



County Technical Assistance Service

UT INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Duties of the Clerk in the Courtroom

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Court Clerk 1994-2021 (many of those years in the
courtroom))

CIRCUIT/CHANCERY (According to E-Li)

Clerks serve an important role in the operation of the Tennessee court system, a role that is outlined generally in Title 18 of the Tennessee Code Annotated. Some of the clerks' duties include the following:

1. Attending each court session with all the papers for the cases on the docket;
2. Administering oaths to parties and witnesses who testify;
3. Keeping minutes of the court in a well-bound book or in an electronic format so long as certain rules relating to the safekeeping of the records are followed;
4. Maintaining the rule docket and an execution docket in which all court judgments or decrees are entered in order of rendition and all receipts and disbursements in a case are entered;
5. Maintaining indexes for all books and dockets that are kept by the office; and
6. Investing funds pursuant to T.C.A. § 18-5-105, T.C.A. §§ 18-5-102, 18-1-105.

Also according to E-Li

General sessions clerks have duties similar to other court clerks:

1. Retaining, preserving, and filing in order all papers in civil cases;
2. Transmitting papers when an appeal has been taken to circuit court; and
3. Keeping in a well-bound book a docket of all judgments and executions, or storing such information in an electronic format

TCA 18-4-103. Duties.

The clerk of each circuit court, in addition to the duties prescribed by chapters 1 and 2 of this title, is required to:

- (1) At each term of the court, when the jury is discharged, make out and certify a list of the jury, with the number of days they have served and the amount due to each, and deliver the list to the county clerk, to be registered by the county clerk, and certificates issued thereon as prescribed by § 18-6-105;
- (2) Make out and transmit to the clerk of the supreme court transcripts of the record, in all cases in which appeals in the nature of writs of error have been taken from the clerk of the circuit court's court, within forty (40) days after the rendition of the judgment, unless the case has been determined within forty (40) days of the session of the supreme court, or during such session, and in that event forthwith;
- (3) Enter up judgment of the court on its records, after the verdict of a jury;
- (4) Note on every execution or order of sale of land, the defendant's direction not to advertise the execution or order in a newspaper;
- (5) Present to the judge of the circuit or criminal court all bills of costs for the clerk of the circuit court's certificate, in criminal cases, in which the state or county is liable for the costs;
- (6) Record, at full length, on the minutes of the clerk of the circuit court's court, the papers returned into the court by a judge of the court of general sessions, for the purpose of having a condemnation of land levied on by execution from such judge, and order of sale;
- (7) Enter, at full length, upon the minutes of the court, the presentment or indictment in cases of felony;
- (8) Perform duties in relation to revenue as prescribed in §§ 9-2-108 — 9-2-122 and [former] 9-2-135 [repealed];
- (9) Notify the Tennessee bureau of investigation by electronic submission of final disposition of criminal proceedings against a person as soon as practicable but no later than seventy-two (72) hours days after final disposition of the criminal proceedings; and
- (10) Perform such other duties as are, or may be, required by law.

18-5-102. Duties.

The clerk and master of the chancery court, in addition to the duties prescribed by chapters 1 and 2 of this title, is required to:

- (1) Keep a rule docket, in which shall be entered the names of the complainants and defendants in full, the names of the attorneys and counsel, a minute of the date of the issuance and return of process, with the return on the process, and a note of all the orders and proceedings made at office;
- (2) Keep a well-bound book, in which shall be entered, under the name of each case, the depositions taken and filed in the case, the names of the witnesses, and the date of the filing, and by whom. This book may be dispensed with by keeping the rule docket in such a way as to enable the entries required in this section to be made in the docket, without interfering with the entries regularly belonging to that docket;
- (3) Issue all original, mesne and final process from the court, make orders of publication for defendants, grant decrees pro confesso for want of answer, hear exceptions to bills, answers and reports, subject at all times to the control, direction and supervision of the chancellor; and
- (4) Perform such other duties as are, or may be, by law required.

18-4-203. Powers and duties of clerk.

General Sessions Court

(a) The clerk of the general sessions court has concurrent authority with the judge to issue warrants and other process and writs, other than those that the law requires to be issued only by a judicial officer, and has the authority to set the amount of bond in the absence of the judge.

(b) It is the duty of the clerk of the general sessions court to:

(1) Keep all dockets required by title 16, chapter 15;

(2) Write all minute entries required;

(3) Promptly make any and all entries necessitated by §§ 16-15-101 - 16-15-711, 18-4-201, 18-4-202, 20-12-143, and 27-5-108, and [former] §§ 40-118, 40-424, and 40-425 [repealed]; and

(4) Notify the Tennessee bureau of investigation by electronic submission of final disposition of criminal proceedings against a person as soon as practicable but no later than seventy-two (72) hours after final disposition of the criminal proceedings.

A quick Google search:

The Court Clerk keeps summaries of court actions in an appearance docket; maintains case files; collects court fees, fines, costs, assessments, and forfeitures; and distributes or expends collected monies.

What role does the clerk play in a courtroom?

Court clerks play a pivotal role in ensuring the courtroom's smooth operation, assuming responsibilities that range from managing documents to scheduling hearings and assisting judges and attorneys with tasks like swearing in witnesses and maintaining exhibits.

Court clerks perform a myriad of tasks to ensure the smooth functioning of the courtroom:

- Managing and organizing documents and records.** Clerks meticulously organize and manage documents and records for a case, ensuring they are properly filed, stored, and readily accessible when needed.

- Scheduling legal proceedings.** It falls upon court clerks to handle the timing and logistics of hearings, trials, and other legal proceedings, ensuring that all [court deadlines](#) are adhered to.

- Assisting judges and attorneys.** From announcing the opening of court sessions to swearing important information between witnesses and maintaining exhibits, court clerks provide crucial support to judges and attorneys throughout court proceedings.

- Facilitating communication:** Clerks serve as intermediaries in legal proceedings, communicating between judges, attorneys, witnesses, and other key figures in the courtroom.

Becoming a Great Courtroom Clerk:

1. Learn how to communicate effectively. ...
2. Attention to detail. ...
3. Time management skills. ...
4. Build up your industry knowledge. ...
5. Gain additional skills. ...
6. Maintain professional standards. ...
7. Learn how to be tactful.

QUESTIONS?