



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COMMON PLEAS COURT
ANNUAL REPORT
2024



GENERAL DIVISION | JUVENILE DIVISION
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION
PROBATE DIVISION | CLERK OF COURTS

To the Citizens Of Montgomery County:

On behalf of my fellow judges and the dedicated staff of the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report. This report offers insight into the work we do each day to uphold justice, protect rights, and serve the people of Montgomery County.

Each division of the Common Pleas Court plays a vital role in Ohio's judicial system. As a court of general jurisdiction, the General Division handles felony criminal cases and major civil disputes. The Juvenile Division handles cases involving children, and in certain circumstances, their families. The Domestic Relations Division handles family law matters, while the Probate Division handles guardianships, adoptions, and estate issues. Finally, while not a court, the Clerk of Courts works closely with the court system to maintain court document filings and provide other administrative services to the public. Each case brought before each of the divisions of Montgomery County Common Pleas Court reflects the real-world concerns of our community, and we remain committed to ensuring that all individuals have meaningful access to justice.

In 2024, we continued to embrace innovation and collaboration. This report highlights our efforts to improve case management, enhance public safety through program that reduce recidivism such as specialized dockets, and expand services that support families and victims. We also share updates on infrastructure improvements, data-driven decision-making, and investments in technology that make the court more accessible and efficient.

We are proud to work alongside local agencies, law enforcement, and community partners to build a court system that reflects our shared values of fairness, accountability, and respect. Whether by ensuring due process, resolving disputes, or providing educational opportunities for the public, our goal is always to strengthen trust in the judicial process.

As you review this Annual Report, I hope it offers insight into our responsibilities, accomplishments, and unwavering commitment to justice in Montgomery County. Thank you for allowing us to serve you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Wiseman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end of the name.

Mary Wiseman
Presiding Judge

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ABOUT THE COMMON PLEAS COURT

The Common Pleas Court possesses constitutional and statutory power. The Montgomery County Common Pleas Court consists of four divisions that provide timely and equitable service to the citizens of Montgomery County. Each of the divisions has a unique role in the judicial process. Collectively, the Court is dedicated to delivering superior service to promote public safety, corrections, rehabilitation, family law, probate, and civil justice. The Courts work on joint programs and projects designed to provide cost effective solutions for our citizens. We provide the best Court system in the State of Ohio.

There are 16 Judges on the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court. The Judges are elected to, and conduct their work in, one of the four divisions. In some instances, the Presiding Judge will assign a Judge from one division to another for specific cases.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

GENERAL DIVISION ■ 11 JUDGES

JUVENILE DIVISION ■ 2 JUDGES

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION ■ 2 JUDGES

PROBATE DIVISION ■ 1 JUDGE

JUDGES OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

GENERAL DIVISION

Judge Timothy N. O’Connell.....	2007
Judge Mary Wiseman.....	2007
Judge Steven K. Dankof.....	2011
Judge Dennis J. Adkins.....	2011
Judge E. Gerald Parker, Jr.....	2019
Judge Mary E. Montgomery.....	2019
Judge Susan D. Solle.....	2021
Judge Kimberly A. Melnick.....	2022
Judge Angelina N. Jackson.....	2022
Judge Elizabeth A. Ellis.....	2023

JUVENILE DIVISION

Judge Helen Wallace.....	2019
Judge Julie Bruns.....	2023

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Judge Timothy D. Wood.....	2011
Judge Jennifer A. Petrella.....	2024

PROBATE DIVISION

Judge David D. Brannon.....	2021
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTS BUILDING

100 N. HANCOCK ST.



GENERAL DIVISION

ABOUT THE GENERAL DIVISION

The General Division of the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court is a trial court of general jurisdiction that provides prompt, fair, and just resolution of litigation in civil and criminal cases. The General Division Judges preside over bench and jury trials involving civil litigation as well as felony criminal cases. Our eleven judges have a combined experience of over 100 years of judicial service to the citizens of Montgomery County.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission: Together we provide fair and efficient justice under the law for all.

Our Vision: We will provide innovative and high quality court services to the people of Montgomery County.

Our Goal: To assure the administration of justice, we will draw on the experience and knowledge of our court employees and community partners.



HONORABLE MARY WISEMAN

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE, Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Wiseman was appointed to the General Division bench in 2007, and was most recently elected to a new, six-year term in November 2022.

Judge Wiseman received her B.S. from Ball State University in 1984 and her J.D. with honors from the William H. Bowen School of Law at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 1988.

Prior to her judicial service, Judge Wiseman practiced complex civil litigation in state and federal courts nationwide. She has taught at the University of Dayton School of Law and Sinclair Community College. She served on the Dayton City Commission from 1998-2002.

Judge Wiseman is a past President of the Dayton Bar Association, the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project, the Carl D. Kessler Inn of Court, and the Dayton Bar Foundation. She serves as the Administrative Judge of the General Division. She is the Presiding Judge of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas.

Judge Wiseman is a member of the Ohio and Dayton Bar Associations, and a trustee of the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association. She is admitted to the United States Supreme Court and numerous other federal courts at the trial and appellate level.

She is a past trustee and member of a diverse array of community groups, and has received numerous awards and recognitions for civic and professional accomplishments.

General Division 2024 IN REVIEW

JUDGE MARY WISEMAN ELECTED PRESIDING JUDGE OF COMMON PLEAS COURT

Effective June 3rd, 2024, Judge Mary Wiseman serves as Presiding Judge of Montgomery County Common Pleas Court.

In accordance with the Ohio Supreme Court Rules of Superintendence, presiding judges are elected by a majority vote of all sixteen Montgomery County Common Pleas Court Judges. Presiding judges provide administrative supervision of the court and its judges.

Judge Wiseman's service continues the year-long term of Judge Denise L. Cross of Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court, who retired in April 2024 after four consecutive years as Presiding Judge.

"I am honored and privileged to serve as the Presiding Judge of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas," Judge Wiseman stated. "Our local courts are hardworking, dedicated, and devoted to

achieving justice and fairness under the law for the many different issues presented to them. My service will continue the excellent work of our past Presiding Judges, such as retired Judge Denise Cross, that have assisted our local courts and judiciary in establishing the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas as one of the most highly regarded courts in Ohio."

JUDGE DENNIS ADKINS RECOGNIZED AT FINAL VETERANS TREATMENT COURT GRADUATION

Each Veterans Treatment Court graduation ceremony is a special occasion, but the court's December 2024 VTC graduation marked a significant moment, as it was Judge Dennis Adkins' final graduation ceremony. Judge Adkins helped to create VTC in 2013, and he has been a central part of its leadership ever since. His tireless commitment to serving veterans involved with the criminal justice system has changed many lives for the better.

At the graduation ceremony, Judge Adkins introduced the next judge of VTC, Judge Kimberly Melnick. Families, court staff, and community stakeholders gathered to celebrate the six graduates as well as honor



HONORABLE TIMOTHY N. O'CONNELL, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge O'Connell was elected a General Division Judge in 2006. He serves on the Executive, Probation Services, and Pretrial & Investigative Services Committees. Judge O'Connell received his B.A. from the University of Dayton in 1977 and his J.D. from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1980.

