



# *State of Tennessee*

## **PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 212**

### **SENATE BILL NO. 1597**

**By Bailey, Johnson; Mr. Speaker McNally; Yager, Bowling, Powers, Walley**

Substituted for: House Bill No. 719

By Keisling, Vaughan, Helton, Faison; Mr. Speaker Cameron Sexton; Crawford, Windle, Moon, Hawk, Whitson, Sherrell, Gant, Calfee, Powers, Doggett, Smith, Littleton, Moody

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 61 and Title 68, relative to ambulance service.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-61-101, is amended by deleting the section and substituting the following:

As used in this part, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Ambulance service" means a public or private entity that is licensed to provide ambulance services in accordance with title 68, chapter 140, part 3;
- (2) "County" means a county or metropolitan form of government; and
- (3) "Municipality" means an incorporated city or an incorporated town of this state.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-61-102, is amended by deleting the section and substituting the following:

(a) Ambulance service is hereby designated as an essential service in the state of Tennessee.

(b) All county governing bodies are authorized and directed to make provisions to ensure that at least one (1) licensed ambulance service is available within their county. This may be provided as a county service, but can also be accomplished through other means, including, but not limited to: providing a license or franchise to a private company; contracting with a public, private, or nonprofit entity for the service; entering into an interlocal agreement with one (1) or more local governments; or entering into an agreement with a hospital or other healthcare facility. A county is not required to appropriate county revenues for ambulance service if the service can be provided by any other means.

(c) Municipal governing bodies are also authorized to make provisions for ambulance service within the boundaries of a municipality. A municipality shall not provide and maintain, license, franchise, or contract for ambulance service outside its corporate boundaries without the approval of the county governing body, in the case of unincorporated areas, or the municipal governing body if the area to be served lies within the boundaries of another municipality.

(d) A county shall not provide and maintain, license, franchise, or contract for ambulance service within the boundaries of a municipality that has made provisions for ambulance service without the approval of the municipal governing body of the area to be served.

(e) The governing body of any county or city may adopt and enforce reasonable regulations to control the provision of private or nonprofit ambulance service.

(f)(1) Except as provided in subdivision (f)(2), any two (2) or more counties and municipalities may enter into agreements with each other and with persons providing both emergency and nonemergency ambulance service for a county or counties on a countywide basis, for joint or cooperative action to provide for ambulance service as authorized in this chapter.

(2) In any county having a metropolitan form of government and a population in excess of five hundred thousand (500,000), or in any county having a population of not less than eight hundred twenty-five thousand (825,000) nor more than eight hundred thirty thousand (830,000), according to the 1990 federal census or any subsequent federal census, any two (2) or more counties and municipalities may enter into agreements for joint or cooperative action to provide for ambulance service as authorized in this chapter.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 7-61-103 and 7-61-104, are amended by deleting the sections.

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

SENATE BILL NO. 1597

PASSED: April 8, 2021

  
RANDY McNALLY  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

  
CAMERON SEXTON, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of April 2021

  
BILL LEE, GOVERNOR