains in White County. Every county would elect one Representative except those named in the act to elect two of which Jackson was not one.
10. Acts of 1813, Chapter 12, Section 5, declared that an election would be held at the house of David Johnson, at or near the mouth of Blackburn's Fork of the Roaring River on those days appointed for the election of President, the General Assembly, the Governor, the U.S. Congress, and the field officers of certain companies as described in the Act. This Act was repealed by Acts of 1820 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 32.
11. Acts of 1815, Chapter 31, divided the state into eight electoral districts for the election of electors of President and Vice-President. The districts were to be the same as enumerated in Acts of 1812, Chapter 5.

12. Acts of 1815, Chapter 78, provided that a separate precinct election be conducted at the home of Lemuel Cherry in the bounds of the First Battalion of the 48th Regiment of the militia for all elections from President of the United States down.
13. Acts of 1819, Chapter 5, provided that elections be held in Gainesboro but a new precinct be opened also at the house of George White in Williamsburg for the voters of the former county seat.
14. Acts of 1819, Chapter 69, apportioned Tennessee into 20 Senatorial and 40 Representative Districts. White, Overton, and Jackson counties would elect one senator between them and Jackson was given one representative alone.
15. Acts of 1822 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1, divided the State into eight U.S. Congressional Districts. The Fourth District was composed of the counties of Franklin, Warren, White, Overton, and Jackson.
16. Acts of 1823, Chapter 47, formed eleven Presidential Electoral District in Tennessee assigning Franklin, Warren, White, Overton, and Jackson Counties to the 5th District with all the votes being counted at Sparta, in White County.
17. Acts of 1823, Chapter 12, established a voting precinct at the house of William Rash in Jackson County making it the duty of the Sheriff to hold separate elections there at all regular election times.
18. Acts of 1824 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1, set up eleven Presidential Electoral Districts in the state making the Fifth District consist of the counties of Franklin, Warren, White, Overton, Fentress, and Jackson Counties, specifying that the polls for that District be compared at Sparta.
19. Acts of 1826, Chapter 3, apportioned the State for the General Assembly. Of the 20 Senators, White Overton, Jackson, and Fentress counties would elect one jointly and Overton and Jackson Counties would share one of the 40 Representatives, counting polls at White Plains.
20. Acts of 1827, Chapter 17, established eleven Presidential Electoral Districts making no changes in the 5th District which had the same counties in it as set by Acts of 1824 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1.
21. Acts of 1827, Chapter 22, provided that hereafter in all elections where the Sheriff, or other officer was required to make a return and compare the polls of the elections at White Plains for White, Overton, Fentress, and Jackson counties, they shall meet at the home of William Burton in Jackson County and count the polls under the same rules and regulations.
22. Acts of 1832, Chapter 4, divided Tennessee into thirteen U.S. Congressional Districts of which the 6th District contained the counties of Jackson, Smith, and Sumner.
23. Acts of 1832, Chapter 9, set up fifteen Presidential Electoral Districts in the same allotting the counties of Jackson, White, Overton, Fentress, and Warren to the 6th District.
24. Acts of 1833, Chapter 71, reapportioned the General Assembly of the State retaining the twenty senators and forty representatives. White, Overton, Fentress, and Jackson Counties would elect one Senator jointly comparing polls at McKinney's in Overton County. Overton and Jackson would share a representative.
25. Acts of 1833, Chapter 76, organized the membership of the forthcoming Constitutional Convention at 60 members, the same number as was then in the General Assembly. The delegates would be elected on the first Thursday and Friday in March, 1834, and meet in Nashville on the third Monday in May, following. Jackson County would elect one delegate to the convention.
26. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 39, divided the State into 15 Presidential Electoral Districts assigning Jackson, White, Overton, Fentress, and Warren Counties to the 6th District.
27. Acts of 1839-40, Chapter 79, made each U.S. Congressional District into a Presidential Electoral District, providing also that two of the electors would be selected at-large, and the Act also prescribed the procedures to be followed when votes were to be counted and reported.
28. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1, apportioned the general assembly of the State into 25 Senatorial Districts and 50 Representative Districts. Fentress, Overton, Jackson, White, and Van Buren Counties composed the 9th Senatorial District and Jackson County was given one representative alone.
29. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, set up 11 U.S. Congressional Districts. The 4th District contained the counties of Fentress, Overton, Jackson, White, DeKalb, Van Buren, Warren, and Coffee.
30. Acts of 1845-46, Chapter 171, provided that the qualified voters in Civil District #15, of Jackson County, the same being a district in which an incorporated city was located, may elect an additional Justice of the Peace who shall reside in Granville, wh shall be commissioned as other