From 1980-1990, Judge O'Connell was in the private practice of law. He maintained a general practice with Baver, Messham & Bookwalter Co., L.P.A., initially, and then with Ensley & Eilerman Co., L.P.A. In 1990, Judge O'Connell was appointed as a Referee in the General Division. He served in that position for 16 years with the last three years as Chief Magistrate.

Judge O'Connell serves on the Board of Trustees of Nova Behavioral Health. He also serves on the Executive Committee for the Ohio Judicial Conference. He is a member of the American, Ohio and Dayton Bar Associations, and the Carl D. Kessler Inn of

Court. He serves on the Judicial Advisory Board of the MonDay CBCI.

Judge O'Connell has taught continuing legal education seminars for the Dayton Bar Association, Ohio Association of Magistrates and the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Association of Magistrates.



Judge Dennis Adkins at his final Veterans Treatment Court graduation ceremony. Photo: Alli Mullikin, Knack Video + Photo.

a longstanding VTC mentor as he retired.

KUSHINDA COURT RECOGNIZED AT ALL RISE CONFERENCE

The week before Judge Gerald Parker, Carlos Walker, Karla Arnold, Alvin Stokes, and L.A. Christian left for the All Rise 2024 Conference in Anaheim, California, they received some very exciting news: Kushinda Court had received initial certification from the Supreme Court of Ohio. It is an exciting step on the road to final certification for the General Division’s newest specialized docket.

The conference attendees gave a presentation on Kushinda Court titled “H.E.A.T and H.E.R.: An Overview of a

Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Lessons Learned by the Kushinda Specialty Court,” and it quickly became apparent that treatment court community was excited to hear about a docket serving a historically underserved demographic. As a court, the General Division was recognized for Kushinda Court’s groundbreaking approach to judicial innovation, under Judge Parker’s leadership.

Specialized Docket Supervisor Karla Arnold recounts that from the moment she stepped on the plane to Anaheim, a sense of community among All Rise attendees was present. “So many people had this common interest. When we reached the hotel and conference center, everywhere we went, somebody wanted to know how we



HONORABLE STEVEN K. DANKOF, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Dankof was appointed as a General Division Judge by then Governor Ted Strickland on December 30, 2010. Judge Dankof was elected to the Bench in 2012, and thereafter re-elected in 2014 and again in 2020. Judge Dankof is the Men’s Achievement Recovery Court (MARC) Judge and a member of the General Division’s Executive Committee. He received his BBA summa cum laude from Ohio University in 1973 and his JD with Honors from the University of Texas at Austin’s School of Law in 1976 where he also received The Order of the Coif. Judge Dankof has frequently lectured for the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association, the Dayton and Ohio State Bar Associations, and the University of Cincinnati’s Honors College and School of Law. Judge Dankof is the author of Extreme Cruelty – the Complicity of Judges in the Shame of Wrongful Convictions, and a moving force behind An Evening for Justice – an annual event in Dayton, Ohio to benefit the work of the Ohio Innocence Project.



HONORABLE DENNIS J. ADKINS, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Adkins was appointed to the General Division bench on June 6, 2011. He received his B.S. from the University of Dayton in 1982, and his J.D. from the Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University in 1986.

From 1986 to 2011, Judge Adkins practiced law in the Dayton area, engaging in both criminal and civil litigation. Since 1993, he has served as an Acting Judge in Kettering Municipal Court, and has over 15 years of experience as a special prosecutor in several cities.

Judge Adkins is a member of the American, Ohio, and Dayton Bar Associations, the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association, and has taught continuing legal education seminars for the Dayton Bar Association. He has also been a frequent lecturer at local colleges, including the University of Dayton School of Law, various legal organizations,

and other community civic and service groups.

He currently serves on the Judicial Advisory Board of the MonDay Community Correctional Institution. Judge Adkins is also a member of the Dayton Lawyers Club and the Carl D. Kessler Inn of Court.

In 2013, Judge Adkins created the first Veteran’s Treatment Court in this area. He presides over the court, which is designed to provide treatment and rehabilitation for veterans who have found themselves involved in the Criminal Justice System due to combat related problems. Judge Adkins is also Honorary Chair of the Final Salute Society, which assures that no Veteran is buried in Montgomery County without a representative at the grave site to receive the American flag for the veteran’s service to this country.

were doing and how our courts were doing. Everyone shared the ideal that punitive justice just doesn’t always help people—what helps is wrapping your arms around people and showing them you care.”

Intensive Probation Officer L.A. Christian was a first-time All Rise attendee. “It was very encouraging to see positive reactions to Kushinda Court,” he remarked. “The whole conference was very detail-oriented, insightful, and helpful. There was a lot of

helpful information about new trends in specialized dockets, and developments that might be coming our way.”

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

At the General Division’s Employee Appreciation Luncheon, two employees were honored with Professional Excellence Awards: Amanda Koenig, Investigative Services Supervisor; and Janet Davis, Payroll & Benefits Analyst.



Left: Judge Gerald Parker and Probation Services staff attended the All Rise conference in Anaheim, California. Right: Amanda Koenig, left, and Janet Davis, right, were honored with Professional Excellence Awards.



Left: Trained mediators attended the General Division's Mediation Luncheon. Right: The Court's mediation staff.

Professional Excellence Awards are given based on nominations from the court's own staff for a colleague's achievements, attitude, and display of professionalism. Amanda and Janet both received multiple nominations highlighting their professional attitudes and commitment to service.

**COURT RECOGNIZES MEDIATION WEEK
OCTOBER 21-25**

In the third week of October, the court recognized Mediation Week. Mediation offers an alternative to the traditional trial process where the parties can choose to work directly

with a trained mediator to resolve disputes faster.

The General Division has twelve trained mediators in its mediation program, with an overall successful settlement rate of 70%. A successful mediation may save a party thousands of dollars in legal fees and court costs.

On the final day of Mediation Week, General Division judges gathered with court mediators for an appreciation luncheon to recognize the crucial role they play in providing an important court service.



HONORABLE E. GERALD PARKER JR., JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Gerald Parker was elected to the Common Pleas Court Bench, General Division, in November of 2018, taking office in early January of 2019. He serves on the Offender Supervision and Security Committee. Judge Parker received his B.A. from Georgetown College (KY.) in 2004 and his J.D. from Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University in 2007.

From 2007 to 2011, Judge Parker was an Assistant Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney spending a majority of his time on felony dockets. In 2012, Judge Parker joined the civil litigation team with the Dayton firm of Dyer, Garofalo Mann and Schultz. He would then be appointed as juvenile magistrate for Montgomery County Juvenile Court in 2016.

Judge Parker is a member of the Dayton and Ohio State Bar Association, the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association and the Ohio Black Judges Association. He serves as Board President for Building Bridges, Inc., and on the board for the Salvation Army.

He is a member of numerous community organizations and received both Dayton's Top 10 African-American Male Award and WHIO Channel 7's Making a Difference Award. Judge Parker became Montgomery County's first African-American male elected to serve on the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court Bench. Judge Parker often volunteers at various churches, schools and community organizations.



Central State University students observed Judge Mary Wiseman's criminal docket.

