



Municipal Technical Advisory Service
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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General Law Mayor-Aldermanic Charter

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal 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 municipal 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 MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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General Law Mayor-Aldermanic Charter

Reference Number: MTAS-330

The mayor-aldermanic general law charter (T.C.A. §§6-1-101, *et seq.*) provides for a board of mayor and aldermen consisting of the mayor and two to eight aldermen. Newly incorporated cities must have at least one ward, and two aldermen must be elected from that ward. Newly incorporated cities with more than 5,000 people must have at least two wards, and two aldermen must be elected from each ward.

Any existing city also may adopt the mayor-aldermanic charter. The board appoints the recorder, the treasurer, the city judge (if he is not exercising concurrent jurisdiction with general sessions court; see Chapter 6, City Courts), and other department heads. The mayor prepares the budget, hires and fires employees, and sees that all city laws and ordinances are enforced. However, the board may designate itself or someone else to perform any or all of these mayoral functions. The board may appoint a city administrator by ordinance.

Municipalities that were incorporated under the mayor-aldermanic charter before June 30, 1991, may establish wards, increase or decrease the number of aldermen, and switch to staggered terms in accordance with T.C.A. §§ 6-3-101–102. Municipalities with non-staggered two-year terms may change by ordinance to non-staggered four-year terms.

T.C.A. § 6-3-101(a) allows municipalities that incorporated under the mayor-aldermanic charter after June 30, 1991, to modify the number of aldermen and/or wards by ordinance. The ordinance must provide for staggered four-year terms but may provide for transitional terms of fewer than four years.

T.C.A. §§ 6-3-101(b) and 102(a) allow municipalities incorporated under this charter that have only one ward to provide by ordinance for election of aldermen by numerical position. A person seeking office as an alderman may qualify for only one position.

DISCLAIMER: The letters and publications written by the MTAS consultants were written based upon the law at the time and/or a specific sets of facts. The laws referenced in the letters and publications may have changed and/or the technical advice provided may not be applicable to your city or circumstances. Always consult with your city attorney or an MTAS consultant before taking any action based on information contained in this website.

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