

TITLE 3
MUNICIPAL COURT¹

CHAPTER

1. TOWN JUDGE.
2. COURT ADMINISTRATION.
3. SUMMONSES AND SUBPOENAS.
4. BONDS AND APPEALS.

CHAPTER 1

TOWN JUDGE

SECTION

- 3-101. Town judge.
3-102. Jurisdiction.

3-101. Town judge. (1) Appointment. The town judge designated by the charter to handle judicial matters within the town shall be a licensed attorney appointed by the board of mayor and aldermen and shall serve at the pleasure of the governing body. Vacancies in the office of the town judge arising from resignation, disqualification or for any other reason whatsoever, shall be filled in the same manner as prescribed for the appointment of the town judge.

(2) Qualifications. The town judge shall be a minimum of twenty-five (25) years of age, be licensed by the State of Tennessee to practice law.

(3) Judge pro tem.² During the absence of the town judge from his duties for any reason or at any time the office of the town judge is vacant, the board of mayor and aldermen may appoint a town judge pro tem to serve until the town judge returns to his duties or the office of town judge is no longer vacant. The town judge pro tem shall have all the qualifications required, and powers, of the town judge.

(4) Salary. The salary of the town judge shall be determined by the board of mayor and aldermen per month. (modified)

¹Charter reference
Town judge - Town court: § 6-4-301.

²Charter reference
Appointment of temporary judge: § 6-4-301(b)(2).

3-102. Jurisdiction. The town judge shall have the authority to try persons charged with the violation of municipal ordinances, and to punish persons convicted of such violations by levying a civil penalty under the general penalty provision of this code.

CHAPTER 2

COURT ADMINISTRATION

SECTION

3-201. Maintenance of docket.

3-202. Imposition of penalties and costs.

3-203. Disposition and report of penalties and costs.

3-204. Contempt of court.

3-201. Maintenance of docket. The town clerk shall keep a complete docket of all matters coming before him in his judicial capacity. The docket shall include for each defendant such information as his name; summons numbers; alleged offense; disposition; penalties and costs imposed and whether collected; and all other information which may be relevant.

3-202. Imposition of penalties and costs. All penalties and costs shall be imposed by the town judge and recorded by the court clerk on the town court docket in open court.

In all cases heard and determined by him, the town judge shall impose court costs in the amount of one hundred three dollars and seventy-five cents (\$103.75). One dollar (\$1.00) of the court costs shall be forwarded by the court clerk to the state treasurer to be used by the administrative office of the courts for training and continuing education courses for municipal court judges and municipal court clerks.

In addition, pursuant to authority granted in *Tennessee Code Annotated*, § 67-4-601, the court shall levy a state litigation tax in the amount of thirteen dollars and seventy-five cents (\$13.75) in all cases on which state litigation tax is levied. (modified)

3-203. Disposition and report of penalties and costs. All funds coming into the hands of the town judge or town court clerk in the form of penalties, costs, and forfeitures shall be recorded by him and paid over daily to the town. At the end of each month, he shall submit to the board of mayor and aldermen a report accounting for the collection or noncollection of all penalties and costs imposed by his court during the current month and to date for the current fiscal year.

3-204. Contempt of court. Contempt of court is punishable by a fine of fifty dollars (\$50.00), or such lesser amount as may be imposed in the judge's discretion.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMONSES AND SUBPOENAS

SECTION

3-301. Issuance of summonses.

3-302. Issuance of subpoenas.

3-301. Issuance of summonses. When a complaint of an alleged ordinance violation is made to the town judge, the judge may, in his discretion, issue a summons ordering the alleged offender personally to appear before the town court at a time specified therein to answer to the charges against him. The summons shall contain a brief description of the offense charged, but need not set out verbatim the provisions of the municipal code or ordinance alleged to have been violated. Upon failure of any person to appear before the town court as commanded in a summons lawfully served on him, the cause may be proceeded with ex parte, and the judgment of the court shall be valid and binding subject to the defendant's right of appeal.

3-302. Issuance of subpoenas. The town judge may subpoena as witnesses all persons whose testimony he believes will be relevant and material to matters coming before his court, and it shall be unlawful for any person lawfully served with such a subpoena to fail or neglect to comply therewith.

CHAPTER 4**BONDS AND APPEALS****SECTION**

3-401. Appeals.

3-402. Bond amounts, conditions, and forms.

3-401. Appeals. Any person dissatisfied with any judgment of the town court against him may, within ten (10) days¹ thereafter, Sundays exclusive, appeal to the circuit court of the county upon giving bond.

"Person" as used in this section includes, but is not limited to, a natural person, corporation, business entity, or the municipality.

3-402. Bond amounts, conditions, and forms. (1) Appeal bond. An appeal bond in any case shall be two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) for such person's appearance and the faithful prosecution of the appeal.

(2) Pauper's oath. A bond is not required, provided the defendant/appellant:

(a) Files the following oath of poverty:

I, _____, do solemnly swear under penalties of perjury, that owing to my poverty, I am not able to bear the expense of the action which I am about to commence, and that I am justly entitled to the relief sought, to the best of my belief; and

(b) Files an accompanying affidavit of indigency.

The affidavit of indigency must be sworn to by the defendant/appellant and the facts therein may be investigated.

¹State law reference

Tennessee Code Annotated, § 16-18-307.

