



March 31, 2025

Criminal Court

Dear Reader:

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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,

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Criminal Court

Public Acts of 1957 Chapter 54

SECTION 1. That a Criminal Court is hereby created and established in the First Judicial Circuit of Tennessee, for the Counties of Washington, Carter, Unicoi and Johnson, to be known as the "Criminal Court of the First Judicial Circuit of Tennessee."

SECTION 2. That the said Criminal Court shall have general, common law and statutory jurisdiction, original and appellate and exclusive over all criminal cases existing and arising in said counties to the same extent as is now or may hereafter be conferred upon the Circuit Courts and Criminal Courts of this State under the common laws or the statutes and to hear, try and determine all criminal cases.

SECTION 3. That upon the passage of this Act, the Governor of the State of Tennessee, is hereby authorized and directed to appoint a judge of the Criminal Court created hereunder; and said Judge shall serve until the next general election, as provided for in Section 4 of this Act. Said Judge shall be clothed with the same powers and jurisdiction as to extraordinary process as are now provided by law for such criminal judges, circuit judges and chancellors in this State, and his salary shall be the same and shall be paid in like manner by the State as that of other criminal and circuit judges of the State.

SECTION 4. That at the general election to be held on the first Thursday in August, 1958, and at all regular elections for judges held thereafter, there shall be elected by the qualified voters of said counties a judge for said Criminal Court for the First Judicial Circuit of Tennessee, in the same manner and with the same tenure of office as other Criminal and Circuit Judges of this State.

SECTION 5. That the District Attorney General of the First Judicial Circuit for Tennessee shall perform the duties of the District Attorney General in the said Criminal Court in the Counties herein named.

SECTION 6. That the Circuit Court Clerks and Sheriffs of the several counties herein named, shall be the Clerks and Sheriffs for the said Criminal Court in said Counties and they shall perform the same duties and receive the same compensation now provided by law for them.

SECTION 7. That all bonds and recognizances heretofore or hereinafter taken and of process heretofore or hereinafter issued, shall be made returnable to the Court at the times and places fixed by this Act for the holding the said Court in said Counties herein named.

SECTION 8. That it shall be lawful for the Judge of the Criminal Court and the Judge of the First Judicial Circuit to hold each of their Courts in any of the different counties, including the same county, or said Circuit at the same time.

SECTION 9. That the County Courts, Jury Commissioners or other duly existing and authorized authorities of the various counties above set out, shall appoint and select juries for said Criminal Court, according to the law now controlling in the above counties respectively, who shall be summoned to attend and bound to appear at said criminal court and shall have the same pay, qualifications, powers and privileges and shall be organized as now, under existing law as the law provides with reference to Grand Juries and all other juries of courts, but all bills of indictment, presentment and information shall be returned to said Criminal Court.

SECTION 10. That all criminal cases now existing or pending in the Circuit Courts of said named counties, on the passage of this Act, shall be by virtue of the provisions of this Act, automatically be transferred to the said Criminal Court herein established in said counties respectively and said cases shall be tried and determined therein by this said Criminal Court. The Clerks of the respective Circuit Courts in the aforesaid counties shall immediately upon the passage of this Act, transfer all Criminal proceedings and papers from the Circuit Court for said Counties to the Criminal Court and shall procure and keep the proper books, records and minutes for the said Criminal Court. The Clerk shall keep the records, papers, minutes and proceedings of the Circuit Court and the Criminal Court separate. All Courts of General Sessions and Justices of the Peace or other inferior courts in the various herein named counties shall bind over offenders against the State laws to said Criminal Court as heretofore they have been bound over to the Circuit Court.

SECTION 11. That all appeals, writs of error and appeals in the nature of writs of error, shall be prosecuted from the judgments of the said Criminal Court to the Supreme Court and as from other Criminal Courts of this State.

SECTION 12. That the time and places for holding the said Criminal Court in the said Counties shall be as follows: Washington County, at Jonesboro, the Second Monday in January, May, and September. Carter County, at Elizabethton, the Second Monday in February, June and October. Unicoi County, at Erwin, the

First Monday in April, August and December. Johnson County at Mountain City, the First Monday in February, June and October.

SECTION 13. That all laws and parts of laws now existing in conflict with this Act and its full intentions be and the same are hereby repealed.

SECTION 14. That this Act take effect from and after its passage, the public welfare requiring it.
Passed: February 20, 1957.

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