

2016

Report to the Citizens of Montgomery County

**CLERK OF COURTS &
COMMON PLEAS COURT**

PROBATE DIVISION ■ GENERAL DIVISION

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION ■ JUVENILE DIVISION



Table of Contents

The Structure of the Ohio Judicial System....	2
What is the Clerk of Courts?	3
What is the Common Pleas Court?	13
What is the Probate Division?	14
What is the General Division?	22
What is the Domestic Relations Division? ...	32
What is the Juvenile Division?	41
Directory	53

STRUCTURE OF THE OHIO JUDICIAL SYSTEM



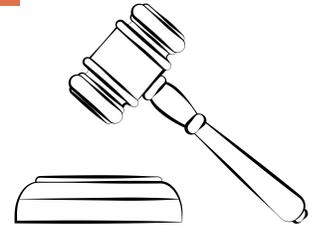
THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

Chief Justice and six Justices. Court of last resort on state constitutional questions and questions of public or general interest; appeals from Board of Tax Appeals, Public Utilities, Commission, and death penalty cases.



SECOND DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS

Three-judge panels. Original jurisdiction in select cases. Appellate review of judgments of Common Pleas, Municipal, and County Courts; and appeals from Board of Tax Appeals.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

GENERAL DIVISION

Civil and criminal cases; appeals from most administrative agencies. Unlimited civil and felony criminal jurisdiction.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Divorces, dissolutions; legal separations and annulments. Allocations of parental rights and responsibilities; parenting time; child and spousal support.

JUVENILE DIVISION

Offenses involving minors, most paternity action, abuse, neglect, dependency and child support.

PROBATE DIVISION

Decedents' estates, mental illness commitments, guardianships, adoptions and marriage licenses.



MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY COURTS

Civil cases up to \$15,000; traffic cases; and misdemeanor offenses. Preliminary jurisdiction in felony matters.

COURT OF CLAIMS

All suits against the state for personal injury, property damage, contracts, and wrongful death. Three-judge panels upon request.



MAYORS COURTS

Not courts of record. Violations of local ordinances and state traffic laws.

What is the Clerk of Courts?

The Montgomery County Clerk of Courts plays a vital role in serving the interest of justice. It is a complex organization comprised of approximately 100 employees. We have the important responsibilities of receiving, docketing, indexing, certifying, and preserving pleadings, court orders, and other legal documents. These are filed with the General Division and Domestic Relations Division of Common Pleas Court, Montgomery County Municipal Court, and the Second District Court of Appeals. The Auto Title Division of the Clerk of Courts issues titles for motor vehicles and processes U.S. passport applications as an authorized Passport Acceptance Agency.



"In 2016, I was privileged to be elected to my fourth term to this office. It has truly been an honor to serve the citizens of this county on a daily basis with a dedicated team of staff who believe in our vision of delivering outstanding customer service in every aspect of our operations."

Gregory A. Brush
Montgomery County Clerk of Courts

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the [Montgomery County Clerk of Courts](#) is to provide progressive and efficient records management and financial services for the justice system, the legal community, and the public through our core values of respect, fairness, and honesty.



Clerk of Courts | Year in Review

Meet Human Resources Officer

AJ Spencer



"The survey was our first step in fostering an open and engaging culture. Assessing employee satisfaction is a critical component in retaining engaged employees. Employees who are conscientious about their work, enthusiastic about what they do, and work on behalf of the organization create a more efficient office."

Meet Auto Title Supervisor

LaJuana Curington



"Having participated in the Collaborative Coaching Champions Mentoring Program since its inception, I continue to be a strong supporter. Having a Peer Mentor as an encouraging role model was exactly what I needed. The most valuable part of my relationship with my Peer Mentor was knowing I always had someone rooting for me. As a result of this program, I gained a sense of self-worth and self-confidence in my abilities as a supervisor. The Program truly added value to my professional and personal life and I will forever be grateful for the investment."

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY

In 2016, our HR Department conducted an employee satisfaction survey with the goal of identifying potential problems and attempting to resolve them before they impact the customer service experience. Research has shown that in most organizations there is a link between employee attitudes and customer satisfaction. The survey focused on key areas of work engagement, compensation & benefits, career development, relationship management, and work environment. We were pleased with the 83% participation rate. The results of the survey served as a basis for discussion and learning, as well as for personal and organizational development.

COLLABORATIVE COACHING CHAMPIONS (CCC) MENTORING PROGRAM

The Human Resources Department of the Montgomery County Clerk of Courts office launched the CCC Mentoring Program during the first quarter of 2016. The program is designed to establish collaborative relationships for the development and strengthening of professional skills, knowledge, and abilities. In a typical mentoring relationship, the mentor usually has more experience, skill, and knowledge than the mentee. The intent of this program is to establish relationships where both parties learn from each other through the development of a bond that is respectful and mutually beneficial.

Meet Auto Title Records Manager

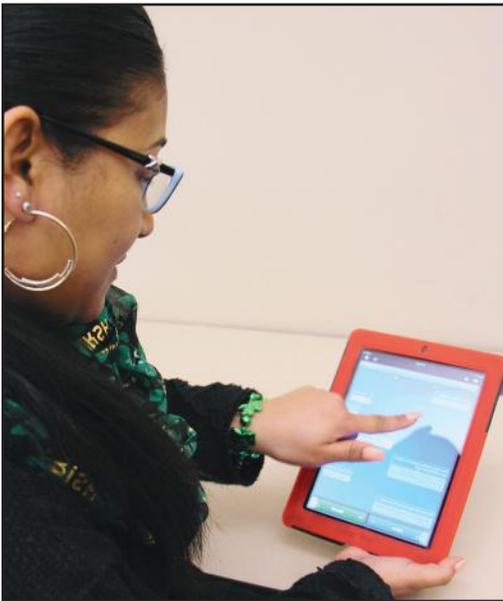
Lenny Thomasson



"My mentor believed in me when I didn't believe in myself by encouraging me to take college courses. He not only showed me how to study correctly, but he also gave me pointers on how to improve my career. My mentor is an inspiration to me and I hope that future mentors/mentees who take part in the program build a mutual trust and respect like we have over time."

EXPANDING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

A Training Program Committee was organized in late 2016 with the responsibility of promoting employee development and organizational effectiveness by providing high-quality educational training programs. Training programs will be designed to meet individual, departmental, and organizational needs and objectives. Through these programs we will strive to create a better working environment for our organization.



In 2016, the Legal Division began providing staff with opportunities for self-improvement and inter-departmental discussions through a series of webinars. Staff have already covered a wide range of topics, including communication, self-motivation, and handling conflict.

NEW TECHNOLOGY TRANSLATES INTO DIVERSIFIED SERVICE

The Legal and Municipal Court Divisions' counter staff acquired an exciting new customer service tool in 2016: a universal voice translator that can help them provide basic information and assistance to our multi-lingual customer base. The software offers 43 languages and dialects, all available in a simple user interface which presents both audio and visual outputs. With the ability to customize everything from language and dialect to speech voice and listening speed, our staff is now able to help non-native English speakers more thoroughly and efficiently, all with the touch of a few buttons. The IT Team purchased, set up, and trained staff on the software, and our entire organization is pleased with the improved accessibility we can now provide to every person who visits our locations.

ISSUE CIVIL RULE 4 SERVICE VIA COMMERCIAL CARRIER

In 2016, the Clerk of Courts embarked on a technology project that required an enhancement to our case management system so that the Clerk's Office can issue Civil Rule 4 Service via Federal Express as a more efficient means of perfecting service. The additional method of service via commercial carrier will be made available the second quarter of 2017. The enhancement allows for instantaneous and constant communication with Federal Express. The commercial carrier will collect an electronic image of the signed receipt of delivery and then electronically result the service through integration between our case management system and Federal Express. The benefits realized from this project include an increased success rate for delivery of initial service as compared to USPS certified mail; automatic resulting of service in the case management system; reduction in costs to perfect service due to reduction in failure rate; and reallocation of staff resources due to automatic resulting of service.

eFILING FOR DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT

The Clerk's Office seeks opportunities to promote greater collaboration with our customers and partners. In 2016, we began working with the Domestic Relations Court to allow for eFiling in Domestic Relations cases. The two offices meet on a biweekly basis and are committed to planning well in advance the necessary steps and technology needs for a successful eFiling implementation. Currently, eFiling is only available for Common Pleas Civil and Criminal cases. eFiling for Domestic Relations case documents will allow customers the convenience of 24/7 filing ability.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

We are increasingly reliant upon technology and will continue to seek new approaches and leading-edge technologies that help us work smarter. Our IT staff is responsible for developing software solutions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes within the organization and optimize our operational productivity. The IT Department is also responsible for providing staff with the most efficient infrastructure possible. In 2016, the IT team installed a variety of new equipment including 129 new Dell workstations with dual monitors. They also upgraded three Municipal Court courtrooms to the latest court-recording systems to facilitate an electronic audio-visual record of judicial proceedings.

THE GROWTH OF eFILING

The move to implement eFiling began in October 2009, through a pilot project that allowed participating parties to eFile their case documents for Common Pleas Civil cases rather than physically file them at the Office. Through the years, the program expanded to mandatory eFiling of all documents for Common Pleas Civil and Criminal cases. In 2016, over 300,000 documents were filed electronically. eFiling permits judges, attorneys, parties, and relevant court and clerk personnel to view a case simultaneously and increases the speed and efficiency of case processing.

Meet Senior Software Developers

Ryan Nalls & Chris Wagner



In 2016, our developers created new applications and tweaked existing applications that created small changes that added up to big results and made our processes more efficient. Improvements were made to a software solution that integrated Microsoft Office Word with our electronic filing system, allowing users to submit electronic documents directly from Word. Staff also upgraded software that incorporates our document management solution (DMS) with both electronic filing and our public records online (PRO) website so that the Clerk's office could leverage new functionality the DMS provided. Modifications were made to our PRO site that improve our ability to "block" details on cases that might contain information of a sensitive nature. A solution was developed to allow Municipal Court Division to submit traffic citation conviction information to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles electronically.

THE IT DEPARTMENT MAINTAINS ALMOST 10 MILLION ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS.

PRO SYSTEM

The Clerk's IT Department supports our Public Records Online (PRO) system which offers public access to all court case information that is not confidential. The IT Department maintains almost 10 million electronic documents, allowing the public to obtain non-confidential documents through our PRO system any time, day or night. In 2016, over 503,000 documents were submitted to the PRO system through eFiling and the scanning of documents. Almost 50,000 of these documents required redaction.

The busiest day for eFiling documents in 2016 was August 25, when 2,023 documents were filed electronically.

ATPS BLUE

As of December 2016, the implementation of the Automated Title Processing System (ATPS Blue) began. The Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Ohio Clerk of Courts Association began this upgrade in 2010 and have now implemented ATPS Blue throughout all 88 Ohio counties. Efficiency, security, and eliminated redundancy are all benefits of the new and improved statewide system.

ZOMBIES AMONG US

It is necessary to have a valid auto title in order to have a vehicle legally transferred into your name. There have been a growing number of customers arriving at Auto Title locations without a title after acquiring a vehicle online and across state lines. In order to get the word out to the citizens of Montgomery County, Clerk of Courts Greg Brush and some of his staff appeared in a thirty-second TV commercial asking, "Why do zombies walk? Because they don't have valid auto titles." The commercial captured the attention of and informed the public, as well as garnering a Bronze Telly Award for Dayton's own Blue Dog Media Group who produced the commercial.

Meet Auto Title Deputy Clerk III

Angela Gerros



Angela became a subject matter expert and volunteered as a system tester for the ATPS Blue developers. This commitment included numerous trips and extended work stays in Columbus over a five-year period and involved great personal sacrifice to Angela and her family. The benefit to the Clerk's Office was huge in that we were able to provide feedback on how the new application directly impacted Montgomery County.



Without a valid title and required paperwork for their vehicle, individuals are forced to file a Petition to Transfer Title with the General Division of the Court of Common Pleas.

COLLECTING COURT FEES AND FINES: A PRIORITY DUTY IN OUR MUNICIPAL COURT DIVISION

The Clerk's Office is charged with collecting fees and fines in all manner of cases. We pursue that money through a number of means, with an eye toward making it as convenient as possible for individuals to pay their debt. In our Municipal Court Division, customers have long been able to pay their traffic ticket fees and fines online at www.mcclerkofcourts.org. This saves the Clerk's Office time and money, as online payments are more efficient. In 2017, we look forward to expanding online payments to additional case types in both our Municipal Court and Legal Divisions.

