



March 31, 2025

Libraries

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,

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

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The legislative body of any county and/or the governing body of any incorporated city or town has the power to establish and maintain a free public library, give support to any free public library already in existence, contract with another library for library service for its citizens, or enter into contractual agreements with one or more counties or cities for joint operation of a free public library. T.C.A. § 10-3-101 *et seq.* To fund these services a county may levy a property tax or may use funds raised for general county or municipal purposes. Libraries established under these statutes must be free to all inhabitants of the county and/or city; the city or county may allow use of the library by those residing outside its territorial boundaries upon such terms as it may deem proper. T.C.A. § 10-3-107.

Counties may participate in the state's regional library system. The regional library system is composed of such regional offices as the secretary of state may establish, each office providing support and assistance to the public libraries in the counties assigned to it under the direction of the state librarian and archivist. The secretary of state may establish criteria for joining and for continuing participation in the regional library system. Local public libraries meeting such criteria may join or leave the regional library system by vote of the county commission or city governing body. T.C.A. § 10-5-101.

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