



March 31, 2025

Administration - Historical Notes

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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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Budget System

The following act once created a budgeting system for Sullivan County, but it has been specifically repealed or superseded by current law.

1. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 114, provided for the regulation, supervision and control of certain county officials in Sullivan County. This act made it unlawful for county officials who had the authority to purchase and materials, goods or supplies to do so by contract or on a quantum meruit basis in excess of the amount of money appropriated by the quarterly county court. This act was found unconstitutional in Bandy v. State, 185 Tenn. 190, 204 S.W. 2d 819 (1947).

County Attorney

The following acts once affected the appointment, election, or office of the county attorney in Sullivan County. These acts are included for historical reference only.

1. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 231, would have amended Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 524, by increasing the monthly pay of the Sullivan County Attorney to \$200 per month, however, this act was rejected or disapproved by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.
2. Private Acts of 1988, Chapter 131, would have amended Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 609, so as to have the Sullivan County Attorney review tax delinquency matters unless otherwise assigned to the delinquent tax attorney for prosecution and to allow that the compensation of the delinquent tax attorney be negotiated between the county trustee in accordance with state statutory procedure; however, this act was disapproved by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.

County Clerk

The following acts once affected the office of county clerk in Sullivan County. They are included herein for historical purposes.

1. Private Acts of 1819, Chapter 9, authorized the county and circuit court clerk of Sullivan County to build an office on part of the public square in the Town of Blountville.
2. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 215, authorized the Sullivan Quarterly County Court to increase the salary of the county court clerk to \$50 per month in addition to his compensation. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 239, which eliminated the additional \$50 per month to the county court clerk.

County Legislative Body

1. Acts of 1809 (1st Sess.), Chapter 93, regulated the time for holding the courts of pleas and quarter session of Sullivan County on the third Monday in February, May, August and November.
2. Private Acts of 1827, Chapter 65, established a court of pleas and quarter sessions in Sullivan County.
3. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 757, required the justices of the peace of Sullivan County to file quarterly within five days of the meeting of the quarterly county court with the county judge or chairman and the county trustee a written, itemized, sworn statement or report showing all fines, forfeitures and other revenue collected by them during the preceding quarter.
4. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 9, fixed the per diem compensation for attendance of justices of the peace at the regular called sessions of the Sullivan Quarterly County Court at \$5.00 per day. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1961, Chapter 257, so as to allow the justices of the peace to be paid for any committee meetings of said court held in connection with the duties of such office. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 9, was repealed by Private Acts of 1967- 68, Chapter 194.
5. Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 194, set the compensation of the justices of the peace of Sullivan County at \$25 per day for each day in attendance at regular or special meetings of the quarterly county court. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 441, which gave the justices of the peace an additional \$5.00 for each committee meeting which they attended, however, such meetings were limited to four per year. Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 194, was repealed by Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 253.
6. Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 253, set the compensation of the justices of the peace of Sullivan County at \$25 for each day in attendance at regular or special meetings of the quarterly county court and \$5.00 for attendance at each committee meeting, which was limited to four meetings

per year. In addition, members of the quarterly county court were paid a mileage allowance of 10 cents per mile for traveling to and from regular or special meetings.

7. Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 366, would have amended Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 253, relative to the compensation of justices of the peace of Sullivan County, however, this act was not ratified by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.

County Mayor

The references below are of acts which once applied to the office of county judge, or county executive in Sullivan County. They are included herein for historical purposes only. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Public Acts of 1867-68, Chapter 47, created the office of county judge for Sullivan County and set the term and compensation. This act was amended by Public Acts of 1868-69, Chapter 35, Section 13, which increased the judge's salary to \$600 per year. The act, as amended, was repealed by Public Acts of 1869-70 (1st Sess.), Chapter 7, which abolished the office of the Sullivan County Judge.
2. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 375, created and regulated the office of county judge for Sullivan County. The provided for the county judge's salary, defined his duties and jurisdiction and abolished the office of county chairman of the county court of Sullivan County. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 196.
3. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 195, required the Sullivan Quarterly County Court to elect a county chairman. This act set the county chairman's term of office at 1 year and set his salary at \$1,200 per annum. The office of county chairman was abolished by Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 15.
4. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 15, as amended, created the office of county judge of Sullivan County. This act was superseded by Public Acts of 1978, Chapter 934, when the office of county judge was phased out.
5. Private Acts of 1951, Chapter 709, provided compensation for the Sullivan County Judge as financial agent and for other governmental duties. The county judge was paid \$3,600 for his services. The office of county judge no longer exists due to Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 934.
6. Private Acts of 1973, Chapter 151, would have amended Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 15, relative to the compensation of the county judge of Sullivan County, however, this act was not ratified by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.
7. Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 358, would have amended Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 15, relative to the compensation of the county judge of Sullivan County, however, this act was not ratified by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.

County Register

The following acts once affected the office of county register in Sullivan County, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1831, Chapter 162, provided that all deeds of conveyances and other instruments of writing registered in Sullivan County be good and valid in law and equity as if the same had been indorsed and certified in the most formal and legal manner. The deeds of conveyances were allowed to be read as evidence on trails at law or in equity, in all cases.
2. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 317, fixed the compensation of registrars registering the voters in Sullivan County at \$4.00 per day.
3. Private Acts of 2011, Chapter 4, repealed the Private Acts of 1899, Chapter 242, which provided for keeping a register's office at Bristol, Tennessee, for the convenience of the citizens of the first, second, nineteenth, twenty-first, twenty-second and seventeenth civil districts of Sullivan County.

