

## **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 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 preliminary hearings 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 non-judicial officer and reports only 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 investigation.

## **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 the employees is to 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.

## **Strategic Priorities for 2010**

- Implement a new residential Work Release program with Alvis House through a Community Correction Act grant. A residential work release program, which saves the costs of jail incarceration, has not been available as a sentencing option for four years. If the program is successful, the Court will seek General Revenue funding to continue the program.
- Continue enhancement of human resources functions, including creation and implementation of an employee evaluation system, preparation and release of an employee policy and procedures manual; continue expanding employee training programs; create a new personnel filing system; and improve recruitment, screening, and hiring procedures.
- Identify and implement ways to cooperate with Franklin County Common Pleas Court on areas of mutual interest such as jury service, probation, and use of foreign and sign language interpreters.
- Continue to evaluate and refine the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of audio recording equipment installed in magistrate courtrooms in 2007 and in a judge's courtroom in 2008.
- Increase usage of the new electronic monitored home confinement program in the Department of Probation Services that was introduced in 2007.
- Seek ways to address the ever-increasing challenge of providing interpretation and translation services to the growing number of those who have business with the Court for whom English is not their primary language.
- Develop methods and forms to create detailed periodic financial reports so that hiring and purchasing decisions can be more accurately made.
- Work with the Clerk of Court on new methods of providing mail service to the Clerk and the Court.
- Undertake limited remodeling to enhance the Duty Room, create a small meeting space, and provide several new office spaces.
- Begin preparation of a Request for Qualifications seeking potential vendors to perform a salary survey and update the Court's job classifications and salary ranges, if it appears that funding for the work will be available in 2011 or 2012.

- Begin preparation of a Request for Qualifications seeking potential vendors to engage in a complete review of Court structure and operations, if it appears that funding for the review will be available in 2011 or 2012.

### **2010 Budget Notes**

- Court costs and fees fund core Court functions that would otherwise require general fund support. The Security Fund, which is budgeted at \$1,666,376, pays for all Court security, including a 20-person security department, contracted evening and weekend services, and equipment. The Court's computer fund is budgeted at \$533,933 and pays the salaries of legal research staff and all technology needs.
- Fees for professional services include fees for court-appointed counsel (\$130,000), foreign language interpreters (\$105,250), forensic psychological examinations (\$40,000), and interpreters for the deaf (\$15,000).
- Funding of \$15,000 is included for electronic monitoring of offenders in the home incarceration program, which provides a cost effective option to incarceration of offenders who do not pose a threat to public safety.

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## Budget and Program Summary

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
<b>DIVISION SUMMARY</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>	<b>2008 Actual</b>	<b>2009 Original Appropriation</b>	<b>2009 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>2010 Proposed</b>
Municipal Court Judges	\$ 13,517,980	\$ 14,532,691	\$ 14,712,883	\$ 14,351,774	\$ 14,574,234
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 13,517,980</b>	<b>\$ 14,532,691</b>	<b>\$ 14,712,883</b>	<b>\$ 14,351,774</b>	<b>\$ 14,574,234</b>

<b>DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY CHARACTER</b>					
<b>MUNICIPAL CT JUDGES GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>	<b>2008 Actual</b>	<b>2009 Original Appropriation</b>	<b>2009 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>2010 Proposed</b>
Personnel	\$ 12,003,553	\$ 12,838,032	\$ 13,007,345	\$ 12,814,007	\$ 13,047,278
Materials & Supplies	60,803	27,619	37,600	32,992	37,100
Services	984,108	952,772	1,069,045	1,023,461	955,923
Other	7,500	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 13,055,964</b>	<b>\$ 13,818,423</b>	<b>\$ 14,113,990</b>	<b>\$ 13,870,460</b>	<b>\$ 14,040,301</b>
<b>MUNICIPAL CT JUDGES COMPUTER FUND</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>	<b>2008 Actual</b>	<b>2009 Original Appropriation</b>	<b>2009 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>2010 Proposed</b>
Personnel	\$ 205,276	\$ 208,560	\$ 257,388	\$ 189,461	\$ 249,694
Materials & Supplies	44,931	66,053	113,700	113,700	77,900
Services	211,809	439,655	227,805	178,153	206,339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 462,016</b>	<b>\$ 714,268</b>	<b>\$ 598,893</b>	<b>\$ 481,314</b>	<b>\$ 533,933</b>

**DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY FUND**

<b>FUND SUMMARY</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>	<b>2008 Actual</b>	<b>2009 Original Appropriation</b>	<b>2009 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>2010 Proposed</b>
General	\$ 13,055,964	\$ 13,818,423	\$ 14,113,990	\$ 13,870,460	\$ 14,040,301
Municipal Court Computer Fund	462,016	714,268	598,893	481,314	533,933
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 13,517,980</b>	<b>\$ 14,532,691</b>	<b>\$ 14,712,883</b>	<b>\$ 14,351,774</b>	<b>\$ 14,574,234</b>

**DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SUMMARY**

<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>FT/PT</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>	<b>2008 Actual</b>	<b>2009 Authorized</b>	<b>2010 Authorized</b>
General Fund	FT	180	179	184	184
	PT	7	8	9	9
Computer Fund	FT	2	2	3	3
	PT	4	4	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>193</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>

\*FT=Full-Time PT=Part-Time

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2010 Operating Budget  
Municipal Court Judges

Program	Mission	Financial History by Program				Personnel by Program			
		2007 Budget	2008 Budget	2009 Budget	2010 Proposed	2007 FTEs	2008 FTEs	2009 FTEs	2010 FTEs
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; secretarial services; and appointment of interpreters and security management.	\$ 4,588,953	\$ 4,240,180	\$ 4,581,926	\$ 4,260,617	50	50	51	51
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.	\$ 776,702	\$ 854,488	\$ 890,323	\$ 905,410	14	14	15	15

2010 Operating Budget  
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Program	Mission	Financial History by Program				Personnel by Program			
		2007 Budget	2008 Budget	2009 Budget	2010 Proposed	2007 FTEs	2008 FTEs	2009 FTEs	2010 FTEs
Service Bailiffs	To assist litigants and attorneys by efficiently handling and delivering court documents and the timely enforcement of judgment remedies.	\$ 1,159,501	\$ 1,210,626	\$ 1,239,449	\$ 1,103,188	18	18	18	18
Courtroom Bailiffs	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.	\$ 1,312,530	\$ 1,380,956	\$ 1,323,899	\$ 1,438,326	17	17	17	17
Probation	To provide administration, regular supervision, non-reporting probation, the domestic violence program, the chemical abuse program, the multiple OMVI offender program, the sex offender program, investigation services, the community service program, the restitution program and the no convictions program.	\$ 3,539,112	\$ 3,948,649	\$ 3,836,968	\$ 4,233,295	56	56	57	57

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2010 Operating Budget  
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Financial History by Program

Personnel by Program

Program	Mission	Financial History by Program				Personnel by Program			
		2007 Budget	2008 Budget	2009 Budget	2010 Proposed	2007 FTEs	2008 FTEs	2009 FTEs	2010 FTEs
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.	\$ 305,187	\$ 336,520	\$ 365,864	\$ 269,694	5	5	5	5
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.	\$ 1,079,227	\$ 1,178,274	\$ 1,102,918	\$ 1,092,659	14	14	14	14
Jury Office	To summon citizens to serve as jurors, randomly select jurors for panels, postpone and reschedule jury service, and maintain information on prospective jurors.	\$ 425,902	\$ 420,858	\$ 425,434	\$ 405,716	2	2	2	2
Home Incarceration/ Work Release	To provide a cost-effective alternative sentencing option to traditional jail incarceration, consistent with public safety. To provide for the court's acquisition of software, technology-related equipment, internal technology billings and on-line services.	\$ 411,424	\$ 198,695	\$ 207,397	\$ 197,080	3	3	3	3

2010 Operating Budget  
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Financial History by Program

Personnel by Program

Program	Mission	Financial History by Program				Personnel by Program			
		2007 Budget	2008 Budget	2009 Budget	2010 Proposed	2007 FTEs	2008 FTEs	2009 FTEs	2010 FTEs
Mental Health Program Docket	To provide a cost-effective alternative sentencing option to traditional jail incarceration for prisoners with mental illnesses.	\$ 121,828	\$ 127,989	\$ 139,812	\$ 134,316	2	2	2	2
Computer Services	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.	\$ 540,912	\$ 608,056	\$ 598,893	\$ 533,933	2	2	3	3
		\$ 14,261,278	\$ 14,505,291	\$ 14,712,883	\$ 14,574,234	183	183	187	187

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