



December 22, 2024

County Treasurer

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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County Treasurer

Reference Number: CTAS-824

Acting as treasurer for the county, the trustee receives and pays out county funds. Legislation passed in 1996 prohibits any official, including the trustee, from requiring or encouraging checks to be payable to the official in his or her own name, rather than the name of the governmental entity, the office, or the official's name and title. T.C.A. § 9-1-117.

Monies that the county trustee receives in the role of treasurer for the county must be allocated to one of the county's various funds such as the general fund, school fund, highway fund, solid waste management fund, or debt service fund. Other special purpose funds may be established according to law by the county legislative body or new funds may be authorized by act of the General Assembly. Generally, monies placed in a fund may only be used for the purposes of the particular fund and may not be transferred from one fund to another. The authority to disburse monies from these funds comes from the county legislative body through appropriation resolutions and expenditures for particular purposes are established in annual budget resolutions adopted by the county legislative body. The appropriation and budget actions may be contained in one resolution and may be amended from time to time during the fiscal year which begins July 1 of each year.

Other officials receiving funds turn over some or all of these to the trustee. Under the fee system excess fees and commissions from fee officers, including the clerk and master, the county clerk, court clerks, and the register, are turned over to the trustee and become part of the county's revenue (county general fund). The trustee's excess commissions likewise become part of the county general fund. T.C.A. § 8-22-103. These excess commissions are paid over quarterly on the tenth of January, April, July, and October. The trustee must keep an accurate account of the commissions and transfer excess commissions of the trustee's office from the office commission account to the general fund by these quarterly dates. T.C.A. § 8-22-104.

As soon as possible after the quarterly dates, the trustee files a sworn report with the county mayor/executive showing the funds received from the other county offices and the excess commissions transferred by the trustee to the general fund. The trustee also files a sworn, itemized monthly statement with the county mayor/executive. T.C.A. § 8-22-104. If an official's salary is supplemented from county funds (in order to receive the statutory salary), that official must keep records and make an annual report of collections to the county mayor/executive. Filing such a report is a prerequisite to receiving the county funds since supplementary compensation is computed on the basis of the report. T.C.A. §§ 8-22-108 and 8-24-106.

The county legislative body may choose to operate under the salary system instead of the fee system, paying salaries and expenses of an office and requiring all fees to be turned over monthly to the trustee. T.C.A. § 8-22-104(a)(3). Sheriff's offices always turn over all fees to the trustee and do not operate using the fees collected. T.C.A. § 8-24-103. The sheriff's fees received by the trustee are held in the general fund of the county in a separate designated account. The trustee reports these funds at each regular meeting of the county legislative body, a report which is retained as a permanent record. T.C.A. § 8-22-113. Trustees also handle the accounting for drug fund monies, for which special accounts must be maintained. T.C.A. § 53-11-415.

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