

TOLEDO MUNICIPAL COURT

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

TOLEDO MUNICIPAL COURT

555 N. Erie Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604

Joshua W. Lanzinger
Presiding Judge

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On behalf of the Toledo Municipal Court, and as the current Presiding Judge for the Court, I am pleased to present to you our annual report for calendar year 2017 as required by statute. The report provides a comprehensive summary of the Court's significant accomplishments and overall performance during the past year. I encourage you to read the report in its entirety as you will find its contents to be educational and informative.

The Court recognizes and values the critical role it performs in administering justice and ensuring the citizens of Toledo, Washington Township, and Ottawa Hills are treated fairly in criminal and civil matters that come before the Court. The Judges and Court staff take great pride in the work they do, and are mindful of the potential impact of such work. We also appreciate and value the cooperative and positive working relationships that have been forged with the other branches of government, including the Mayor's Office and City Council, as well as representatives from Washington Township, the Village of Ottawa Hills, and Lucas County. Additionally, the Judges and Court staff continue to put forth significant effort to preserve and strengthen the Court's partnerships with the criminal justice agencies and community organizations that it works with on a daily basis in serving the community.

The Court is, and will continue to be, cognizant and sensitive to the economic conditions and challenges of the City of Toledo and the surrounding areas that we serve. In 2017, we demonstrated our commitment to making sound fiscal and operational decisions. The Court remains committed to providing cost effective programs and services that address the needs of offenders, victims, and the community.

As we move forward in 2018, the Court will remain fiscally responsible and transparent in managing its daily operations. At the same time, we will continue to identify and pursue new and cost effective opportunities, which will help improve our efficiency, performance, and service delivery to the public.

In closing, on behalf of the Judges of our Court, I encourage you to review the 2017 annual report. We invite you to contact us should you have any questions or concerns related to this report.

Respectfully,



Joshua W. Lanzinger
Presiding Judge

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COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

C. Lisa Falgiano
Court Administrator

Department Description

The Court Administrator's Office was created in 1972 to provide the judges with support for researching, planning, and executing all administrative functions and operations as well as providing day-to-day leadership and general supervision over the Judges' Division departments and staff. In establishing the Court Administrator's Office, the judges were relieved of many of their former administrative duties, enabling them to increase their focus and efforts on their judicial responsibilities. Although the Court Administrator's Office is not directly involved in daily judicial courtroom operations, the office does assist the bench in researching, measuring, developing, documenting, and implementing case management processes and procedures.

The Court Administrator's staff has a wide range of responsibilities including: budget preparation and fiscal administration, technology management, personnel administration, policy development and implementation, facilities management, statistical data collection and analysis, and purchasing. The Court Administrator's Office also acts as a liaison with criminal justice partners and stakeholders, including the practicing bar, governmental agencies, and the public. The court administrator reports directly to the seven judges and facilitates the judges' monthly meeting. The court administrator also serves as the organization's equal opportunity/affirmative action officer.

As required by Rule 3 and Rule 4 of the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio, the judges select by majority vote a Presiding/Administrative Judge. The court administrator has a close working relationship with the Presiding/Administrative Judge. Judge Joshua W. Lanzinger served his first one-year term as the Presiding/Administrative Judge in 2017. Judge Michelle A. Wagner was elected as the Acting Presiding/Administrative Judge for a one-year term beginning January 1, 2017.

Year in Review – Overview

During 2017, the Toledo Municipal Court continued to operate under challenging budget conditions, although the Court did experience a modest increase in its operating budget compared to the 2016 budget. The Court remains a supportive partner of the City of Toledo as it continues its fiscal recovery. The Court is confident that the city will continue to allocate the necessary budget resources to enable it to maintain adequate staffing and programs to provide its constituents with essential services.

The judges and Court Administrator's Office continue to work with city and county government to find a reasonable balance of the resources that is both fiscally prudent and preserves public safety and ensures access to justice for all. In 2016, the Toledo Municipal Court lost 54 of its sentenced beds at the Corrections Center of Northwest Ohio (CCNO) as a result of the city withdrawing as a member of CCNO. The city also did not renew previously existing regional court services contracts. As a result, as of January 1, 2017, Toledo Municipal Court no longer had pretrial supervision services for misdemeanor cases, pretrial drug testing, or access to Work Release.

The Court has worked diligently to reduce the incarcerated population, while at the same time protecting the public safety of our community. It also strives to provide individuals in the criminal justice system with the necessary treatment and programs.

The Court is using the Public Safety Assessment (PSA) court tool to reduce crime, increase public safety, and enhance fairness and efficiency within the Court. The PSA helps determine which criminal defendants should remain in custody and which should be released. This tool has helped ease overcrowding at the Lucas County Corrections Center. As 2017 was drawing to a close, the Court was preparing to receive the PSA in electronic, rather than paper, format.

The Court is dedicated to criminal justice reform and is working with Lucas County and other community partners involved with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's MacArthur Grant. The Court played a pivotal role in helping secure the \$1.75 million dollar Safety+Justice Challenge Grant. Our community was one of only 11 jurisdictions selected through a competitive process to receive financial and technical support in our efforts to rethink our justice system and implement data-driven strategies to safely reduce jail populations, particularly our pretrial jail population. The grant targets five strategies: 1) Pre-arrest Deflection; 2) Managing Pretrial Risk; 3) Population Review Team; 4) Diversion of Underserved Populations and 5) Coordinated Probation Practices. Toledo Municipal Court Administrator Lisa Falgiano is the owner of Strategy Four and Chief Probation Officer Burma Stewart is one of the owners of Strategy Five. Toledo Municipal Court Judge Timothy Kuhlman, the Court's judicial liaison to the grant, is a sponsor of several of the strategies and is a member of the grant's core planning group. These grant strategies are indicative of the Court's commitment and engagement in ensuring that its use of jail space promotes public safety and the defendant's appearance before the Court. Keeping the right people in custody, for the right reason, is crucial to maintaining the public's trust and confidence.

In 2017 Toledo Municipal Court focused on community outreach. To that end, the Court engaged in two major projects. For the first project, a team of Toledo Municipal Court staff, consisting of six staff members from the Court's Probation Department and Civil Bailiff's Office provided support to Northwest Ohio's first-ever Children's Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom School. The CDF Freedom School model provides summer enrichment, with an emphasis on reading, for children who might otherwise not have access to books. The goal of the program is to curb summer learning loss and close achievement gaps for children. The Maumee Watershed District sponsored a CDF Freedom School June 19-July 28. A team of Court employees designed and created an interactive game, based on the children's tale of the "Three Little Pigs" that permitted children to experience the court system from different perspectives (defendant, prosecutor, judge, victim, witness). After the game, staff facilitated a discussion with the audience regarding the role of the court, the roles of different people in the courtroom, and simple legal concepts. In addition, the CDF Freedom School opens up each day's program with a guest reader. The Court provided guest readers who picked and read some of their favorite children's stories to the children. The staff that participated donated the books they read to the program. The Court has been invited back to participate in the 2018 Freedom School.

The Court's second project was to conduct its first ever court-wide amnesty event. Amnesty Week was conducted from Monday, October 2 thru Saturday, October 7. The purpose of Amnesty Week was to provide an opportunity for individuals with non-violent bench warrants to come to court and have their warrants cleared without the fear of being arrested and taken into custody. Throughout Amnesty Week, staff from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles was available and helped 329 individuals determine what steps were necessary to resolve driver's license issues. Informational booths from local mental health and substance abuse treatment providers were on site for two days to provide information and assistance. The Court used social media to publicize the event, establishing a Court Facebook page that continues to be a point of connection between the Court and the community. Yard signs were also placed at key locations such as bus

stops and parks containing the tagline “Clear Your Warrants, Keep Your Freedom.” A new informational sheet for defendants explaining the court process, including a pictograph, was created and provided to Court users. In anticipation of the expected volume and attendant wait, activity bags were created and provided to children accompanying parents to Court.

Amnesty Week was accompanied by a number of activities celebrating the Court’s 100th Anniversary. On Friday, September 29th, a potluck luncheon was held recognizing Court staff and the tremendous work they do every day in the service of justice and the citizens of Toledo. The judges recognized each staff member individually with a certificate of service notating their length of service. In addition, each staff member was presented with a 100th anniversary pin designed by a staff member. One hundredth anniversary “swag” was designed, with items ranging from coffee mugs to cardigans, with the Court’s 100th anniversary logo, and made available for purchase. A photo installation, depicting the history of the Court, was installed in the Court’s lobby. Finally, at the end of Amnesty Week, the Court held a small celebration commemorating its anniversary with the installation of a flag pole in the front of the building.

The Veteran’s Treatment Court completed its third year in 2017. This specialized court docket allows offenders who are military veterans to receive intensive, specialized treatment services while under the supervision of the Court. Judge William M. Connelly, Jr. was appointed to preside over the Veteran’s Treatment Court. In 2017, 15 veterans were accepted into the Court and nine successfully graduated from the program, compared to 2016, when 13 veterans were referred to the Court and seven successfully graduated from the program.

In 2017, 12 Judges’ Division staff members left employment, including nine resignations and three retirements. The Court hired six new staff members in 2017 and appointed two internal candidates to new positions and transitioned two part-time employees to full-time status. Seven employees served in positions in an “acting” status. The Court deeply values the work performed by staff and is committed to employee development as evidenced by appointing seven employees to acting positions, promoting two employees to new positions within the Court, and the transitioning of two part-time employees to full-time positions.

Court Administrator Lisa Falgiano completed her seventh full year as court administrator in 2016. As a veteran court administrator, Ms. Falgiano brings a great deal of experience and expertise to the position. She is a certified Ohio court manager, certified court executive, and certified faculty for the Ohio Judicial College’s Court Management Program. Ms. Falgiano also is a member of the Ohio Court Administrator’s Association, the Toledo Bar Association, and the Ohio State Bar Association. In 2017, Ms. Falgiano was invited to teach a module of the Court Executive Program, “Essential Components,” for the Florida Judicial System and taught a leadership development seminar at the statewide Ohio Court Administrators Association Conference in May, 2017 entitled “Boundaries: The Not So Obvious Piece of the Puzzle.”

CourTools

The Court continues to use the CourTools program, which was developed by the National Center for State Courts, to measure its efficiency and case management performance. Specific performance areas measured by the use of CourTools include: public access and fairness, clearance rates, time to disposition, age of active pending caseload, trial date certainty, and employee satisfaction. Since the Court started using CourTools in 2008 and 2009, it has demonstrated positive results in the targeted performance areas. Individuals who are interested in obtaining additional information about CourTools should access <http://www.courtools.org>. Additional information regarding the Court’s case management performance is available on the Court’s public website: <http://www.toledomunicipalcourt.org>. Also included on the Court’s

website is the age of active pending caseload reports which are updated monthly. These reports confirm that the judges are effectively managing their caseloads and disposing of cases in a timely manner.

FTA Project

Over the past several years, the Court made changes to its policies and procedures in an effort to decrease the percentage of defendants who do not appear for a scheduled court date. The Court's target was to reduce the failure to appear (FTA) rate by 30%. Preliminary results indicate a substantial reduction in the FTA rate. The reduction appears attributable to several factors, including the implementation of the Warrant Enforcement Unit (WEU) and pretrial electronic monitoring, as well as implementation of an updated Federal Court Order release policy and the PSA.

The WEU pilot project has proven successful. The Court entered into a three-year contract with the Lucas County Sheriff's Department to continue the program. In 2016, the judges referred 625 defendants to the WEU. In 2017, the judges referred 695 defendants to WEU. The unit has had a positive result locating individuals with bench warrants and bringing them before a judge to resolve their case(s). This ultimately reduces the Toledo Municipal Court population at the Lucas County Corrections Center.

