

# MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK



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## Department Description

In 1916, the General Assembly of the State of Ohio created the Columbus Municipal Court. Prior to this time, the Court was operated under the Justice of the Peace System. On July 5, 1955, the Columbus Municipal Court was given county-wide jurisdiction and, in 1968, the State Legislature changed the name of the Court to Franklin County Municipal.

In 1979, the Court and the Clerk of Court moved from City Hall to a new facility in the Franklin County Municipal Court Building, located at 375 South High Street.

The Franklin County Municipal Court and Clerk of Court respectfully operates under state statute with fifteen Judges and one Clerk of Court, each of whose term is for a period of six years.

The Franklin County Municipal Clerk of Court's Office serves as the legal guardian and keeper of the official records of the Franklin County Municipal Court. It consists of the following nine programs: administration, internal services, accounting and finance, audit/internal controls, civil, collections, criminal and traffic, traffic violations bureau, and office of information services. The Clerk's Office is open to the public 24 hours per day, seven days per week and provides support services to law enforcement agencies operating within the jurisdiction of the Court. Currently, eight townships and 19 mayor's courts exist within Franklin County and the City of Columbus, which extends into two other counties – Delaware and Fairfield. The Clerk's Office receives traffic citations and

criminal complaints from the Columbus Division of Police, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Franklin County Sheriff, the Ohio State University Police, Port Columbus Police and 21 municipal law enforcement agencies.

## Department Mission

To accurately maintain and safeguard court records, collect and disburse public funds while promoting equal access, fairness, and transparency. The vision of the Clerk's Office is to provide access to justice through competent customer service, communication, and community outreach.

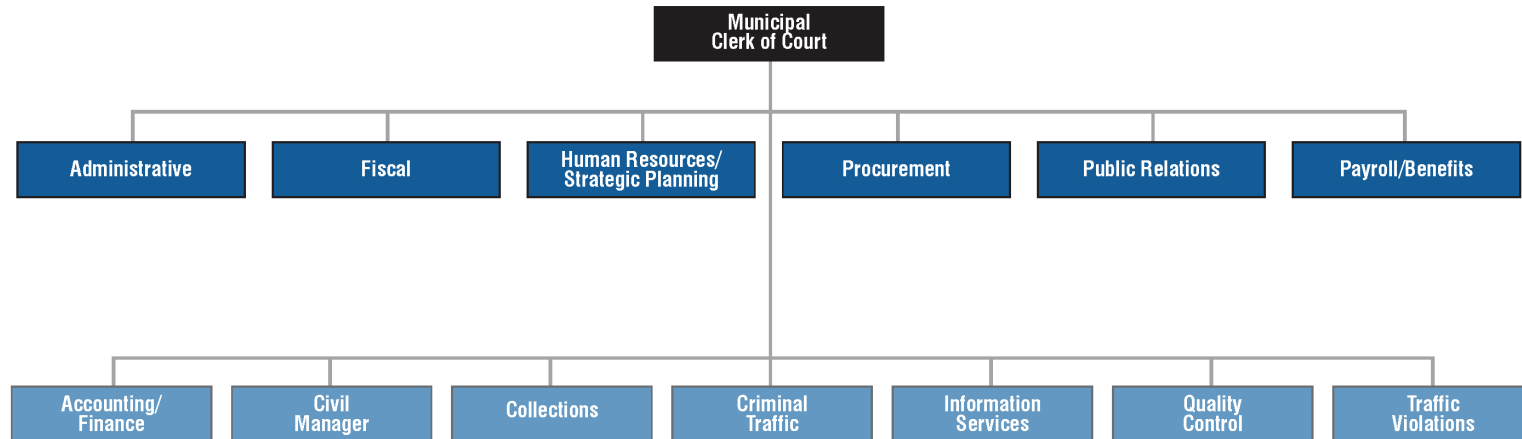
The Clerk's Office is responsible for accepting and processing documents filed in criminal, civil, environmental and traffic cases as well as the collection and disbursement of court costs, fines, and fees according to legal mandates. Documents include complaints, arrest warrants, citations, subpoenas, search warrants, motions, and pleadings. In order to ensure

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**Department Description (Continued)**

the security, integrity, and availability of digital records into the future, the Clerk’s Office has implemented a digital imaging process for the safe and effective management of digital images, files, and related information. It also maintains an extensive website that provides public access to court records and information regarding services offered by the Court and the Clerk’s Office. A complete detailing of financial transactions is compiled and published in an annual report which is available on its website.

**Franklin County Municipal Clerk of Court**



## Strategic Priorities for 2018

To conserve valuable taxpayer dollars, better utilize staff resources and lessen the carbon footprint of Franklin County Municipal Court Clerk's Office.

**Web Chat:** Provide the convenience of instant communication through an on-line website application to expedite customer service in the Criminal/Traffic Division.

**Electronic Ticket Pilot:** Participate in a pilot with the Ohio Highway Patrol, the Franklin County Sheriff and Upper Arlington Police Department to implement an electronic traffic ticket with data transfer to the Clerk's Office.

**Electronic Criminal Complaint:** Collaborate with the Ohio Highway Patrol to develop and implement a uniform criminal complaint (long form) for electronic filing.

**Payment Kiosk:** Develop and install a self-serve kiosk to provide online payment options for defendants who may pay outstanding warrants/tickets or post bond in lieu of jail.

**E-Filing Expansion for Civil Cases:** Expand electronic filing to include all civil case types.

**Matrix:** Collaborate with law enforcement and the Columbus City Attorney's office to promote information sharing between agencies using the Prosecutor's new Matrix software system.