Our Municipal Court Division also offers payment plans for customers to help them pay the monies owed. We partner with Capital Recovery and we have collected 1.1 million dollars over the last five years from customers who fail to pay in the allotted timeframe. Monies collected are disbursed to more than 50 local and state agencies' accounts.

Meet Municipal Court Supervisory Projects Manager

Susan Anderson



One of the best things we do in our organization is to review our processes and determine how they can be more efficient. In 2016, a Supervisory Projects Manager position was created for the Municipal Court Division with the goal of identifying division practices that need efficiencies. Susan's role is to pinpoint these areas and work with staff to identify opportunities for improvement.

EFFICIENCIES GAINED FROM NEW CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In March 2015, the Municipal Court Division migrated to a new case management system. Staff has become more familiar with the capabilities of the system and in 2016 made changes to our processes in order to better utilize the case management system and gain more efficiencies. We continually review and implement new features offered by the case management system that will specifically benefit our office and improve our overall customer service. It is important that we keep our case management system up-to-date in order to offer the best customer service. The new system provides a more efficient way of scheduling events, generating documents, and creating caseload reports.



Municipal Court Division clerk employees participated in the Annual Montgomery County Municipal Court Retreat sponsored by the court on August 26, 2016, at Madison Lakes. The agenda included round table meetings and team-building exercises for both the Judicial and Clerk staff.

Office Overview



The Clerk of Courts Office traces its origins from the medieval cleric who maintained records, was responsible for correspondence, and had the power to issue writs and other processes ordered by the court. The 1802 Ohio State Constitution provided for the appointment of a Clerk of Court for each county. Originally, the Clerk was appointed by the judges of the Court of Common Pleas for a seven-year term. Under the 1851 Constitution, the office became elective for a three-year term that was then extended to a four-year term in 1936.

The Montgomery County Clerk of Courts Office today is comprised of approximately 100 employees who maintain and make available all court records filed with the General Division and Domestic Relations Division of Common Pleas Court, Montgomery County Municipal Court, and the Second District Court of Appeals. The Clerk's Office also issues titles for motor vehicles and processes U.S. passport applications as an authorized Passport Acceptance Agency.



AUTO TITLES

2016

257,438



WATERCRAFT TITLES

2016

435



OTHER DOCUMENTS *

2016

288,142



PASSPORT APPLICATIONS

2016

6,989

*Other Documents include liens, memos, archive fees, and inspection fees.

By the authority of the President of the United States, the Secretary of State has designated various entities authorized to accept passport applications. One of these entities is the State Court of Record. The Clerk of Courts for Montgomery County is designated as a State Court of Record, thus enabling the office to accept passport applications.



AUTO TITLE DIVISION

The Auto Title Division of the Clerk of Courts Office issues and maintains motor vehicle and watercraft titles to individuals and automobile dealers within and outside of Montgomery County. The Auto Title Division also processes passport applications in response to the federal mandate requiring passports for all travelers.

LEGAL DIVISION

The Legal Division is comprised of four departments: Civil, Criminal, Domestic Relations, and Second District Court of Appeals.

Civil Department accepts electronic filings for new complaints, issues service of summonses, maintains a journal of pleadings filed in each case, and issues subpoenas to witnesses when a case is ready for trial. Judgment liens including Ohio sales and personal income tax liens are also filed in the Civil Department, along with the execution of lien proceedings.

Criminal Department maintains all electronic case files for felony case proceedings. This department receives all filings pertaining to a particular case and executes the necessary documents in each phase of the criminal justice process including indictments, arraignments, issuance of subpoenas for grand jury and trial witnesses, and filing notices of appeal. Other duties include posting bonds, calculating court costs, paying witnesses, and preparing post-sentencing documents to transfer defendants to designated state institutions.

Domestic Relations Department is responsible for the filing, docketing, and distribution of court papers from attorneys, judges, and court personnel pertaining to divorce, dissolution of marriage, domestic violence, and foreign support orders. Many of the cases processed in Domestic Relations involve child support to minor children, requiring continual updating of files until the children are emancipated, under most circumstances at 18 years old.

Second District Court of Appeals is served by the Clerk of Courts in the capacity that the Clerk is responsible for receiving, filing, and conveying all appeals filed from various trial courts in Montgomery County. Additionally, the Clerk of Courts Office is responsible for preparing the lower court record in appeal cases including cases appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court.

MUNICIPAL COURT DIVISION

The Montgomery County Municipal Court serves the cities of Brookville, Trotwood, Huber Heights, and Riverside; the villages of Farmersville, New Lebanon, Phillipsburg, and Verona; and the townships of Clay, Jackson, Jefferson, and Perry. In addition to the law enforcement agencies in these areas, the court also serves various other agencies including the Ohio State Patrol, State of Ohio Park Rangers, Ohio Division of Wildlife, Public Utilities Commission, Montgomery County Zoning, Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County, Montgomery County Animal Resource Center, Board of Liquor Control, Board of Pharmacy, Department of Taxation, and Five Rivers MetroParks. The County Municipal Court has jurisdiction in all adult traffic and misdemeanor cases occurring in the court's jurisdiction, civil cases up to \$15,000, and small claims cases up to \$6,000, and is the originating court for felony preliminary hearings in its jurisdiction.



**1 DEDICATED CLERK + 3 FOCUSED DIVISIONS + 100 DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS =
1 ORGANIZATION PROUDLY SERVING MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

2016 MAINTAINING COURT RECORDS

Common Pleas Civil		6,531
Common Pleas Criminal		4,565
Domestic Relations (Excluding DV)		1,798
Domestic Violence		1,463
Court of Appeals		425
Certificates of Judgment		3,557
State Certificates of Judgment		8,696
Executions on Judgment		1,373
Board of Revision		381
Notary		1,244
County Municipal Civil		2,728
County Municipal Criminal		3,488
County Municipal Traffic		8,588
Total		44,837

Visit us at
www.
mcclerkofcourts.org.

The Clerk of Courts
website receives
thousands of hits
per week.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

CLERK STAFF RAISES MONEY FOR WORTHY CAUSES

The Clerk’s Office sponsored several “Casual for a Cause” days in 2016. Monies collected from these events were donated to United Way, UNCF, Culture Works, and the American Cancer Society. Clerk of Courts staff also participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.





ADOPTED FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS

This past holiday season, the Legal Division along with the Administration and IT Departments adopted a family from CHOICES, Inc. (“Children Have Options in Caring Environments”). CHOICES is committed to the safety, stability, and success of youth and families. Through monetary donations from staff, we were able to provide the family a carload of presents, tailored to their needs and wants that were both size- and age-appropriate. Staff went above and beyond with their generous giving.



APPRECIATION TO OUR STAFF FOR A JOB WELL DONE

Our best resource is our people. The Clerk’s Office has a workforce of 100 talented employees who complete varied tasks. We strive to create a workforce where our customers are efficiently served and our employees are provided with the tools to provide high levels of service. We think it is important to recognize and express our appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our employees. We provide several opportunities for our staff to kick back and enjoy time with their co-workers. Whether it is Halloween fun, or an appreciation lunch, we make time to just relax, laugh, and be together.



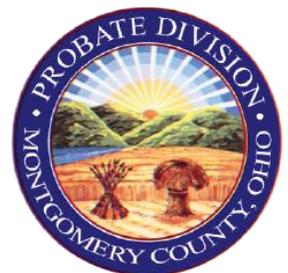
What is Common Pleas Court?

The *Montgomery County Common Pleas Court* consists of four divisions that provide timely and equitable service to the citizens of Montgomery County. Each of the divisions has a unique role for a specific area of the judicial process. Collectively, the Court is dedicated to delivering superior programs in public safety, corrections, rehabilitation, family law, probate, and civil justice. While the Courts are, by law, separate entities, Judges and administrative staff work together on joint programs and projects designed to provide more cost effective solutions for the Courts. These joint efforts reduce expenditures as well as avoid duplication and inefficiency. We appreciate citizen support and endeavour to continue our efforts to provide the best Court system in the State of Ohio.



DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMON PLEAS COURT

There are sixteen Judges in the Common Pleas Court for Montgomery County. The Judges are elected to and conduct their work in one of the four divisions. In some instances, the Presiding Judge will assign a Judge from one division to another for specific cases. This is done to avoid the cost and delay involved with a Judge from another county being assigned to a matter.



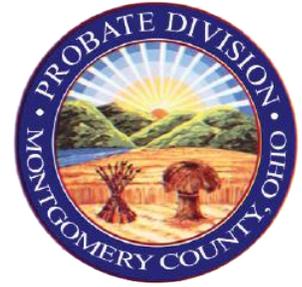
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COMMON PLEAS COURT JUDGES

- GENERAL DIVISION**
11 JUDGES
-
- DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION**
2 JUDGES
-
- JUVENILE DIVISION**
2 JUDGES
-
- PROBATE DIVISION**
1 JUDGE

What is the Probate Division?

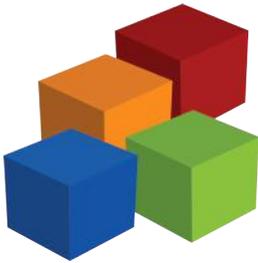
The Probate Court, a division of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, is a trial court with limited jurisdiction as granted by the Ohio Revised Code. The Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction over the administration of estates and trusts, appointment of guardians for incompetents and estates of minors, adoptions, and issuance of marriage licenses, name changes, commitment of the mentally ill and various other actions. The court also approves settlements in wrongful death actions and minor injury actions. The Probate Court is empowered with more than 200 responsibilities pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code.



"Citizens utilizing the Probate Court are usually in the midst of life changing events, most often the death of a loved one. For thirteen years, it has been my privilege to provide a user friendly court with compassionate and knowledgeable staff to ensure an efficient and supportive experience for all."

**Alice O. McCollum, Administrative Judge
Montgomery County Probate Court**

OUR MISSION



The Montgomery County Probate Court is dedicated to resolving matters and disputes fairly and efficiently. The Court accomplishes this mission by:

ACCESS

Offering easy access to the Court for prompt problem resolution

FAIR

Upholding the law and delivering justice in an equitable and just manner

INNOVATIVE SERVICES

Providing quality and innovative services to the public

EFFICIENT

Ensuring efficient case management by a professional and courteous staff

Probate Court | Year in Review

PROBATE COURT CREATES GUARDIANSHIP DEPARTMENT

The Probate Court is responsible for appointing guardians for adult incompetents and minors. As superior guardian, the Court is also responsible for ensuring that the guardians it has appointed are fulfilling their fiduciary obligations to their wards. These obligations increased in number and in scope with the adoption of Rule of Superintendence 66.01 et seq. in 2015. Accordingly, in 2016, the Court created a department devoted entirely to guardianships – the Guardianship Department.

The Guardianship Department is comprised of a Director, Magistrate Catharine Kidd; a Court Social Worker, Shawnieka Pope; and a Court Investigator, Rochelle Garner. The Department's mission is to create and support successful guardianships, enhancing the experience of guardians and wards in Montgomery County.

In keeping with its mission, the Guardianship Department conducts hearings on applications for guardianship, reviews Guardian's Reports and Annual Guardianship Plans and investigates Guardianship Complaints. In addition, the Department offers a variety of education and support services for guardians. These services include initial guardian education, continuing guardian education, and guardian support groups. The Department also offers an externship program for social work students. As part of the program, the externs conduct wellness visits with wards, providing much-needed personal interaction between the Court and the wards under its care.



PROBATE COURT BEGINS E-FILING OF ALL CIVIL CASES

The Probate Court introduced Mandatory E-Filing of all Civil or Miscellaneous Case Types December 7, 2016.