Pretrial electronic monitoring, provided by CCNO, continues to provide a valuable option to judges seeking to balance the need to ensure a defendant appears for his or her court dates with competing interests such as maintaining employment, continuing community-based treatment, and managing jail population. From the program's inception, April 1, 2015 through April 2, 2018, 698 individuals have been placed on pretrial electronic monitoring.

Technology

The Court's Information Technology Department is responsible for maintaining the Court's information security and technology needs. The department's expertise and work helps ensure that the Court's business and public records are more transparent to the public, as well as protecting the confidentiality of private/non-public information. In 2017, the Court provided the necessary financial resources to fund various software programs and information technology items needed to support Court operations. These programs and items allowed the Court to generate performance reports and statistical data, including monthly superintendence reports, the annual physical inventory, and the ongoing development of the civil bailiff computerization system.

The Judges' Division, Clerk of Court, and Northwest Ohio Regional Information System (NORIS) implemented a new voice over internet protocol (VOIP) phone system. This project updated the Court's outdated phone system, is providing more reliable service, and will save the Court approximately \$44,400.00 annually.

In 2017, the Court added a JAVS recording system suite to courtrooms 2, 8 and 10. JAVS (Justice Audio Visual Solutions) is a courtroom AV integration system which preserves the court record electronically. The Court updated its JAVS systems in courtrooms 6 and 12 as well as one of its portable recording systems. The Court also created a JAVS Quality Assurance Policy in April 2017 in order to ensure the quality of recordings for all court proceedings, a critical function especially when a case is appealed.

In 2017, the Court also updated its email appliance and eliminated its internal email system.

The Court continued its tradition of partnering with the Clerk of Court and NORIS to implement cost and operational efficiencies when purchasing new equipment and software, as well as working together to increase the Court's use of electronic filing options and recordkeeping systems. The Court and the Clerk of Court continue to share oversight of a governance committee, which provides project management support and guidance to NORIS in the design and implementation of information technology projects.

Professional Development

The Court continues its commitment to provide meaningful professional development and training opportunities to its employees. In May, Judges' Division staff attended training on the Court's updated sexual harassment policy. This training, provided by attorney Patricia Wise, a nationally recognized employment law expert, included bystander intervention training and in-depth training for Court supervisors. Nine new employees attended training regarding Toledo Municipal Court's Ethics Policy (2 hours). Nine Civil Bailiffs attended Pepper Spray Re-Certification through the Toledo Police Department (1.5 hours), CPT and First Aid Training with the Toledo Fire Department (3.5 hours) and Safety, Legal Authority, Ethics and Civil Process through the Ohio Judicial College (8.0 hours). A number of staff also attended individual seminars addressing such topics as communication skills, leadership and team development, grant management, and implicit bias. Probation staff also completed a variety of individual and department-wide trainings regarding case management, heroin awareness, EPICS, managing offender behavior, human trafficking, cultural sensitivity and emotional intelligence. A total of 1,217.5 training hours were completed by Judges' Division staff in 2017.

Judges Division staff also serve as trainers for others. Unit Supervisor Jennifer Friddell, who manages the Probation Department's Quality Assurance Program, presented at the Third Annual QA/CQI Symposium, where she co-facilitated "Overcoming Hurdles in the Coaching Process" and co-presented "How I Became I Believer," regarding her experience in coming to understand the importance of quality assurance to the probation process. Judge Timothy C. Kuhlman, Chief Probation Officer Burma Stewart, Probation Officer Melissa Stasa, and Court Administrator Lisa Falgiano provided Procedural Fairness training for the staff of the Lucas County Correctional Treatment Facility.

Administrative Support Services

The Court Administrator's Office provides a variety of support services for the administration of Court policy and personnel. The Court Administrator's Office helped revise two position's job descriptions along with a number of Court policies and procedures, including the Court's harassment policy, a standardized process for handling the disqualification of assigned judges, as well as a standardized process for preparing sentencing entries for cases under appeal. In 2017, Local Court Rules 6, 14, 15, 22 and 42 were updated.

Throughout the year, the Court Administrator's Office managed a number of personnel selections and personnel actions. The Court's Judges' Division advertised 13 external job vacancy postings and conducted over 90 applicant interviews. The Court Administrator's Office processed 33 FMLA packets. In addition, four staff investigations were conducted. The Court Administrator received no grievances this year under the Court's Employee Grievance Program. One employee was referred to the Court's disciplinary process. In addition, the Court Administrator's Office helped support the departments in numerous personnel actions, ranging from identifying opportunities for informal coaching to assisting in the development of performance improvement plans. Staff in Salary Groups 1-15 received a 1% salary increase in 2017.

The Court Administrator's Office continued to work closely with the City of Toledo facilities administrator to oversee the maintenance of the courthouse. Several building improvement projects and maintenance work orders were completed to help enhance working conditions within the Court. In 2017, carpet was replaced in courtrooms 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and the third floor public hallway. This year, the Court struggled to maintain its elevator system as parts become increasingly difficult to secure for the dated system. The Court learned in 2016 that it would lose access to the ramp to its secure, underground parking garage. This loss was caused by the planned construction of an annex to the Federal courthouse. As a result, the Court worked with the City of Toledo to build an above ground secure parking lot to the north of the building. This project required extensive planning, including security system modifications and internal building modifications to fashion a new secure entry point into the building from the new secure parking lot. Other building improvement projects included installation of carpet in two courtrooms and in the public hallway on the fourth floor. A total of 99 work orders were completed during the year.

External Relations

The Court Administrator's Office continues to maintain excellent relationships with various agencies and community stakeholders. The Court Administrator's Office coordinated and facilitated requests from the Toledo Bar Association Auxiliary to provide 10 group tours for high school students. The Court also hosted the Toledo Bar Association's high school mock trial competition on January 20, 2017. The Court provided a venue for the annual Police Memorial luncheon on May 12, 2017. The Court contributed \$1,000 in support of the 2017 Kiroff Bench Bar Conference sponsored by the Toledo Bar Association.

The court administrator is an appointed member of the Lucas County Community Corrections Planning Board as well as a member of the Lucas County Jail Feasibility Work Group.

The Coming Year

In 2018, the Court will be implementing a cutting edge diversion program with curriculum developed in conjunction with the Center for Court Innovation. This diversion program is being developed under the auspices of the Lucas County's Safety+Justice Challenge Grant from the MacArthur Foundation. The diversion program is designed for low level misdemeanors, particularly the charges of obstructing, disorderly conduct, and low level drug possession, where statistics show that African American citizens are held in pretrial custody at a much higher rate than Caucasian citizens. Defendants who complete the diversion program will have their underlying court case dismissed. Unlike first offender diversion programs, defendants may be referred into this diversion program multiple times.

The Court will also be working on examining the best method of staffing for robust case management and courtroom support. One early project to support courtroom operations will be updating processes and procedures for the handling of competency cases.

The Court will continue to work on its strategic goals, including addressing the facility assessment study presented by DLZ Architecture, Inc. in 2016. DLZ Architecture, Inc. provided recommendations on the probable physical lifespan of the current courthouse building in relation to its current structural conditions, operational and space needs. The Court, working with the city, will need to determine the best course forward.

The Court anticipates filling several vacant positions next year including: chief probation officer, probation unit supervisor, probation officer, senior assignment clerk, and court service specialist.

Staffing

The Court Administrator's staff includes:

Court Administrator Lisa Falgiano
Human Resource Officer Tammy Harris
Information Technology Officer Terry Koluch
Finance Officer Tonya Grainger
Bookkeeper/Payroll Clerk Vanessa Williams
Acting Administrative Assistant Meredith Kurucz
Judges' Secretary Joan Kelly
Judges' Secretary Kate McManus
Acting Judges' Secretary Amber Kiss

Computer Legal Research 3T03013STDSTD 2017 Annual Statement of Expenditures	
<i>Court Research</i>	
On-line Legal Research and Printed Material (Westlaw)	\$23,057.24
Total Expenditures	\$23,057.24

Alternate Dispute Resolution (Mediation) Trust Fund 3T03028STDSTD 2017 Annual Statement of Expenditures	
<i>Supplies/Equipment</i>	
ProLaw Software License	\$940.80
Mediation Membership and Dues	100.00
Total Expenditures	\$1,040.80

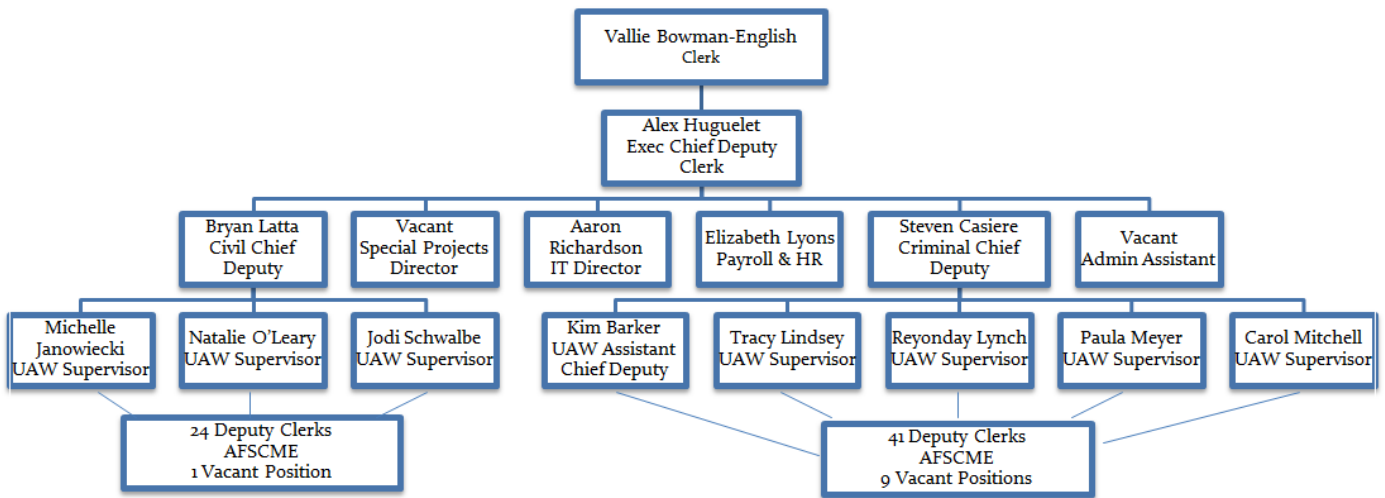
Court Computerization (Judges') Trust Fund 3T02916STDSTD 2017 Annual Statement of Expenditures	
<i>Supplies/Equipment</i>	
Monitors	\$608.00
Supplemental Staffing – Applications Program/Analyst	\$98,229.00
Stenograph Software Maintenance Agreement	\$1,617.30
Microsoft Licensing and Software Assurance	\$6,500.00
Time and Attendance Software License	\$9,250.00
Website Hosting and Redesign	\$2,878.00
Total Expenditures	\$119,082.30

CLERK OF TOLEDO MUNICIPAL COURT

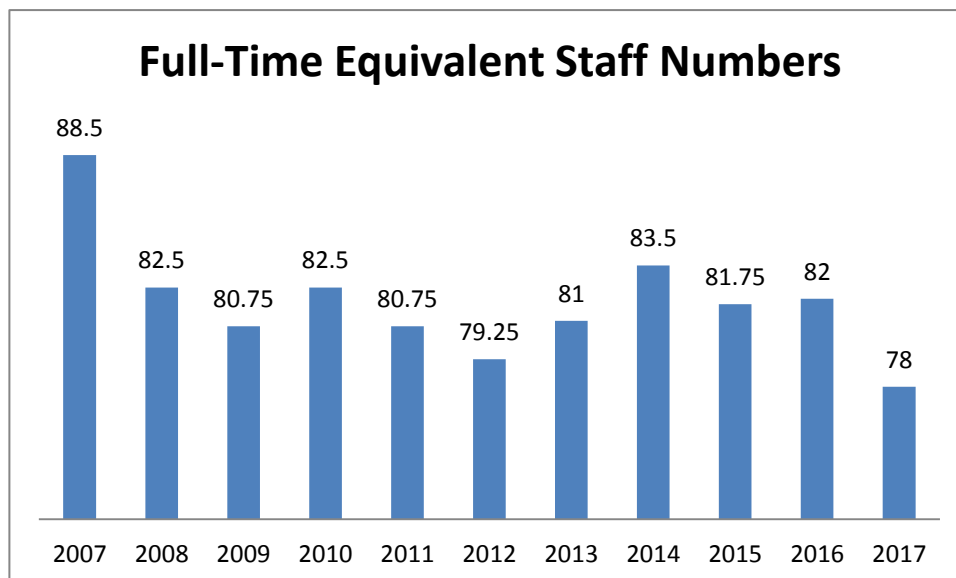
Vallie Bowman-English
Clerk of Court

The Clerk of Toledo Municipal Court is responsible for maintaining the public record on all court cases in Toledo Municipal Court as well as collecting and distributing fines, fees, bail, and other moneys associated with these cases. These responsibilities are defined under Ohio Revised Code §1901.31.