**Ohio Community Supervision System (OSCC):** Assist the Franklin County Municipal Probation Department with their implementation of the new statewide software system including data integration from the Clerk's Office database.

**Digital Continuity Plan:** Develop and implement a sustainable digital records management program that ensures records access as digital technology evolves.

## 2018 BUDGET NOTES

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The 2018 general fund budget funds 163 full-time employees. Non-personnel expenses include witness fees, banking, print, postage, and other ordinary office expenses.

The 2018 computer fund budget includes funding for six full-time employees. This fund provides technological support, supplies, and maintenance to help the department achieve its mission.

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## Municipal Court Clerk

Department Financial Summary by Area of Expense					
Fund	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Budget	2017 Projected	2018 Proposed
<b>General Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Clerk					
Personnel	\$ 10,601,920	\$ 10,769,486	\$ 11,260,771	\$ 11,218,110	\$ 11,655,069
Materials & Supplies	127,301	158,857	132,788	127,418	138,978
Services	788,241	838,788	766,115	789,692	782,783
<b>General Fund Subtotal</b>	<b>11,517,462</b>	<b>11,767,131</b>	<b>12,159,674</b>	<b>12,135,220</b>	<b>12,576,830</b>
<b>Computer Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Clerk					
Personnel	352,216	233,516	657,578	447,772	716,799
Materials & Supplies	45,958	30,025	61,000	61,000	61,000
Services	727,212	714,503	799,304	794,234	742,968
Principal	-	260,000	150,000	150,000	40,000
Interest	-	14,700	4,850	4,850	1,000
Transfers	289,950	-	-	-	-
<b>Computer Fund Subtotal</b>	<b>1,415,336</b>	<b>1,252,744</b>	<b>1,672,732</b>	<b>1,457,856</b>	<b>1,561,767</b>
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>\$ 12,932,798</b>	<b>\$ 13,019,875</b>	<b>\$ 13,832,406</b>	<b>\$ 13,593,076</b>	<b>\$ 14,138,597</b>

Department Personnel Summary					
Fund	FT/PT	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Authorized	2018 Authorized
<b>General Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Clerk	FT	155	155	172	172
	PT	4	4	2	2
<b>Computer Fund</b>					
Municipal Court Clerk	FT	0	6	12	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>159</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>186</b>

Operating Budget by Program				
Program	2017 Budget	2017 FTEs	2018 Proposed	2018 FTEs
Administration	\$ 766,849	8	\$ 792,279	8
Internal Services	586,313	0	613,277	0
Accounting and Finance	2,181,546	29	2,217,782	29
Civil	2,133,535	32	2,247,723	32
Collections	173,540	2	179,124	2
Criminal and Traffic	4,830,810	71	4,960,030	71
Office of Information Services	1,658,173	6	1,550,531	6
Audit/Internal Controls	570,176	7	612,925	7
Traffic Violations Bureau	931,464	14	964,926	14
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>\$ 13,832,406</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>\$ 14,138,597</b>	<b>169</b>

For additional financial information related to the Municipal Court Clerk, 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 ensure the efficient operation of the Clerk's Office by preparing the annual budget; tracking expenditures; processing vendor contracts regarding the purchase and/or maintenance of equipment and supplies; hiring all deputy clerks; managing personnel payroll records; ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal statutes, local rules and case law; preparing and submitting statistical reports to the Ohio Supreme Court; and to providing timely responses to all public records requests.

## **INTERNAL SERVICES**

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

## **ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE**

To collect and disburse court costs, fines, and bail for criminal, environmental, and traffic cases filed in the Franklin County Municipal Court; to accept and disburse civil court costs, fees, judgment amounts, garnishment payments, escrow, and trusteeship payments; to process all mail payments; prepare receipts for monies collected; distribute funds to the proper governmental subdivisions; and to make a general accounting of all funds received and disbursed by the Clerk's Office.

## **CIVIL**

To accept, process, and maintain all documents filed within the Franklin County Municipal Court's jurisdiction related to civil matters including small claims cases; to issue service of civil filings; and to provide timely responses to all public records requests.

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**COLLECTIONS**

To direct and coordinate the collection of debts owed to the Court through the use of outside collection firms; to secure bond agent registration; monitor compliance of state and local statutes; and to process monthly billing statements.

**CRIMINAL AND TRAFFIC**

To accept and process all complaints related to criminal, environmental, and traffic cases filed within the jurisdiction of the Franklin County Municipal Court; to update all cases scheduled daily for Court dockets; to issue warrants; to report all applicable driving records data to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles; to support law enforcement requests for information 24 hours per day, seven days per week; to process requests for sealing and expungement of records; to process documentation and present to the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for release of prisoners; and to provide timely responses to all public records requests.

**OFFICE OF INFORMATION SERVICES**

To provide support services for all the technological needs of the Franklin County Municipal Clerk and Court staff; to maintain all software and equipment necessary for the daily operations of the Clerk's Office and the Court; to provide electronic reporting as required by state statute to the Ohio Court Network, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and the Ohio Bureau of Investigation; and to provide timely responses to all public records requests.

**AUDIT/INTERNAL CONTROLS**

To minimize erroneous data through a system of real time process monitoring, audit reporting, and total quality management strategies, and to provide timely information requested by the external auditing firm for the annual audit.

**TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS BUREAU**

To record and process criminal, environmental, and traffic citations issued by law enforcement operating within the jurisdiction of the Franklin County Municipal Court and to provide timely responses to all public records requests.

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