This modern process provides:

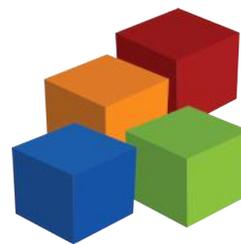
- an easier method for Attorneys and Pro Se citizens to file cases with the Probate Court
- minimizes the need for additional hardware and software through a hosted environment
- improves the work flow of the clerk's office by removing the 'paper' process
- utilizes up to date technology that the citizens have come to expect



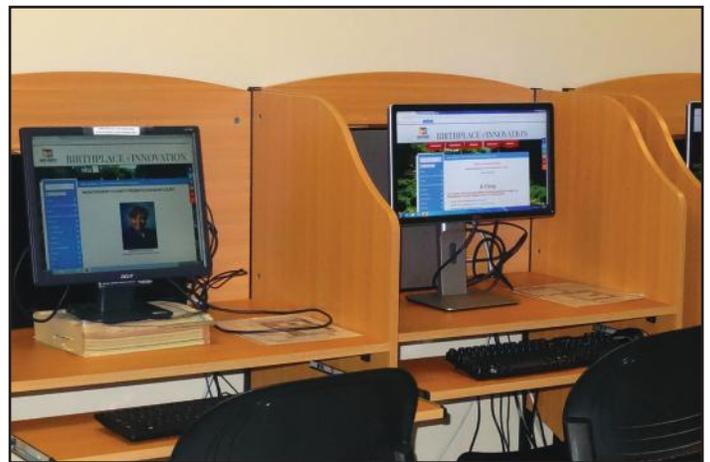
Civil or Miscellaneous Probate Cases include:

- Assign Lottery Prize
- Change of Name • Adult
- Change of Name • Minor Child
- Concealment of Assets
- Correction of Birth
- Correction of Marriage
- Declaration of Paternity
- Declaration Judgment
- Declaration of Heir
- Determination of Heirship
- Disinterment
- Presumption of Death
- Production of Will
- Registration of Birth
- Sale of Real Estate • Estate
- Sale of Real Estate • Guardianship
- Successor Custodian
- Surviving Spouse Purchase Action
- Transfer of Rights
- Validity of Will
- Will Construction
- Will Contest
- Other • Applicant
- Other • Plaintiff

The Court's E-Filing Team worked for three years preparing the case management system and relocating all the Court's imaged documents into a repository called OnBase. The Court received a Supreme Court of Ohio Technology Grant for \$26,168.00 to replace out dated computer hardware that could not support the E-filing project.



The Court set up four computer stations in the public docket room to assist citizens that may not have convenient computer access.

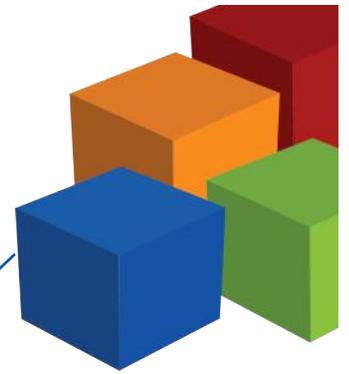


COMMUNITY OUTREACH

COURT BEGINS SUPPORT GROUP

The Probate Court began a Guardian Support Group called Coffee and Conversation. The monthly, hour long meetings are facilitated by the Court's Licensed Social Worker and are held throughout Montgomery County at various Dayton Metro Library Branches. The group meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month. The format includes resources for guardians including support for filing the required guardian forms of the Guardian's Report, Annual Guardian Plan and Statement of Expert Evaluation.

54 Guardians attend the inaugural Coffee & Conversation Support Groups.



COURT SUPPORTS WORTHY CAUSES

Probate Court participates in Casual Day for Culture Works, United Negro College Fund and the United Way. The Court also participates in Go Red for Women’s Heart Health. Support of these valuable causes is an investment in the future of our neighborhood, cities, and region.



1
JUDGE



30
COURT STAFF



Office Overview



JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

JUDGE MCCOLLUM

The Judge of the Probate Court shall be assigned all cases coming before the Court. The Judge is charged with the assignment and division of the work of the departments and with the employment and supervision of all personnel of the Probate Court.

MAGISTRATES

Five Magistrates assist the Judge in handling the case load. A magistrate is an attorney appointed by the Court who hears cases referred by the Judge. Magistrates hear and consider cases in the same manner as a judge. All magistrates' decisions are reviewed and approved by the Judge. Magistrates are available to answer procedural and other questions, but may not discuss a case with either a litigant or attorney in the absence of the other party, or that party's attorney to the case.

COURT OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

COURT ADMINISTRATOR

The Judge appoints the Court Administrator. The Administrator manages and coordinates the operations and non legal staff of the Court. The Administrator is responsible for the general administration and supervision of all support services for the Court. In addition, the Court Administrator supervises the implementation of all special projects the court may undertake. The Court Administrator utilizes leadership and management skills to create a high-performance work environment for court staff. The Administrator reviews data and information for planning purposes, evaluates organizational effectiveness, reviews cost and impact analysis, and establishes time lines and benchmarks of standards. The Administrator handles attorney, agency and public concerns and complaints regarding court proceedings. The Court Administrator also acts as a liaison between the Judge and staff.

FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of budgets, financial reporting and analysis, support for financial and analytical needs of other court departments, control over all payments and purchasing, and continual monitoring of all aspects of finance for the Court.

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The M.I.S. Department provides data processing services and office automation to the entire staff of the Probate Court in order to provide a more efficient court for the public. The department administers and maintains a Windows network, granting Network users appropriate permissions and access rights to a variety of applications. The department upgrades hardware and software, installs new hardware and software, and troubleshoots any computer-related problems users may have.



CLERKS OFFICE

The Clerks Office maintains and makes available to the public the hard-copy records of all case files for the Probate Court. The Clerks Office assists customers at the Court and over the telephone. The Clerks Office collects any costs or fees required, issues receipts, and posts the collected monies. Appropriate information for case files is docketed in a timely manner, including entering information in the computer system and issuing appropriate notices. Documents are scanned for the case file database which is available online. Further duties of the office include providing basic case management information and completing statistical reporting.

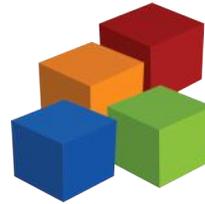


The Probate Court Clerk's office processed 66,524 documents totaling 179,877 scanned pages. The Probate Court Clerk's office opened 3,089 new cases.



MARRIAGE DEPARTMENT

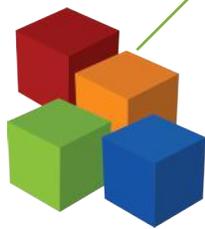
The Marriage Department's principal function is to issue marriage licenses and complete marriage certificates. Further duties include providing statistical reporting concerning case management.



The Marriage Department issued 3,211 marriage licenses and 11,588 marriage certificates.

ADOPTION DEPARTMENT

One of the most rewarding responsibilities of the Probate Court is to make sure a child is placed in a safe, loving, and permanent home. The Adoption Department serves a dual function. The primary function is to provide case management for the adoption cases. Adoption filings are accepted by this Department, reviewed, and set for hearings as appropriate. All adoption proceedings and records are confidential. Every year the Court participates in National Adoption Day. The theme for the 2016 was Elf. The theme embraced family ideals such as love, security and acceptance. The entire Court participates in the National Adoption Day agenda. The secondary function is that of a case management specialist to the magistrates. The case management specialist duties require considerable knowledge of office, secretarial, and administrative practices and procedures. They maintain court orders, reports, forms, correspondence, and final decisions by the magistrates and Judge.



The Adoption Department finalized adoptions for 123 children.





MENTAL HEALTH

It is the responsibility of the Probate Court to oversee the involuntary commitment process of individuals who are alleged to be mentally ill or mentally retarded, while protecting their rights and ensuring they receive treatment in the least restrictive environment. The Court conducts hearings at various hospitals and other mental health facilities throughout the county to determine if an individual requires hospitalization.



The Mental Health Department processed 593 individuals in local facilities alleged to be mentally ill.

The Probate Court's website is where citizens can locate information including appropriate forms are needed to open a case, court costs and changes in the law or Probate Court processes. The most popular website feature is the case search. All cases in the Probate Court except Adoption and Mental Illness are public cases.

Visit the Probate Court at www.mcoho.org/probate.



What is the General Division?

The General Division of the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court is a trial court of general jurisdiction that provides prompt, fair, and just resolution of litigation in civil and criminal cases. The General Division Judges preside over bench and jury trials involving complex civil litigation as well as criminal cases where offenders can receive imprisonment for as little as six months or up to the remainder of their lives or, in the event of a capital murder case, may even receive the death penalty. Our eleven judges have a combined experience of over 100 years of Judicial service to the citizens of Montgomery County. In 2016, the General Division employed more than 180 people. The General Courts has 11 Judges, one Magistrate, 34 Judicial Staff, 128 Court Support Staff and 13 Contracted Security. Our 2016 Budget was \$11,814,219.



"It has been my honor and privilege to serve the citizens of Montgomery County for the past 15 years as a judge on the Common Pleas Court. I am humbled daily in my service by the reminder of the tremendous responsibility of the courts in the United States, as expressed in the words of Joseph Story in his Commentaries on the Constitution (1833): 'Without justice being freely, fully, and impartially administered, neither our persons, nor our rights, nor our property, can be protected.'"

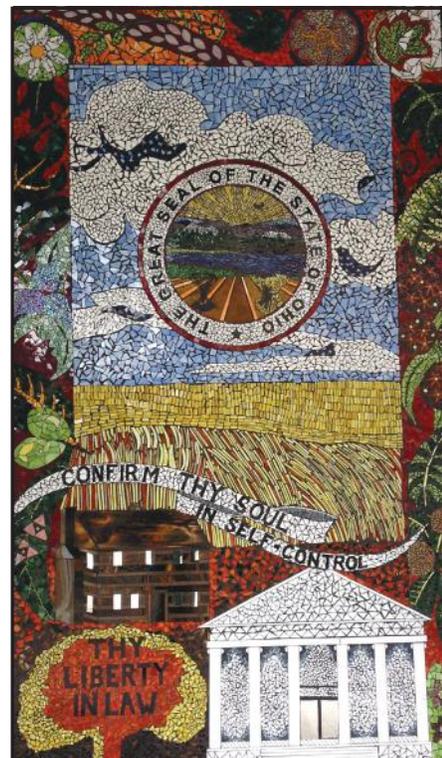
Mary Katherine Huffman, Administrative Judge



**11
JUDGES**



**175
COURT STAFF**



General Division | Year in Review

COURT CAMP

One of the programs that is sponsored by the Court Services Division is Court Camp. In June of 2016, the General Division hosted its Fifth Annual Court Camp with 15 students attending. Court Camp is an educational program for high school students who are interested in learning more about the judicial and criminal justice systems in Ohio. The theme for Court Camp 2016 was

"No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom."

Court Camp is a week-long immersion program held at the Montgomery County Courts Building. During the 2016 program students arrived at the courts building each day at 8:45 a.m. daily and were involved in various activities until 4:00 p.m. At the beginning of each day, the students met with judges and attorneys to ask questions and learn about what they would encounter during the day ahead. On the student's first day, they met with Administrative Judge Mary Katherine Huffman and Kermit Lowery, President of Dayton Bar Association.

Throughout the week, the students participated in activities that included:

- A tour of the Montgomery County Jail and the Juvenile Detention Center;
- Insight into the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office and their role in the justice system;
- A presentation by a defense attorney regarding the defense of clients in the justice system;
- Observation of a felony criminal docket;
- Visit to Dayton Municipal Court;
- Visit to the U.S. Federal Court;
- Lunch with a Judge each day and a discussion on various topics;
- A visit to the Probate Division including a presentation;
- A presentation from a detective and an evidence technician on investigation of a crime;
- Round-table discussion with the Secure Transitional Offender Program (S.T.O.P.) and Adult Probation clients.



"I have had the honor and privilege of serving on the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division, bench for almost 30 years. A number of things have changed over time, but the pursuit of justice and fairness for the citizens of Montgomery County has been, is, and always will be of primary importance to our Court."

Barbara P. Gorman, Presiding Judge



"Court Camp was a wonderful experience. I learned so much about the law."
– Court Camp student

"It was inspiring to see the legal process from arrest to detention." – Court Camp student

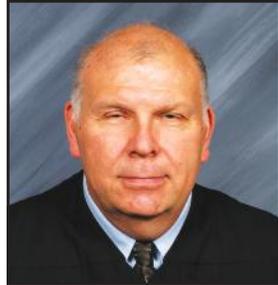
"I learned so much about the justice system. Court Camp opened my eyes to a lot of careers that I never would have considered."
– Court Camp student

"It is a really great program. Each year we try to make Court Camp a little bit more interesting to give students a broader view of the criminal justice system."
– Vanessa Carter, Deputy Court Administrator/
Court Camp organizer



"It has truly been my honor for the last 21 years to be a part of this nationally recognized Court in which every judge and the entire supporting staff is dedicated to provide – day in and day out – equal justice under the law in every case."

Dennis J. Langer, Judge



"Trial judges, on a day-to-day basis, must make decisions and otherwise take action to resolve the criminal and civil disputes coming before the Court. This dispute resolution process is vital to the maintenance to the rule of law.