The office is divided into two divisions: the Criminal/Traffic Division and the Civil Division.



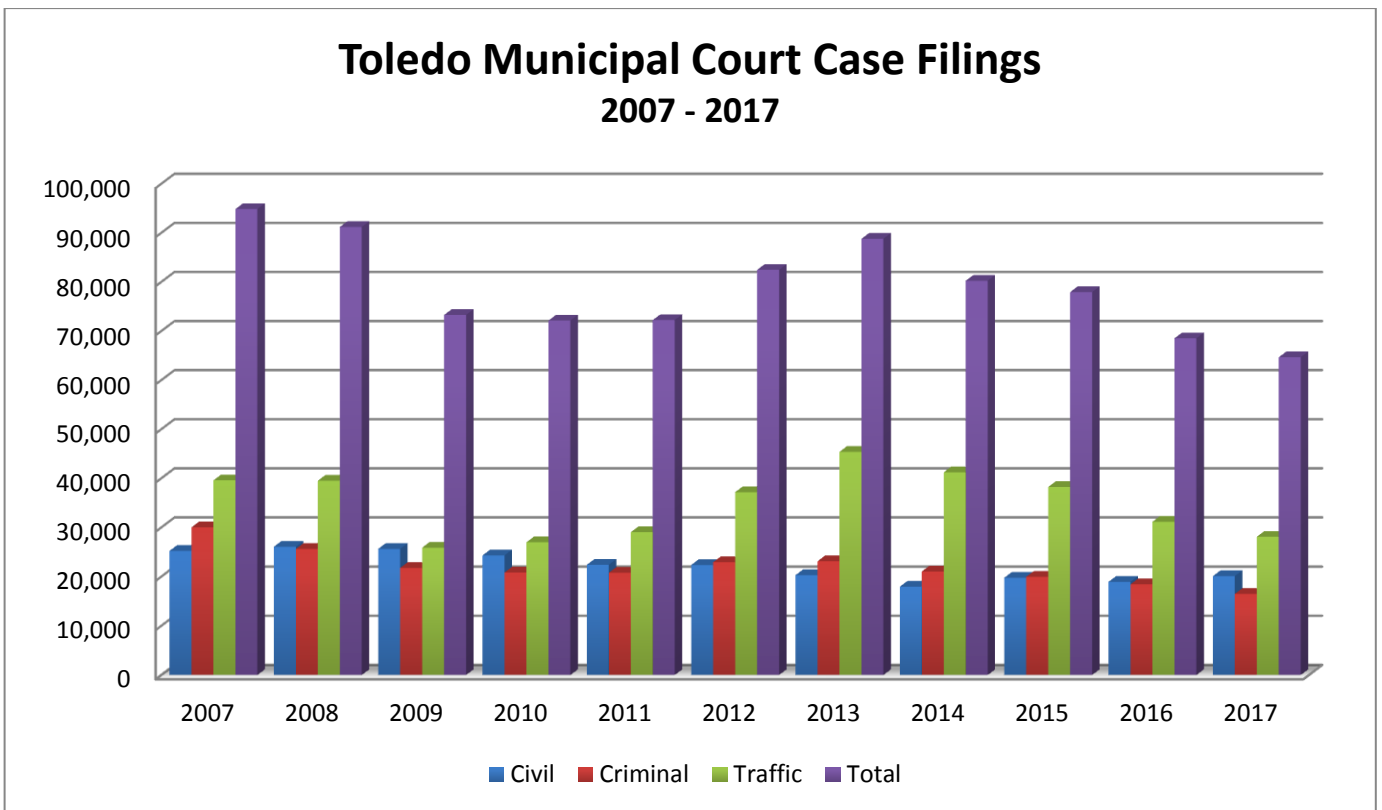
The Clerk's Office employs 78 full-time deputy clerks under Clerk of Court Vallie Bowman-English. This is a decrease of 11.86% since 2007 and a decrease of 4.88% in the last year.



Clerk of Court
Case Filings

Toledo Municipal Court saw a decrease in case filings in 2017: 64,655 cases were filed, a 5.63% decrease from 2016.

	2017	2016
Civil Division	20,086	18,932
Criminal/Traffic Division	44,569	49,577
TOTAL	64,655	68,509

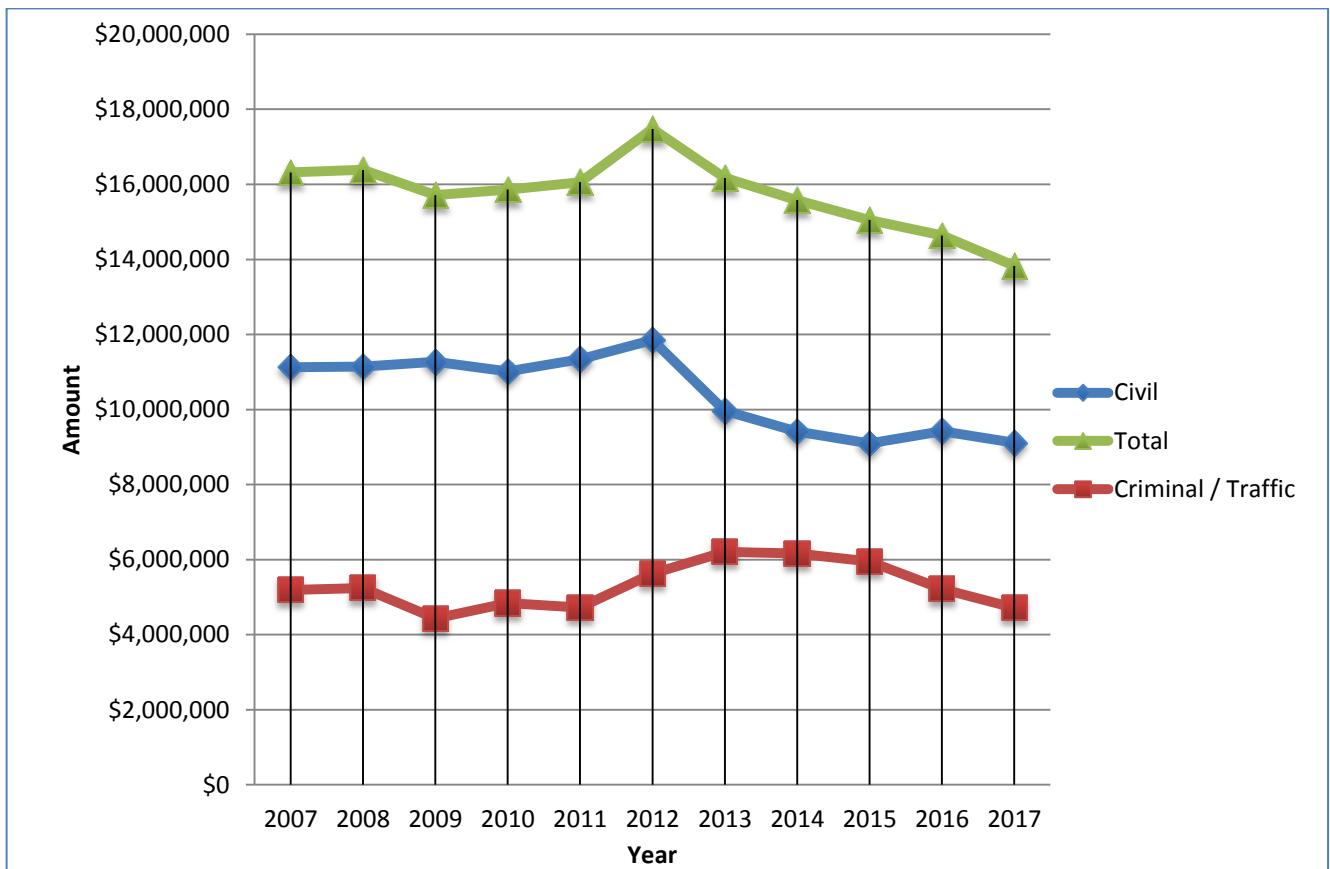


Clerk of Court
Revenue Collection

Revenue collection also decreased in 2017: \$13,827,299.37 was collected in 2017, a 5.53% decrease from 2016.

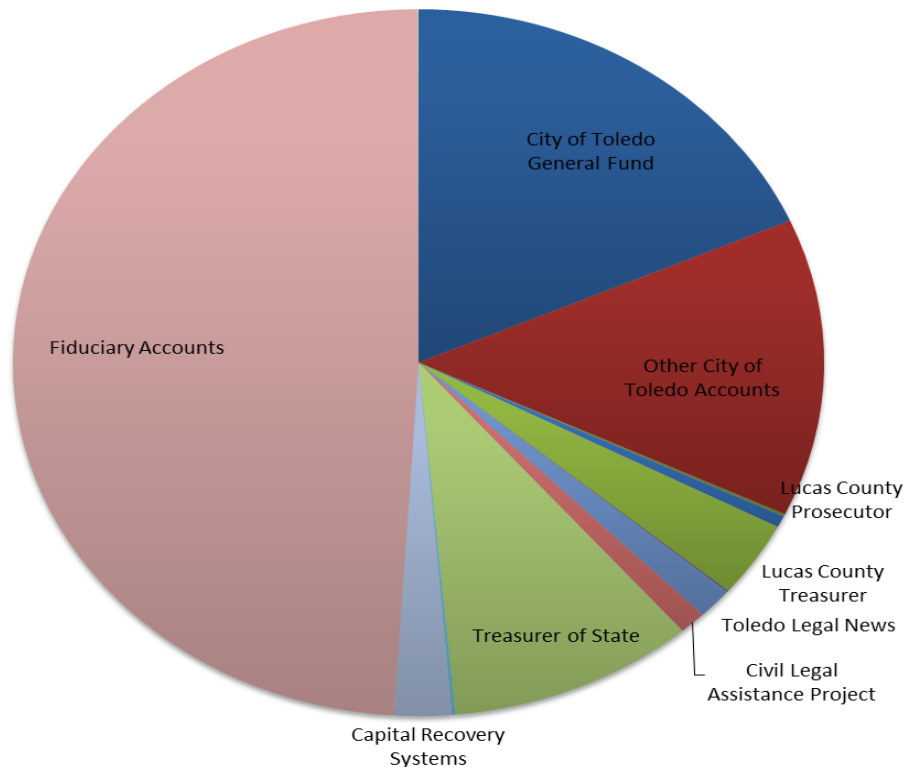
	2017	2016
Civil Division	\$9,117,169.17	\$9,418,693.65
Criminal/Traffic Division	<u>\$4,710,130.20</u>	<u>\$5,217,590.27</u>
TOTAL	\$13,827,299.37	\$14,636,283.92

