



Located to the east of Schumacher Place on the city's near south side, the Southern Orchards neighborhood has seen investment from nonprofits as well as its neighbor to the north, Nationwide Children's Hospital, in recent years.

MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGES

Department Description

The Franklin County Municipal Court is established pursuant to section 1901.01 of the Ohio Revised Code and traces its origin to the creation of the Columbus Municipal Court in 1916. The geographic jurisdiction of the court is all of Franklin County and those portions of the City of Columbus that extend beyond the boundaries of Franklin County. The Court has 14 judges in the General Division and 1 judge in the Environmental Division. Judges serve six-year terms, unless appointed or elected to fill a vacancy. Annually, they elect one of their peers to serve as the Administrative and Presiding Judge.

The judges preside over civil, criminal, and traffic cases and conduct both jury and non-jury trials. In jury trials, judges interpret the law and the jury determines factual matters. In non-jury trials, by far the more common, judges have the dual role of interpreting the law and determining the facts. The judges also conduct criminal arraignments and initial appearances on felony cases, set bond on criminal charges, issue search warrants, and impose sentence when a defendant is found guilty of a traffic or criminal charge. The judges hear civil cases where the amount in controversy is \$15,000 or less, and cases that are transferred from the Small Claims Division to the regular docket of the court.

The jurisdiction and powers of the Environmental Division differ from those of the General Division in several important respects. The Environmental Division has exclusive jurisdiction to enforce local codes and regulations affecting real property, such as fire and building codes. The Environmental Division has injunctive powers, and there is no monetary limit on the cases that fall within the Environmental Division's exclusive jurisdiction.

Each week, a different judge is assigned to the Duty Session to handle a variety of responsibilities, which include applications for search warrants, motions to dismiss filed by the prosecutor, cognovit notes, motions to excuse jurors, probable cause hearings, motions for default judgments filed in unassigned cases, and performing civil wedding ceremonies.

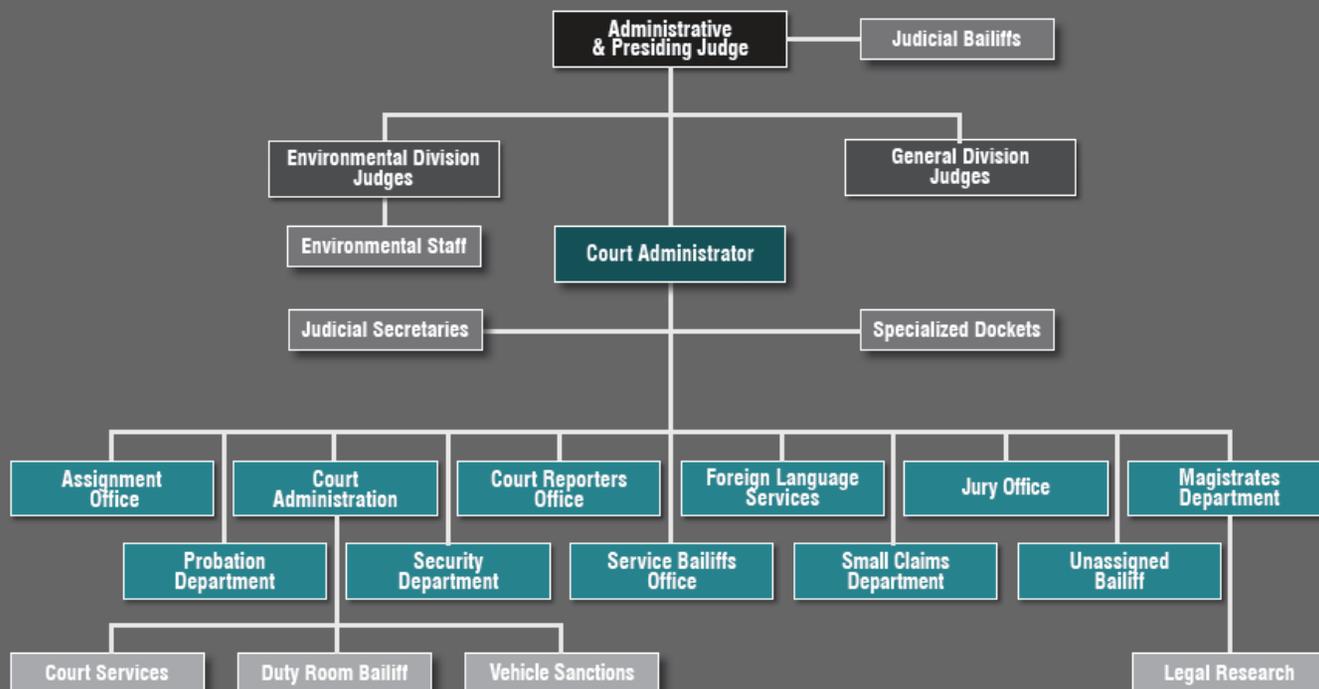
The court administrator is the chief executive officer and reports to the judges of the court, primarily through the Administrative and Presiding Judge. The court administrator is responsible for developing and implementing policies and procedures, and directs and supervises all administrative and operational court functions, which include the following areas: budget and finance, purchasing, facilities, security, human resources, magistrates, jury, case assignment, probation services, service bailiffs, small claims, court reporters, interpreters, vehicle immobilization, court-appointed counsel, and court services.