County Trustee

The following act once affected the office of county trustee in Sullivan County, but is no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 481, fixed the amount of bonds to be given by the Sullivan County Trustee.

General Reference

The following private or local acts constitute part of the administrative and political history of Sullivan County but are today no longer operative because they have either been superseded, repealed, or failed to receive local approval. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Acts of 1799, Chapter 18, authorized Sullivan County to hold two fairs yearly in Blountville on the

- first Thursdays and Fridays of May and November.
2. Acts of 1801, Chapter 5, prevented the exportation of unmerchantable commodities in Sullivan County. John Spurgen's mill and Saltville were designated as the place of inspection in Sullivan County for said commodities.
 3. Acts of 1805, Chapter 30, established warehouse along the bank of the Holston River in Sullivan County for the inspection of flour, beef and pork.
 4. Acts of 1807, Chapter 75, authorized Elizabeth Spurgin, administratrix, and George Webb, administrator of the estate of John Spurgin of Sullivan County, to make a deed of conveyance to Thomas Cox.
 5. Private Acts of 1822, Chapter 60, relieved John Smith, of Sullivan County, from the penalties imposed on him in a suit brought by John C. Veal.
 6. Private Acts of 1823, Chapter 134, authorized the drawing of a lottery in the Town of Kingsport, Sullivan County, for the purpose of opening and improving the navigation of the Holston and Tennessee Rivers.
 7. Private Acts of 1827, Chapter 232, Section 4, made it lawful for Margaret Fickle to file her petition for a divorce from her husband Abram B. Fickle in the Sullivan County Circuit Court.
 8. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 69, allowed Margaret Fickle to petition for a divorce against her husband Abraham B. Fickle in the Sullivan County Circuit Court.
 9. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 213, authorized a survey of Sullivan County to determine the number of square miles therein.
 10. Private Acts of 1832, Chapter 5, authorized Joshus Shipley, of Sullivan County, to raise his mill dam on the south sluice of the Holston River.
 11. Private Acts of 1832, Chapter 76, authorized the clerk and treasurer of the board of common school commissioners of Sullivan County to perform all the duties required of the late agents in said county, under the same rules, regulations and restrictions as were provided for the bank agency of Campbell County.
 12. Private Acts of 1832, Chapter 136, authorized Arthur Hays to emancipate his slave Mender. Section 2 of this act also authorized Thomas Rockhold of Sullivan County to emancipate his slave Emily and her two children.
 13. Private Acts of 1833, Chapter 117, authorized Andrew Shell to hawk and peddle goods in Sullivan County.
 14. Private Acts of 1833, Chapter 271, authorized the Sullivan County Court to allow Christopher Jennings to emancipate his slave Phillippia.
 15. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 191, Section 20, authorized the counties of Washington, Jefferson, Greene, Hawkins, Carter, Sullivan, Grainger and Warren to take stock in the Nashville, Franklin and Columbia Railroad Company.
 16. Acts of 1903, Chapter 380, authorized any electric street railway company, which operated its street car line in any incorporated city or town in Sullivan County, to extend its line from such city or town in any direction and gave such company the right of eminent domain.
 17. Acts of 1903, Chapter 423, amended Public Acts of 1895, Chapter 160, a general law which regulated insurance, so as to include life and fire insurance; provided that the provisions of Chapter 423 apply only to Sullivan County.
 18. Acts of 1907, Chapter 392, authorized electric railway companies to acquire lands for park purposes, either by purchase or condemnation in Sullivan County.
 19. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 471, regulated the operation of automobiles in Sullivan County. This act prescribed some of the duties of chauffeurs and provided for the recovery of damages for injuries caused by the unlawful running of automobiles.
 20. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 276, enabled and facilitated the cities, towns, villages and other public or private corporations in Sullivan County, which had the power of eminent domain, to locate, relocate and construct places of interment, highways and other public betterments, and provided the assessment of damages in connection therewith.
 21. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 732, authorized and regulated the practice of law by nonresident attorneys in Sullivan County.
 22. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 486, authorized Sullivan County to construct and maintain sidewalks upon any public roads or highways and to authorize the quarterly county court to provide funds

- for the construction and maintenance of any such sidewalks.
23. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 608, amended the general act setting the compensation of county officials to create a class 3A. Sullivan County is one of the counties which comprised this new class.
 24. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 611, regulated the formation of grand juries and the appointment of the foreman thereof in Sullivan County. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1961, Chapter 256.
 25. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 152, removed the disability of infancy of Hazel Ileen Ketron of Sullivan County.
 26. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 356, removed the disability of minority from Lelia Bell Andis of Sullivan County, and gave her full contractual, property and all other rights of a person twenty-one years of age.
 27. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 741, removed the disabilities of infancy of Edna Catherine Miller of Sullivan County, so as to give her full right to contract, to sue and be sued, to hold property and convey real estate and to have and possess all the rights of persons twenty-one years of age.
 28. Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 299, fixed the compensation of the Sullivan County Attorney at \$1,800 per annum. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 288.
 29. Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 303, would have provided for an election in Sullivan County to permit the qualified voters of the county to indicate their will relative to a new form of county government, however, this act was not ratified by Sullivan County and therefore never took effect.
 30. Private Acts of 1980, Chapter 198, provided for the creation of a Metropolitan Government Charter Commission in Sullivan County subject to the outcome of a referendum vote in November, 1980. There would be 18 members of the Commission four from the city of Kingsport, four from the City of Bristol, and from Bluff City, and nine from Sullivan County.
 31. Private Acts of 1995, Chapter 104, would have created a consolidated government charter commission for Sullivan County, however, this act was not ratified by Sullivan County and therefore never became law.

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