Revenue Collection 2007 - 2017



Clerk of Court
Revenue Disbursed

	2017	2016
City of Toledo General Fund	\$2,537,922.00	\$2,843,429.46
Other City of Toledo Accounts	\$1,880,007.07	\$1,900,182.28
Ottawa Hills	\$14,109.70	\$12,970.80
Washington Township	\$1,792.80	\$3,351.30
University of Toledo	\$252.00	\$547.80
Metroparks of Toledo	\$54.00	\$139.00
Lucas County Prosecutor	\$71,573.85	\$40,574.40
Lucas County Sheriff	\$200.00	\$60.00
Lucas County Treasurer	\$480,178.59	\$499,656.87
Lucas County Law Library Association	\$8,443.87	\$8,823.32
Citizens Award Fund/Crime Stoppers	\$3,294.80	\$3,655.20
Toledo Area Humane Society	\$250.00	\$300.00
Toledo Legal News	\$189,495.63	\$184,828.39
Civil Legal Assistance Project	\$148,882.92	\$142,830.87
Treasurer of State	\$1,353,906.15	\$1,483,838.58
Department of Natural Resources	\$619.00	\$2,130.00
State Pharmacy Board	\$19,722.87	\$20,292.39
Division of Liquor Control	\$0	\$25.00
Capital Recovery Systems	\$313,080.61	\$356,179.66
Fiduciary Accounts	\$6,752,517.72	\$7,268,338.07
Refunded Overpayments	\$4,695.31	\$9,198.80
TOTAL	\$13,780,999.09	\$14,781,352.19



Clerk of Court
Civil Division

	2017	2016
Filings		
Civil General	16,954	16,027
Small Claims	3,124	2,888
Trusteeship	8	17
TOTAL	20,086	18,932
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Activities		
Certificate of Judgment	2,894	3,088
Certified Mail Issued	34,265	33,641
Disbursements - Civil	3,731	3,979
Disbursements - Trusteeship	918	896
Dismissals	8,329	8,282
Executions	160	272
Garnishments	8,657	10,050
Judgments	45,039	48,272
Motions	8,558	8,245
Ordinary Mail Issued	14,132	13,877
Proceeding in Aid	4,534	4,933
Reports	16,019	19,605
Revivors	396	592
Satisfactions	4,123	4,195
Subpoenas	302	274
Terminations	19,449	20,711
Transcripts	102	108
Writ of Restitution	3,287	3,197
TOTAL	174,895	184,217
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Revenue Collected		
Civil Revenue	\$2,318,348.17	\$2,293,821.30
Fiduciary Accounts - Civil	\$6,743,437.74	\$7,045,308.71
Fiduciary Accounts - Trusteeship	\$55,383.26	\$79,563.64
TOTAL	\$9,117,169.17	\$9,418,693.65
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Revenue Disbursed		
City of Toledo General Fund	\$1,283,396.37	\$1,293,080.55
Other City of Toledo Accounts	\$287,200.54	\$282,360.84
Civil Legal Assistance Project	\$148,882.92	\$142,830.87
Treasurer of State	\$409,175.71	\$392,111.20
Toledo Legal News	\$189,495.63	\$184,828.39
Fiduciary Accounts - Civil	\$6,694,464.02	\$7,190,597.38
Fiduciary Accounts - Trusteeship	\$58,053.70	\$77,740.69
Refunded Overpayments	\$200.00	\$212.00
TOTAL	\$9,070,868.89	\$9,563,761.92

Clerk of Court
Criminal Traffic Division

Filings	2017		2016	
	Charges	Cases	Charges	Cases
Traffic	68,572	27,998	50,857	31,148
Criminal	22,641	16,483	25,806	18,429
TOTAL	68,572	44,569	76,663	49,577

Revenue Collected

Fines	\$1,176,585.04	\$1,270,083.55
Costs and Fees	\$3,517,516.57	\$3,891,513.32
HITT	\$1,726.28	\$3,541.60
Bond Forfeitures	\$9,807.00	\$43,465.00
Overpayments	\$4,495.31	\$8,986.80
TOTAL	\$4,710,130.20	\$5,217,590.27

Revenue Disbursed

City of Toledo General Fund	\$1,254,525.63	\$1,550,348.91
Other City of Toledo Accounts	\$1,592,806.53	\$1,617,821.44
Ottawa Hills	\$14,109.70	\$12,970.80
Washington Township	\$1,792.80	\$3,351.30
University of Toledo	\$252.20	\$547.80
Metroparks of Toledo	\$54.00	\$139.00
Lucas County Prosecutor	\$71,573.85	\$40,574.40
Lucas County Sheriff	\$200.00	\$60.00
Lucas County Treasurer	\$480,178.59	\$499,656.87
Lucas County Law Library Association	\$8,443.87	\$8,823.32
Citizens Award Fund/Crime Stoppers	\$3,294.80	\$3,655.20
Toledo Area Humane Society	\$250.00	\$300.00
Treasurer of State	\$944,730.44	\$1,091,727.38
Department of Natural Resources	\$619.00	\$2,130.00
State Pharmacy Board	\$19,722.87	\$20,292.39
Division of Liquor Control	\$0	\$25.00
Capital Recovery Systems	\$313,080.61	\$356,179.66
Refunded Overpayments	\$4,495.31	\$8,986.80
TOTAL	\$4,710,130.20	\$5,217,590.27

2017 Highlights

In 2017, the Clerk's Office installed an automated teller safe, an electronic safe that disburses and collects cash from the cashiers each day. Prior to the installation of the safe, the office utilized a traditional cash logistic chain. Bookkeepers manually counted and assembled the cashiers' cash bags each day, cash was stored in a safe overnight, and a Toledo Police Officer escorted a staff member to the bank each day to deposit Clerk of Court funds. This was a time intensive manual process with many possibilities for human error on both the Court's end and the bank's end.

By using the automated teller safe, the funds processed by the Clerk's Office are more secure. There is an audit trail for every bank note that enters and leaves the system. The safe has its own cellular modem and the amount of cash collected is transmitted to the bank every night and credited to the Court's account. Brinks picks up the cash deposit each week which no longer requires the Court to utilize the Toledo Police Department's staff to escort a member of the Court to the bank.

The Clerk's Office also imaged and destroyed over 44,000 case files pursuant to Ohio Rule of Superintendence 26.05 and Ohio Revised Code §1901.41. These efforts freed up space in the courthouse and helped to keep offsite storage costs level.

In the Criminal/Traffic Division, the Clerk's Office launched an e-subpoena program for Toledo Police Officers. Officers now receive subpoenas via email instead of receiving a paper copy in the mail. This allows officers to quickly receive information on when and where they are to appear in court and the Court receives a return receipt when the officer opens the subpoena.

Additionally, the Clerk's Office expanded the electronic traffic citations project to Ottawa Hills and the University of Toledo Police Departments. Toledo Police, Ottawa Hills, and the University of Toledo officers no longer need to appear in Toledo Municipal Court to file their traffic citations. The Clerk's Office is able to enter four times as many e-citations per hour as paper citations into the Clerk's Office case management system. This enhancement saves staff time and grants the public quicker access to the traffic citations.

The Clerk's Office was awarded the Court Technology Grant from the Ohio Supreme Court to upgrade the Clerk's Office electronic filing system. The \$14,187 grant will further the evolution of the Clerk's Office electronic filing system by developing programming to integrate the current e-filing system into the case management system. The current e-filing system is merely a delivery tool which allows for safe document submission and secure electronic payment. After a filing is submitted, deputy clerks must manually transfer data into our proprietary case management system. This grant will allow the Clerk's Office to grow its case management system to automatically push information between systems without the need for redundant data entry. This grant will increase Court efficiency and filing accuracy.

Finally, the Clerk's Office continued to aggressively collect past due money owed to Toledo Municipal Court through the collection program started in 2005. In 2017, \$1,940,000 was collected on delinquent accounts. More than \$22,000,000 has been collected through the program at no cost to the Court or to the city's general fund.

ASSIGNMENT OFFICE

Valerie Hobbs
Acting Assignment Commissioner

Department Description

The Assignment Office's main responsibilities are to coordinate the scheduling of court events for the judges and to make random individual case assignments. The scheduling of trials, pretrials, and motions are coordinated through this office based upon the judges' scheduling preferences and the Court's seven-week judge rotation. Criminal and traffic cases are assigned to a judge at random in the scheduling system when a defendant enters a not guilty plea. Civil cases are assigned when an answer or a motion is filed. All housing matters, both criminal and civil, are assigned to the Housing Court Judge at the time of filing.

The Assignment Office also maintains the judges' court schedules, distributes monthly and weekly schedules, makes arrangements for jurors when jury trials are held, schedules visiting judges and magistrates as needed, notifies all parties of court dates, schedules probation violation hearing dates, and works closely with other court departments.

In 2017 the Assignment Office manual was completed. The manual includes detailed instructions for the computer systems used by the Assignment Office and also provides the rules of scheduling and the preferences for each judge.

Goals for 2018

1. Update the scheduling software used by the department.
2. Move to a paperless court appearance notification system for outside law enforcement agencies.
3. Work with the Clerk's Office and Probation Department on new process on how expungements are handled.
4. Assist judges and other departments in creating court efficiencies.
5. Provide training to staff to assist the department in continuing to offer excellent service to court users.

Staff Summary

The current Assignment Office staff consists of:

Valerie Hobbs, Acting Assignment Commissioner
Wanda Butts, Assignment Clerk
Cheryl Smith, Assignment Clerk
Alice Thomas, Assignment Clerk
Amy Trevino, Assignment Clerk
Colleen Anderson, Acting Assignment Clerk

Figures for 2017 with comparison figures for 2016 are as follows:

CASES HANDLED BY THE ASSIGNMENT OFFICE	2017	2016
Cases Assigned		
Criminal/Traffic Assignment	17,631	19,353
Civil Assignments (including Housing)	7,747	7,820
Cases Set for Trial		
Criminal/Traffic Trials	8,024	9,624
Civil Trials	609	498
Criminal/Traffic Trial Resets	5,748	5,963
Cases Set for Pretrial		
Pretrial - Criminal/Traffic	8,692	9,701
Pretrial Resets - Criminal/Traffic	2,056	1,575
Mandatory Jury Pretrials (MJPT)(Criminal/Traffic/Civil)	83	93
Preliminary Hearing/Felony Arraignment Docket	13,156	14,725
Jury Trials Set (Criminal/Traffic/Civil)	100	106
Bureau of Motor Vehicle Hearings	5	5
Eviction	6,668	6,912
Housing		
Criminal Housing Trials	330	249
Civil Housing (Not a Draw) New Assignments	7,063	7,076
Rent Escrow	111	90
ALS/Innocent Owner Hearings	54	37

Civil Assignments

Pursuant to the Rules of Superintendence, judges are assigned on civil cases upon the filing of an answer or motion. There are instances in which judges are assigned to other cases, such as housing cases, reassignment, consolidation, or transfers. The following charts represent the number of civil cases assigned during 2017 and 2016 and per individual judge:

2017 CIVIL ASSIGNMENTS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Berling	6	8	7	10	11	11	9	13	11	15	7	14	122
Christiansen	11	12	12	10	9	7	5	6	8	15	9	13	117
Connelly	9	6	8	11	8	7	15	12	9	9	5	12	111
Kuhlman	4	9	9	8	7	7	8	9	13	7	11	7	99
Lanzinger	6	12	7	8	13	7	6	13	12	10	11	9	114
McConnell	589	518	574	534	544	590	675	831	678	622	423	485	7,063
Wagner	4	11	12	15	7	13	9	13	9	8	10	10	121
TOTAL	629	576	629	596	599	642	727	897	740	686	476	550	7,747

2016 CIVIL ASSIGNMENTS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Berling	7	9	8	9	15	8	14	10	9	11	11	20	131
Christiansen	5	15	15	15	5	5	11	9	12	11	4	11	118
Connelly	5	15	24	12	10	14	4	9	9	8	7	11	128
Kuhlman	4	9	14	15	10	6	12	9	10	8	8	13	118
Lanzinger	6	13	17	11	7	13	11	8	8	11	6	16	127
McConnell	607	476	475	551	591	625	640	586	706	630	558	631	7,076
Wagner	8	8	17	14	7	7	12	6	13	9	9	12	122
TOTAL	642	545	570	627	645	678	704	637	767	688	603	714	7,820

Civil Cases Set for Trial

Month	2017	2016
January	64	46
February	44	48
March	72	27
April	43	57
May	58	44
June	43	41
July	41	23
August	51	43
September	58	41
October	50	43
November	39	44
December	46	41
TOTAL	609	498

Civil Pretrials, Jury Trials and Jury Pretrials Set in 2017 and 2016

Civil Pretrials		Civil Juries Set		Civil Mandatory Jury Pretrials	
2017	1,193	2017	12	2017	6
2016	746	2016	17	2016	16

Evictions Set

Month	2017	2016
January	584	563
February	536	525
March	511	550
April	376	439
May	566	561
June	559	636
July	598	567
August	691	671
September	583	544
October	675	678
November	580	627
December	409	551
TOTAL	6,668	6,912

Rent Escrow Hearings

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
2017	13	11	13	12	5	8	12	5	7	10	8	7	111
2016	9	8	7	8	4	8	5	8	12	9	6	6	90

A tenant may deposit with the Clerk of Court all money due to a landlord if there is a defect with the property by filing an application in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §5321.07.

