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# Employees

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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>Employees .....</b>	<b>. 3</b>
<b>Private Acts of 1935 Chapter 257 .....</b>	<b>. 3</b>
<b>Private Acts of 1949 Chapter 193 .....</b>	<b>. 4</b>

# Employees

## Private Acts of 1935 Chapter 257

**COMPILER'S NOTE:** Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 193, immediately following, does not repeal any but the conflicting portions of this act. Both acts are published herein so that a comparison of the two will reveal those provisions of both which are in effect.

**SECTION 1.** That in all counties in the State of Tennessee, having a population of not less than 159,000, nor more than 200,000, according to the Federal Census of 1930, or any subsequent Federal Census, the teachers and principals of schools of such counties shall have certain qualifications and certain tenure of office as herein set forth.

**SECTION 2.** That all teachers employed by the school authorities of said counties shall have been awarded a degree of Bachelor of Arts or a degree of Bachelor of Science, or shall have an education equivalent thereto, from a standard senior college or university and shall have had at least 27 quarter hours in education, *provided* that this section shall not apply to those teachers already employed or on leave of absence, *provided further* that nothing in this section shall apply to teachers of vocational schools who meet requirements of State Board of Education, and to provide further that nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the employment of persons to teach special subjects in the interests of handicapped persons which are not embodied in the regular educational program of the County.

**SECTION 3.** That any principal or assistant principal hereafter employed by the school authorities of said counties in a school in which eight or more teachers are engaged shall have been awarded a Master's degree from a standard senior college or university and shall have also had at least three years of teaching experience and also shall have had at least 36 quarter hours in education, of which at least nine quarter hours shall be in the field of administration; *provided, however*, that in a school employing less than eight teachers the principal shall be qualified in the same manner and degree provided herein for teachers, and *provided further* that this section shall not apply to those principals already employed or on leave of absence, and *provided further* that nothing in this section shall be construed as applying to principals of vocational schools who meet requirements of State Board of Education: and *provided further* that this section shall not apply to teachers already employed.

**SECTION 4.** That all teachers and principals employed by school authorities of said counties during the first two years of employment shall be considered as probationary teachers and principals, during which time they shall be employed on annual contract which may or may not be renewed at the discretion of the employing authority, *provided* that in event of dismissal during the period covered by contract the teacher or principal shall have the same right of hearing as provided for teachers and principals on permanent tenure.

**SECTION 5.** That all teachers and principals now employed by the school authorities of said counties who have served for two years or those who have not served for two years upon the completion of two years of satisfactory service and all teachers and principals hereafter employed upon the completion of two year of satisfactory service, shall be employed on permanent tenure of office and shall not be demoted or dismissed except for cause, inefficiency or immorality or on account of discontinuance of position, in which latter case the teacher or principal shall receive the first appointment to any position for which qualified.

**SECTION 6.** That no teacher or principal employed by the school authorities of said counties shall be peremptorily or arbitrarily demoted or dismissed but shall receive written notice that demotion or termination of service is contemplated on a specific date and the notified teacher or principal may thereupon request that a written statement as to the grounds of demotion or dismissal shall be made, and following the delivery of such written statement the teacher or principal shall have fifteen days in which to request a hearing of said grounds as hereinafter provided.

**SECTION 7.** That the Chairman of the County Board of Education of said counties upon request for hearing being delivered to him or her in writing shall set a date for such hearing which date shall not be less than seven days nor more than twenty-one days after request for such hearing has been made, and the Chairman and the County Board of Education of said counties shall hold such hearing at which time the teacher or principal shall have the right to be represented by counsel.

**SECTION 8.** That said County Board of Education of said counties shall issue writs of subpoena on request of either party to compel attendance of witnesses to testify at the hearing of such investigation, such subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman of the County Board of Education of said counties and be served and obeyed in the same manner as subpoenas issued by Justices of the Peace under the general statutes of Tennessee, and any failure to obey such subpoenas may be enforced or punished in the same

manner and to the same extent as is now provided by law for enforcing or punishing failure to obey subpoenas issued by Justices of the Peace. The Chairman of the County Board of Education of said counties is hereby authorized to administer oath to witnesses at such hearing. Such hearing shall be held at the Courthouse in said counties and shall be public unless private hearing is agreeable to parties filing the complaint and to the teacher or principal.

**SECTION 9.** That the Chairman of the County Board of Education of said counties shall preside at such hearing and the decision shall be rendered by a majority of the members of the County Board of Education of said counties unless there is a tie, in which case the deciding vote shall be cast by the Chairman. Upon the hearing said Chairman and County Board of Education shall consider the charges as preferred and the evidence thereon and upon rendering their decision shall immediately notify the teacher or principal involved, or their attorney of records. Notice mailed to the address, which must be furnished said Chairman by the parties, will be sufficient notification. If the decision is rendered in the presence of the teacher or principal against whom the charges have been made, no other notification will be necessary. Either party upon execution of cost bond or taking pauper's oath will have seven days, from the time notice is given of its decision by the County Board of Education, in which to perfect an appeal by certiorari or otherwise to the Chancery Court of said counties, for a review of question of law and fact.

As amended by: Private Acts of 1935 (1<sup>st</sup> Spec. Sess.), Chapter 81

**SECTION 10.** That if on final disposition of the case the employment of said teacher or principal is not terminated any unpaid salary during his or her suspension shall be paid in full.

**SECTION 11.** That a transfer of a teacher or principal from one position to another for which he or she is qualified, or from one school to another at the same salary, or the same comparative salary, if there has been a general salary increase or reduction, shall not be considered as a demotion.

**SECTION 12.** That if any sentence, clause or section of this Act be held unconstitutional, or the application of said Act be held unconstitutional, with respect to any person or circumstance, such holding shall not affect any other sentence, clause or section or application to any other person or circumstance.