I was a trial judge for 16 years and it was a very satisfying, but humbling, experience to have played a small role in this critical dispute resolution process."

Michael L. Tucker, Judge

SPECIAL NOTE: *On November 8, 2016, Judge Michael L. Tucker was elected to the Ohio Second District Court of Appeals in Dayton. He took that bench on February 13, 2017. The Judges and employees of the General Division wish Judge Tucker all the best in his new adventure!*

2016 Pretrial Services Accomplishments

- 5,165 felony defendants were screened; of those, 1,499 were supervised by Pretrial Services prior to trial.
- 2,103 misdemeanor defendants were screened; of those, 352 were supervised by Pretrial Services prior to trial.

2016 Jury Services Accomplishments

- The voluntary juror fee waiver program, which was implemented in September 2010, has resulted in a total savings of \$62,700 since inception of the program.
- 4,853 prospective petit jurors reported for jury selection to hear 121 trials.
- 66 grand jurors served from two weeks to four months during 2016.

2016 Stalking and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Order Program Accomplishments

- 1,100 petitioners assisted in seeking a protection order.
- 740 petitions for protection orders filed.
- 352 ex parte orders were granted.



"So many times when you have to deal with government entities, you wonder what this experience will entail. So many times you hear, '[You] don't have the correct papers,' 'you need to get something,' 'we can't help you,' or, 'that will take a long time.' Absolutely nothing like that happened at your office."

– SS00PO client

2016 Presentence Investigation/Intervention in Lieu of Conviction Accomplishments

- 1,902 Presentence Investigation reports were completed.
- 861 Intervention In Lieu of Conviction reports were completed.

2016 Drug and Alcohol Accomplishments

- 12,378 ocular drug tests were performed.
- 16,147 urinalysis tests submitted, 74 percent tested negative.
- The Probation Officer receives immediate electronic notification every time their client is tested.

2016 Community Service Work Accomplishments

- 2,478 probationers participated in community service work.
- 98,451 hours of service work were provided.
- \$768,991 savings to county and local nonprofit agencies.
- 35 agencies accepted community service workers from the Division of Criminal Justice Services.

2016 Drug and Alcohol Accomplishments

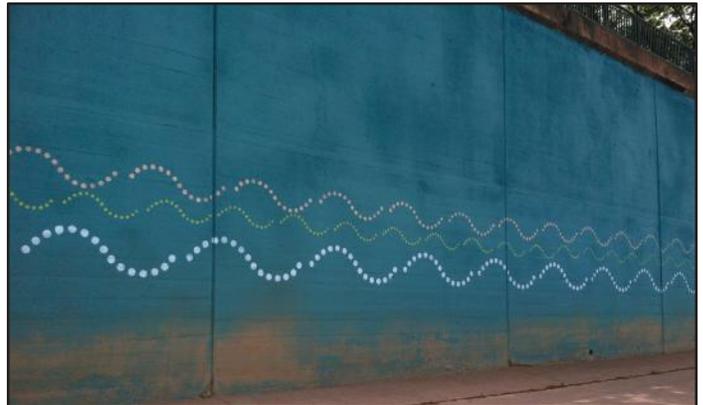
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S.T.O.P Supervisor and clients conducting community service work on river wall in downtown Dayton.



2016 S.T.O.P. Accomplishments

- 730 offenders were sentenced and accepted into the S.T.O.P program;
- 643 offenders successfully completed the S.T.O.P. program;
- 81,955 hours of community service work were performed by S.T.O.P. participants;
- 30,864 jail bed days were saved based on a possible 180-day sentence in lieu of completing the S.T.O.P. program.

2016 CASE ACTIVITY

Civil Filings	6,539
Criminal Filings	4,418
Probation • Offenders Supervised	6,785
Investigations • Bond, PSI, Other	3,381
TOTAL	21,123

Office Overview

The General Division encompasses five distinct areas – **Judicial, Court Administration/Court Administrative Services, Management Information Systems, Court Services**, and **Criminal Justice Services**. Here is a more detailed description of the individual tasks of each division, as well as our 2016 accomplishments.

JUDICIAL

There are eleven judges comprising the General Division bench, and each judge employs a staff of three – a Bailiff, Judicial Assistant, and a Staff Attorney. Throughout 2016, working directly for the Judges were a total of 37 staff members – one Magistrate, 11 Bailiffs, 11 Judicial Assistants, 12 Staff Attorneys, and two part-time Law Clerks.

COURT ADMINISTRATION/COURT ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Administrative functions of the Court are the responsibility of the Court Administrator and the Administrative Judge. The Administrative Judge is elected annually by the Judges and is responsible for setting in motion the rules and policies established by the Court. The Court Administrator is appointed by the Court and supervises the various divisions and operations of the Court. The Court Administrator's Office implements the administrative policies of the Court, develops policies and procedures, and provides research and advisory services, public information services, and other special projects.

Other functions included under the auspices of the Court Administrator's Office are purchasing, safety and security, finance, technology, and human resources. Including the Court Administrator, there are 14 employees who work in Administration and Administrative Services.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The MIS Division identifies the technological needs of the Court by providing direction and budget requirements. The division also provides technical support and the necessary infrastructure in order to conduct the Court's testing of applications and reports, procurement and management of software and network services such as e-mail and file sharing, as well as installation and maintenance of workstations, servers, and storage. MIS is responsible for disaster recovery planning and maintaining the audio/video recording equipment in our twelve courtrooms. It integrates with the Court's business partners, working with vendors on special projects, developing training, conducting quality assurance testing, and developing IT policies and procedures.

There are five employees on the MIS team who work under the direction of a Deputy Court Administrator. These five include an IT Manager, Systems Administrator, Systems Programmer, Help Desk/IT Technician, and an Administrative Assistant.



"Serving our citizens is much more to me than a challenging and rewarding final chapter to my legal career. It's been a great opportunity to try to make my hometown an even better place to live."

Gregory F. Singer, Judge



"I appreciate the trust placed in me. Accordingly, I strive to call forth the characteristics of ethics, fairness, intellect, industry, and reasonableness every day."

Timothy N. O'Connell, Judge

COURT SERVICES

The Court Services Division provides an array of direct services to the Court that include case management, alternative dispute resolution programs, bond investigation and pretrial supervision, and management of the evidence room. The Division monitors judges' cases to ensure compliance with case management standards. Bond recommendations are provided to the Court for new felony and certain misdemeanor charges; supervised pretrial release monitoring is also provided to ensure court appearance. Alternative Dispute Resolution programs include the mediation and magistrate departments that assist the judges with their caseload by utilizing alternative ways to resolve legal disputes. The Division also provides jury services to the Court.

A Deputy Court Administrator oversees the Court Services Division and its 40 employees. The functions of these employees include pretrial supervision, jury management, electronic home detention monitoring, mediation services, case management, magistrate support, civil stalking protection order processing, judicial support, and evidence room supervision.

Stalking and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Order Program (SSOPO)

A part of Court Services, the Stalking and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Order Office began in 2001 after an influx of violent crimes in Montgomery County. Since that time, over 13,000 petitions for protection orders have been filed.

Many parties seeking protection orders have been, and currently are, the victims of crime and abuse, and, consequently, they present to the office with challenging and demanding circumstances. The Stalking Staff interview petitioners to determine if they are in the appropriate jurisdiction, assist in completing the necessary paperwork to file with the Court, and, if needed, refer parties to outside agencies for additional help.

The goal of the Stalking Office is to ensure that each party, regardless of whether he or she is the petitioner or respondent, feels heard and respected. The office staff accomplish this by taking a people-oriented, empathetic approach. Consequently, ongoing relationships are often formed between the parties who have appeared in the SSOPO office and its staff. It is common for former clients to stop by the office, after their case has been closed, just to say 'hello' or give staff an update of their personal situation – achieving sobriety, getting a new job, moving to a new neighborhood, or leaving a bad relationship, e.g.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

The Criminal Justice Services Division provides supervision, presentence investigations, and community residential services for felony and misdemeanor cases. The division addresses major areas of offender risk or need and monitors offender behavior. Criminal Justice Services endeavors to hold the client accountable for Court-ordered sanctions. Offenders are required to take responsibility for their behavior, submit to drug testing, and participate in specialized programming as offered by the Court or Probation Officers.

The Court's largest office, there are more than 80 employees who make up the Criminal Justice Services Division; they also work under the direction of a Deputy Court Administrator. The employees include associate, basic, and senior probation officers; presentence investigation report writers; and probation coordinators.



"If it is determined a protection order is not the best route for a party to take (e.g., the circumstances do not meet the criteria of the statute), staff will offer alternatives to filing a petition. Consequently, the party will still have other options that may be better suited to their situation. We will never say to a person, 'Sorry about your luck,' and show them the door. The office staff takes pride in the level of customer service provided to the public."

– SSOPO Supervisor Leslie Keplinger



"Justice. Fairness. Dignity. Integrity. Independence. Impartiality. Uphold our Constitution. Apply the law. All of these words and principles set my duties as a judge for Montgomery County. Our citizens deserve nothing less. In fulfilling these goals, our justice system is worthy of trust and respect. I'm honored to serve in this way."

Mary Wiseman, Judge

OUR SPECIALTY COURTS

Several of the General Division's Probation Officers monitor offenders who participate in one of our three specialty courts (sometimes called problem-solving courts). These courts are specifically designed to address particular offenders, typically those with severe drug and/or alcohol addictions. In addition, the probation officers who monitor the offenders in our specialty courts have established relationships with several local treatment facilities and organizations which provide therapy and programs to serve the particular needs of these offenders.

The following is a synopsis of each of our three specialty courts:



"The Court's work is the work of the people. I remain mindful of that and the profound obligations that are my duty."

Steve K. Dankof, Judge

DRUG COURT

Having begun in 1996, Drug Court is the first of the General Division's specialty courts. In the 20 years between 1996 and 2016, more than 3,700 offenders have participated in this specialty court. Before the development of the Women's Therapeutic Court in 2014, Drug Court participants consisted of both men and women. The minimum length of time an offender will participate in Drug Court is six months.

Like the WTC, offenders in Drug Court have been given numerous prior treatment opportunities but have failed to overcome their drug and/or alcohol habits. They are, consequently, imposed the much more rigid sanction of a drug specialty court to help them better navigate treatment and also manage their life issues in healthier ways. Also like the WTC, the Probation Officers who monitor Drug Court participants hold regular staffings with local treatment agencies in order to determine the best facility to help the offender.



In 2016, the General Division's Drug Court enjoyed a 68 percent success rate.

"Drug Court provides our clients with the opportunities to address areas of needed improvement in all aspects of their lives and to promote growth amidst a treatment team approach which includes a judge, local treatment agencies and probation staff."

— Drug Court Senior Probation Officer Alvin Stokes

WOMEN'S THERAPEUTIC COURT

The Women's Therapeutic Court (WTC) is the General Division's most recent specialty court, having commenced in 2014. Since that time, more than 430 women have participated in the program. Like the Veterans Treatment Court, WTC participants are required to meet with their probation officers anywhere from one to five times a week, depending on their particular situation. However, they are all required to appear in court on a weekly basis. These women have severe alcohol and/or substance addictions as well as a history of trauma throughout their lives. Some are also dealing with moderate to severe mental health issues. If a particular participant continues to use drugs and/or alcohol while in the program, she may be admitted to a local residential treatment program for up to 90 days. The average length of time that a woman will participate in the WTC is one year.

The probation officers who monitor Women's Therapeutic Court participants also hold weekly staffings with numerous local treatment providers who treat, and also help monitor, the offenders. These providers include Cornerstone Project, NOVA House, Day-Mont West Behavioral Health Care, Samaritan Behavioral Health, Addiction Services, South Community, Inc., and Women's Recovery Center.



In 2016, the Women's Therapeutic Court enjoyed a 71 percent success rate.

"I wasn't ready to get clean...it took OD'ing twice for me to get here...[but] I finally stepped out of myself [and decided that] no matter how hard it gets, I'll just keep going."

— Women's Therapeutic Court Graduation Client

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

The General Division's Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) was initiated in November of 2013, and since its inception to the end of 2016, 124 offenders have participated in the program. In order to qualify for participation in this specialty court, the offender must be an honorably discharged veteran, and both males and females are permitted to participate. He or she may or may not have been in combat, and while some VTC offenders have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, it is not a requirement to be eligible for the program. Most participants have a severe drug and/or alcohol addiction, or they are using multiple kinds of illegal drugs and have committed a felony.