Bureau of Motor Vehicle Hearings (Civil) – Scheduled with Magistrates

2017: 5 cases
2016: 9 cases

Criminal and Traffic Assignments

Upon entering a plea of not guilty before a judge, the Assignment Office's computer program randomly assigns the case to a judge. Once a judge is assigned, all pretrials and trials are set within time limits set forth in Ohio Revised Code §2945.71, unless a defendant or his or her attorney waives time.

Judge	2017	2016
Berling	2,746	3,051
Christiansen	2,746	3,144
Connelly	2,788	3,053
Kuhlman	2,794	3,069
Lanzinger	2,762	3,100
McConnell	1,060	833
Wagner	2,735	3,103
TOTAL	17,631	19,353

Reactivated Cases (Sealing of Record/Expungements)

2017: 880 cases
2016: 680 cases

Criminal/Traffic Trial Reset Cases – 2017 and 2016

2017

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Berling	96	73	85	71	103	98	75	68	90	49	119	80	1,007
Christiansen	148	59	58	47	91	96	112	80	115	106	117	97	1,126
Connelly	83	59	64	75	58	64	50	64	75	93	70	67	822
Kuhlman	68	48	59	57	52	74	76	77	68	75	58	62	774
Lanzinger	85	63	72	30	71	80	88	78	80	68	67	48	830
McConnell	9	15	13	6	10	12	12	12	8	15	16	14	142
Wagner	78	88	97	75	87	136	82	82	81	95	80	66	1,047
TOTAL	567	405	448	361	472	560	495	461	517	501	527	434	5,748

2016

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Berling	56	63	63	63	65	59	78	91	76	99	82	67	862
Christiansen	115	84	98	102	76	119	93	93	100	72	101	93	1,146
Connelly	77	86	57	72	76	70	92	72	68	72	79	66	887
Kuhlman	58	81	77	79	63	84	64	74	92	51	53	54	830
Lanzinger	79	75	78	86	95	95	73	74	85	77	79	84	980
McConnell	17	12	14	12	12	21	11	22	5	1	3	15	145
Wagner	81	111	127	85	81	95	91	93	81	106	80	82	1,113
TOTAL	483	512	514	499	468	543	502	519	507	478	477	461	5,963

2017 Jury Trials - Criminal/Traffic and Civil

Month	Crim/Traffic	Civil	Ordered	Used	No. of Jurors
January	9	0	0	0	0
February	8	1	1	1	32
March	6	2	0	0	0
April	4	2	2	1	72
May	5	0	2	2	48
June	7	0	1	1	27
July	8	0	1	1	20
August	6	2	3	2	92
September	5	1	1	1	27
October	9	0	3	2	103
November	5	0	2	2	39
December	3	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	75	8	16	13	460

2016 Jury Trials - Criminal/Traffic and Civil

Month	Crim/Traffic	Civil	Ordered	Used	No. of Jurors
January	3	1	0	0	0
February	10	2	1	1	21
March	6	2	1	0	0
April	9	0	1	1	30
May	7	1	6	4	129
June	11	0	2	1	39
July	3	1	0	0	0
August	5	2	0	0	0
September	11	2	2	2	42
October	11	3	2	2	54
November	10	1	3	2	47
December	3	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	89	17	18	13	362

2017 Criminal/Traffic Trials: 8,024

2016 Criminal/Traffic Trials: 9,624

2017 Criminal/Traffic Pretrials

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Berling													
Set	36	46	37	41	30	38	50	47	53	38	45	44	505
Reset	4	4	2	3	5	8	11	8	9	10	9	11	89
MJPT*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Christiansen													
Set	137	115	138	144	152	126	130	141	127	149	116	113	1,588
Reset	18	46	14	26	32	33	36	34	45	42	37	46	409
MJPT*	3	1	0	0	3	1	0	2	2	3	1	1	17
Connelly													
Set	157	111	141	129	170	143	112	140	133	131	114	118	1,599
Reset	38	37	21	29	43	63	48	61	45	52	56	28	521
MJPT*	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	7
Kuhlman													
Set	133	114	136	121	135	127	102	145	134	147	118	107	1,519
Reset	22	29	23	26	28	24	24	34	16	47	31	45	349
MJPT*	1	2	2	0	1	3	3	2	0	2	2	1	19
Lanzinger													
Set	152	125	136	137	139	135	112	125	127	156	116	115	1,575
Reset	18	22	31	22	22	37	17	16	39	35	38	36	333
MJPT*	2	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	3	2	1	0	16
McConnell													
Set	36	23	35	17	33	35	12	40	33	34	30	16	344
Reset	6	9	5	2	10	10	8	5	6	10	10	6	87
MJPT*	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
Wagner													
Set	119	142	128	135	150	118	126	157	116	135	127	109	1,562
Reset	13	19	20	11	28	38	21	21	28	25	36	13	273
MJPT*	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	17

*Mandatory Jury Pretrials

2017 Criminal/Traffic Pretrials

Total Pretrials Set: **8,692**
 Total Pretrials Reset: **2,062**
 Total Jury Pretrials: **77**

2016 Criminal/Traffic Pretrials

Total Pretrials Set: **9,701**
 Total Pretrials Reset: **1,575**
 Total Jury Pretrials: **77**

2017 Total of Criminal/Traffic trials, trial resets, pretrials, pretrial resets, jury trials and jury pretrials: **25,057**

2016 Total of Criminal/Traffic trials, trial resets, pretrials, pretrial resets, jury trials and jury pretrials: **27,027**

2016 Criminal/Traffic Pretrials

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Berling													
Set	72	80	121	93	50	53	44	48	41	56	39	39	736
Reset	14	7	7	7	7	4	6	3	4	4	0	0	63
MJPT*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Christiansen													
Set	139	170	145	155	141	135	158	149	124	136	143	118	1,713
Reset	30	37	26	25	23	24	13	39	26	27	26	21	317
MJPT*	2	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	0	12
Connelly													
Set	127	161	157	168	169	149	139	136	151	140	130	141	1,768
Reset	42	35	12	12	25	20	15	9	14	34	38	30	286
MJPT*	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	9
Kuhlman													
Set	145	147	156	140	163	142	164	157	142	142	104	122	1,724
Reset	30	34	31	25	7	18	18	16	30	14	12	12	247
MJPT*	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	3	10
Lanzinger													
Set	135	166	160	159	163	151	162	127	134	141	136	119	1,753
Reset	20	42	26	27	34	46	28	19	20	24	27	22	335
MJPT*	3	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	11
McConnell													
Set	18	32	29	17	19	24	9	25	29	44	27	34	307
Reset	7	8	13	12	7	8	6	6	6	19	8	13	113
MJPT*	0	0	1	0	3	4	0	1	2	1	1	0	13
Wagner													
Set	142	155	160	142	167	131	135	151	143	145	118	111	1,700
Reset	17	20	18	20	8	14	15	27	21	22	15	17	214
MJPT*	0	1	3	2	3	0	3	2	3	1	0	2	20

*Mandatory Jury Pretrials

CIVIL BAILIFF

David G. Baz, Jr.
Chief Civil Bailiff

Department Description

The Civil Bailiff Department perfects service for legal civil documents. Bailiffs enforce civil orders, civil judgments, and execute writs as required by Ohio Revised Code and local court rules.

The Civil Bailiff Department serves summonses, complaints, garnishments, subpoenas, civil restraining orders, and other civil writs of the Court. The department supervises evictions and executes judgments and replevins according to court order.

The department's jurisdiction for housing matters encompasses the City of Toledo, Village of Ottawa Hills, and Washington Township. The department's jurisdiction for other civil matters encompasses all of Lucas County.

Accomplishments

Improving Public Safety

The Civil Bailiff Department continues to collaborate with the Lucas County Sheriff's Office in keeping the community free of prescription drugs. Civil bailiffs removed 561 unattended prescription drugs found at the scene of court-ordered evictions. This collaboration between both departments provides an avenue for defendants to retrieve their prescription drugs at the Lucas County Sheriff's Office. This partnership keeps prescription drugs off the street and provides an environmentally safer avenue for disposal.

The Civil Bailiff Department continues to collaborate with the United Way of Greater Toledo and various other local community resources to provide assistance to members of the community who find themselves subject to eviction. On occasion, bailiffs suspect some of these individuals may require housing assistance. As a result, contact information has been added to court documents for tenants to contact the United Way of Greater Toledo for possible assistance.

The Civil Bailiff Department, in conjunction with the Toledo Police Department Motorcycle Unit and Lucas County Sheriff's Office, executed 23 writs of replevin in 2017. Upon executing these writs, the Civil Bailiff Department returned property to the owners as determined by the Court. These items ranged from household items to motor vehicles.

Increased Efficiency

Collaborating with NORIS and the Clerk of Court, the Civil Bailiff Department implemented the financial component of the bailiff computer system. The enhancement to the system allows the Civil Bailiff Department to maintain electronic financial records, including account balances, and tracks payments the department has collected in the field from civil executions and replevins. The financial portion of the system was designed to be transparent and auditable.

Training

In September, half of the department attended a course on safety, legal authority, ethics, and civil process. The course was conducted by the Supreme Court of Ohio Judicial College. The remaining half of the department attended the same course in December.

In October, the department completed cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association's Heartsaver: First Aid, CPR, and AED Program. The course was conducted by the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department.

In December, the department conducted its annual pepper spray recertification. The recertification was conducted by a unit instructor in the Ohio Peace Officer Basic Training Program.

Goals for 2018

1. Implement a Quality Assurance Policy to ensure that a consistent standard of service to judges, staff, attorneys, and the public is being met.
2. Implement bailiff uniforms for the purpose of improving identification, safety, and continuity.
3. Continue to provide training and tools to assist the department in executing its duties and functions at the highest quality, and producing an excellent standard of service to the judges, staff, attorneys, and the public.

Staff Summary

The following civil bailiffs made the above mentioned accomplishments possible.