VISITING CENTRAL STATE STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM; INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The General Division welcomed Central State University students throughout 2024 for a court visits packed with programming designed to show what the court is really like.

In April and again in November, juniors and seniors from criminal justice and sociology

courses at Central State University started their visit at the Reibold Building. Senior probation officers gave a presentation on the Probation Services department, including levels of supervision, probation conditions, and types of casebooks. Probation clients were invited to speak about their experiences in the criminal justice system, and they highlighted the support of their probation officers in avoiding recidivism and maintaining sobriety.



HONORABLE MARY E. MONTGOMERY, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Montgomery was elected to the Common Pleas Court Bench, General Division, in November 2018 after serving nearly 21 years as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney with the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office. During her tenure with the Prosecutor's Office, she served, among other positions, as a Supervising Attorney at Care House, prosecuting felony crimes involving physical and sexual abuse of children, as well as a Trial Supervisor, training and managing trial attorneys on multiple judges' criminal dockets. Judge Montgomery then served as Chief of the Civil Division, where she and her staff represented the County and all its departments and agencies, as well as the elected officials, in various administrative and civil matters, including civil defense litigation.

Judge Montgomery graduated summa cum laude from Ohio University in 1994, receiving her B.A. in Political Science. She received her Juris Doctor in 1998 from the

University of Dayton School of Law.

Judge Montgomery is a member of the Dayton Bar Association, the Ohio State Bar Association, the Dayton Lawyer's Club, the Carl D. Kessler Inn of Court, and the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association. She is currently a member of the Common Pleas Court Case Management Committee, Technology Committee, and Court Security Committee, as well as the Criminal Law and Procedure and Court Technology Committees for the Ohio Judicial Conference.

Judge Montgomery is admitted to practice law in the United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio, the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court. When not on the bench, you'll find her on the soccer field cheering on her three children.



HONORABLE SUSAN D. SOLLE, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Susan D. Solle joined the General Division on January 1, 2021. She was elected to the position in November 2020.

Before joining the court, Judge Solle was a trial lawyer for 18 years and practiced law with the firm of Dinsmore & Shohl from 2004 until she took the bench. She received her undergraduate degree, with honors, from Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, and her law degree, also with honors, from the University of Dayton School of Law.

Judge Solle's professional experience also includes working as an acting judge in the Montgomery County Municipal Court, as a judicial staff attorney for Judge James A. Brogan in the Ohio Second District Court of Appeals, and as a law clerk for Judge David G. Sunderland in the General Division.

Judge Solle has served as a board member and president of the Dayton Bar Association, and as board member and president of Legal Aid of Western Ohio and Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, and as board member and president of the Dayton Bar Foundation. She currently serves as vice president of the board of Nova Behavioral Health. She was also an adjunct professor at the University of Dayton School of Law from 2004-2022. Married for 35 years, Judge Solle and her husband, Jeff, have two grown sons.

Additional portions of the presentation covered a probation officer's day-to-day job responsibilities and work environment. All students, many of whom were interested in careers in the criminal justice field after graduation, received information on applying for internships or job shadowing with the court.

After lunch, the students walked two blocks to the Montgomery County Courts Building to sit in on court dockets. In the April visit, students attended one of the court's five specialized dockets, Kushinda Court. Judge Gerald Parker took students' questions after the docket and opened a dialogue about new approaches to decreasing criminal behavior.

In November, students attended Judge Mary Wiseman's criminal docket, and participated in a Q&A with Judge Angelina Jackson. Student visits are a valuable opportunity for the court to engage with the Dayton community and give young people insight into the workings of the criminal justice system.

ONSITE BRUNNER LITERACY CENTER OFFERS PROBATION CLIENTS PATH TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Among the many support organizations that the Probation Services department of Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division connects clients to, few may be as life-changing as the Brunner Literacy Center.



Judge Angelina Jackson led a discussion and Q&A with students enrolled in courses in criminal justice and related fields.



The Brunner Literacy Center provides onsite services in the Reibold Building to help probation clients achieve literacy goals such as earning their GED.

The Brunner Literacy Center is a Dayton-based literacy organization that provides one-on-one tutoring to adults who want to improve their reading, writing, or math skills. Since 2016, the Brunner Literacy Center has worked with the General Division's Probation Services department to offer their services to individuals on probation, many of whom have not attained a high school diploma.

Volunteer tutors from the Brunner Literacy Center work one-on-one with probation clients to help them gain basic educational skills, earn a GED, or obtain professional

licensure. Any probation client—and indeed, any member of the Dayton community—can use this service, which is free of charge to the client and to the court. In addition to their main location in northwest Dayton, Brunner Literacy Center provides ongoing tutoring sessions where Probation Services is located.

To date, 176 probation clients have earned their GEDs with the help of the Brunner Literacy Center. Many others have developed basic literacy skills or worked toward professional goals. In 2024, the Brunner Literacy Center hosted



HONORABLE KIMBERLY A. MELNICK, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Melnick was elected to the Common Pleas Court Bench, General Division, in November 2022 after serving the majority of her 28-year career prosecuting criminal cases.

Judge Melnick began her legal career with the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office in January 1994. In 1998, she went into private practice before returning to the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office from 2000 to 2002. From 2002 to 2006, Judge Melnick spent time as a Deputy District Attorney in Jefferson County, Colorado. She returned to Dayton and the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office in November 2006.

During her tenure with the Prosecutor's Office, she served, among other positions, as a Supervising Attorney of the Grand Jury/Intake Division, the Supervising Attorney for the Adult Protection Unit, as a Trial Supervisor, training and managing trial attorneys and most recently as a member of the Violent Crimes Bureau, prosecuting only homicide cases.

Judge Melnick graduated from Wright State University in 1990, receiving her B.S. in Marketing. She received her Juris Doctor in 1993 from the University of Dayton School of Law.

Judge Melnick is a member of the Dayton Bar Association and the Carl D. Kessler Inn of Court. She is currently a member of the Common Pleas Court's Information Technology and Probation Services Committees.



HONORABLE ANGELINA N. JACKSON, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Angelina N. Jackson was elected to the General Division in 2022 after practicing law for 18 years.

A Dayton native, Judge Jackson graduated from Colonel White High School. She received her B.A. from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee and her J.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Law.

From 2015 until her election to the bench, Judge Jackson worked as an Assistant Montgomery County Public Defender. Prior to her employment as a public defender, she was employed at the Ohio Justice & Policy Center, the University of Cincinnati College of Law, and the law firm of Dinsmore and Shohl.

Judge Jackson has volunteered with a number of community service initiatives, including mock trial, community-based legal clinics, the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project, and the City of Dayton's Use of Force Committee. She is a member of the Ohio State Bar Association, the Dayton Bar Association, the Ohio Black Judges Association and the Thurgood Marshall Law Society.

a graduation ceremony for GED recipients, nine of whom were probation clients. The court extends its heartfelt congratulations to these clients and its deepest appreciation to the staff of the Brunner Literacy Center and the Probation Services department.

