

To meet the challenges and demands of taking on the full responsibilities of Peace Officers and the added liabilities of processing civil cases, Texas Constables MUST be licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education by attending a Basic Police Academy. Any Certified Texas Peace Officer may run for election as a Constable; however, they must reside in the Precinct for which they run.

AN ACT

relating to the qualifications for service as constable.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 86.0021, Texas Local Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

§ 86.0021. QUALIFICATIONS; REMOVAL. (a) A person is not eligible to serve as constable unless:

(1) the person is eligible to be licensed under Sections 1701.309 and 1701.312, Occupations Code, and:

(A) has at least an associate's degree conferred by an institution of higher education accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;

(B) is a special investigator under Article 2.122(a), Code of Criminal Procedure; or

(C) is an honorably retired peace officer or honorably retired federal criminal investigator who holds a certificate of proficiency issued under Section 1701.357, Occupations Code; or

(2) the person is an active or inactive licensed peace officer under Chapter 1701, Occupations Code.

(b) On or before the 270th day after the date a constable takes office, the constable shall provide, to the commissioners court of the county in which the constable serves, evidence that the constable has been issued a permanent peace officer license under Chapter 1701, Occupations Code. A constable who fails to provide evidence of licensure under this subsection or who fails to maintain a permanent license while serving in office forfeits the office and is subject to removal in a quo warranto proceeding under Chapter 66, Civil Practice and Remedies Code.

(c) The license requirement of Subsection (b) supersedes the license requirement of Section 1701.302, Occupations Code.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 884, § 3, eff. Jan. 1, 1998.
Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 877, § 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, § 14.821, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2005, 79th Leg., ch. 954, § 1, eff. June 18, 2005.

CONSTABLE'S DUTIES

Article five, section Eighteen of the Texas Constitution delineates the constitutional directives of the office of constable and how it is organized.

SUBCHAPTER C. POWERS AND DUTIES § 86.021 TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

General Powers and Duties

(a) A constable shall execute and return as provided by law each process, warrant, and precept that is directed to the constable and is delivered by a lawful officer. Notices required by Section 24.005, Property Code, relating to eviction actions are process for purposes of this section that may be executed by a constable.

(b) A constable may execute any civil or criminal process throughout the county in which the constable's precinct is located and in other locations as provided by the Code of Criminal Procedure or by any other law.

(c) A constable expressly authorized by statute to perform an act or service, including the service of civil or criminal process, citation, notice, warrant, subpoena, or writ, may perform the act or service anywhere in the county in which the constable's precinct is located. (d) Regardless of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, all civil process may be served by a constable in the constable's county or in a county contiguous to the constable's county, except that a constable who is a party to or interested in the outcome of a suit may not serve any process related to the suit.

(e) The constable shall attend each justice court held in the precinct.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, § 13(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 884, § 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1998.

§ 86.022. Power to Summon Resident Assistance

(a) If a constable encounters resistance in the execution of any lawful process or in the arrest of an offender, the constable may call for assistance any resident of the county who is convenient.

(b) A person who fails or refuses to obey a call for assistance may, on the motion of the constable, be fined by a justice of the peace in the manner provided for contempt. The amount of the fine may not exceed \$10. The person who is accused of not providing assistance must be given three days' notice of the motion.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987

Constables are not limited to only "serving the Justice of the Peace Courts";in fact, there is no statute to support this notion, at all. Statutorily, process service for Justice Courts is only a small portion of the official powers and duties of the office. By Statute, Constables serve ALL courts in the state of Texas and are also accountable for providing the same services and duties as all other police agencies.

Art. 2.13 TEXAS CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE. [37] [44]
[45]

Duties and Powers

(a) It is the duty of every peace officer to preserve the peace within the officer's jurisdiction. To effect this purpose, the officer shall use all lawful means.

(b) The officer shall:

(1) in every case authorized by the provisions of this Code, interfere without warrant to prevent or suppress crime;

(2) execute all lawful process issued to the officer by any magistrate or court;

(3) give notice to some magistrate of all offenses committed within the officer's jurisdiction, where the officer has good reason to believe there has been a violation of the penal law; and

(4) arrest offenders without warrant in every case where the officer is authorized by law, in order that they may be taken before the proper magistrate or court and be tried.

(c) It is the duty of every officer to take possession of a child under Article 62.009(g).

Acts 1965, 59th Leg., vol. 2, p. 317, ch. 722.

Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 685, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999

Many Constables have departments with Traffic Enforcement Divisions, Criminal Investigators, Warrant Divisions, Hot Check Divisions, Crime Prevention Units and other Community Service Divisions when needed and supported by budget funding.