

# 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 one 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

## 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.

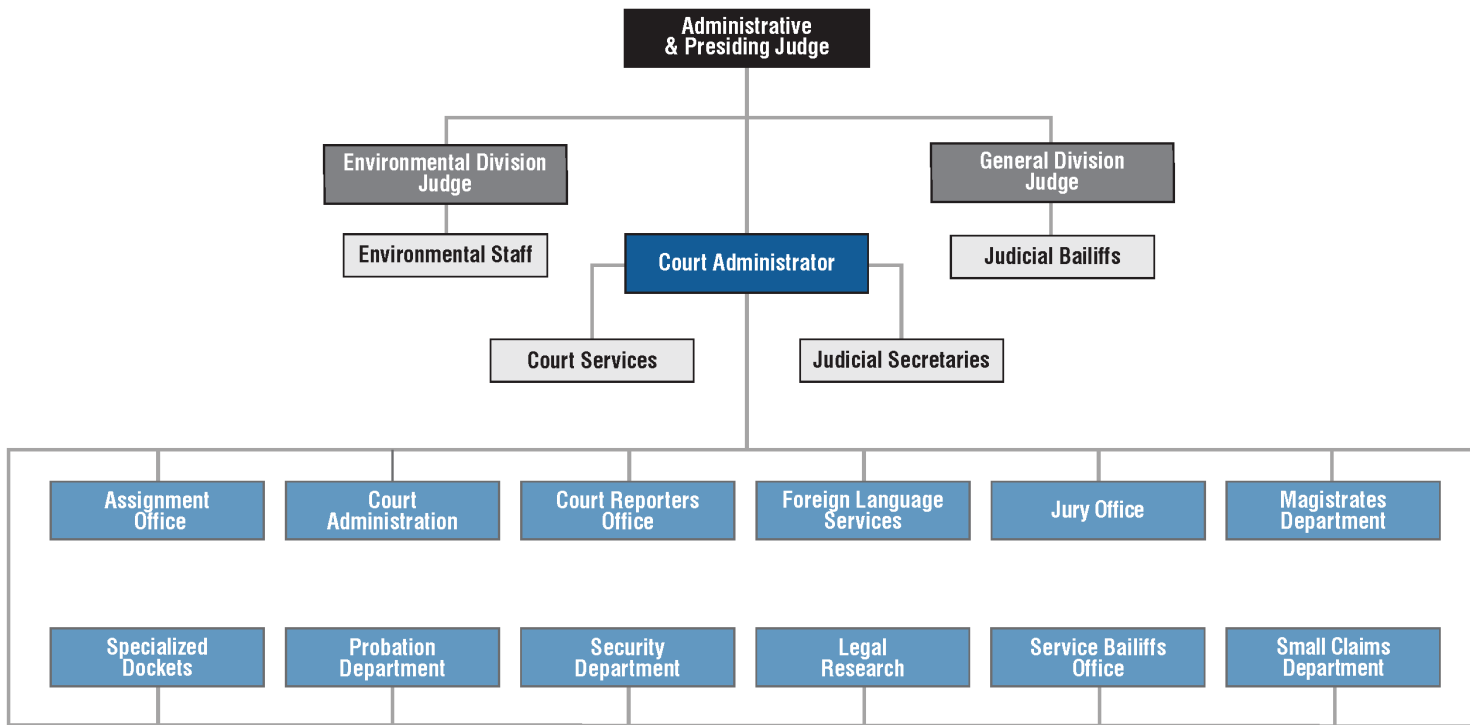
*Administration:* The mission of Court Administration is to oversee the operations and employees of the Court, implement the policies and procedures established by the judiciary and the legislature in a professional and dedicated manner, and to ensure accessibility, fairness, accountability, and courtesy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

**Department Description (Continued)**

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.

**Franklin County Municipal Court Judges**



## Strategic Priorities for 2018

The extensive, multi-year renovation project to the Municipal Court Building will continue into 2018 with elevator modernization.

In 2018, the Department of Probation Services (DOPS) will continue to develop the Pretrial Services Program it developed in 2016 through a multi-year probation improvement and incentive grant from the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Services. These program enhancements will follow the recommendations that were made by the National Institute of Corrections and will continue to follow the best practice standards outlined by the American Bar Association and the National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies. One specific program enhancement will be the incorporation of the domestic violence population. The goals of the Pretrial Services Program are 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.

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 2018, the Court will work to expand this relationship and will continue to look for additional community resources that are available and beneficial to defendants/probationers.

The DOPS will continue its efforts to increase the capacity of residential programming options for its moderate and high risk defendants, specifically, for the female population. These residential options include supported housing, residential alcohol and drug treatment and halfway house services that provide a variety of substance abuse treatments, cognitive behavioral programming, supported employment, and recovery coaches.

The DOPS will work with its community partners and the jail to increase access to medication assisted treatment options for opiate dependent defendants. Additionally, grant funding will be sought to provide additional resources to better support the supervision and treatment needs of this population.

The DOPS will continue the enhancement of the Probation Assisted Victim Empowerment Division (PAVD) Program that is made possible by a renewed 2018 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant Award in the amount of \$143,123.53.

