



County Technical Assistance Service

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County Medical Examiner

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS electronic library known as e-Li. This online library is maintained daily 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 e-Li material.

Sincerely,

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County Medical Examiner

Reference Number: CTAS-451

Every county is required to have a county medical examiner. T.C.A. § 38-7-104. The principal function of the medical examiner is to investigate deaths occurring under certain circumstances described by statute and to provide information to law enforcement officials. T.C.A. §§ 38-7-106 through 38-7-119. The county commission may assign the county coroner's duties to the medical examiner and eliminate the office of coroner. T.C.A. § 8-9-101. The county medical examiner may order autopsies in cases where the death is sudden or is possibly not from natural causes.

The county medical examiner is appointed by the legislative body from a list of two doctors of medicine or osteopathy nominated by a convention of physicians residing in the county. In counties with a metropolitan form of government, the medical examiner is appointed by the chief executive officer subject to confirmation by the metropolitan council. T.C.A. § 38-7-104. The county legislative body may appoint a medical examiner from another county if it is impossible to obtain acceptance from a physician in the county. If the legislative body fails to certify a medical examiner, the state's chief medical examiner may appoint a medical examiner for the county until the legislative body takes such action. T.C.A. § 38-7-104.

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