VTC participants may be required to come to the courthouse to meet with their probation officers anywhere from one to five times a week, depending on the severity of their addiction and their offense, and whether or not they are regularly employed, among other factors. The VTC is convened on a biweekly calendar, although if a particular offender is fulfilling the judge's sanctions and following the probation officer's instructions, he/she may be required to appear in VTC on a less-frequent basis. The average stay of a veteran in this particular specialty court is 12 to 18 months.

As with all of our specialty courts, the General Division utilizes outside facilities to treat drug- and alcohol-addicted offenders. While most VTC participants are treated at Veterans Administration facilities, those who do not qualify for such services may be treated at NOVA House, Cornerstone Project, or Samaritan Behavioral Health.

"Women's Therapeutic Court provides access to community resources to help in recovery. It considers the client's whole person in recovery, including mental as well as physical health, and their environment. It takes a stepwise approach in assisting with the recovery process, understanding that recovery occurs over time and behavioral and environmental changes may not be immediate"

– *Women's Therapeutic Court*
Senior Probation Officer Connie Houston

In 2016, the General Division's Veterans Treatment Court enjoyed a 73 percent success rate.



"Those who have served our country and have found themselves in the justice system can receive valuable services specifically tailored to their needs, from the collaboration of Veterans Treatment Court staff, Veteran Services, and the participants. The intensive and individualized approach to supervision in VTC allows for accountability while delicately balancing the cause and effects from the unique experiences sustained from military service."

– *Criminal Justice Services Supervisor Terra Bechtol*



"My job is to protect the community by either removing those criminals from our community, or to rehabilitate their behavior. Seeing someone truly rehabilitated, as in the Veterans Treatment Court I began over three years ago, is a very rewarding experience. When you can stop further crime and change behaviors, that is a plus of the job."

Dennis K. Adkins, Judge



"It is one of the proudest parts of my life to be able to serve my community in a way where I can help individuals who are experiencing profound difficulties, and at the same time, protect the citizens of Montgomery County and the State of Ohio."

Michael W. Krumholz, Judge



"I was elected in 2014 to serve on the Montgomery County Common Pleas Bench. I work, therefore, for the citizens of Montgomery County. I enjoy the job and strive to resolve disputes in a fair and timely manner."

Richard S. Skelton, Judge



"There are limited residential facilities for women in southwestern Ohio. At our female S.T.O.P. facility, we offer programming that addressed the needs of women who struggle with addiction, education, housing victimization, parenting, and other gender-specific life area."

**– S.T.O.P. Senior Probation Officer/Manager
Terri Hawk (Female Facility)**

SECURE TRANSITIONAL OFFENDER (S.T.O.P.) PROGRAM

The General Division's Secure Transitional Offender Program, or S.T.O.P., is an intensive residential education and cognitive program that challenges male and female offenders to make permanent and positive changes in their behavior and, consequently, their lives. Located at 1901 S. Gettysburg Avenue (see photo), the program began in late July 2002 with just a few beds and was open to males only. In the fall of 2015 S.T.O.P. extended its program to include females, and today it serves 96 drug-addicted offenders who have been sentenced to the program in lieu of jail time. The facility maintains full capacity at all times.

S.T.O.P. staff conduct group activities with their clients on a daily basis utilizing the latest intervention techniques, including Thinking for a Change, Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Hazelden's Model of Recovery. Clients also receive a personalized intervention plan which directly addresses their specific needs and instills mutual respect between clients and staff.

Additional programs conducted at S.T.O.P. are facilitated by volunteers from, among others, HIV/AIDS Awareness (Wright State University), AA/NA meetings, Paradigm Thinking – Male Thinking Issues Group, Education (Sinclair Community College), Employment Counseling (Goodwill Easter Seals), and Parenting and Cancer Awareness (Combined Health District).



Female S.T.O.P. clients attending inhouse GED classes.



There are several restrictions placed on an offender before he or she is deemed eligible for the S.T.O.P. program. The offender cannot:

- Be charged with a predatory sex offense;
- Have a severe mental health condition;
- Have a protection order filed against him/her;
- Have pending charges or detainers filed against him/her.

In addition, a S.T.O.P. client must be able to perform community service work and be sentenced to the Montgomery County Jail for a minimum of 45 days.

Medical and dental services for program clients are coordinated through the Good Samaritan Homeless Clinic and other private care providers.



"I would say the most helpful thing about the S.T.O.P. program is our ability to get clients set up for success upon their release by getting them scheduled for aftercare treatment, educational opportunities, housing assistance, and providing them with the tools to make positive life changes."

**– S.T.O.P. Senior Probation Officer/Supervisor Scott Harting
(Male Facility)**



The average length of stay in S.T.O.P. is 42 days.

"It helped me realize some changes I needed to make in my life that will help me in the long run."

"I loved the PO...and I love[d] the fact I had structure while learning about my addiction."

"It taught me responsibility and discipline and respect."

"It showed me how to progress (sic) my thinking and how to deal with problems better."

– S.T.O.P Client

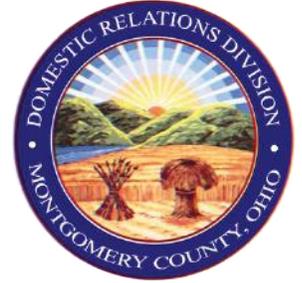
What is the Domestic Relations Division?

The Domestic Relations Court is the division of Common Pleas responsible for hearing all divorce, dissolution, legal separation, annulment and civil domestic violence cases for residents of Montgomery County. Parties may also return to the Court for post-decree resolution of matters including child or spousal support, allocation of parental rights and responsibilities ("custody"), parenting time or visitation, among other matters. In 2016, two Judges along with 45 staff served Montgomery County in this capacity.



2
JUDGES

45
COURT STAFF



"The Domestic Relations Court provides a beacon of light and hope during very trying circumstances. Divorces, separations, domestic violence and other family issues demand the highest in professional skill and experience. Our county has an efficient, effective and user friendly court for all citizens; working hard to minimize conflict for children and families while maximizing resources. The court's dedicated staff consistently works above and beyond to ensure justice for all. It is with great pride that I serve our community as a member of this forward-thinking court."

Denise L. Cross, Administrative Judge
Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court

OUR MISSION

The *Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court* is dedicated to resolving family conflict by:

- Providing quality services to the public.
- Ensuring efficient case management by a professional and courteous staff.
- Offering easy access to the court for prompt problem resolution.

The Court will anticipate and meet the challenges presented by continuing social, legal, and technological changes.



Domestic Relations Division | Year in Review

A YEAR FOR COLLABORATION

The Domestic Relations Court collaborates with many entities to coordinate service and minimize costs. The Court meets quarterly with stakeholders to gauge our progress in service delivery. This team of dedicated partners is invaluable for our continued enhancement.

This year the Court was awarded a Technology Grant from the Supreme Court of Ohio for a proposal that effectively enhanced 'process of service' through the Clerk of Courts. The Clerk's Office determined the scope of work with the computer development team. The Court gained approval from the Montgomery County Auditor's Office and our County Commissioner's to apply for the grant. Receiving this grant award saved Montgomery County taxpayers over \$18,000 in development costs.

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

The Court replaced outdated computers for all staff. This upgrade, originally projected to take three years to complete, was realized within months of the same budget cycle. These computers not only enhanced current workload efficiency, but they will also support e-filing processes in the near future. The staff computer replacement will allow us to provide computers for use by Self Represented litigants and will greatly aid litigants as we move to e-filing. They provide convenience and ease of use.

The Domestic Relations Court received new "Voice over Internet Phones" (VoIP). Domestic Relations was the first Court division to join the new phone system. These new phones provide enhancements such as recording any phone calls and forwarding as required to assure safety of all court personnel and participants.



"It is an honor to serve the citizens of Montgomery County. It is my hope that our court is able to assist families who are divorcing, to do so in a manner that is fair and equitable to all, and to minimize disruption to children."

Timothy D. Wood, Judge
Montgomery County
Domestic Relations Court



GOING GREEN

April 22nd, Amy Brandl, Administrative Assistant to the Legal Director was awarded the grand prize for her "Green Idea" by the Dayton Regional Green Action Team. Amy's submission was a water bottle that could be brought to Dayton festivals, fairs, even Dragon's games and 'refilled' at a lower cost than bottled water/soda. Her idea to re-use the container will significantly reduce waste and is being considered for local development. Vendors may reward participants with lower prices to fill their containers.

PHYSICAL PLANT UPGRADES

The Court collaborated with Facilities Management on a special soundproofing project. This project included adding insulation to walls as well as replacing ceiling tiles and fixtures with thicker materials and tighter finishing pieces. The project successfully resulted in less sound carrying from conference rooms and public waiting areas into Courtrooms and vice versa, assuring the privacy of all those doing business at the Court.

The Court is replacing its seating for public participants. This project began by replacing all chairs in the lobby areas. Public seating posed health concerns as bed bug and other insect infestation was noted. Other court areas were addressed by recovering and/or replacing seating.

COMMUNITY SERVANTS

Domestic Relations Court Judges and staff are public servants by virtue of their career choices. The service many offer to enrich their personal communities extends beyond their professional endeavours at the Court. We want to publicly recognize all the staff who participate in or volunteer selflessly at the food pantries, animal shelters, school clubs, Girl Scouts, walk events, employment/career development programs, churches and community action awareness groups. Our staff's volunteerism enriches the entire community.



RE-ORGANIZATION FOR MORE EFFECTIVE SERVICE

Administrative Judge Denise Cross continues to review caseload and function of each position in the Court. Over the years, the Court has restructured to meet the changing needs of the community it serves. The Court continues to see a dramatic increase in the number of participants entering the system without an attorney. The Self-Represented litigants result in increased time necessary to complete cases. Our Court is dedicated to ensuring meaningful access to the Courts by assisting, and keeping our Court open and easy to navigate.

Successfully navigating the justice system takes expertise that should never be limited by an inability to meet financial responsibilities. Because of this, the Court partnered with the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project and numerous attorneys to offer a monthly clinic. The Clinic advises clients who would not afford or seek out counsel for their proceedings. The Clinic has been in place for over two years, and Attorneys volunteer their time to answer questions for Self-Represented litigants.

Electronic files are now prepared for the Magistrate dockets and assist the Legal Secretaries in performing their duties. The Court expanded its division of Court Reporters from two to three to support the Magistrates. By having Court Reporters available in more hearings, Magistrates are provided 'real-time' notes and parties have a shorter turn-around time for transcript preparation.

In addition to the Court's moving parts, staff continue to give input and develop the e-filing process. Judge Cross signed a Memorandum of Understanding with partners from General Division and the Clerk's Office to join Montgomery County E-filing system to provide continuity of service and a cost savings to the public. The Court is meeting with vendors in the spring of 2017, testing and training with stakeholders in the fall, and will have a working program available for all users by 2018.

IN THE COMMUNITY'S WORDS...

"Just a note to say thank you!... we appreciated the caring way in which you do your job!" —Excerpt of thank you to staff from a self-represented litigant.

"Thank you for your time and diligence. It must be a difficult job to do."
—Opening lines of thank you from a filer after his paperwork had been reviewed.

"Thank you so much for helping me during my time of need. It was nice to know that there still are people in this world that will go the extra mile." —Party thanking staff after spousal support termination had been finalized.

"Wonderful speaker. Kind, informed, compassionate." [and] "This seminar was very helpful and I wish I would have attended sooner. Thank you!!" —Mothers' comments after attending their parent seminars.

The most important/most helpful thing(s) I learned from the seminar (was): COMMUNICATION. I was pleasantly surprised... I like the class. —Father experience after attending the class, "Helping Children Succeed After Divorce.

...And the Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court staff is pleased to serve YOU.



Office Overview



Judges

Denise L. Cross has been serving as the elected Administrative Judge of Domestic Relations Court since 2001. In addition to hearing cases on her docket, as the Senior Judge, she is charged with assigning work throughout the division, hiring staff to carry out the specific functions and overseeing supervision of all personnel. She is also ultimately responsible for the budget, safety of all participants, providing access to justice and impartiality of the hired decision-makers.

Timothy D. Wood serves as Judge for the division. Judge Wood actively participates in Court business and decision development, in addition to hearing the cases assigned to his docket.