The DOPS will continue the process of implementing a differentiated Batterer Intervention Programming Response that will be based on an individual's assessed risk level. Additionally, the DOPS will continue its efforts to provide Batterer Intervention Programming that is specifically geared toward 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.

The DOPS will finalize its development and implementation of a Behavioral Management System that will assist in a more appropriate and efficient response to both non-compliant and pro-social behaviors in an effort to promote sustained behavior change.

## **Strategic Priorities for 2018 (cont.)**

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 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.

The five Specialized Dockets are certified by the Supreme Court of Ohio and continue to follow the best practices established by the commission and the most current evidence based practices. The Specialized Docket Department serves between 275-350 high risk/high need participants each week via the five specialized dockets, two educational programs, and forensic restorations. 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). The Franklin County Municipal Court Specialized Docket Department is the largest in Ohio and one of the largest in the nation.

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 website [www.EnvironmentalCourt.us](http://www.EnvironmentalCourt.us).

## **2018 BUDGET NOTES**

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The 2018 general fund budget totals \$18,865,752. The general fund supports both personnel and non-personnel costs. In addition:

- General fund monies continue to offset a portion of the costs associated with the Mental Health Program, ADAP, CATCH, MAVS and the OEP programs.
  - In 2010, the Court began requiring current employees to pay a portion of the employee share of OPERS retirement contribution. In 2018, employees hired before 2010 will be paying nine percent of their OPERS contribution. All employees hired after January 2010 are required to pay the full ten percent employee share of pension contribution.
  - The majority of the Court's technology costs are paid from the Court's computer fund, not the general fund.
  - The 2018 general fund budget continues support of the Environmental Court's Community Service Program, which provides a sentencing alternative for those individuals who are charged with non-violent offenses.
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<b>Department Financial Summary by Area of Expense</b>					
<b>Fund</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Budget</b>	<b>2017 Projected</b>	<b>2018 Proposed</b>
<b>General Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Judges					
Personnel	\$ 14,984,384	\$ 15,606,314	\$ 16,353,109	\$ 16,181,956	\$ 16,916,388
Materials & Supplies	32,434	37,481	36,800	72,242	58,200
Services	1,357,755	1,476,474	1,451,700	1,463,194	1,551,164
Other	-	-	-	1,000	-
Transfers	340,000	340,000	340,000	340,000	340,000
<b>General Fund Subtotal</b>	<b>16,714,573</b>	<b>17,460,269</b>	<b>18,182,609</b>	<b>18,058,392</b>	<b>18,865,752</b>
<b>Computer Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Judges					
Personnel	-	-	100,733	-	102,445
Materials & Supplies	87,374	83,187	75,500	105,500	75,500
Services	243,527	197,420	444,356	436,699	436,700
<b>Computer Fund Subtotal</b>	<b>330,901</b>	<b>280,608</b>	<b>620,589</b>	<b>542,199</b>	<b>614,645</b>
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>\$ 17,045,474</b>	<b>\$ 17,740,877</b>	<b>\$ 18,803,198</b>	<b>\$ 18,600,591</b>	<b>\$ 19,480,397</b>

<b>Department Personnel Summary</b>					
<b>Fund</b>	<b>FT/PT</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Authorized</b>	<b>2018 Authorized</b>
<b>General Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Judges	FT	177	183	196	196
	PT	10	15	11	11
<b>Computer Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Judges	FT	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>187</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>208</b>

<b>Operating Budget by Program</b>					
<b>Program</b>	<b>2017 Budget</b>	<b>2017 FTEs</b>	<b>2018 Proposed</b>	<b>2018 FTEs</b>	
Administration	\$ 2,286,605	6	\$ 2,278,626	7	
Assignment	815,819	13	862,457	13	
Computer Services	572,683	1	574,395	1	
Court Reporters	1,248,074	12	1,252,991	12	
Environmental Court	442,952	5	497,108	5	
General Court	3,320,164	40	2,789,637	32	
Home Incarceration/Work Release	255,658	3	266,065	3	
Internal Services	160,267	0	190,881	0	
Jury Office	375,673	2	408,651	2	
Legal Research	182,465	1	204,309	1	
Magistrate Court	1,301,900	14	2,019,448	22	
Probation	5,240,935	60	5,271,999	59	
Security Services	709,476	8	741,166	8	
Service Bailiffs	526,389	16	749,159	16	
Small Claims	551,753	6	571,392	6	
Specialty Docket Court	168,809	2	194,749	2	
Support Services	643,576	8	607,364	7	
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,803,198</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>\$ 19,480,397</b>	<b>196</b>	

## **Municipal Court Judges**

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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.



# 2018 PROGRAM GUIDE

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## **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.

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**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, and post judgment collection matters, small claims cases, parking violation appeals, and any other matters specifically referred to them by the judges.

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**PROBATION**

To provide administration, regular supervision, non-reporting probation services, and the following programs: domestic violence, chemical abuse, multiple OVI (Operating a Vehicle Impaired) offender, sex offender, investigation services, community service, restitution, and no convictions.

**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.

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