Department Mission

Judiciary: To safeguard the constitutional rights of all citizens and to provide equal access to all; professional, fair, and impartial treatment; timely disposition of cases without unnecessary delay; and a just resolution of all court matters.

Administration: The mission of Court Administration is to oversee the operations and employees of the Court, implement the policies and procedures established by the judiciary and the legislature in a professional and dedicated manner, and to ensure accessibility, fairness, accountability, and courtesy in the administration of justice.

Franklin County Municipal Court Judges



Strategic Priorities for 2017

The extensive, multi-year renovation project to the Municipal Court Building will continue into 2017 with elevator modernization.

In 2017, the Department of Probation Services (DOPS) will continue to implement the Pretrial Services Program it developed in 2016 using a multi-year incentive grant from the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Services. The purpose of this program is to reduce the length of incarceration for pretrial detainees, specifically those with significant mental health issues, and reduce the number of pretrial issuance of failure to appear warrants and order-ins. In 2017, with technical assistance from the National Institute of Corrections, enhancements will be made to this program, specifically geared toward the domestic violence population.

Since the fall of 2015, Job and Family Services has provided a benefits specialist on-site several days per week to assist probationers with enrollment in Medicaid, Food Stamps, Cash and Child Care Assistance and Supplemental Security Income. In 2017, the Court will continue to look for additional community resources that are available and beneficial to probationers.

The DOPS will continue its efforts to identify and develop partnerships with expanded residential programming options to include Halfway House services for our moderate and high risk defendants. These include, but are not limited to, halfway house programming that provides a variety of substance abuse treatments, cognitive behavioral programming, transitional housing, supported employment, and recovery coaches.

The DOPS will continue the enhancement of the Probation Assisted Victim Empowerment Division (PAVD) Program that is made possible by a renewed 2017 VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) Grant Award in the amount of \$143,123.53.

The DOPS will continue the process of implementing Batterer Intervention Programming Standards to better serve defendants who identify as gender and sexual minorities.

The DOPS will finalize an updated Officer Field Work and Safety Training Program that incorporates a formalized training and law enforcement component to address the safety of the officers and allow for a swift response to high risk defendants in the community.

Work will continue on the implementation of a Court-Wide Probation Case Management System that will allow the DOPS to better track outcomes, provide more thorough data analyses to funding sources, and to better inform continued strategic planning.

The Court will continue testing the electronic search warrant and subpoena application for use by the Judge assigned to the Duty Room. The goal of this project is to eliminate, to the extent possible, the need for law enforcement officers to physically drive to court during business hours or after-hours to the judge's location to have the warrant issued. Once in use county-wide, this process should provide significant resource efficiencies to law enforcement agencies.

