



March 12, 2025

Compensation and Funding

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-857

A minimum compensation for members of the county election commission is specified by statute and varies according to the population of the county. These amounts may be increased in any county by resolution of the county legislative body. In order to trigger the daily rate, a commissioner must work at least one hour in any given 24 hour period, but payment is made for meetings lasting less than one hour if they are required by statute, budget preparation, or litigation. T.C.A. § 2-12-108.

A separate statute, T.C.A. § 2-12-208, provides for the compensation of certified administrators of elections, whose salaries are based on a percentage of the salary of the assessor of property. The salary specified by statute for the certified administrator of elections is a minimum that may be increased by the county legislative body. Any certified administrator of elections in a county where the election commission office is open five full days a week is required to receive as a base salary at least 90 percent of the salary of the assessor of property in the county. If the administrator's salary is less than this level on June 18, 2005, then the salary must be increased in the two subsequent fiscal years by at least 5 percent per year to reach the 90 percent level.

Basically, the funding of each county election commission is the responsibility of that county which, if not provided for, will be compelled by the chancery court. However, each municipality is responsible for expenses the county election commission incurs in holding municipal elections, and for the additional expenses attributable to the municipal election when it is held on the same day as a countywide election. Similarly, elections for the sole purpose of choosing a member of the General Assembly are to be funded by the state, as are presidential preference primaries. The state will also fund county primaries that are held along with the presidential primary. All expenses must be properly reviewed and certified in order to be paid. T.C.A. § 2-12-109.

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