



March 12, 2025

Law Enforcement - Historical Notes

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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Offenses

Some counties in Tennessee have made various activities illegal within their boundaries by the enactment of private legislation. Some of these were billiard playing, operating dance halls, shooting fireworks, and things of a similar nature.

The acts briefly summarized below fell into this category in Unicoi County.

1. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 104, made it unlawful and a misdemeanor for any person, firm, or corporation in Unicoi County to own, operate, or in any way be connected with the owning, or operating, or conducting or working in, any pool room, billiard room or hall, whether it or a similar game is played for money, pleasure or otherwise. The fine was from \$25 to \$50 for conviction upon each offense and every game played would be a separate offense. The grand jury was given inquisitorial powers regarding this situation and the judges were required to charge this act to the grand juries at each session. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 290, so that the giving of a prize or any reward or premium after a game would constitute a misdemeanor and this provision was also inserted into the section of the act making each and every game a separate offense subject to the \$25 and \$50 fine.
2. Private Acts of 1955, Chapter 404, would have made it unlawful to maintain loud speakers from which music or other sound is broadcast upon the public streets or highways or other public places with certain exceptions, in Unicoi County, but the act was rejected by the county and did not become effective.

Sheriff

The following acts have no current effect but are included here for reference purposes since they once applied to the Unicoi County Sheriff's Office.

1. Public Acts of 1897, Chapter 124, set the salary of the Unicoi County Sheriff at \$1,000 per annum.
2. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 185, provided that the sheriff of Unicoi County would receive \$800 as an annual salary, payable quarterly in January, April, July and October, if he would keep an itemized statement of the fees received from every source and file it with the judge, or chairman, of the county court, properly sworn to, at the beginning of every quarter. The fees were not to include those for boarding prisoners and turnkeys. If the total amount of income from these sources failed to amount to \$800, the county would make up the difference; but the sheriff could not donate directly or indirectly such fees to the person from whom they were collectible, the same being declared unlawful and the basis upon which the judge could withhold payment of his salary.
3. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 58, raised the salary of the sheriff of Unicoi County to \$1,200 annually, payable quarterly on the first day of January, April, July and October. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 7, which increased the salary of the sheriff from \$1,200 to \$1,800 annually, payable quarterly.
4. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 29, provided that the sheriff of Unicoi County would be paid \$500 per annum, in quarterly payments, in ex-officio fees, out of the regular funds of the county, the same to be in addition to all the other fees collected in his office.
5. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 341, set the salary of the Unicoi County Sheriff at \$2,300 annually, payable in quarterly installments from regular county funds.
6. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 836, set the Unicoi County Sheriff's salary at \$3,600 annually, payable monthly under the same terms and conditions as before except the reports of

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