



November 04, 2024

Jailers' Fees

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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Reference Number: CTAS-1332

Misdemeanant Prisoners

The county legislative body of each county has the authority to pass a resolution fixing the amount of jailers' fees that may be applied to misdemeanor prisoners. The rate fixed shall apply to such prisoners confined in the county jail or county workhouse or workhouses but not meeting the conditions required for a state subsidy under Title 41, Chapter 8. T.C.A. § 8-26-105(a). See Sample Resolution to Fix Jailer's Fee.

Sheriffs and jailers must make written statements of account, properly proven and sworn to, for the keeping of prisoners, specifying distinctly each item and the amount due for each item. T.C.A. § 41-4-129.

Jailer's fees are taxed separately from the general bills of costs of criminal cases. All state costs must be properly proved and sworn to before the clerk of the criminal or circuit court of the county and certified by the clerk for payment. T.C.A. § 41-4-131.

Jailer's fees for county prisoners shall be referred monthly to the county mayor for inspection, who shall audit the fees and cause the clerk to issue a warrant for the amount allowed. T.C.A. § 41-4-136.

Federal Prisoners

The jailer is liable for failing to receive and safely keep all persons delivered under the authority of the United States, to the like pains and penalties as for similar failures in the case of persons committed under authority of the state. However, the marshal or person delivering such prisoner under authority of the United States is liable to the jailer for fees and the subsistence of the prisoner while so confined, which shall be the same as provided by law for prisoners committed under authority of the state. The jailer will also collect from the marshal 50 cents a month for each prisoner, under the resolution of the first Congress, and pay the same to the county trustee forthwith, to be accounted for by the trustee as other county funds. T.C.A. § 41-4-105.

Inmate Copay

Any county may, by resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of the county legislative body, establish and implement a plan authorizing the county jail administrator to charge an inmate in the county jail a copay amount for any medical care, treatment, pharmacy services or substance abuse treatment by a licensed provider provided to the inmate by the county. A county adopting a copay plan must establish the amount the inmate is required to pay for each service provided. However, an inmate who cannot pay the copay amount established by the plan cannot be denied medical care, treatment, pharmacy services or substance abuse treatment by a licensed provider. T.C.A. § 41-4-115(d).

If an inmate cannot pay the copay amount established by a plan adopted pursuant to T.C.A. § 41-4-115(d), the plan may authorize the jail administrator to deduct the copay amount from the inmate's commissary account or any other account or fund established by or for the benefit of the inmate while incarcerated. T.C.A. § 41-4-115(e).

Fees for Issued Items

Any county may, by a resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of the county legislative body, establish and implement a plan authorizing the jail administrator to charge an inmate committed to the county jail a fee, not to exceed the actual cost, for items issued to the inmate upon each new admission to the county jail. T.C.A. § 41-4-142(a).

Additionally, any county may, by a resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of its county legislative body, establish and implement a plan authorizing the jail administrator to charge an inmate committed to the jail a nominal fee set by the county legislative body at the time of adoption for the following special services, when provided at the inmate's request:

1. Participation in GED or other scholastic testing for which the administering agency charges a fee for each test administered;
2. Escort by correctional officers to a hospital or other healthcare facility for the purpose of visiting an immediate family member who is a patient at such facility; or
3. Escort by correctional officers for the purpose of visiting a funeral home or church upon the death of an immediate family member.

T.C.A. § 41-4-142(b).

A plan adopted pursuant to T.C.A. § 41-4-142(a) or (b) may authorize the jail administrator to deduct the amount from the inmate's jail trust account or any other account or fund established by or for the benefit

of the inmate while incarcerated. Nothing in T.C.A. § 41-4-142 shall be construed as authorizing the jail administrator to deny necessary clothing or hygiene items or to fail to provide the services specified in T.C.A. § 41-4-142(b) based on the inmate's inability to pay such fee or costs. T.C.A. § 41-4-142(c).

For additional information, see Jail Fees.

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