David G. Baz, Jr., Chief Civil Bailiff
Kevin L. Smith, Assistant Chief Civil Bailiff
Greg R. Davis, Deputy Civil Bailiff
Sherhonda R. Haynes, Deputy Civil Bailiff
Reggie Keel, Deputy Civil Bailiff
Ann M. Mauder, Deputy Civil Bailiff
Tiffany A. Phenix, Deputy Civil Bailiff
James A. Roman, Deputy Civil Bailiff
Julie M. Willhauck, Deputy Civil Bailiff

CIVIL BAILIFF STATISTICS FOR 2017 AND 2016

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Bailiff Sale	0	0
Bench Warrants - Received	622	604
Creditor Bill	0	1
Garnishments	462	556
*Garnishments No Service	45	62
Garnishment - Mail Service (Notifying Defendants on Bank Attachments)	9	48
Landlord Complaints One Cause	4,506	4,809
*Landlord Complaints One Cause - No Service	187	116
Landlord Complaints Second Cause	7,236	7,262
*Landlord Complaint Second Cause - No Service	111	93
Notification	1	8
Paper Writ of Execution	15	76
Proceeding in Aid - Received	2,701	3,390
*Proceeding in Aid - No Service	1,747	2,002
Replevin Summons	44	75
Writs of Replevin	39	64
Subpoenas - Received	176	136
*Subpoenas - No Service	37	33
Summons - Received	189	156
*Summons - No Service	82	46
Writs of Execution	100	130
Writs of Restitution Set Out	3,173	3,380
Writs of Restitution Lock Out	61	34
Alias Writs of Restitution Set Out	861	989
Alias Writs of Restitution Lock Out	31	28
Plaintiff Notice of Action	3,234	3,414
Four Day Notice to Leave	3,234	3,414
Total Civil Documents Processed	26,694	28,574
Evictions Scheduled	1901	1981
Evictions Executed	567	615
Lock Outs Executed	42	27
Money Collected on Writs of Execution	\$22,238.74	\$27,406.63

*Not included in total count of civil documents processed

COURT REPORTERS

Meredith Kurucz
Acting Administrative Assistant

Department Description

The court reporters of Toledo Municipal Court are responsible for the production of verbatim stenographic records or transcripts of digital recordings of all trials in the traffic, criminal, and civil branches of the Court. They also provide records of motions, arraignments, sentencing, pleas, waivers, and cases processed by the Probation Department.

A transcript of proceedings is the finished product of the department. It is used either in further court proceedings, in civil lawsuits, or in trials which are appealed. In cases which are appealed, the court reporters must follow specific rules as set forth by the Court of Appeals.

The only magistrate docket the court reporters regularly cover is the forcible entry and detainer (FED) docket, which is the landlord/tenant docket. The FED docket takes place daily in courtroom 9. This docket is covered by court reporters because of the possibility of lengthy hearings and rent escrow proceedings filed by a defendant. Transcripts of these hearings are often requested.

It is necessary to retain the exhibits marked in any case until the appeal time of 40 days has elapsed. All stenographic notes, digital recordings, and exhibits not attached to transcripts are retained for five years and then destroyed.

Each judge, when in his or her own courtroom, has one jury day per week, and there are generally several jury trials scheduled for that same day. Should more than one of the cases need to proceed to a jury trial, the case with the oldest case number would take precedence; the other cases would then be rescheduled. Jury trials are most often concluded in one or two days.

The proceedings in Judge Berling's, Judge Wagner's, Judge Lanzinger's and Judge Connelly's courtrooms are digitally recorded on JAVS. When transcripts are requested from these courtrooms, they are produced from digital recordings. The proceedings in Judge Christiansen's, Judge Kuhlman's, and Judge McConnell's courtrooms are recorded by the court reporter assigned to each of these judges.

Accomplishments

In 2017, the Court completed the installation of JAVS in courtrooms 2, 8, and 10. All courtrooms are now outfitted with this recording system. Now that all courtrooms have been equipped with JAVS, the court reporters will no longer be required to cover courtrooms in which there is no recording system.

2017 Highlights

In June 2017, Chief Court Reporter Patricia Lindsey-Schmidlin retired after 35 years with the Court. She was assigned as court reporter to Judge Timothy Kuhlman for the past 12 years. In the absence of a chief court reporter, Meredith Kurucz was appointed as the acting administrative assistant to supervise Lori Hauenstein and April Vickers, the two remaining court reporters. Lori Hauenstein was assigned to Judge C. Allen McConnell and April Vickers is assigned to Judge Robert G. Christiansen. Judge McConnell retired at the end of 2017 and Judge Christiansen will retire at the beginning of 2018. The retirements of these two judges will leave the remaining court reporters in unassigned positions.

There was a total of 88 jury trials scheduled in 2017, but only 16 of those cases proceeded to trial. The court reporters produced a total of 106 transcripts, 43 of which were required for defendants filing appeals.

Goals for 2018

Upon the retirement of the two judges in which the court reporters are currently assigned, the goal of the Court Reporting Department for 2018 is to create a new assignment policy. This new policy will assign the two remaining court reporters in an equitable way which will still allow ample time for the production of transcripts while also being able to fully service the needs of the Court. Now that all courtrooms have been equipped with JAVS, court reporters will no longer be required to cover courtrooms in which there is no recording system.

Staff Summary

The following is a breakdown of the court reporters according to seniority and the judge to whom they are presently assigned:

Chief Court Reporter Patricia Lindsey-Schmidlin, assigned to Judge Timothy C. Kuhlman

(Ms. Lindsey-Schmidlin's retirement was effective June 2017);

Lori A. Hauenstein, assigned to Judge C. Allen McConnell

(Judge McConnell's retirement effective was effective December 31, 2017);

April Vickers, assigned to Judge Robert G. Christiansen

LAW CLERK/BAILIFF

Anne Eckhardt
Chief Courtroom Bailiff

Department Description

The Law Clerk Department is comprised of eight full-time law clerks and one part-time research law clerk. Seven law clerks are assigned to individual judges of the Toledo Municipal Court, one law clerk is responsible for legal research and covering traffic court and one part-time law clerk is responsible for housing legal research, working solely with Housing and Environmental Court Judge C. Allen McConnell. The law clerks work closely with their respective judge to complete all tasks and duties assigned.

One law clerk is appointed by the judges to serve as the chief law clerk for a one-year term. On March 1, 2017, Anne Eckhardt was appointed by the judges to serve as chief law clerk. Her term will expire March 2, 2018.

Services Provided

Although specific duties for this position vary by judge, in general, all law clerks have common courtroom responsibilities. Law clerks organize and coordinate the daily dockets for their judge with the focus directed at providing good service to the public and the agencies involved in the courtroom proceedings. Specific duties performed by a law clerk include: calling cases, posting entries, communicating with prosecutors, public defenders, private attorneys, witnesses, jurors, the various intra-court departments, and the general public, as well as working with deputy sheriffs for in-custody defendants.

A critical responsibility for law clerks is the completion of a monthly report for the cases assigned to their judge, as mandated in the Ohio Supreme Court Rules of Superintendence. This report categorizes or classifies cases by type, i.e. traffic, OVI, criminal, and civil, as well as the disposition of each case (i.e. no contest plea, dismissal, unavailability of defendant). The Ohio Supreme Court Individual Judge Monthly Report does not include cases that are terminated prior to being assigned to a judge; however, the law clerk to the presiding judge generates a report of the unassigned cases according to their categories and dispositions. Additionally, the monthly report makes a notation for any case designated as being overage.

Two law clerks continue to help their judges with specialized dockets. Judge Connelly's law clerk, Ashley Fosgate, provides immense support to the Veteran's Treatment Court docket. The Veteran's Treatment Court has steadily grown since its inception in 2015. Judge Kuhlman's law clerk, Richard Frelin, continues to assist with the monthly "Reentry Docket." This program provides assistance to ex-offenders assimilating back into daily life by addressing any outstanding legal issues with Toledo Municipal Court.

2017 Retrospective

The law clerks continued to utilize weekly reports from NORIS (Northwest Ohio Regional Information Systems), which provided specific activity of pending cases and allowed the law clerks to monitor their assigned judges' caseload by age and status. This quality control process has enabled the law clerks to further improve their control and management of their respective judges' caseload.

The law clerks played a valuable role in the Court's Amnesty Week which also coincided with the Court's 100th Anniversary. Each law clerk staffed his or her own courtroom as well as provided support to the courtroom of the duties judge, which saw the bulk of the walk-in cases during the week. Additionally, four law clerks provided support for the two judges who held walk-in court on the Saturday during Amnesty Week.

Research Law Clerk Leslie Barker was instrumental in researching and developing new forms and procedures for mental health competency, which will debut in early 2018. This complete revamping of the Court's prior forms and procedures was a major project that saw several meetings with various local agencies and departments to ensure the Court is compliant with all local, state, and federal laws.

Goals for 2018

The law clerks will continue to take a lead role in overseeing the management of their respective judges' assigned cases. The law clerks' goal for this arena remains the same as in prior years which is to process cases in a timely fashion to eliminate the possibility of overage cases. This goal applies to all assigned and unassigned cases.

Regular monthly meetings are held with the law clerks and court administrator for the purpose of addressing courtroom issues, information sharing, and brainstorming. These meetings have proven to be productive as oftentimes new ideas for efficiency and quality of service are developed.

Staff Summary

There were several staffing changes in 2017. In July 2017 Veronnica McCord resigned her position as law clerk to Judge Amy J. Berling, and Barbara Hinz was hired as her replacement. Part-Time Housing Research Clerk Elizabeth Ellison resigned, and Jenna Anthrop was hired as her replacement.

Below is a list of the law clerks and their judicial assignment:

Presiding Judge Joshua W. Lanzinger	Brittany Sharp-Goldsmith
Judge Amy J. Berling	Barbara Hinz
Judge Robert G. Christiansen	Anne Eckhardt, Chief Law Clerk
Judge William M. Connelly, Jr.	Ashley Fosgate
Judge Timothy C. Kuhlman	Richard Frelin
Judge C. Allen McConnell	Zoe Kuzdzal
Judge Michelle A. Wagner	Jennifer Kerman
Research Law Clerk	Leslie Barker
Part-Time Housing Research Clerk	Jenna Anthrop

CITIZENS DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

James S. Petas
Senior Mediator

Department Description

The Citizens Dispute Settlement Program (CDSP) of the Toledo Municipal Court provides the people of Toledo an alternative means of resolving disputes. By using mediation, counseling techniques, and conciliation, citizens are empowered to settle disputes that would otherwise be included in the traditional court system.

Mediation is an effective means for resolving disputes. With the help of a neutral third party, participants often reach mutually accepted agreements. In mediation, avenues of communication are opened which permit the participants to more clearly understand themselves, each other, and the situation. Since the participants themselves craft these agreements, there is a greater likelihood that the agreement will be successfully implemented. The mediation process is especially helpful when the participants have an ongoing relationship with family members, friends, neighbors, or business associates.

Services Provided

The staff members of CDSP conduct mediations. Students from the University of Toledo Law School's Alternative Dispute Resolution class also conduct small claims mediations. Mediations are also conducted by volunteer attorneys from the Toledo Bar Association who have been trained as mediators.

Cases that involve misdemeanor behavior such as menacing, criminal damaging, disturbing the peace and theft are referred to mediation. These cases can be referred at any point, including before any charges are filed, at a pre-trial conference, or even at trial.

Civil cases are referred to mediation by the assigned judge or may be requested by the parties themselves or their attorneys.

Rent escrow cases are also screened first for mediation. If the dispute is resolved through mediation, the escrowed rent is released. If the case is not resolved or if the mediation agreement is not successfully implemented, the case is continued to the Housing Court magistrate's docket.

FED cases are referred the day of hearing. If the dispute is resolved through mediation the tenant and landlord will either mutually agree on a date to vacate with or without case dismissal or will work out a payment arrangement to stay in the unit. If the case is not resolved, a same day hearing will take place.

Same day mediation for small claims cases was initiated in October 1994. As individuals appear for their scheduled small claims hearing, they are presented the option of mediating their dispute that same day. If both parties agree, same day mediation is conducted rather than the parties appearing before the magistrate. If a resolution is not reached through mediation, the magistrate hears the case that day as scheduled.

