



March 12, 2025

---

# Physical Examination

---

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website ([ctas.tennessee.edu](http://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,

The University of Tennessee  
County Technical Assistance Service  
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
615.532.3555 phone  
615.532.3699 fax  
[www.ctas.tennessee.edu](http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu)

Table of Contents

<b>Physical Examination .....</b>	<b>3</b>
-----------------------------------	----------

# Physical Examination

Reference Number: CTAS-1373

A more complete examination shall be completed on inmates within fourteen (14) days of their initial confinement date. If the facility can document that health appraisal was conducted within the previous ninety (90) days, this fourteen (14)-day physical is not required unless medical conditions dictate otherwise. This examination shall be performed by a physician or a person who has been designated by a physician as capable of performing such examination. If a designee performs the examination he/she must do so under supervision of a physician and with a protocol or set of instructions and guidelines from the physician. This examination shall include:

- (a) Inquiry into current illness and health problems, including those specific to women;
- (b) Inquiry into medications taken and special health requirements;
- (c) Screening of other health problems designated by the responsible physician;
- (d) Behavioral observation, including state of consciousness and mental status;
- (e) Notification of body deformities, trauma markings, bruises, lesions, jaundice, ease of movement, etc.;
- (f) Condition of skin and body orifices, including rashes and infestations;
- (g) Disposition/referral of prisoners to qualified medical personnel on an emergency basis;
- (h) A review of the initial intake receiving screening; and,
- (i) An individual treatment plan as appropriate.

Rules of the Tennessee Corrections Institute, Rule 1400-1-.13(9).

An intake physical examination is advisable in order to screen out drug addicts, alcoholics, and physical ailments for treatment, to avoid contagion within the jail population, and as a public health function. *Collins v. Schoonfield*, 344 F.Supp. 257, 277 (D. Md. 1972) (Lack of complete physical examination for inmates upon entry into city jail did not constitute cruel and unusual punishment under constitutional standards as they existed in 1972.). See also *Smith v. Swanson*, 2004 WL 1157433 (Ohio App. 2004) (County jail inmate's § 1983 complaint alleging that upon his arrival at the jail he was denied a proper physical examination failed to allege "serious deprivation of human need" as required to state a claim for a violation of Eighth Amendment's cruel and unusual punishment cause.); *Mawby v. Ambroyer*, 568 F.Supp. 245, 250 (E.D. Mich. 1983) (Failure to provide incoming inmates with a physical exam found not to violate the Eighth Amendment absent claim that inmates had actually been denied treatment of any serious medical needs.).

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/eli/physical-examination>