General Division COURT OVERVIEW

COURT ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

The Court Administration Department implements the administrative policies of the Court, develops policies and procedures, and provides research and advisory services, public information services, and other special projects. Its functions are the

responsibility of the Court Administrator and the Administrative Judge. The Administrative Judge is elected annually by the Judges and is responsible for setting in motion the rules and policies established by the Court. The Court Administrator is appointed by the Court and supervises the various divisions and operations of the Court. These operations include purchasing, safety and security, finance, technology, and human resources.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The Information Technology (IT) Department manages the court's technology portfolio, programs and special projects, prepares and maintains the court's IT budget, manages IT procurement and vendor relationships,



Court Administration

**Steven Hollon, Court
Administrator**

**Mary Kay Stirling, Deputy
Court Administrator**



HONORABLE ELIZABETH ELLIS, JUDGE
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division

Judge Elizabeth Ellis was appointed to the General Division bench in June 2023.

Judge Ellis graduated from Denison University in 1997, receiving her B.A. in Communications and English Literature with a concentration in Renaissance Studies. Judge Ellis also studied with the Advanced Studies in England through University College of Oxford, UK, and with the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law Summer Program at St. Anne's College of Oxford, UK. She received her J.D. from the University of Dayton School of Law in 2001.

Judge Ellis first practiced with Legal Aid of Western Ohio before becoming an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Greene County, Ohio. Judge Ellis worked for Greene County for 18 years in the Juvenile, Appellate, Criminal, and Civil Divisions, serving as Chief Assistant of the Civil Division for 10 years. In 2021, Judge Ellis was appointed to the Appellate Division in the Montgomery County

Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Judge Ellis is a member of the Dayton Bar Association, the Ohio State Bar Association, the Carl D. Kessler Inn of Court, and the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association.

Judge Ellis is admitted to practice law in the State of Ohio; the United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio; the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals; and the United States Supreme Court. Judge Ellis has volunteered for various community organizations, including the Girl Scouts of Southwestern Ohio, Oakwood Ballet, and the Dayton Ballet School.

manages the court's five-year end-of-life cycle and initiates and participates in any audits, investigations, public record requests, sealed and expunged record court orders, as well as strategic direction of the court from a technological perspective.

2024 Accomplishments

In December 2024 the IT Department contracted with vendor Ohio Valley AV to install new presentation systems in two of the court conference rooms. These systems were installed in the lower level conference room in the Court Building and the 10th floor conference room in the Reibold Building. These systems were a significant upgrade to the previous systems with multiple large monitors, an entire room camera, multiple speakers and microphones, all integrated together to provide a whole room system for training, meetings, and conference calls.

The IT Department and Court staff began work with other stakeholders on a multi-year project to migrate from our existing case management system to a new, state of the art web-based platform developed by Journal Technologies. Configuration and testing will continue in 2025 with an

expected go-live date of February 2026.

As part of our end-of-life cycle, the IT Department replaced the Court's existing desktop printer fleet with 60 new printers. With the new printers, the IT Department was able to reduce the cost per page printed and increase the annual page allowance, resulting in approximately \$8,000.00 annual savings.

CASE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Case Management Department provides administrative and case management services to the court. The administrative functions of the Case Management Department include the collection and reporting of caseload statistics in compliance with the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio, the storage and maintenance of evidence, and the coordination of jury services. Through its Docket Support Section, the Case Management Department monitors judicial criminal dockets and prepares related court entries. The Case Management Department also supports and manages the court's Magistrate and Civil Stalking Protection offices, as well as the



General Division Magistrates

Adelina E. Hamilton (2022)

Karen B. Groseth (2025)

court's Mediation and Appointed Counsel programs.

Magistrate Office

The Court has two full-time magistrates who preside over civil matters referred by the judges of the court, including court hearings and bench trials. Matters of general referral to the magistrate include presiding over i) petitions for civil stalking protection and sexually oriented offense protection orders, ii) forcible entry and detainer cases, iii) replevin actions, iv) property forfeiture actions, v) petitions for court-ordered certificates of title, vi) motions for distribution of excess funds, and vii) proceedings in aid of execution. In 2024, the magistrates handled 1,958 matters for the court, 1,858 of which were general referrals.

2024 Stalking and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Order (SSOPO) Program

The Stalking and Sexually Oriented Offense Protection Order Office began in 2001 after an influx of violent crimes in Montgomery County. Since that time, over 20,000 petitions for protection orders have been filed. Many parties seeking protection orders have been, and currently are, the victims of crime and abuse, and, consequently, they present to the office with challenging and demanding circumstances. The Stalking Office Staff interview petitioners to determine if they are in the appropriate jurisdiction, assist in completing the necessary paperwork to file with the Court, and, if needed, refer parties to outside agencies for additional help. The goal of the Stalking Office is to ensure that each party, regardless of whether he or she is the petitioner or respondent, feels heard and

respected.

- 1,231 petitioners assisted in seeking a protection order
- 1,128 petitions for protection orders filed
- 539 full hearings were held

2024 Jury Services Accomplishments

- 2,657 prospective petit jurors reported for jury selection to hear 51 trials
- 79 grand jurors served from two weeks to four months during 2024
- Petit and grand jury fees for jury service totaled approximately \$117,240

PRETRIAL & INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES

The Pretrial and Investigative Services Department provides the court with investigative screening and supervision of criminal defendants, as well as the preparation of various reports necessary to the judicial process. Pretrial and Investigative Services Department staff interview those arrested on new felony and certain misdemeanor charges and recommend bond, conditions of supervision, and other services. Department staff supervises those defendants who are on electronic monitoring and other supervised release arrangements. The Pretrial and Investigative Services Department also prepares reports for the judges including those relating to pre-sentence investigations, intervention in lieu of conviction, judicial release, sealing of records, and jail time credit.

Pretrial Screening

- Screened 3,611 felony defendants

2024 Pretrial & Investigative Services Data

8,902

Investigations Completed (Bond, Presentence Investigation, and Other)

77%

of Pretrial Supervision Defendants Successfully Terminated

6,614

Felony and Misdemeanor Defendants Screened by Pretrial Screening

78%

of Electronic Monitoring Defendants Successfully Terminated

- Screened 3,003 misdemeanor defendants.
- Completed 954 Sealing of Records reports.
- Completed 3,434 jail time credit reports.

Pretrial Supervision and Electronic Monitoring

- Supervised 2,321 felony defendants.
- Supervised 409 misdemeanor defendants.

Pretrial Supervision defendants had a 77% successful termination rate, while Electronic Monitoring defendants had a successful termination rate of 78%.

Investigative Services

- 1,106 Presentence Investigation reports completed in 2024.
- 1,058 Intervention in Lieu of Conviction reports completed in 2024.
- 124 judicial release reports completed in 2024.

- 8,902 investigations completed in total in 2024.

PROBATION SERVICES

The Probation Services Department provides varying levels of supervision for persons who are convicted of felonies and misdemeanors and sentenced to probation or granted intervention in lieu of conviction. The Department is comprised of the following sections and teams: supervision teams, transport team, Specialized Docket team, and program coordinators. Services provided by Probation Services include intensive supervision, including specialized supervision for domestic violence cases and sex offender cases, chemical abuse/mental health supervision, evidence-based programming, on-site cognitive based programming, a community service work program, drug intervention services, adult treatment and mental health courts, literacy and education programs and employment opportunities.

