



TOWN CLERKS' SELECTION METHODS AND TERM LENGTHS

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TOWN CLERKS

State and local laws govern town clerks' duties and responsibilities. Generally, they are considered the local government official in charge of public records, vital statistics, and licensing. They also play a role in election administration, especially absentee ballot procedures.

ISSUE

Which municipalities elect their town clerk? Which ones appoint the clerk? What is each clerk's term length?

SUMMARY

According to information provided by the Office of the Secretary of the State (SOTS) and a review of selected municipal charters, 121 municipalities elect their town clerk, and 48 appoint the clerk. Seventy-seven town clerks serve four-year terms, 51 serve two-year terms,

38 serve for an indefinite period, two serve terms coterminous with the town's mayor, and one serves a six-year term.

Clerks who serve for an indefinite period do not have specified term lengths. Such clerks include those who (1) serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority or (2) may be removed only for cause.

Table 1 indicates, for each municipality, (1) whether the town clerk is elected or appointed and (2) the clerk's term length, if applicable.

Table 1: Town Clerks' Selection Methods and Term Lengths

Municipality	Selection Method	Term Length
Andover	Elected	4
Ansonia	Elected	2
Ashford	Appointed	4
Avon	Appointed	Indefinite
Barkhamsted	Elected	4
Beacon Falls	Elected	4
Berlin	Appointed	Indefinite
Bethany	Elected	4

Table 1 (Cont.)

Municipality	Selection Method	Term Length
Bethel	Elected	4
Bethlehem	Elected	4
Bloomfield	Appointed	Indefinite
Bolton	Appointed	Indefinite
Bozrah	Elected	4
Branford	Elected	2
Bridgeport	Elected	4
Bridgewater	Elected	4
Bristol	Appointed	4
Brookfield	Elected	4
Brooklyn	Elected	2
Burlington	Appointed	Indefinite
Canaan	Elected	4
Canterbury	Elected	4
Canton	Appointed	Indefinite
Chaplin	Elected	2
Cheshire	Elected	2
Chester	Elected	4
Clinton	Appointed	2
Colchester	Elected	4
Colebrook	Elected	2
Columbia	Appointed	Indefinite
Cornwall	Elected	2
Coventry	Appointed	Indefinite
Cromwell	Elected	2
Danbury	Elected	2
Darien	Elected	2
Deep River	Elected	2
Derby	Elected	4
Durham	Elected	4
East Granby	Appointed	Indefinite
East Haddam	Elected	2
East Hampton	Appointed	Indefinite
East Hartford	Appointed	Coterminous with mayor
East Haven	Elected	2
East Lyme	Elected	4
East Windsor	Appointed	Indefinite
Eastford	Elected	4
Easton	Elected	2
Ellington	Appointed	Indefinite
Enfield	Appointed	Indefinite
Essex	Elected	4
Fairfield	Elected	4
Farmington	Elected	4

Table 1 (Cont.)

Municipality	Selection Method	Term Length
Franklin	Elected	2
Glastonbury	Appointed	Indefinite
Goshen	Elected	2
Granby	Appointed	Indefinite
Greenwich	Elected	2
Griswold	Elected	4
Groton	Elected	4
Guilford	Appointed	Indefinite
Haddam	Elected	4
Hamden	Elected	2
Hampton	Elected	2
Hartford	Appointed	Indefinite
Hartland	Appointed	4
Harwinton	Elected	4
Hebron	Elected	4
Kent	Elected	4
Killingly	Appointed	Indefinite
Killingworth	Elected	4
Lebanon	Elected	4
Ledyard	Appointed	Coterminous with mayor
Lisbon	Elected	4
Litchfield	Elected	4
Lyme	Elected	2
Madison	Appointed	Indefinite
Manchester	Elected	4
Mansfield	Appointed	Indefinite
Marlborough	Elected	4
Meriden	Elected	4
Middlebury	Elected	4
Middlefield	Elected	2
Middletown	Appointed	Indefinite
Milford	Elected	2
Monroe	Elected	2
Montville	Appointed	Indefinite
Morris	Elected	4
Naugatuck	Elected	2
New Britain	Elected	4
New Canaan	Elected	2
New Fairfield	Elected	4
New Hartford	Elected	4
New Haven	Elected	2
New London	Appointed	Indefinite
New Milford	Elected	4
Newington	Appointed	Indefinite

Table 1 (Cont.)

Municipality	Selection Method	Term Length
Newtown	Elected	4
Norfolk	Elected	4
North Branford	Appointed	Indefinite
North Canaan	Elected	4
North Haven	Elected	2
North Stonington	Elected	2
Norwalk	Elected	2
Norwich	Appointed	2
Old Lyme	Elected	4
Old Saybrook	Elected	4
Orange	Elected	2
Oxford	Elected	4
Plainfield	Elected	4
Plainville	Appointed	Indefinite
Plymouth	Elected	4
Pomfret	Elected	4
Portland	Elected	4
Preston	Elected	2
Prospect	Elected	2
Putnam	Elected	2
Redding	Elected	2
Ridgefield	Elected	4
Rocky Hill	Appointed	Indefinite
Roxbury	Elected	4
Salem	Elected	2
Salisbury	Appointed	4
Scotland	Elected	2
Seymour	Appointed	Indefinite
Sharon	Elected	4
Shelton	Appointed	2
Sherman	Elected	2
Simsbury	Appointed	Indefinite
Somers	Elected	4
South Windsor	Elected	4
Southbury	Elected	4
Southington	Elected	6
Sprague	Elected	2
Stafford	Elected	2
Stamford	Elected	4
Sterling	Elected	4
Stonington	Elected	2
Stratford	Appointed	Indefinite
Suffield	Elected	4
Thomaston	Elected	4

Table 1 (Cont.)

Municipality	Selection Method	Term Length
Thompson	Elected	2
Tolland	Appointed	Indefinite
Torrington	Elected	4
Trumbull	Elected	2
Union	Elected	2
Vernon	Appointed	Indefinite
Voluntown	Elected	2
Wallingford	Appointed	Indefinite
Warren	Elected	4
Washington	Elected	4
Waterbury	Elected	2
Waterford	Elected	4
Watertown	Elected	4
West Hartford	Elected	4
West Haven	Elected	2
Westbrook	Elected	4
Weston	Elected	4
Westport	Appointed	Indefinite
Wethersfield	Appointed	Indefinite
Willington	Elected	4
Wilton	Appointed	Indefinite
Winchester	Elected	2
Windham	Appointed	Indefinite
Windsor	Appointed	Indefinite
Windsor Locks	Elected	4
Wolcott	Elected	4
Woodbridge	Appointed	4
Woodbury	Elected	4
Woodstock	Elected	2
Total Elected	2-year term	48
	4-year term	72
	6-year term	1
Total Appointed	2-year term	3
	4-year term	5
	Coterminous with mayor	2
	Indefinite	38

Source: SOTS and municipal charters

TA:tjo/jk