

Amendment 8

County Sheriffs

VOTE NO

Writes the elected county sheriff into the Missouri Constitution and changes how sheriffs are staffed and removed, in every county except three.

What a YES vote does

- Constitutionally requires elected sheriffs, serving four-year terms, as each covered county's chief law-enforcement officer.
- Lets the sheriff appoint deputies and staff and set their pay within the budget the county provides.
- Allows a sheriff to be removed **only** by a quo warranto action initiated by the Attorney General.
- Excludes St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County.

What a NO vote does

- Sheriffs are still elected every four years under existing state law.
- Current removal paths remain: the Attorney General **or** a local prosecuting attorney can initiate quo warranto, and citizens can start a misconduct removal through their local prosecutor.
- Sheriff staffing rules stay in statute, including judicial approval in some counties.

What Act for Missouri Thinks, and Why

Vote No. We support a constitutional sheriff, but not one that exempts three jurisdictions and makes the Attorney General the only official who can start a removal.

We like the idea of a constitutional sheriff. An independently elected sheriff whose office cannot be abolished by an ordinary bill is a sound principle, and giving sheriffs control over their own staff within their budget has real merit. If Amendment 8 did that for every Missourian, we would be glad to support it.

It does not. It expressly excludes St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. A principle worth putting in the Constitution should be worth applying statewide.

The bigger problem is removal. Accountability for a county officer would run through a single statewide official in Jefferson City instead of local prosecutors and local citizens. We objected to the same kind of exclusive Attorney General power in Amendment 4, and the principle has not changed. A "no" vote does not end elected sheriffs; Missouri already elects them.

The bottom line

A constitutional sheriff is worth doing, for every county, with local accountability intact. Amendment 8 bundles a good idea with a carve-out and a single statewide gatekeeper. Vote No, and ask for a clean version.