2024 Probation Services Data

2,887

Total Probation Population in 2024

\$298,295

Community Service Value to the Community

\$784,564

Restitution Collected in 2024



Carlos Walker, Director of Probation Services

**Carlos Walker
Elected President
of Ohio Chief
Probation Officers
Association**

The General Division’s Director of Probation Services, Carlos Walker, was elected as the President of the Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association (OCPOA).

Walker’s election marks a historic milestone, as he becomes the first Black president of the association in a two-year term which commenced on January 1, 2025. This achievement underscores his dedication to probation services and his leadership within the field.

- Specific programming began in the Montgomery County Jail, including Breaking the Cycle and Decision Points.
- Brunner Literacy graduated 16 Probation Clients with their GED.
- Manager Terri Hawk completed 35 years of court service.
- Probation lost an integral member of the team. Todd Humfleet passed away on May 7, 2024. Todd was proud to be appointed the first Quality Assurance Coordinator. He is deeply missed by all

his coworkers.

2024 Drug and Alcohol Accomplishments

- 29,490 urinalysis tests were administered to clients.
- The Probation Officer receives immediate notification every time their client is tested with the instant urine cups.

2024 Community Service

- 562 clients participated in community service work.
- 28,545 hours of service work were completed.
- \$298,295 value to the community.

Specialized Dockets

General Division Intensive Probation Officers monitor clients who participate in one of five specialized dockets. Specialized Dockets are specifically designed to address particular clients, typically those with severe drug and/or alcohol additions. In addition, the probation officers who monitor the clients in our specialty courts have established relationships with several local treatment facilities and organizations that provide therapy and programs to serve the particular needs of these clients.

Specialized Docket	Year Established	Presiding Judge in 2024
Men’s Achievement Recovery Court (MARC)	1996	Hon. Steven K. Dankof
Recovery is Empowering Court (RISE)	2014	Hon. Mary Wiseman
Veteran’s Treatment Court	2016	Hon. Dennis A. Adkins
Mental Health Court	2019	Hon. Timothy N. O’Connell
Kushinda Court	2021 (pending certification)	Hon. E. Gerald Parker, Jr.

JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER



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JUVENILE DIVISION

ABOUT THE JUVENILE DIVISION

As a division of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court extends countywide to children who are alleged to be traffic offenders, delinquent, unruly, neglected, dependent, abused, and/or born to unmarried parents. The Court also has jurisdiction to rule on Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act, and to hear and determine criminal cases that charge adults with violating Ohio Revised Code Chapter 2152. In addition to the two judges and twelve magistrates who preside over official court hearings, there are additional court facilities and departments that serve the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a court of law dedicated to:

- preserving families by supporting parents and intervening only when it is in the best interest of the child and/or community;
- ensuring fairness, equity, and access to justice for all children and families regardless of their ethnicity, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation;
- ensuring a balance between consequences and rehabilitation while holding offenders accountable for their actions;
- protecting the children of the community while at the same time ensuring the safety of the community.



HONORABLE HELEN WALLACE, *ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE*
Montgomery County Juvenile Court

Judge Wallace is the administrative judge of Montgomery County Juvenile Court, leading the organization of approximately 450 employees who strive to provide individualized justice for children and to protect the community, while carefully balancing the interests of both.

Judge Wallace presides over specialized dockets including Juvenile Wellness Court and Juvenile Treatment Court. Wellness Court offers mental health support and rehabilitation to youth. Treatment Court assists in rehabilitation of juveniles who have been adversely affected by drugs and alcohol. Judge Wallace encourages family involvement and collaboration between treatment providers, probation and the youth in an effort to reduce recidivism and promote positive, healthy futures.

In 2023, Judge Wallace was appointed by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy to the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission. She was subsequently appointed by the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission to reconvene and chair the Juvenile Justice subcommittee.

Judge Wallace earned her law degree from George Washington University Law School after obtaining a bachelor's degree in International Affairs from the University of Cincinnati.

GOALS

Juvenile Court is a catalyst in the community, rallying community partners to be a part of cost effective programming that eliminates implicit bias and racial inequities, while also benefiting children and families by organizing and maintaining community resources. Juvenile Court exercises sensitivity toward, and protection of, victims and their families, while at the same time providing appropriate rehabilitation for juvenile offenders.

Juvenile Division

2024 IN REVIEW

- 128 new Court employees were hired in 2024 (not including 21 internal moves)
- 14 federal, state and local grants totaling approximately \$14.5 million were awarded to the Court in 2024. One grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services funds 26 individual programs within the Probation, Intervention and Detention departments.
- The Clerk's Office processed a total of 12,163 new filings.
- Tiffany Dulin was named deputy court administrator in July. She has worked at the Court for 24 years, the last nine serving as the director of the Intervention Center.
- A March presentation during the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Conference in Cleveland showcased how the Court uses neuropsychological evaluations to help youth and families to help identify learning needs, tailor case plans, and advocate for specialized educational interventions.
- Two outdoor spaces in the Court's Detention Center were renovated thanks to a Behavioral Health Grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services. The spaces now feature security cameras, safety turf, benches, plants and paint colors with a focus on trauma-informed design.
- The Information Technology staff completed 5,000 data support requests.
- The Court joined a new collaborative



HONORABLE JULIE BRUNS, JUDGE
Montgomery County Juvenile Court

Judge Julie A. Bruns began serving as a Montgomery County Juvenile Court judge in January 2023. She had previously worked as a Juvenile Court magistrate since 2019, presiding over juvenile traffic cases and private custody cases, and serving as chief magistrate.

Judge Bruns currently co-chairs the Dayton Bar Association's Juvenile Law Committee, and the Ohio Attorney General's Criminal Justice and Mental Health Task Force. She also presides over the Court's Adult Child Support Imposition Docket.

Before becoming a magistrate, Judge Bruns was an assistant prosecuting attorney for 23 years where she prosecuted cases in the Juvenile Division, Adult Trial Division, CARE House (Montgomery County's Child Advocacy Center), and ultimately served as the Juvenile Division Chief from 2005-2019. During her employment in the Montgomery

County Prosecutor's Office, Judge Bruns was instrumental in developing one of the first Juvenile Sexting Diversion programs in the nation, which became a model for similar programs in multiple states throughout the US. She also served on several committees through the Ohio Supreme Court and the Governor's Office, including work on Senate Bill 10, also known as the Adam Walsh Act, and Ohio's Juvenile Competency statute.

Judge Bruns received her undergraduate degree from Miami University in 1993, and her law degree from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1996.



Left: Deputy Court Administrator Tiffany Dulin received the Ambassador Award from Dayton Mediation Center. Right: The Juvenile Court's three schools received the highest awards of Excellence in Prevention from Montgomery County Educational Service Center.

between law enforcement, social service agencies, and community providers to effectively address child exploitation. The Court's Creating Opportunities for Resilience and Empowerment (CORE) Program addresses the needs of youth at-risk or who have been affected by human trafficking.