Justices of the Peace are commissioned, and have the same power, jurisdiction, and compensations.

31. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 196, formed Tennessee into 10 U.S. Congressional Districts. The 4th District was made up of the counties of Jackson, Macon, Smith, DeKalb, White, Warren, Coffee, Grundy, and Van Buren.
32. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 197, apportioned Tennessee for the General Assembly. Jackson County would elect one representative alone, and, along with White and Macon Counties composed one Senatorial District whose polls would be counted at Gainesboro.
33. Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, was the first apportionment of the state after the Civil War, being divided into eight U.S. Congressional Districts. The Third District contained the counties of Meigs, Rhea, Hamilton, Marion, Grundy, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Sequatchie, Warren, White, Smith, Cumberland, Putnam, Jackson, Macon, Overton, DeKalb, and Fentress.
34. Acts of 1865-66, House Resolution No. 59, declared that at the election held on March 4, 1865, Jackson County elected Brigadier General A. C. Gillem as its Representative in the General Assembly. This was alleged to be in violation of the Tennessee Constitution and therefore the seat had been declared vacant. The Governor was requested to call an election to fill the vacancy.
35. Acts of 1871, Chapter 146, reapportioned the general assembly according to the figures of the 1870 census. Macon, Smith, Clay, Trousdale, Sumner, and Jackson Counties made up the 9th State Senatorial District and Jackson, Macon, and Clay Counties would elect one Representative between them.
36. Acts of 1872 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, gave Tennessee 9 U. S. Congressional Districts. The 2nd District consisted of the counties of Sevier, Knox, Jefferson, Anderson, Campbell, Scott, Morgan, Fentress, Cumberland, White, Putnam, Overton, Jackson, Smith, Macon, and Clay.
37. Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, added another U.S. Congressional District to Tennessee, making 10 in all. The 4th District was composed of the counties of Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Jackson, Clay, Macon, Smith, Trousdale, Wilson, Sumner, and Robertson.
38. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 6, was the first apportionment of the general assembly based on the 1880 census. Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, and Fentress Counties shared one State Senator and the 11th District and Jackson would elect one representative alone.
39. Acts of 1882 (2nd Ex. Sess.), Chapter 27, divided Tennessee into 10 U. S. Congressional Districts. The 4th District contained Sumner, Macon, Wilson, Trousdale, Smith, DeKalb, Clay, Jackson, Putnam, Overton, Fentress, and Pickett Counties.
40. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, brought on another apportionment of the General Assembly because of the 1890 Census. Jackson was given one Representative alone and was assigned to the 10th State Senatorial District with Scott, Fentress, Pickett, Overton, Clay, and Putnam Counties.
41. Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, set up 10 U.S. Congressional Districts in the state. Jackson County stayed in the 4th District with the counties of Sumner, Trousdale, Wilson, Putnam, Clay, Overton, Smith, Macon, Pickett, Fentress, Morgan, Cumberland, and Rhea.
42. Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, reapportioned the State which now had 33 Senators and 99 Representatives. Jackson, Morgan, Fentress, Pickett, Clay, Overton, and Putnam Counties composed the 10th State Senatorial District and Jackson would continue to elect a single representative.
43. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 233, stated that in Jackson County, election officials shall be paid \$3.00 per day for one day only for their services in any general or legalized primary election.

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