Each Judge appoints a personal staff consisting of a bailiff and a court reporter or judicial assistant. Lynice Stewart acts as bailiff and Linda Zell is Court Reporter for Judge Cross. Judge Wood's staff includes Teresa Griffith serving as bailiff and Jean Walther as Judicial Assistant.

Administrators

Two Administrators have the primary responsibility of overseeing Court departments and day-to-day functions. Duties are divided between court operations and legal matters. The Court Administrator primarily attends to public and staff relations, as well as safety and welfare of all participants in the Domestic Relations Court. This administrator assists in program development, payroll, budget and inventory control, contract oversight and manages staff directly related to the support of the courtrooms and daily operations. The Legal Administrator primarily oversees magistrates and legal support staff and maintains relations among the attorneys and legal community practicing in Domestic Relations Court. This administrator assists in maintaining the Court's Local Rules, providing legal training and assuring magistrates provide timely and consistent decisions. Administrators collaborate on case management and special projects.

Jennifer Petrella-Ahrens serves as Court Administrator with direct supervision of 5 Managers and 3 Staff. Keith Hall serves as Legal Administrator with direct supervision of the Magistrates, 2 Managers, Staff Attorneys and an Administrative Assistant.

Domestic Relations Division

MAGISTRATES

Magistrates are attorneys appointed by the Court to hear cases referred by the Judges. Magistrates hear and consider cases in the same manner as a Judge, but their decisions must be approved by the Judge to become final orders. Magistrates are available to answer procedural and other questions but may not discuss case specifics with either party (or their attorney) without the other party (and/or attorney) being present. Magistrates are regularly called upon to write articles for legal publications and make presentations at legal seminars.

There are currently 6 full-time Magistrates. Additionally, there are four part-time Magistrates supporting the Court's caseload. Three of these are assigned regular docket days.

COURT REPORTERS

Staff of this department are designated the Official Court Reporters for the Court and are responsible for providing a verbatim record, or 'transcript' of legal proceedings. Transcripts are available in written or electronic format. Parties should note that they must request a written transcript be prepared whenever objections or appeals are filed. The cost for this service is dependent upon the number of pages in the transcript. The Court Reporters are also responsible for retaining custody of all exhibits admitted in proceedings, in accordance with applicable statutes.

There is currently one Judicial Court Reporter, and three Court Reporters support the Magistrate Dockets.

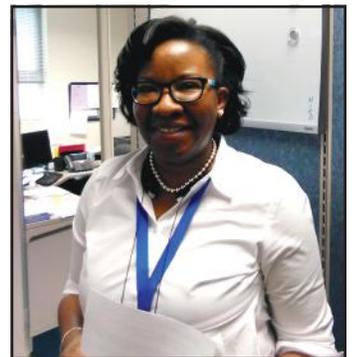
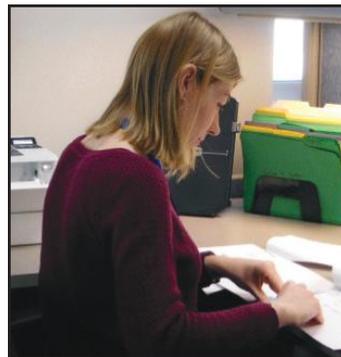


*In 2016,
Court staff reviewed
over 3,800 documents
prepared by
self-represented
litigants.*



LEGAL SECRETARIES

The Legal Secretary Department performs tasks in support of a Magistrate or Judge. Staff require considerable knowledge of office, secretarial and administrative practices and procedures. The legal secretaries prepare court orders, Domestic Violence Wallet Cards, reports, forms, memos, correspondence along with final decisions for the Magistrates and Judges. They receive, screen and refer telephone calls from the public and attorneys. Additional duties include searching and maintaining files for a variety of complex and confidential materials, as well as scanning documentation for the Court's internal files. There is one Manager and three (3) Legal Secretaries for the Court.



The Domestic Relations Court provides a "Wallet Card" to all protected persons who are granted full protection orders. It's a great tool for them to give law enforcement in case they find themselves in an emergency.

ASSIGNMENT OFFICE

The Assignment Office consists of a Manager and three (3) staff. Assignment Officers have the primary duties of assigning Magistrates to cases and scheduling initial hearings.

To perform these duties, Assignment Officers facilitate calendar coordination between the Court, attorneys and self-represented parties, collect and maintain files for matters pending before the Court, and complete case inventory. They also track cases monthly and complete mandated reporting to Supreme Court of Ohio along with any public record request.

In addition to the above, the department has two other positions with related functions that serve very specific roles. One of the staff has the responsibility to review records of individuals with Seek Work Orders, and payment history of overdue support obligations. This staff member determines if the party is in compliance with the order, monitors progress and prepares compliance reports for the Judges and Magistrates prior to contempt or imposition of sentence hearings.

The other staff member is the Public Coordinator for Domestic Violence. This Coordinator is responsible for providing paperwork and reviewing forms completed by parties in domestic violence cases. Working in conjunction with the Magistrates and Clerk's Office to assure parties get expedited hearings, the Coordinator prepares any necessary copies of temporary orders and reports LEADS information to law enforcement. Similar to other Assignment Office positions, the Public Coordinator acts as a point of contact for other courts, out of county police, victim witness advocates and the public.



COMPLIANCE OFFICE

The Compliance Office consists of a Manager and six (6) staff. Compliance Officers primarily prepare post-decree administrative orders regarding child support and / or spousal support. They also review the final decree, subsequent orders and any agreed orders submitted by attorneys and self-represented litigants. The role of the Compliance Officer is to assure administrative support matters are addressed in accordance with Ohio law and the Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court Local Rules. Some of the post-decree administrative orders this team prepares to the Judge include modifications, terminations and establishment of arrearage payments.

With similar but broader functions, the Public Coordinator for Self-Represented Parties is also located in Compliance. It is this team member's responsibility to review all documents prepared by self-represented parties prior to filing. This Coordinator answers questions in person or via phone calls, and prepares correspondence, instruction packets and other miscellaneous documents. Additionally, the Coordinator reviews final decrees drafted by the parties themselves, and assures that necessary addenda are included.



*Over 1,460 petitions
for Domestic Violence
were filed in 2016.*



MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The M.I.S. Department has the primary task of providing sound hardware options and software solutions to assure the entire staff of the Domestic Relations Court has the proper tools to complete their tasks effectively on behalf of Montgomery County citizens. The department administers and maintains data collection in the Court's case management system, assures regular back-up of stored information and provides protection for internal files and confidential communication. The department is responsible for virtually all technological resources provided the Court, from computers and printers to check-in kiosks, telephones and the Court website. M.I.S. is the point of contact for vendors, Clerk's Office and other county agencies and technology entities doing regular business with the Court. There is currently a Manager in Information Systems who works with other information technology personnel under contract with the Court.



FAMILY RELATIONS

The Family Relations Department provides investigative services and reports for the Court, in order to help resolve issues pertaining to allocation of parental rights and responsibilities and/or parenting time. While parties may request involvement of the Family Relations Department, all referrals come directly from the Magistrate or Judge assigned. The department provides family investigations and home studies, including home studies at the request of out-of-state courts or agencies. Family Investigators may also meet with parents needing assistance in creating a workable parenting time schedule and provide recommendations. The Family Relations Department consists of a Manager and four (4) staff, several of whom support the Court as mediators on cases they are not investigating.



Mediation services were provided in 197 cases, a 12% increase from 2015.

PARENT EDUCATION

The Parent Education Department consists of one Manager, a Parent Education Specialist and Parent Education Coordinator. The Manager and Specialist are responsible for conducting parent seminars held on a regular basis at Sinclair Community College. The seminar, entitled "Helping Children Succeed After Divorce", is a mandatory three-hour presentation for parents of children under eighteen (18). The presentation provides expert information regarding the effects of divorce and parental conflict on children, and the importance of regular and consistent child support payments, as well as regular and consistent parenting time. Parent Education staff regularly support the Court as mediators and the department also provides conciliation services for divorcing parties.



MEDIATION DEPARTMENT

Mediation is a process where parties resolve disputes outside the formal legal system. In Domestic Relations Court, mediation services are available for most cases, and all pre-decree cases are screened for mediation. If the parties agree to mediate, they will meet in a private setting with two Ohio Supreme Court certified, staff mediators. They assist the couple in identifying issues and developing options and solutions in the best interests of the children, but they will not decide the issues for the couple. Mediation is a confidential process and the mediators may not be subpoenaed into court. If the parties are able to reach an agreement, a "written agreement" is prepared, and signed by the parties, which, in turn, is given to the parties, the Court, and attorneys of record. There is one Manager and two dedicated staff to the Mediation Department, along with several staff throughout the court who also volunteer their services.

2016 NEW FILING STATISTICS

Divorces	1,130
Dissolutions	614
Legal Separations	17
Annulments	4
Domestic Violence Petitions	1,463

**2016 PRE & POST DECREE MOTIONS**

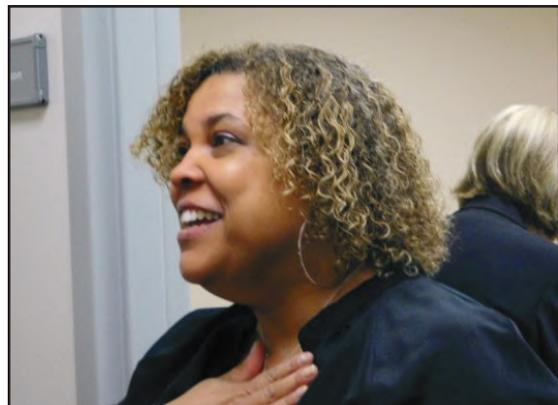
Custody	204
Parenting Time	103
Support	539
Property / Other	328

**2016 FINAL ORDERS**

Divorce Decrees	1,050
Dissolution Decrees	640
Annulment Decrees	9
Legal Separations Decrees	18
Motions Dismissed by Court	1,192

**OTHER SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2016**

Family Relations' Investigations	87
Mediations	197
Conciliation Counseling Participants	53
Parent Education Seminar Attendants	1,182
Documents Reviewed (Self Represented Parties)	3,813
Withholding Orders Prepared	1,135
Child Support Emancipation Entries	1,521
Interpreters Provided (for Court Events)	80



What is the Juvenile Division?

The jurisdiction of the Montgomery County Juvenile Court extends countywide to children who are alleged to be traffic offenders, delinquent, unruly, neglected, dependent or abused, and their families. The Court also determines adult misdemeanor criminal cases charging adults with misdemeanor offenses against children, including contributing to delinquency/unruly, child endangering and educational neglect; hears matters of custody, parentage, child support, and visitation; and hears other miscellaneous areas involving children and families, including tobacco possession cases and juvenile protection orders hearings.



2
JUDGES



470
COURT STAFF



"My service to the community as a Juvenile Court Judge has been the most satisfying of my entire career. The Common Pleas Court Juvenile Division has the most diverse cases a judge could have the challenge to resolve. The Court is truly the people's court, addressing the individual complicated issues for adults and children."

**Nick Kuntz, Administrative Judge
Montgomery County Juvenile Court**

We are a Court of law dedicated to the task of upholding the Constitution and administering the laws of our land in a just and equal manner. We must strive to provide individualized justice for our children and protect our community, carefully balancing the interests of both. We believe there must be consequences for violation of the laws and that treatment begins with legal consequences. These consequences are intended to teach one responsibility and accountability for their actions; yet our goal is not to punish but to rehabilitate whenever rehabilitation can be effected without endangering the community.



We are a Juvenile Court, and although protecting children is everyone's responsibility, we must be the catalyst in rallying the entire community toward that end through the following:

- Be a leader in the effective and cost-efficient utilization of community resources for the treatment of children and families;
- Provide for the protection of the community through just and speedy consequences;
- Be sensitive and responsive to individual victims and their families;
- Provide individualized justice for the offenders;
- Protect the abandoned, neglected and abused and assess and seek treatment for children in need;
- Hold those accountable who fail to meet their obligations as parents, guardians or custodians;
- Demand high professional standards for ourselves and make every effort possible to demand the same standards from other government agencies and service providers.

We must pursue these goals vigorously and honestly with the utmost respect for the rights of all our citizens.

Juvenile Division | Year in Review



"I am honored to work with the children and families of Montgomery County, some of whom have substantial challenges to

overcome. It is rewarding to build partnerships within our community to help these families improve their lives. We have amazing children that will accomplish greatness with our help and support!"