DEPUTY COURT ADMINISTRATOR RECEIVES RECOGNITION

Deputy Court Administrator Tiffany Dulin received the Dayton Mediation Center's Ambassador Award during a September Annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner. The award was established "to honor volunteers and supporters who have gone above and beyond in their commitment to our mission," said Michelle Zaremba, the Mediation Center's director.

Dulin has served for more than ten years on the center's Mediation Advisory Board. "She has consistently made herself available to provide valuable insights on cases and processes, particularly during challenging times," Zaremba said. Following the pandemic, when referrals to the Mediation Center doubled, Dulin helped to secure funding and grants to help manage the influx of cases.

COURT FACILITIES EARN PREVENTION AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

All three Court-affiliated schools, located at the Center for Adolescent Services, the Detention Center and Nicholas Residential Treatment Center, received the highest 'platinum-level' awards of Excellence in Prevention at Montgomery County Educational Service Center's December



Court Administration

Eric Shafer, Court Administrator

Tiffany Dulin, Deputy Court Administrator

awards celebration. The awards highlight efforts to help youth develop self-regulating and coping skills, and provide a sense of safety. The mission is to assist schools with implementing best-practices to create healthy, drug-free environments that promote optimal mental health for students, parents, teachers, and staff in the school community.

COURT CREATES NEW DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY IMPACT

In November 2024, the Court Appointed Special Advocates team and the coordinators of Juvenile Detention Alternatives and Race Equity and Inclusion joined to form a new department called Community Impact. Led by Director Andrina Ryhlick, this new department is poised to implement innovative initiatives and serve even more families in the community.

In 2024, CASA welcomed 7 new volunteers to its team. Volunteers received comprehensive training on crucial topics, including the impact of abuse and trauma, mental health awareness, and the challenges of homelessness. Throughout the year, CASA served 130 families, providing a lifeline to 165 children, contributing approximately 2,426 hours of time, and successfully closing 61 cases, each one representing a positive change in a child's life.

In July, the Ohio CASA organization recognized local CASA volunteer, Rachel

Easter, before a July Dayton Dragons baseball game.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UNDERGOES LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Kendra Kirsch began as the new education director in July. She has previous experience working as an assistant principal at Winton Woods High School, as an intervention specialist, Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) coach, and administrator in the Dayton Public Schools' Office for Exceptional Children.

The Juvenile Court's Education Department has three non-public schools chartered by the Ohio Department of Education located within the county. Nichols Residential Treatment Center (NRTC), Center for Adolescent Services (CAS), and the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) are the locations that house each school within the facility. Each location offers a comprehensive middle and high school course of study through year-round programming and partners with the local school districts for Title 1, Part D funded programming and services.

The schools receive federal funding to improve the quality of education in facilities for neglected and delinquent youth who have yet to attain the credits that allow them to graduate from high school and are under the age of 21. All three locations are staffed with certified teachers in all core content areas of English, Math, Social Studies,



*Left: Volunteer Rachel Easter was recognized by the Ohio CASA organization before a Dayton Dragons baseball game.
Right: The Nichols Residential Treatment Center holiday party.*



and Science, as well as Art and Physical Education. This allows for students to either continue on their educational path toward high school graduation and/or participate in credit recovery to realign his or her path to obtain a diploma. The Court supplements services for those youth that have significant learning deficits. Additionally, the schools maintain community partnerships with Dayton Metro Library and K-12 Gallery & TEJAS to implement additional programming for students.

All schools have implemented full PBIS programming to include holiday celebrations, building-wide events, and incentives for honor roll for all students.

DETENTION CENTER OFFERS SAFETY, TREATMENT

Detention Services provides a comprehensive program for pre and post dispositional youth, in a safe and secure environment, while protecting the public safety. Youth range in age from 10 to 20 years old. Detention Services houses six distinct populations within its 96-bed facility. All youth housed or committed to placement are offered evidence based programming, educational, mental health, medical, physical, and life-skills programming.

In 2024, Detention Services continued to offer a variety of programming designed to inspire youth to make better decisions, encourage them to become leaders in their peer groups, and decrease their involvement in delinquent behaviors. This included a Black History Program, Professional Career Expo, Skillstreaming, Harvest Fest, assemblies with local professionals and motivational speakers, and weekend incentivized activities and tokens. The facility continued to incorporate Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports standards and practices to incentivize youth for expected behaviors.

The six distinct populations and the number of youth served in 2024 include:

Detention Services - those awaiting the legal process or transfer to approved placements. (860 youth served in 2024)



Two outdoor porches and two terraces in the Juvenile Court's Detention Center were renovated using a grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

The Juvenile Cognitive Alternative Rehabilitative Effort-Specialized Treatment Program (JCARE-STP) is designated for male sex offenders ages 14 to 18 of all felony levels. (6 youth served)

Juvenile Cognitive Alternative Rehabilitative Effort-Aggression Replacement Training (JCARE-ART) is a treatment program for felony adjudicated male youth ages 12-19, identified as moderate to high risk to reoffend per the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) who would otherwise be committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services. (36 youth served)

The **Corrections Program** is an alternative program for adjudicated youth who have demonstrated the need for an immediate short-term commitment of either for 5 or 10 days. The program is designated for youth between the ages of 10-17. (23 youth served)

The **Detention Certified Program** is for youth under the age of 21, whose cases have been transferred to the adult Court for prosecution; but who can be behaviorally maintained in a juvenile setting. (4 youth served)

The **Detention Motion to Transfer (MTT)** Program services youth under the age of 21, who are awaiting a determination of amenability or transfer to the adult Court. (12 youth served)

2024 Juvenile Probation Data

778

Total Youth Served

492

Total Terminated

303

Total Youth Admitted

9 months

Average Length of Probation

PROBATION ADDS NEW EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE

The Probation Department includes the Traditional Unit, Resource Planning Program, Adult Probation, Evening Reporting Center I & II, Community Based Services, Juvenile Court Work Program, and Transportation.

In 2024, Probation began offering another service for youth and families through the addition of Intensive Home-Based Treatment (IHBT). This was made possible through a grant opportunity through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The grant was awarded in 2022; however the program was delayed due to external staffing challenges.

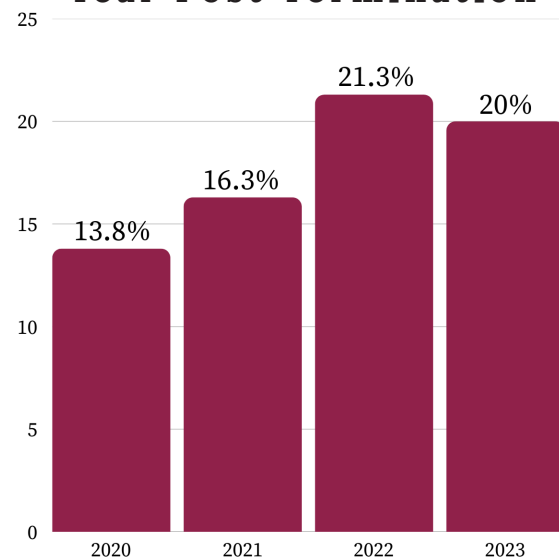
In May 2024, the National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP) was identified as a new partner for this endeavor, and the first youth



Youth helped to create a public mural through the Helping Adolescents Achieve Long Term Objectives program.

was connected to the service in August. By December, the program had reached its capacity of 8 youth. IHBT is intended to be an intensive, short-term program with youth and families receiving counseling, case management and other services at home, school or in the community for five (5) hours per week for a period of time not to exceed six (6) months. By bringing IHBT to the Probation, the goal is reduce the amount of time that youth with severe and persistent mental health diagnoses spend in out of home placements.