The Court will continue to partner with The Ohio Supreme Court on the implementation and evaluation of video language interpreting in the courtrooms.

All of the Specialized Docket Programs in this Court have been awarded their initial certification status from the Supreme Court of Ohio's Commission on Specialized Dockets. The dockets include the Mental Health Program, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Program (ADAP), Changing Actions to Change Habits (CATCH), Military and Veteran Service (MAVS), and Opiate Extension Program (OEP). In 2016, the Court began its required "re-certification" process with the Supreme Court. This may involve making changes to the programming to meet new Supreme Court compliance standards that are required to be able to offer Specialized Dockets. It is anticipated that these evaluations will continue into 2017.

Strategic Priorities for 2017 (cont.)

The Environmental Division will continue to implement unique sentencing strategies for those convicted of code violations related to rental properties and hoarding activities, which will benefit neighborhoods and communities. It will continue to provide helpful information to the public and area agencies through its new website—www.EnvironmentalCourt.us.

2017 BUDGET NOTES

The 2017 general fund budget includes \$370,652 to fund the Court's contract for evening and weekend security. In addition:

- General fund monies continue to offset a portion of the costs associated with the Mental Health Program, ADAP (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program), CATCH (Changing Actions to Change Habits), MAVS (Military and Veteran's Services) and the OEP (Opiate Extension Program) programs.
- In 2010, the Court began requiring current employees to pay a portion of the employee share of OPERS retirement contribution. In 2017, employees hired before 2010 will be paying eight percent of their OPERS contribution. All employees hired after January 2010 are required to pay the full ten percent employee share of pension contribution.
- Most of the Court's technology costs are paid from the Court's computer fund, not the general fund.
- In 2017, two additional positions are included for the expansion of the Environmental Court's Community Service Program, which provides a sentencing alternative for those individuals who are charged with non-violent offenses.

Department Financial Summary by Area of Expense					
Fund	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	2016 Projected	2017 Proposed
General Fund					
Municipal Court Judges					
Personnel	\$ 14,367,716	\$ 14,984,384	\$ 16,071,898	\$ 15,776,522	\$ 16,353,109
Materials & Supplies	26,230	32,434	29,800	32,684	36,800
Services	1,322,614	1,357,755	1,433,678	1,428,678	1,451,700
Other	-	-	-	-	1,000
Transfers	340,000	340,000	340,000	340,000	340,000
General Fund Subtotal	16,056,560	16,714,573	17,875,376	17,577,884	18,182,609
Computer Fund					
Municipal Court Judges					
Personnel	76,678	-	97,439	-	100,733
Materials & Supplies	132,935	87,374	115,500	115,500	75,500
Services	240,355	243,527	413,705	448,442	444,356
Computer Fund Subtotal	449,968	330,901	626,644	563,942	620,589
Department Total	\$ 16,506,528	\$ 17,045,474	\$ 18,502,020	\$ 18,141,826	\$ 18,803,198

Municipal Court Judges

Operating Budget by Program					
Program	2016 Budget	2016 FTEs	2017 Proposed	2017 FTEs	
Administration	\$ 3,262,806	14	\$ 2,286,605	6	
Assignment	842,768	13	815,819	13	
Computer Services	626,644	1	572,683	1	
Court Reporters	1,187,198	12	1,248,074	12	
Environmental Court	176,046	2	442,952	5	
General Court	2,650,852	32	3,320,164	40	
Home Incarceration/Work Release	243,835	3	255,658	3	
Internal Services	-	0	160,267	0	
Jury Office	385,136	2	375,673	2	
Legal Research	173,675	1	182,465	1	
Magistrate Court	1,843,568	22	1,301,900	14	
Probation	5,091,899	59	5,240,935	60	
Security Services	-	0	709,476	8	
Service Bailiffs	703,661	17	526,389	16	
Small Claims	576,929	6	551,753	6	
Specialty Docket Court	155,615	2	168,809	2	
Support Services	581,388	7	643,576	8	
Department Total	\$ 18,502,020	193	\$ 18,803,198	197	

Department Personnel Summary					
Fund	FT/PT	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Authorized	2017 Authorized
General Fund					
Municipal Court Judges	FT	174	177	192	192
	PT	9	10	11	11
Computer Fund					
Municipal Court Judges	FT	0	0	1	1
Total		183	187	204	204

For additional financial information related to the Municipal Court Judges, please refer to the municipal court computer fund contained within the Special Revenue Funds section. Program descriptions begin on the following page.