**SECTION 13.** That all laws and parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this Act be, and the same are hereby repealed, and that this Act shall take effect thirty (30) days after its passage, the public welfare requiring it.

Passed: March 29, 1935.

## Private Acts of 1949 Chapter 193

**SECTION 1.** That the provisions of this Act shall apply to all counties in the State of Tennessee having a population of not less than One Hundred Eighty Thousand Four Hundred (180,400) nor more than One Hundred Eighty Thousand Five Hundred (180,500), according to the Federal Census of 1940, or any subsequent Federal Census.

**SECTION 2.** That the meaning of the following words or phrases, used in this Act, shall be as set out in this section, unless the context clearly requires a different meaning:

"Board" means the County Board of Education;

"Chairman" means the Chairman of the County Board of Education;

"Demote" includes employment at, or transfer to, a position of lesser rank or pay;

"Dismiss" includes the failure to renew a contract of an employee;

"Employee" means a principal, teacher, instructor or supervisor who heretofore or hereafter has been employed for more than two years in the county elementary or high schools of counties subject to this Act;

"Hearing" includes the right to be present and to be heard in person and by counsel, and to have compulsory process to compel the attendance of witnesses;

"Superintendent" means the County Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**SECTION 3.** That an employee shall not be dismissed or demoted except for improper conduct, inefficient service, or neglect of duty, and after charges, notice, hearing and determination thereof, as provided in this Act; or, for lack of funds or abolition of position, subject to the rights of the employee as hereinafter provided.

**SECTION 4.** That written charges in duplicate against an employee shall be filed with the Chairman, setting out specifically the grounds of complaint. Charges must be filed and signed by not less than ten

(10) patrons of the school where the employee is employed, or by the Superintendent. In the event the duties of the employee involve more than one school, the patrons of any one of the schools may file charges. Within three (3) days after receipt of the charges the Chairman shall furnish the employee with one of the copies.

**SECTION 5.** That within five (5) days after the employee receives a copy of the charges the employee may make a written request to the Chairman for a hearing before the Board. The Chairman shall thereupon set a date for the hearing, which shall not be less than thirty (30) days nor more than forty-five (45) days after receipt of the request for a hearing. The hearing shall be public, unless the employee request a private hearing. The hearing shall be at the courthouse of the county, in the room where the Board customarily meets, or in such other room as the Chairman may designate. The Chairman shall give the employee immediate notice in writing of the time and place of the hearing.

**SECTION 6.** That the Chairman shall have the power to issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses, and shall issue such subpoenas upon the request of any party. The subpoenas shall be issued and served in the same manner as subpoenas issued by the clerk of the courts of record of the county. Failure to obey a subpoena shall constitute a contempt and may be punished upon petition filed in the Circuit Court of the county. The Chairman shall have the power to administer oaths or affirmations to the witnesses or parties. The Chairman shall have a stenographic transcript of the proceedings made and preserved and shall furnish a copy of same to the employee within ten (10) days after the conclusion of the hearing. The costs incident to the issuance of subpoenas and the stenographic transcript shall be paid by the Board.

**SECTION 7.** That the Board shall render its decision as expeditiously as possible after the conclusion of the hearing and shall file its written findings and decision, which shall become a part of the record. The Chairman shall furnish the employee with a copy of the findings and decision immediately upon rendering the same. Any findings or decision made orally, at the hearing or in the presence of the employee, shall be reduced to writing, filed and copy furnished the employee, as herein provided, and shall not be effective until this is done.

**SECTION 8.** That any party dissatisfied with the decision of the Board may appeal therefrom by petition for common law or statutory writ of certiorari filed in the Circuit or Chancery Court of the county.

**SECTION 9.** That an employee may be suspended from active duty upon the filing of charges, but the salary of the employee shall continue until decision by the Board, and shall be paid until that time regardless of whether the Board's decision is favorable or adverse to the employee. In the event the decision of the Board is adverse to the employee, the payment of salary may be discontinued pending final determination by the courts. If such final determination is favorable to the employee, the employee shall be reinstated and any salary unpaid during suspension shall be paid in full. In the event the employee does not request a hearing the salary shall be discontinued at the expiration of the time allowed for the employees [sic] to request a hearing.

**SECTION 10.** That any employee who is dismissed or demoted because of lack of funds or discontinuance of position shall be reemployed at the first opportunity. Full seniority rights shall be protected in making dismissals and demotions for these causes and in the reemployment of employees who have been dismissed or demoted for these causes.

**SECTION 11.** That a leave of absence granted by the Board, upon request of the employee, shall not prejudice an employee's rights under this Act. A leave of absence without the consent of the employee shall be deemed a dismissal.

**SECTION 12.** That the provisions of this Act shall apply only to those employees who hold certificates or permits issued by the Commissioner of Education of the State of Tennessee, and only for the time such certificates or permits are in effect.

**SECTION 13.** That nothing herein shall prevent the transfer of an employee from one position to another position of the same rank and pay.

**SECTION 14.** That an employee dismissed or demoted contrary to the provisions of this Act shall be entitled to recover the full amount of the salary unpaid because of the dismissal or demotion and shall be entitled to be reinstated; and, may sue to recover such salary or for reinstatement, or both, in any court or courts of competent jurisdiction.

**SECTION 15.** That if any sentence, clause or section of this Act be held unconstitutional, or the application of said Act be held unconstitutional, with respect to any person or circumstances, such holding shall not affect any other sentence, clause, or section or application to any other person or circumstance.

**SECTION 16.** That all laws and parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this Act be, and the same hereby are repealed, and that this Act shall take effect from and after its passage, the public welfare

requiring it.

Passed: February 17, 1949.

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