Recidivism Rates Up to One Year Post Termination



Recidivism looks at if a youth has been adjudicated of a new offense one year post involvement with Juvenile Court. The national average of juvenile offenders is 55%.

INTERVENTION SERVES AS TRIAGE CENTER FOR YOUTH

In August, Matt Pack was named the new Intervention Center (IC) director, having worked his way through the Court, from intern in 2010, to director.

The IC is located at the Juvenile Justice Center, and is a 24-hour, 7-day a week single point of entry for court services for unruly and delinquent youth. With the onsite support of outside agencies, the IC can provide a triage for youth and their families when more in-depth intervention is needed. Youth are connected to resources such as individual counseling services, certified peer recovery services, and opportunities for restorative justice through community service activities.

In 2024, the Intervention Center conducted 1,296 administrative hearings, monitored 615 youth in the Electronic Home Monitoring program, and facilitated the placement of 70

youth into Emergency Foster Care.

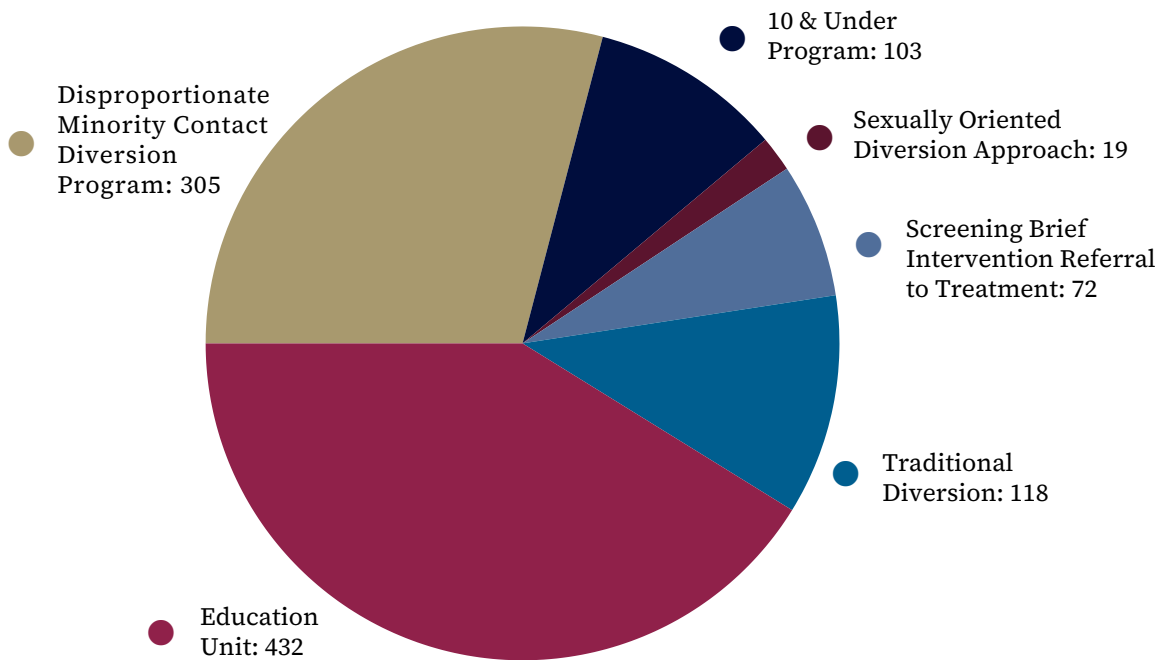
RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES PROVIDE SAFETY, EDUCATION

In 2024, the Center for Adolescent Services (CAS) provided services to 102 youth. CAS received a total of 79 referrals during the year, with 60 being females and 19 being males. Of those, demographics include: 76 African American youth in placement, 27 white youth, 3 American Indian youth, 2 Hispanic youth and 2 other/unknown youth. The average length of stay for males was 190 days, and the average length of stay for females was 151 days.

The center also successfully completed the PREA (National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape) Audit and accreditation in May 2024.

CAS continued to provide cognitive behavioral therapy and gender specific therapy to address criminogenic needs.

2024 Programming Opportunities for Diversion of Low-Risk Youth by Number of Referrals





Left: Youth who achieved their Positive Behavior Intervention & Support goals visited with farm animals. Right: A collaboration between the court, Montgomery County Educational Service Center, and Graduation Alliance helped students earn high school credits during the summer.

In 2024 Nicholas Residential Treatment Center (NRTC) had 43 referrals to programming.

Of those 43 referrals, 36 were male referrals and 7 were female. Throughout the year, NRTC provided services to a total of 51 youth. Of those 51 youth, 37 were males and 14 were females. Demographics include 37 African American youth, 12 white youth and 2 other/unknown youth.

NRTC was found to be in compliance with the Ohio Administrative Code when reviewed by The Ohio Department of Children and Youth. NRTC continued to provide services through a trauma informed care approach. In 2024 all NRTC staff members were trained in the ROCA Rewire training to improve service delivery for the youth.

Both CAS and NRTC continued to collaborate on transition and re-entry services for youth completing programming as well as partnering for staff training and development.

NEW SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM HELPS TEENS CATCH UP

Twelve Montgomery County Juvenile Court-affiliated students from five different districts earned high school credits this summer, during a new collaboration between the Court, Montgomery County

Educational Service Center, and Graduation Alliance, an online education program.

“Everybody worked together with the mindset that we could do it,” Judge Helen Wallace said. “They embraced this idea and it worked.”

The pilot program partners identified youth who had repeatedly missed classes, and were at risk for not graduating. They also worked with school districts to ensure that the online classes would transfer.

Students participated in weekly meetups at local libraries with the Court’s education advocates, who held them accountable and helped with any challenges that might prevent them from completing the work. The Court also provided transportation, snacks, drinks, meals and incentives to help students stay engaged.

“I think having the meetup accountability and support really helped the kids with finishing courses and earning credits,” Wallace said.

“Now, these students have had this experience where they know they can do it. My hope is that it encourages them enough to persevere and keep going to school, keep earning credits, and moving forward towards graduation.”

SPECIALIZED DOCKETS FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH, ADDICTION

Juvenile Court is committed to breaking the cycle of addiction and crime, and helping to lead youth and parents out of the justice system with three specialized dockets: Family Treatment Court, Juvenile Treatment Court, and Wellness Court. The dockets connect residents to evidence-based treatment, and provide accountability to people with substance use and mental health disorders.

In 2024, 19 youth were served in the Juvenile Treatment Court.

The Family Treatment Court provided individualized services to parents - 21 completed the program, resulting in 24 youth being reunified with their families.