**Anthony Capizzi, Judge
Montgomery County Juvenile Court**



Judge Anthony Capizzi supported by his campaign team



*Location of the Evening Reporting Centers,
Mount Enon Missionary Baptist Church*

JUDGE ANTHONY CAPIZZI RE-ELECTED

Judge Anthony Capizzi was re-elected in November 2016 for a third term and will be serving the Juvenile Court for another six years. The Court congratulates him on his hard won success and looks forward to working under his continued leadership.

Judge Capizzi was first elected as Montgomery County Juvenile Court's judge in 2004. Prior to his election, he maintained a private law practice for 25 years and served as an Acting Judge for Dayton Municipal Court.

JUDGE CAPIZZI ELECTED PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

Judge Capizzi will be sworn in as President of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) at the 80th annual conference in Washington D.C. on July 18th, 2017. He was elected by NCJFCJ's Board of Directors and will be the 11th Ohio judge to serve in this honored position.

NCJFCJ seeks to improve court practices and provide all related agencies involved with juvenile, family and domestic cases with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve the lives of those seeking justice.

EVENING REPORTING CENTER II

The Evening Reporting Center II (ERC II) began operations in October 2016 to provide programming for a target group of low risk juveniles referred from the Court's Diversion Unit and other unofficial Court channels. The primary mission of the ERC II is to provide comprehensive services and evidence-based programming to help youth build on existing strengths and to develop life skills. The youth are instructed on how to make sound, informed, life enhancing decisions for the betterment of themselves, their families and their communities. The Court expects to see a reduction in these youth's recidivation rates and an overall decrease in official case filings because of ERC programming.

A total of 29 youth were served from October to December of last year, with 21 males and 8 females. Funding for the ERC II was awarded through a competitive grant by the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) for \$160,000.

CLERKS IN THE COURTROOM

In 2016, Clerks in the Courtroom (CIC) became fully implemented and operational across all Court case proceedings and types. CIC is a real time process of streamlining the hearing process by providing Court entries to parties immediately after a court session is ended. CIC provides an efficient method of recording key aspects of a hearing and allows the entries to be electronically signed by the magistrates and judges. This eliminates any lengthy processing and waiting time for youth and families to receive their paperwork.

DIVERSION UNIT

The Diversion Unit started on April 1, 2016 to address low risk youth who historically received Court services through the Probation Department. The Diversion Unit allows for the unofficial handling and supervision of low risk youth charged with misdemeanor and unruly cases, as opposed to the historically traditional official case status filings. All youth involved in the Diversion Unit will engage in services separate from youth with medium/high risk statuses, along with youth on official probation. This endeavor will help keep risk level populations separated and will reduce the number of cases filed officially within the Court. The Unit will reduce the number of youth placed on official probation and, in turn, decrease the number of potential Court detentions on Violation of Court Orders.

The Diversion Unit falls under the Court's Intervention Center umbrella and temporarily provided case management for all unofficial orders initiated in the Intervention Center. In 2016, the Unit oversaw 694 unofficial cases, 78 of which received Diversion Unit programming and specialized supervision.

FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

In September 2016, the Court was awarded a three year, \$600,000 grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to begin Family Treatment Court (FTC) operations. The first FTC docket took place soon after on October 12, 2016. The mission of FTC is to ensure children are raised in a nurturing and healthy environment with parents who are drug free. FTC also strives to reunify families and to decrease dependency case proceedings costs to the community, particularly with foster care and other temporary child placements. The Court is partnering with Job and Family Services-Children Services Division to achieve these missions.

FTC received a total of 28 referrals in 2016 and served a total of 11 parents and 25 youth.

"I found that the staff genuinely cared about my child's success in the program and were always available and willing to do the necessary steps in helping my child to obtain success." – Juvenile Treatment Court parent



The Diversion Unit Team (left to right): Deb Bellamy, Alma Coleman, Supervisor Jeff Cummings, Jennifer Heckman and Jennifer Schaefer.



Judge Anthony Capizzi and Jewell Good, Assistant Director of Job and Family Services-Children Services Division, presenting together at the Family Treatment's Court press conference.

CAS ACA ACCREDITATION

In October 2016, the Center for Adolescent Services (CAS) completed their American Correctional Association (ACA) facility audit. CAS fulfilled all standard requirements and received 100% fulfillment across all categories. CAS was officially recognized at the ACA Panel Hearing in San Antonio, Texas and was awarded accreditation on January 23, 2017.



CAS LIVING QUARTERS REMODEL

CAS' Strength Based Relations Committee led the initiative to remodel the facility's living and recreation areas to soften the institutionalized feeling of the building and to improve the psychological well-being of residents. With the cooperation of staff and residents, new color schemes, furniture and murals were chosen and designed to positively enhance the behavioral and therapeutic effect of the environment on residents. The committee hopes the changes make the facility appear more welcoming and will further support the youths' journeys of recovery.



JUVENILE COURT HAALO PROGRAM

Helping Adolescents Achieve Long-Term Objectives (HAALO) youth, in partnership with K12 Gallery & TEJAS, completed several murals in 2016 throughout various locations in Montgomery County. These murals enrich our neighborhoods and give Court youth a productive, positive outlet to develop life skills and to give back to their communities.

One mural took place on the retaining wall of the Fort McKinley Community Garden under lead artists Tracy Jane and B.K. Elias. The area was beautifully transformed by Court youth with a mural of healthy fruits and vegetables surrounding shared bricked gardening plots.



A second mural was completed at the Wesley Community Center in Dayton's Westwood neighborhood. Developed by local artist James Pate, the mural tells the story of community revitalization and includes images of African American history and the importance of community, education and teamwork. Court youth enjoyed working alongside Mr. Pate as he challenged youth to think differently about their futures and self-worth. The Wesley Center mural was also selected as a Love Dayton site. This group provided volunteers to help beautify the neighboring Wesley Park for community youth to enjoy.

In partnership with Court Probation, HAALO youth also participated in community cleanups and picked up a total of 10.17 tons of trash.

In support of HAALO, the Court received Montgomery County Environmental Service's "Keep Montgomery County Beautiful" (KMCB) grant and an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) Community Development grant. KMCB will provide \$1000 in funds for needed project and worksite supplies. The OEPA grant provides \$3400 in matching funds for a vehicle trailer and necessary supplies to continue the Court's work with community cleanups, murals and beautification projects.



"[I liked] how much it helped me open my eyes and make me a better person."
 –Juvenile Treatment Court youth

PROJECT EMPOWER

Project Empower started in the Court's Detention Center in August 2016. Project Empower expanded Detention's ART (Aggression Replacement Training) programming to all Detention youth and increased the number of certified staff trained in ART who can also train other Detention staff. ART has been shown to be highly effective in reducing recidivism and in helping youth develop pro-social behaviors through social skills, anger control, moral reasoning training and skill streaming.

Project Empower also included the implementation of the Wellness and Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) programs. These programs build on the importance of overall self-wellness and health and empower youth with strategies of how to identify personal issues and use ongoing coping skills.

Funding for Project Empower was awarded through a competitive grant by the ODYS for \$75,000.

Juvenile Court | 2017 Goals

NICHOLAS RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT BUILDING CHANGE & REMODEL

In collaboration with Job and Family Services-Children Services Division, the Court will be moving its Nicholas Residential Treatment Center (NRTC) to the Dora Lee Tate Youth Center building. The move will allow NRTC to increase its capacity to a 40 total bed facility, with 20 beds designated for males, 10 for females and 10 for Alcohol or Other Drug (AoD) residential treatment youth. This redesign of NRTC will allow the Court to serve the changing, complex needs of Court youth. Construction will begin in 2017 to modify the building and surrounding parking lot areas. The facility will be operational by 2018.

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT COURT

In response to the needs of Court youth, a Mental Health Treatment Court (MHTC) will begin operations in 2017. MHTC will connect youth and their families to therapists, psychiatric services and other supportive community resources to help improve and maintain a youth's mental health. MHTC will hold youth accountable to these services and treatments and will track and reward their program progress. The Court will also hold youth accountable to adhering to juvenile law and will address any criminal delinquency within the program.

FACILITY WIDE PBIS

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive, student support framework established by the U.S.

OPIATE INTERVENTION

In response to the opiate epidemic, the Court's Detention center implemented training of administering Narcan to youth overdosing on opiate substances. Narcan reverses an overdose in a person by blocking the biological effects of opiates. This implementation will help to save youth lives. Seventeen Detention staff received Narcan training, including nine Youth Specialists, one Registered Nurse, three trained Medical Technicians, three Program Managers and the Detention Director.

There were 40 Juvenile Treatment Court graduates in 2016. Since 2010, there have been over 300 youth graduates!



Department of Education and adapted to meet the needs of juvenile facilities across the country. PBIS is designed to reduce safety concerns, enhance academics and promote positive social and behavioral outcomes. PBIS will become facility wide in the Court in 2017 and will include programming at Detention, Nicholas and CAS. Murals to aesthetically enhance the Court building and to promote PBIS' programming will also be included as part of this initiative.

CIC UNOFFICIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Clerks in the Courtroom (CIC) will be implemented in the unofficial handling of cases in the Court's Intervention Center. This will document the administrative hearing process for families, providing immediate feedback in the form of a letter families can take home. Using CIC will eliminate any lengthy processing and waiting time for youth and families to receive their Court paperwork.

DETENTION JDAI SELF-ASSESSMENT

In 2017, Detention will undergo their second self-assessment of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention and Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) standards. The assessment covers over 950 JDAI standards, including in areas of healthcare services, youth access to supportive relationships outside detention facilities, detention programming and more. Public volunteers will administer the assessment and will include persons familiar with detention facilities and juvenile justice. The date of the last JDAI Self-Assessment took place on October 2011.

Office Overview

JUVENILE COURT SERVICES

The **Intervention Center (IC)** is a 24-hour, 7-days a week single point of entry for court service (intake, case screening, assessment and processing) for unruly and delinquent youth, providing easier access for local law enforcement. The Center coordinates needed services and provides ongoing follow-up for youth and their families to divert them from the official court system. With the on-site support of outside agencies such as Caring for Kids, a South Community, Inc. program, which conducts comprehensive assessments on youth, and the Children Services Division of the Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services (CSD/MCDJFS), the Center can provide a triage for youth and their families needing more in-depth intervention. In 2016, 2,786 Behavioral Health Screens (BHS) and 516 comprehensive mental health and drug assessments were completed by Caring for Kids. IC conducted 1,156 administrative hearings on unofficial cases and diverted 443 cases to the Dayton Mediation Center to find meaningful resolution for parties outside of court involvement.

IC provides electronic monitoring for youth released in lieu of detention and also houses the Care Coordination Team (CCT), which works closely with children, 10 years of age and younger, their families and the Disproportionate Minority Contact Diversion Program (DMC/DP). During 2016, IC provided electronic monitoring for 808 cases.¹ The CCT served 253 youth in 2016. In 2016 changes to DMC/DP included limiting DMC/DP programming to first time offenders only. As a result of this change, DMC/DP services have been expanded to include all youth in the City of Dayton.

The Intervention center also houses **Truancy Court**, a program that handles truancy cases in a mass docket format with family members/representatives, school representatives and the IC's Truancy Case Liaison. Together, the team works to improve attendance and makes suggestions of sanctions that will assist the youth/parent in improving attendance. Truancy Court also provides links to community services. In 2016, Truancy Court conducted hearings on 256 truancy referrals. Of those referrals, 78% were closed out successfully.

The **Diversion Unit** was developed as another layer of prevention used to divert low risk youth from official action and traditional probation supervision and is housed under the IC umbrella. The Diversion Unit started on April 1, 2016 and temporarily provided case management for all unofficial orders initiated in the Intervention Center. The Diversion Unit oversaw 694 unofficial cases in 2016, 78 of which received the programming and specialized supervision the unit was designed to provide.

The **Court Services Office** is responsible for processing all

¹ This number does not include 11 youth on EHMP at the end of 2016 who completed the program in 2017.



Intervention Center staff enjoying a team building activity.



Reclaiming Futures trained 44 new Natural Helpers in 2016. From 2013-2016, over 400 Court youth have been matched with a Natural Helper.

official filings for the Court. Documents requiring filing are received via mail or in person from several sources. These sources include private citizens, law enforcement, attorneys representing private or agency parties, appointed counsel, and agencies themselves. The Clerk's Office processes Delinquency, Unruly, Tobacco, Traffic, Petitions for Protection Orders (where the respondent is juvenile), Adult Misdemeanor, Parentage, Support, Custody, Dependency, Neglect, Abuse, Permanent Custody, Visitation, U.I.F.S.A., Judicial Consent Cases, Grandparent Powers of Attorney, Grandparent Caretaker Authorization Affidavits, Objections, Ohio Department of Youth Service Releases/Re-Entry Filings, Certifications, Transfers and Appeals. A separate journal is maintained to docket Adoption Placement Agreements, Permanent Surrenders, and Fingerprinting and Photographing Motions and Entries as well as Juvenile Court appointments, resignations and terminations.