The check resolution service was instituted in October 1993. Individuals or businesses wishing to file a criminal charge for bad checks are referred to the check resolution service before charges are filed. A

\$15.00 filing fee per each endorser (check-writer) is paid by the complainant. The endorser is notified of the complaint and a mediation date is scheduled between the endorser and complainant. At the mediation the endorser has the opportunity to reimburse the complainant the amount of the check plus the \$15.00 filing fee. If the check resolution service is not successful in resolving the matter, the Toledo Police Record Bureau is notified and a report is generated. The complainant is then referred to the City of Toledo Prosecutor's Office for criminal charge review. Check resolution service has a sub-component, collection mediation program that assists businesses in collecting bad debt that is not in check form. The procedure follows the same method used in the check resolution service and requires a \$15.00 registration fee.

CDSP and The University of Toledo College of Law continue to work together through the civil mediation internship program. Citizens Dispute also conducts training for graduating Toledo Police Officers and county emergency operators to educate them on the dynamics of mediation and how to access the service.

Accomplishments

In 2017, the Citizens Dispute Settlement Program remained committed to providing Toledo Municipal Court and the community with excellence in mediation. This goal was reached through the Court's and CDSP's commitment to improvement and quality. In 2017, Senior Mediator James Petas held a seat on the Supreme Court of Ohio's Commission on Dispute Resolution and a board position on the Ohio Mediation Association. Additionally, CDSP accomplished the following:

- Sue Padilla and James Petas attended the Toledo Municipal Court, court-wide "Sexual Harassment Awareness" training" held in Toledo, Ohio.
- Susan Monro attended "Reasoning with Unreasonable People" seminar in Toledo, Ohio.
- CDSP is partnering with the Clerk of Courts Office of the Toledo Municipal Court to initiate an entirely electronic case referral system.

Goals for 2018

Through additional mediation education, Citizen Dispute will improve and continue to provide professional mediation services. CDSP hopes to educate court users and the public on the positive impact of mediation. CDSP will also be evaluating whether there may be additional opportunities for the use of mediation within the court. CDSP will work with the judges to encourage additional referrals of both criminal and civil cases for mediation in 2018.

The CDSP staff will be looking to attend impactful continuing education seminars in 2018 and will also continue the yearly evaluation survey to ensure that the public receives the best in mediation services. CDSP will continue to work with the Clerk of Courts to implement a fully electronic case referral system.

In the past year, of the post mediation evaluations collected, 95% were satisfied with the mediation process and would recommend it to others. Participant comments included, "the mediator was very professional and proactive" and "we were very satisfied with the process, it made it easy to come to an agreement." The department also remains committed to making mediation more available and user friendly to the Court and its users.

Staff Summary

The Citizen Dispute staff consists of Senior Mediator James Petas, Court Mediator Susan Monro and Intake Secretary Susan Padilla.

Statistics for 2017, with statistics from 2016 for comparison, are provided below.

<u>Type of Case</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
	Success Rate	
Civil Cases	82%	76%
Adjudicated	88%	94%
Pre-Adjudicated	86%	87%
Housing – Rent Escrow	67%	81%
Housing – FED	80%	78%
Small Claims	62%	63%
<u>Dispute Resolution – Case Types Referred</u>		
Assault	57	104
Menacing	37	49
Criminal Damage	70	80
Theft	74	16
Harassment	2	8
Neighborhood Dispute	11	13
Telephone Harassment	11	26
Criminal Trespassing	8	3
Landlord/Tenant	47	40
Stalking	0	5
Other	120	81
<u>Civil Case Mediation Results</u>		
Total Referred	126	152
Mediation: Agreement	84	86
No Agreement	18	31
CDSP Involvement/No Mediation	16	24
Pending	8	15
Mediation Agreement %	82%	76%
<u>Adjudicated Case Mediation Results</u>		
Total Referred	128	120
Mediation: Agreement	73	65
No Agreement	10	5
FTA to Notice	16	25
CDSP involvement/No Mediation	18	9
Pending	11	16
Mediation Agreement %	88%	94%

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
<u>Pre-Adjudicated Mediations</u>		
Total Referred	309	379
Mediation: Agreement	88	101
No Agreement	14	15
FTA to Notice	114	152
CDSP Involvement/No Mediation	67	76
Make File Only	20	29
Pending	6	6
Mediation Agreement %	86%	87%
<u>Housing Mediations – Rent Escrow</u>		
Total Referred	115	100
Mediation: Agreement	41	52
No Agreement	20	13
FTA to Notice	16	7
CDSP Involvement/No Mediation	26	15
Pending	1	4
Mediation Agreement %	67%	81%
<u>Housing Mediations – FED</u>		
Total referred	251	264
Mediation: Agreement	201	206
No Agreement	50	56
Mediation Agreement %	80%	78%
<u>Small Claims/Same Day Mediations</u>		
Total Referred	140	137
Mediation: Agreement	87	80
No Agreement	48	50
Mediation Agreement %	62%	63%
<u>Check Resolution Mediations (CRS)</u>		
Total Referred	170	439
Funds Generated	\$2,550.00	\$6,585.00
Collection Mediations	0	0
<u>Total Number of Cases Referred</u>		
(Minus CRS)	1,069	1,154

PROBATION

Burma Stewart
Chief Probation Officer

Department Description

The Toledo Municipal Court Probation Department operates under the authority of the Toledo Municipal Court judges. The primary role of the Probation Department is to support the Court in managing offenders. Probation officers investigate, supervise, and monitor adult offenders and provide information and recommendations to the judges.

In addition to serving the Court, the Probation Department also serves offenders and the community. Public safety is promoted by reducing risk and changing offender behavior. Local partnerships with government agencies, social services, and community groups further support this endeavor.

The Probation Department provides a wide range of services throughout the court process, including pre-sentence, alternative sentencing, and both standard and specialized post-sentence programs. Through these programs, the Probation Department assists victims and holds offenders accountable.

The overall management of the department is under the direction of Chief Probation Officer Burma Stewart. The daily operations are managed by Assistant Chief Probation Officer Kevin Alore.

In 2017, the Probation Department continued to enhance the Quality Assurance (QA) program developed in 2016. Quality Assurance Manager Jennifer Friddell oversaw the review of 550 case file audits, 87 direct observation audits on open probation cases, and 342 closed file audits were conducted to provide assurance that our filing system adheres to established standards.

The department is currently structured into five units: Management Team, pre-sentence investigations (PSI), Supervision Unit, Special Services/Intake Unit, and Clerical Unit. Within each unit, staff members serve as a back-up to each other in order to provide for the ongoing operation of all programs. The supervisor also serves as a back-up to the positions within their unit if coverage is not adequate.

Unit Supervisor Laura Berling supervises PSI, Special Services, and the Clerical Units. The Supervision Unit is supervised by Unit Supervisor Lori Donovan and Mark Klapper who was promoted in February 2017 to the position of probation unit supervisor.

Unit Supervisor Laura Berling supervises four professional staff in the PSI Unit. This unit is responsible for pre-sentence investigations and supervising inactive probation cases. There are four Investigating Probation Officers: Sean O'Connor, Andrew Oberdier, Jodi Alexander, and Eddie Norrils. These investigators are responsible for completing all PSI reports and record check referrals for the department. This unit is also responsible for monitoring all inactive probation cases. The unit also coordinates competency evaluation referrals, investigates restitution referrals, and makes recommendations regarding motions to seal records.

Ms. Berling supervises the Clerical Unit which provides secretarial and support services for the department. This includes, but is not limited to, greeting the public, collecting restitution payments, filing, and

delivering probation files to the courtrooms, and processing incoming cases. The unit includes Mary Baker Idell Daniels, Robin Majewski, Jennifer Caris, and Tiffaney Wasserman.

Probation supervision is a court-ordered sanction that is placed on a person convicted of a crime. It is an alternative to jail and allows the offender to remain in the community under the supervision of a probation officer. Supervising probation officers complete risk assessments, case plans, make social service referrals, monitor drug screens, conduct record checks, and enforce the orders of the court. Significant violations are reported to the judge for further disposition. Probation officers also use a graduated sanction policy to enforce conditions of the court that may not warrant immediate notification to the judge.

The Supervision Unit is comprised of probation officers who supervise high risk, moderate risk or low risk offenders. Unit Supervisor Lori Donovan manages five probation officers that supervise high risk offenders: Markus Whitehead, Melissa Stasa, Allie Popovich, Rachel Borders, and Maria Tomlin. The average high risk caseload is 164 offenders. Mark Klapper manages five probation officers who supervise moderate and low risk offenders: Lewis Simpson, Carrie Tester, Kim Beale, Christopher Giwa, and La'Tarsha Cook. The average moderate risk supervision caseload has 260 offenders. In 2017, unit restructuring was implemented and the supervision of the kiosk offenders was added to the moderate risk unit. Gary Colton is the community sanction (CS) officer. This position is funded by the Community Corrections Act (CCA) Grant from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Mr. Colton monitors the kiosk project, which is an evidence-based kiosk reporting program available to low risk offenders who meet certain criteria. At the end of 2017, there were two vacancies in the unit, one in high risk and another in the moderate risk supervision.

The Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) is currently managed by Probation Officer Melissa Stasa. ISP is a jail diversion program for high risk offenders. This position and related programming is also funded by the CCA Grant from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Supervision for offenders in ISP is short in length, intensive, and averages approximately six months. Offenders must follow strict conditions such as drug testing, treatment, and reporting as often as two times per week. After completing ISP, offenders are transferred to an active probation caseload for the remainder of their sentence. This grant also provides \$140,489 for drug and alcohol treatment services for standard probation offenders who cannot pay for treatment. The grant also funds the Kiosk Reporting Project that is available for low risk offenders. Eligible offenders can report to their probation officer at one of five kiosk stations available within Lucas County.

The Probation Department also received Probation Improvement and Incentive Grant funds from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections in the amount of \$1.1 million dollars to provide substance abuse, domestic violence, and employment services to high risk offenders as well as residential treatment services for 60 days through the Court's Court Addiction Diversion (CAD) program that allows offenders from Toledo Municipal Court, Maumee Municipal Court, Oregon Municipal Court, and Sylvania Municipal Court to receive intensive residential substance abuse treatment at the Correctional Treatment Facility.

Unit Supervisor Laura Berling supervises probation officers in the Special Services Unit and the Intake Unit. Specialized caseloads include the license intervention program, alternatives and the community service probation program (CSPP).

Lisa Kuebler is the license intervention specialist. Ms. Kuebler educates drivers about their license status as well as coordinates limited driving privileges, reinstatement fee payment plans, and vehicle immobilizations.

The alternatives program assists eligible first-time offenders in avoiding formal conviction. Offenders are held accountable for their actions through a series of individual, classroom, or e-course sessions. Each session discusses making good choices and staying out of trouble. Participants who do not incur any additional charges or complaints and complete the program are granted a one-time case dismissal and sealing of their record. The alternatives program is staffed by Probation Officer Megan Stevens who handles all referrals and teaching forums for the program. Ms. Stevens also serves as the electronic monitoring liaison between the court, pretrial services and CCNO.

Darryl Myles and Adriana McCord are the CSPP officers. Community service is an alternative sentencing option that allows offenders to complete public service work instead of paying fines or serving time in jail. This sanction helps the community as well as holds offenders accountable for their criminal behavior.

The Intake Unit currently has two intake officers that conduct all initial ORAS assessments to determine risk to re-offend and probation officer assignment. Additionally, the officers process all cases that have a term of active or inactive probation. Intake officers include Daniel Ford and Debra Neal.

Accomplishments

In 2017, the Probation Department's focus remained on the implementation of a QA program. Policies, procedures and tools were developed to promote consistency and fidelity to established standards and practices. Web-cam recording equipment was purchased to further evaluate the quality of staff interactions with probation offenders.

