



COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sheriff



Summary of Office

The sheriff's duties are widespread and far-reaching, but they generally fall into two broad categories: law enforcement and administrative.

Number to Be Elected

One per county.

Term of Office

Nominations for election to the office of sheriff are made via primary elections conducted by the political parties or via a petition of qualified electors. The general election for the office of sheriff is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of general election years. The sheriff is elected at-large for a 4-year term. The term of office of the sheriff starts on the first Monday of January after the election.

Criteria to Run

Must reside in the county and be a qualified elector. Must not be a defaulter to the state or any county or municipality or to the United States.

Duties of Office

The sheriff's duties are widespread and far-reaching, but they generally fall into two broad categories: law enforcement and administrative. The law enforcement duties are those typically associated with the sheriff's office. These duties are specifically "to keep the peace within the county, by causing all offenders in his/her view to enter into bonds, with sureties, for keeping the peace and for appearing at the next circuit court, and by committing such offenders in case of refusal." The sheriff is also charged with the duty to "quell riots, routs, affrays, and unlawful assemblages, and to prevent lynchings and mob violence." The administrative duties for the sheriff are numerous. One of the most recognizable administrative duties is to serve as the county's jailor, except in any county in which there is a jointly owned jail. Another duty of the sheriff is to "have charge of the courthouse." The sheriff is also charged with several bookkeeping and record-keeping duties. One such duty is to serve as the county librarian. This requires the sheriff to keep the Mississippi Department Reports, census reports, statutes of the state, Mississippi Reports, digests, and legislative journals assigned to the county in the courtroom of the courthouse. The sheriff must also keep books of every kind, maps, charts, and other things that may be donated to the county by the state, the United States, individuals, or other sources.

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