Prior to the first hearing, Deputy Clerks file the initial documentation of the case. This includes the time-stamping and journalizing of the documents in the Court's case management system, assigning a Judge and Magistrate to the case, and assigning a case number or motion suffix. All complaints, motions and entries are then imaged upon journalizing the document. Service is prepared to 1) assure legal notification to parties of upcoming hearings; 2) notify persons of required documentation or mandatory appearance at a hearing; or 3) restrain or detain a person in order for justice to be served. Service documents include summons, subpoenas, warrants, *capias*, orders of apprehension, and temporary restraining orders (used in support cases only). These documents are prepared upon the Judge or Magistrate's setting the hearing on the court docket and are tracked for perfection or failure. Clerks also perform several on-going, case processing responsibilities. Service production mentioned above may be necessary at several points in an open case. The receipt or failure of service is also journalized in the court's docket, along with all official documents in a case, including all Judges' and Magistrates' entries and orders. Other Clerks' duties include mailing the majority of official case documents for the Court and acting as a receiving area for payments of filing fees, bonds, court costs, fines and restitution. Clerks also maintain the 'hard-copy' case files for the Court, complete agency reporting for traffic violations, fingerprints collected, as well as the number of applications for attorneys by indigent parties and the waiver of any fee for the application. Record request for private citizens, judicial agencies and military are completed daily. Additionally, the Chief Deputy will testify regarding the Court's record for criminal non-support cases or in venues when subpoenaed and appropriate.

In 2016, the Clerk's Office filed just under 12,450 new cases and reactivations, including complete case coordination on over 1,992 traffic citations and filings. Clerks maintained over 120,000 official case jackets and 10 years of social history case jackets. Lastly, clerks are also maintaining documentation of all active grandparent Power Of Attorney/Caretaker Authorization Affidavit (POA/CAA) filings.



Detention Services is a 144-bed multipurpose facility, which consists of a 48-bed short-term detention facility that houses both male and female youth pending court disposition or transfer to another jurisdiction, a 24-bed residential treatment option (the JCARE Programs) for boys who may typically have been committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services, a 27-bed short-term correctional high-impact intervention program and nine remaining beds for girls general population/detention. These programs offer comprehensive programming (educational programming and recreational, therapeutic group and community-sponsored activities) for youth in a safe and secure environment, while protecting the community. 849 boys and 362 girls were detained in Detention in 2016 and 262 boys and 125 girls were served in the Corrections Program in 2016. 53 boys were served in the residential treatment program (JCARE/ART) in 2016 and 17 boys were served in the JCARE/STP sex offender treatment program. The Detention Center also housed 14 youth certified to the adult court pending their case resolutions as adults.

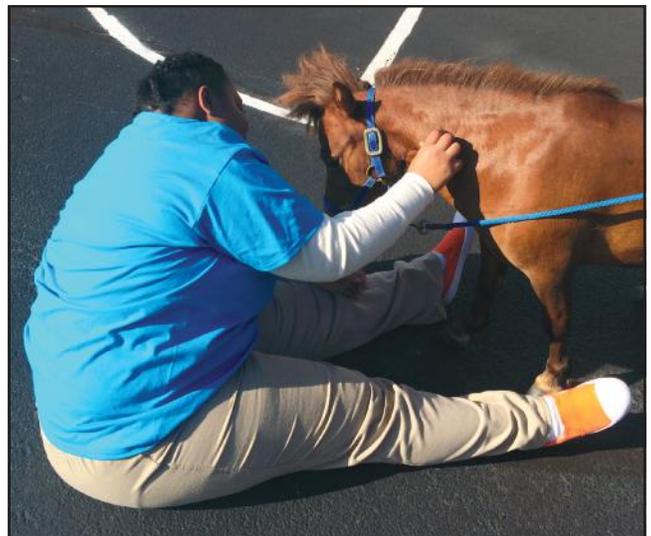


The **Nicholas Residential Treatment Center for Youth (NRTC)** is a 24-hour, non-secure residential treatment center with a 22 bed capacity that provides behavioral interventions for Court-involved boys, ages 11 to 17. The program generally takes six to nine months to complete, based on the progress and compliance of each youth. While involved with the program, these youth can expect to engage in family, individual and group counseling, as well as community resources, school, athletics and other pro-social activities. 43 youth received needed treatment at NRTC during 2016.



The **Center for Adolescent Services (CAS)** was completed in the fall of 2000 and officially dedicated on May 16, 2001. The facility is located in the Village of New Lebanon, Ohio and is a co-educational secure residential correctional/treatment facility. CAS is currently funded to serve 25 boys and 25 girls. Fifteen of these girls come from referrals through the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) facility. During 2016, CAS served a total of 99 youth (44 boys and 55 girls).

This highly structured program provides a safe and secure learning environment for youth adjudicated of felony offenses. Youth participate in a cognitive-behavioral treatment program stressing pro-social skills, self-discipline, and personal responsibility. Treatment modules target thinking patterns, substance abuse, relapse prevention, understanding one's personal, social and family history, developing new habits of thought and action, values exploration and clarification, restitution and victim empathy. Treatment is delivered through a combination of individual, group and family counseling. In addition, youth must participate actively in a year-round academic program in which credits are earned and transferred to their permanent academic record. Additional services provided for all youth include medical and health services, daily recreation, food services, vision screening, dental services, custodial services, and a program of aftercare.



The average length of treatment is 4.09 months depending upon the needs and responsiveness of each youth. Prior to release each Montgomery County youth enters a transition period during which he or she spends increasing periods of time at home. When released, all youth are required to participate in aftercare services with the Probation Department.



Judge Capizzi stands next to a group of Airmen and Airwomen from the Wright Patterson Air Force Base. The logo was made by CAS youth and community partners. The logo was presented to the base, thanking them for their inspirational messages they presented to CAS youth.



Probation Services provides treatment planning and supervision of Court ordered youth placed under community corrections. Probation Services operates from a strength-based perspective in providing supervision and support. The strength-based approach to supervision demands a different way of looking at individuals, families and the community. The Probation Services Department is comprised of the following units and programs: Geographical Units I and II, Resource Planning Program, Intensive Probation Services, Start Right/Adult Probation, Juvenile Treatment Court, Reclaiming Futures, Family Treatment Court, Evening Reporting Center I & II, Community Based Services, Juvenile Court Work Program and Transportation. There were approximately 693 youth under new supervision in 2016. The average caseload for a probation officer in 2016 was 21 youth.



Artwork completed by Court youth to celebrate African American history and to promote awareness of domestic violence.



Probation Director Darlene Powell speaking at Probation's Black History celebration event.



Start Right officially moved to the Merrimac Probation building in March 2016. Under the direction of Magistrate Gregory Scott, the Start Right program handles Parental Failure to Send and Contributing to Educational Neglect referrals on parents whose children, kindergarten through 4th grade, have excessive school absenteeism or who fail to enroll a child in school. Parents are plugged into community programming to help solve the problems these families are facing. In 2016, Start Right received 333 cases and served 782 children. The Start Right Program closed 450 cases, of which 84% were closed successfully. A case is closed successfully when the student has shown improvement in his or her attendance.



A Juvenile Treatment Court youth graduating successfully from programming.

Presided over by Judge Anthony Capizzi, **Juvenile Treatment Court (JTC)** is a specialized docket to assist in the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders who have been adversely affected by drugs and alcohol. It provides intensive intervention and supervision of these youth, ages 13 – 17, who have been screened and assessed to be in need of alcohol/drug treatment. JTC served a total of 151 youth during 2016. A total of 40 youth successfully graduated JTC in 2016.

Also presided over by Judge Anthony Capizzi, **Family Treatment Court (FTC)** is a specialized docket heard by Magistrate Nikole Xarhoulacos. The docket is designed to improve the safety and well-being of children in the dependency system by providing parents access to drug and alcohol treatment, judicial monitoring of their sobriety and individualized services to support the entire family. FTC started in September of 2016 with a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for \$600,000. FTC served a total of 11 parents and 25 children during 2016.

With the active leadership of Judge Nick Kuntz and Judge Anthony Capizzi, **Reclaiming Futures** has been bringing together court staff, treatment providers, families, community partners and volunteers to address the needs of court-involved youth with substance abuse challenges. One of its successful components is the Natural Helpers Program. Natural Helpers are trained citizen volunteers who provide support and connect the youth and their families to opportunities for positive life changes. They work in partnership with youth, family and professionals. In 2016, Reclaiming Futures trained 44 Natural Helpers and retained 126 Natural Helpers. Together, they served 89 youth.



Judge Kuntz with CASA volunteer holding the Rylee Sellers Award.

The **Legal Department** is staffed by a Director – Chief Magistrate, an Administrative Secretary, Civil and Delinquency/Unruly Magistrates, and an Attorney/GAL Billing Specialist. The Department also includes Psychological Services staffed by a licensed Psychologist, the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program and the Citizens Review Board (CRB).

Citizens Review Board (CRB) is an independent arm of the Court to monitor the permanency planning efforts for children adjudicated abused, neglected and dependent served by Montgomery County Job and Family Services-Children Service Division (MCJFS-CSD). CRB conducts six month case planning monitoring reviews of youth on probation, under the care and control of the Court in out-of-home placement. The Board conducts a portion of the Courts Annual Review Hearings for children placed in MCJFS-CSD Permanent Custody and or in a Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. In 2016 CRB monitored around 1,519 families with a total of 3,797 children served by MCJFS-CSD.² The CRB conducted 22 Formal Review Board meetings and 268 Annual Court Review Hearings.



Montgomery County Juvenile Court helps youth to dream!

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) train and supervises adult volunteers to serve as Guardians Ad Litem (GAL) for neglected, dependent and abused children. These volunteers conduct independent investigations, provide written reports to the Court and monitor the child's case as long as it remains in the court system. In 2016, 89 CASA volunteers (along with eight attorneys providing pro bono services) served 347 children in 215 families.

² These numbers may include some families who carried over from 2015.

2016 ADULT MISDEMEANOR COMPLAINTS*

TOTAL	530
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*Complaints include such reasons as Parental Failure to Send Children to School/Educational Neglect, Child Endangerment, Contributing to Delinquency or Unruly Offenses, etc.

2016 CIVIL COMPLAINTS ON ADULTS

Parentage	438
Support	4,923
U.I.F.S.A.**	141
TOTAL	5,502

**Uniform Inter-State Family Support Act Pertains to out-of-state support complaints.

2016 JUVENILE REFERRALS

Abuse, Dependency & Neglect	872
Unruly	2,679
Tobacco	78
Traffic	2,000
Delinquency	5,825
Custody Related	3,872
Miscellaneous	554
TOTAL	15,880

For further Montgomery County Juvenile Court statistical data, please visit the Court's Annual Report webpage at www.mcjcoho.org/annual-report.asp.



The Juvenile Court has two judges, two Court administrators, one Legal Director/Chief Magistrate, 10 magistrates and over 450 employees.

Phone Directory | Location Information

CLERK OF COURTS ■ Montgomery County Courts Building



Address

41 N. Perry Street, 1st Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2150



Phone

937-496-7623



Website

www.mcclerkofcourts.org



CPC • GENERAL DIVISION ■ Montgomery County Courts Building



Address

41 N. Perry Street
1st, 3rd & 4th Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2150



Phone

937-225-6000



Website

www.montcourt.oh.gov



CPC • DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION ■ Dayton-Montgomery County Courts Building



Address

301 W. Third Street
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2156



Phone

937-225-4063
937-496-7835 ■ Fax (Case Specific)
937-496-7443 ■ Fax (Administration)



Website

www.mcoho.org/dr



CPC • JUVENILE DIVISION ■ Montgomery County Juvenile Justice Center



Address

380 W. Second Street
Dayton, Ohio 45422-4131



Phone

937-496-7913



Website

www.mcjcoho.org



CPC • PROBATE DIVISION ■ Montgomery County Courts Building



Address

41 N. Perry Street, 2nd Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2155



Phone

937-225-4640
937-496-3181 ■ Fax (Administration)



Website

www.mcoho.org/probate