The department also participated in activities as part of the Safety and Justice Challenge Strategy #5. Regional collaboration included regular meetings with chief probation officers from municipal and common pleas courts in Lucas County as well as regular QA meetings with the Lucas County and Juvenile Probation Departments. Probation officers also participated in a meet and greet event comprised of probation officers from Lucas County, Sylvania and Maumee Municipal Courts.

Probation staff accomplished several community engagement initiatives that included participation in the East Toledo Family Center Job Fair in May 2017, the Freedom School in June 2017 and meal prep at Food for Thought in November 2017.

Probation officers and managers obtained additional training in the evidence-based area of Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS). Staff enriched existing skills through real play exercises that utilized actual probation clients.

Supervision fee expenditures included confidential shredding services, kiosk maintenance, permanent and temporary clerical staff, general office supplies, case management software enhancements, software licensing agreements, and staff training.

2018 Goals:

1. Providing ongoing training for probation staff.
2. Expansion of kiosk services to provide greater case management differentiation.
3. Implementation of client surveys to assess program effectiveness.

Staff Summary

As of December 31, 2017, there were 32 staff positions in the Probation Department: one chief probation officer, one assistant chief probation officer, one quality assurance manager, three unit supervisors, 17 probation officers, two intake officers, one license intervention specialist, two community service officers, and five probation secretaries. The Probation Department has three unfilled positions: one supervisor position, one intake officer position, and one secretary position. In December, Ms. La'Tarsha Cook joined the Probation Department as a probation officer.

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT
YEAR END STATISTICAL REPORT**

	# OF CLIENTS 2017	# OF CASES 2017	# OF CLIENTS 2016	#OF CASES 2016
Referrals to Probation				
Traffic	3,610	8,756	4,286	9,233
Criminal	4,384	7,563	4,957	8,347
Total Referrals to Probation	7,994	16,319	9,243	17,580
Offenders on Probation				
Active Probation	3,289	4,141	3,756	4,476
Inactive Probation	1,874	2,141	1,980	2,144
Referral Monitor	105	115	121	150
Total Defendants Placed on Probation	5,268	6,397	5,857	6,770
Total Probation Violations Requested	1,900*	3,225*	1,772*	2,943*
Defendants Released or Terminated from Probation	3,498	**	**	**
Presentence Referrals Requested	626	641	764	794
Motions to Seal	433	937	462	965
CDTC Referrals	65	97	66	117
EMU Referrals	265	326	268	316
DIP Referrals	1,169	1,173	1,303	1,310

*Includes Probation Violation Waivers Requested by Officers

**Data not available at the time this report was produced

	# OF CLIENTS 2017	# OF CASES 2017	# OF CLIENTS 2016	# OF CASES 2016
CSPP Program				
Total CSPP Referrals	2,357	4,478	2,515	3,714
Insurance Fees Collected on CSPP Cases	\$1,872		\$2,040	
Total CSPP Hours Ordered	102,012		116,822	
Total CSPP Hours Completed	19,029		32,013	
LIS Program				
Vehicle Release	73	74	18	19
LIS (RED Referrals)	1,114	1,240	1,546	1,643
Immobilizations	152	153	47	47
Driving Privileges	358	419	413	416
General LIS Inquiries (Walk In Clients)	980		666	
Total LIS Program	2,677	1,886	2,690	2,125
Alternatives Program				
Total Program Referrals	366	367	542	545
Successful (Sealed)	208	208	278	278
Unsuccessful	4	74	73	74
Regional Court Referrals				
Bowling Green	0		0	
Sylvania	1		0	
Maumee	0		0	
Oregon	0		0	
Perrysburg	16		45	
Berea	0		1	
Portage	0		1	
Other	0		0	
Total Regional Court Referrals	17		45	
Financial Information				
Restitution Collected	\$101,931.63		\$100,838.21	
Surcharge Collected	\$3,983.11		\$5,453.53	
Total Collected	\$105,914.74		\$106,291.74	

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COURT

Judge C. Allen McConnell
Housing and Environmental Court Judge

Department Description

In 2017 the Toledo Municipal Housing and Environmental Court celebrated its 30th anniversary and also marked the final year for Judge C. Allen McConnell's long enduring tenure as the sitting judge. Judge McConnell was sworn in on January 6, 2000 and retired December 31, 2017. Prior to his departure, Judge McConnell turned over the reins and swore in the newly-elected Housing Judge Joseph J. Howe on December 21, 2017.

Judge Howe graduated Cum Laude from the University of Toledo Law School in 1997, where he was a member of the University of Toledo Law Review and a Law Merit Scholar. He was also selected for the Order of the Coif, an organization that represents the top ten percent of the graduating class.

In July 1997, Judge Howe was first a law clerk, then quickly became a judicial staff attorney in 1998, for the Lucas County Common Pleas Court. While still in law school, he was an editorial assistant for Dean Quick of the University of Toledo School of Law, working on the criminal procedure casebook for West Publishing.

Before election, Judge Howe was the Housing Court prosecutor for over 11 years. He was the recipient of the 2011 University of Toledo, College of Law Outstanding Public Service Supervisor Award. Prior to 2006, Judge Howe worked as a private attorney and spent several years as a staff attorney for the UAW Legal Services Plan in Toledo, Ohio and Clearwater, Florida, handling mostly civil consumer protection cases.

During his final year, Judge McConnell was relentless in his pursuit of improving the quality of life in Toledo's neighborhoods. In 2017, the Housing Court continued to navigate the post-mortgage foreclosure crisis of 2007-2008 and heard many cases involving vacant properties, both residential and commercial. In many instances the properties were beyond repair and demolition was the method of compliance.

Neighborhood improvement remains a top priority for Toledo Housing Court. Judge Joseph J. Howe will use knowledge garnered from over a decade of prosecuting Housing Court violators to ensure the Toledo Municipal Housing Court is contributing to a better life for the city's neighborhoods. He has first-hand experience working with law enforcement, block watch groups, and city administrations in dealing with Housing Court issues. He shares the concerns of Toledo's citizens in their worry of blight in their neighborhoods and he understands the impact and the effect it has on crime.

The History of Housing Court

The Toledo Municipal Housing and Environmental Court was created to remedy abandoned, vandalized and dilapidated structures in the City of Toledo, Washington Township, and Ottawa Hills. In January of 1987, the Ohio Supreme Court approved consolidating all housing matters into one court covered on the docket of one judge in the Toledo Municipal Court.

Judge Judith Ann Lanzinger was appointed on April 1, 1987 to serve as interim Housing Judge. In 1988 Judge J. Ronald Bowman was installed as the Court's first elected Housing Court Judge. Judge Roger R. Weiher was then appointed on July 7, 1989 to fill the vacancy created by the appointment of Judge Bowman to the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas.

On January 6, 2000, Judge C. Allen McConnell was sworn-in as the Housing and Environmental Court Judge to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Roger R. Weiher. Judge McConnell retired on December 31, 2017 after serving three terms.

The Housing Court has both civil and criminal dockets. The civil docket includes matters involving landlord-tenant disputes known as FEDs, rent escrows under Chapters 1923 and 5321 of the Ohio Revised Code, any civil actions filed by the City of Toledo for a temporary restraining order to abate a nuisance, receivership appointments to abate a nuisance, and motions for stays of eviction or temporary restraining orders.

The Housing Court magistrate selectively refers rent escrow cases with allegations of unfit conditions to the housing specialists for inspection and report. If the tenant vacates during this process, the property owner may be ordered not to re-rent the unit until these conditions are corrected. Generally, Chapter 17 of the Toledo Municipal Code (the Health Code) is used as the basis for inspection. In referred cases, a housing specialist assists the property owner in establishing timeframes for correction of violations. The housing specialist performs re-inspections and reports to the Court when code compliance has been reached.

About the Court

The criminal docket of Housing Court hears cases involving alleged violations of the Toledo Municipal Code Chapters 11, 13, 15 and 17 (Planning and Zoning, Building, Fire Prevention, and Health Codes). Defendants appear before the Court after charges have been brought by the City of Toledo Health, Neighborhoods, and Inspection Departments seeking to enforce zoning, building, health, safety, and nuisance abatement codes. In addition, cases involving house stripping, fire prevention, dumping, littering, smoking violations, fishing violations, watercraft violations, and manufactured homes pursuant to new legislation codes (R.C. 1923.02) are assigned to the Environmental Court docket. The weekly docket may be viewed on the Housing Court's website at toledohousingcourt.org.

In 2017, 1,078 criminal nuisance citations were filed in Housing Court, more than a 20% increase from the previous year. Bench warrants are issued for those that fail to appear for court. Many of those defendants are absentee landlords and/or out-of-state owners. In some bench warrant cases where the defendant resides within the City of Toledo or Lucas County, the Court's WEU makes every effort to serve the warrant and arrest the individual. The defendant is then immediately brought to Toledo Municipal Court for appearance.

There were 6,668 eviction cases and 111 rent escrow cases filed in 2017. A Housing Court magistrate hears all first causes of action in FED cases, as well as rent escrow cases wherein tenants deposit rent into an escrow account with the Court because of a dispute with the landlord. The magistrate's orders are submitted to the Housing Court Judge for approval. Any objections to the orders of the magistrate are referred to the Housing Court Judge for decision or hearing. The majority of the second causes of action (money damages) are heard by the Housing Court Judge.

The principal objective of the Housing and Environment Court is to achieve compliance with the Toledo Housing Code. If the condition can be corrected quickly, sentencing may be reserved and the case may be continued to allow the defendant time to correct the violations and comply with the code.

The Community Control Program gives Housing Court defendants the opportunity to correct housing violations in cooperation with Housing Court personnel. Alternative sentencing programs work through mutual cooperation. However, participants must be mindful that the Court can impose the original sentence if the participant fails to meet his or her obligations as directed.

The policy of the Housing Court Judge is to impose fines and costs in all cases in which full compliance has been achieved, even if there is full compliance at first appearance for arraignment. This policy was put in place to enable the city to recover costs expended to bring the case to court due to the defendant's failure to comply within the regulation time. Larger fines and costs are imposed if the case is delayed by the defendant. Incarceration or electronic monitoring may be imposed if the defendant is stalling or abusing the process. If convicted of illegal dumping or house stripping, jail time is mandatory.

2017 Accomplishments and Goals for 2018

An upgraded case management system was installed mid-2017 for enhanced record keeping of community control cases referred to the housing specialists. One final upgrade will take place in 2018.

All housing staff attended Preventing Discrimination and Harassment training in May 2017. The senior housing specialist attended an additional leader training session.

In 2018, the newly-elected Judge Joseph J. Howe and his staff will seek new community partnerships to secure resources for owner occupants that are brought before the Court. The housing specialists will continue to offer their decades of housing expertise to assist litigants in gaining compliance with city code.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Toledo Municipal Housing and Environmental Court is to provide a fair and efficient forum for litigants involved in housing matters. The Housing and Environmental Court seeks to educate the community about housing issues and link homeowners with appropriate agencies in order to promote neighborhood health and safety in the City of Toledo.

Vision Statement

- Lead the way in developing innovative and effective solutions for Housing Court litigants
- Link homeowners, tenants and landlords to community resources to maintain safe homes for our citizens
- Foster partnerships with community organizations and governmental entities for continued improvement of available housing

Staff Summary

The 2017 Housing Court staff consists of Judge C. Allen McConnell, Magistrate Alan J. Michalak, Standby Magistrates James E. Morgan, Rebecca K. Ligibel, and Catherine Hoolahan, Senior Housing Specialist Barbara Falls, Housing Specialist Larry A. Cardwell, Housing Specialist Robert Krompak, Court Reporter Lori Hauenstein, Deputy Lorraine Walker, Law Clerk Zoe Kuzdzal, and Judges' Secretary Meredith Kurucz.