



November 16, 2024

Interim Successors

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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Interim Successors

Reference Number: CTAS-585

The law provides for a temporary successor to fill vacancies in the offices of trustee, register, county clerk, sheriff, highway chief administrative officer, and assessor of property, in addition to the provisions for an interim county mayor. T.C.A. §§ 8-11-111, 8-13-105, 18-6-115, 8-8-107, 54-7-107, 67-1-504. The duties of the office are to be temporarily discharged either by the chief deputy or by a deputy designated as temporary successor by the official in writing. It is important to note that this law applies only to the duties of the office and not to the office itself. In case of death of a clerk of court, the deputy holds office until the vacancy is filled. T.C.A. § 18-1-401. There is a statute (T.C.A. § 18-1-402) that says judges fill the vacancy in the office of court clerk but that statute (from 1858) has been superseded by the 1978 amendment to the state constitution (Art. VII, Sec. 2) requiring vacancies in county offices to be filled by the county legislative body. See AG Op. No. 88-131. If there is a vacancy in the office of clerk and master, a new clerk is appointed by the chancellor for another six-year term, beginning with the date of the appointment. T.C.A. § 18-5-101.

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