2017 PROGRAM GUIDE

ADMINISTRATION

To carry out non-judicial policies of the court including personnel management, fiscal management, purchasing, appointment of counsel for indigent defendants, liaison with other courts, governmental entities and private agencies, public information and report management, settlement week, and secretarial services.

ASSIGNMENT

To control case flow management by making individual case assignments to judges; to prepare individual judges' and magistrates' court sheets and broadsheets; to notify plaintiffs, defendants, prosecutors, attorneys and suburban solicitors of all court hearings; to schedule and maintain an up-to-date status of all active cases assigned to the judges and magistrates; and process all motions and pleadings.

COMPUTER SERVICES

To provide services for updating and maintaining technological needs for Municipal Court.

COURT REPORTERS

To provide a verbatim record of all court proceedings; to read back any and all portions of court proceedings; to prepare verbatim transcripts of court proceedings; and to maintain records on court exhibits.

ENVIRONMENTAL COURT

To protect the health, safety and aesthetics of the properties and environments of our neighborhoods and communities through fair, tough, and compassionate adjudication and mediation.

GENERAL COURT

To coordinate activities in the courtrooms of judges and magistrates including scheduling cases and providing information to the public regarding the status of pending cases.

HOME INCARCERATION/WORK RELEASE

To provide a cost-effective alternative sentencing option to traditional jail incarceration, consistent with public safety.

INTERNAL SERVICES

To account for the internal service charges of the department necessary to maintain operations.

JURY OFFICE

To summon citizens to serve as jurors; randomly select jurors; postpone and reschedule jury service; and maintain information.

LEGAL RESEARCH

To research and prepare memoranda of issues pending before the court; maintain the law library; review new case law to ensure the court's compliance with the decisions; review pending legislation that may affect the court; advise the judges and employees regarding new legal developments and applications of current law to court procedures; and update local court rules.

MAGISTRATE COURT

To assist the judges by presiding over a variety of legal proceedings, making findings of fact and legal rulings, and rendering decisions, most of which are subject to final approval by a judge. Specific duties of the magistrates include hearing traffic arraignments; evictions; rent escrow proceedings; post judgment collection matters; small claims cases; parking violation appeals, and any other matters specifically referred to them by the judges.

PROBATION

To provide administration; regular supervision; non-reporting probation services; and the domestic violence, chemical abuse, multiple OMVI offender, sex offender, investigation services, community service, restitution, and no convictions programs.

SECURITY SERVICES

To ensure the safety of court staff, and the visiting public. Security services are provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, so that law enforcement and the public has access to file warrants and clerk bonds, and to make payments.

SERVICE BAILIFFS

To assist litigants and attorneys by efficiently handling and delivering court documents and the timely enforcement of judgment remedies.

SMALL CLAIMS

To provide citizens with a simplified procedure for bringing civil suits for sums of \$3,000 or less by providing forms and assistance to individuals wishing to file claims, motions and writs of execution.

SPECIALTY DOCKET COURT

To provide a cost-effective alternative sentencing option to traditional jail incarceration for prisoners with mental illnesses.

SUPPORT SERVICES

To provide support to the Court in the areas of appointed counsel, interpretation services, vehicle sanctions, and other court services related to the scheduling of court dates, the processing of requests to extend the time to pay fines and court costs, the rescheduling of court-ordered incarcerations, and the administration of limited driving privileges.

Municipal Court Judges

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