The Wellness Court aims to prevent youth with mental illnesses from repeatedly cycling through a juvenile justice system and identify the mental health needs of adjudicated youth to provide more effective treatment and improved safety. The specialized docket served 14 youth in 2024.



Family Treatment Court is one of Juvenile Court's specialized dockets.

**Juvenile Division
2024 STATISTICS**

ADULT MISDEMEANOR COMPLAINTS	
Total	180
CIVIL COMPLAINTS ON ADULTS	
Parentage	744
Support	6,702
UIFSA (Uniform Inter-State Family Support Act)	115
Total	7,561
JUVENILE REFERRALS	
Abuse, Dependency and Neglect	2,084
Unruly	2,776
Tobacco	87
Traffic	1,247
Delinquency	4,308
Custody Related	3,991
Other	1,479
Total	15,972



DAYTON-MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTS BUILDING

301



DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

ABOUT THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

The Domestic Relations Court is the division of Common Pleas responsible for hearing all divorce, dissolution, legal separation, annulment and civil domestic violence cases for residents of Montgomery County. Parties may also return to the Court for post-decree resolution of matters including child or spousal support, allocation of parental rights and responsibilities (“custody”), parenting time or visitation among other matters. In 2024, two Judges along with 44 staff served Montgomery County in this capacity.

OUR MISSION

The Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court is dedicated to resolving family conflict by:

- Offering easy access to the Court for prompt problem resolution
- Providing quality services to the public
- Ensuring efficient case management by a professional and courteous staff
- Providing insightful education to divorcing parents

The Court will anticipate and meet the challenges presented by continuing to embrace social, legal, and technological advancements.



HONORABLE TIMOTHY D. WOOD, *ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE*
Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court

Judge Timothy D. Wood stepped into the role of Administrative Judge in May 2024, and was elected to the bench in November 2024. Prior to becoming the Administrative Judge, he served our community in the Domestic Relations Court as Judge for 14 years after being elected to that position in 2011 and served as a magistrate for 19 years prior to becoming Judge. Judge Wood received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Dayton in 1980 and his Juris Doctorate from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1984. Judge Wood first served as a Staff Attorney in Darke County, Ohio, and then went into private practice for a number of years. Judge Wood became a Domestic Relations Magistrate in 1992. He is very involved in several legal and community organizations, as well as serving as an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Dayton Law School.



HONORABLE JENNIFER A. PETRELLA, JUDGE
Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court

Judge Jennifer A. Petrella is currently serving her first year as Judge of the Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court. She received a Bachelor of Arts and Laut Honors degrees from Wheeling Jesuit College in 1995 and her Juris Doctor from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1998. Judge Petrella has served her entire legal career in public service. She advanced from law clerk to Director of Court Services in the Montgomery County Juvenile Court, serving over 18 years in the division. In 2015, she joined the Domestic Relations Division as Court Administrator and Magistrate and was elected as Judge of the Division in 2024. Judge Petrella continues to serve as Treasurer of Miami Valley Crime Stoppers, Trustee of Montgomery County Juvenile Court Foundation, as well as participates in Ohio Supreme Court boards and committees. She continues to educate and volunteer in her church and community.

Domestic Relations Division

2024 IN REVIEW

2024 was a year of change for the Domestic Relations Court. Court Administrator Jennifer Petrella won the nomination as Judge in the March primary election. In April, Judge Cross announced her retirement after serving as Judge in Domestic Relations Court for 23 years and serving Montgomery County for 36 years. Judge Wood moved into the role of Administrative Judge upon Judge Cross'

retirement. The following month, Judge Petrella was appointed to fill the temporary position of Judge in the Domestic Relations Court until the election in November, when she was elected to the position.

With the retirement of Judge Cross came the retirement of the Court's last Court Reporter, Linda Zell. Linda served the Court for 32 years and the county for 40 years. She was the last court reporter on staff in Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, bringing an end to the era of having Court Reporters in person in our courtrooms. This service is now outsourced to independent contractors



Judge Jennifer Petrella takes the oath of office after her appointment as Domestic Relations Court judge in June 2024.



The Domestic Relations Court is involved in Child Abuse Awareness Month in April.

throughout the area.

At the end of 2024, the Domestic Relations Court's Legal Administrator and Chief Magistrate, Elaine Stoermer, also hung up her robe. Magistrate Stoermer served in Domestic Relations Court for 29 years and served Montgomery County for 32 years. In addition to hearing cases, she managed the Court's Magistrates and legal staff and wrote the Spotlight newsletter keeping attorneys who practice at our Court up to date on legal matters.

As part of our outreach to the community, the Court was involved in Child Abuse Awareness month in April. The Court works annually to raise awareness and focus on preventing child maltreatment, encouraging communities to

work together to support families, and create safe, healthy environments for children.

Additionally, the Court took part in the annual Law Day Celebration in May. This is a nationally celebrated day that looks at the important role of law and Courts in our communities. Judge Cross collaborated with the Dayton Bar Association and invited all Court divisions, as well as the Clerk of Courts, and the honorees for a special luncheon at the Sinclair Conference Center. The Court honored two people for their dedication to the community. Attorney Nicole Rutter-Hirth was recognized for her work in family law, representing parties on complex family law cases. Elizabeth Nicholson was awarded for her work as the director of CARE House and for her expertise in the legal community.



Left: The Court's last court reporter, Linda Zell, retired in 2024. Center: Attorney Nicole Rutter-Hirth received an award for her work in family law. Right: Elizabeth Nicholson received an award for her work as director of CARE House.



Domestic Relations Court staff manned booths at the Legal Advocacy and Information Day hosted by the Montgomery County Fatherhood Initiative and Public Defender's Office.



Also in May, the Domestic Relations Court took part in the Legal Advocacy and Information Day. Primarily targeted to assist fathers and hosted by the Montgomery County Fatherhood Initiative and Public Defender's Office, the all-day event included Montgomery County Domestic Relations Court, Juvenile Court, Clerk's Office, Public Defender, and Support Enforcement Agency as participants. The local courts, agencies, and organizations created a day of education as well as a one-stop-shop, where fathers could work with legal professionals and even file to address child support. The event was held on May 22, 2024, at the Sinclair Conference Center.

The Court also recognized Domestic Violence Awareness throughout the month of October to raise awareness about the prevalence and impact of domestic violence in our communities. The Court aims to uplift

the needs and voices of survivors, encourage people to take action to prevent domestic violence, highlight available resources, and to remember the victims.

Looking to the Future

The Domestic Relations Court is collaborating with the Clerk's Office, General Division and Probate Court to build a new case management system. Nicknaming it "JTI", as Journal Tech Industries' is the developer who is creating this system as their first footprint at a Common Pleas Court in Ohio. The program kicked off in February 2024 and is scheduled to go live in February 2026.

Why JTI? The Domestic Relations Court's current case management system is several decades old. Domestic Relations started filing electronically in February 2022 with a different system. Part of that build was to



Domestic Relations Court staff recognized Domestic Violence Awareness Month throughout October.



Left: Judge Wood with his staff, Amy Brandl and Kathy Everson. Right: Judge Petrella with her staff, Suzanne Alder and Dannese Jackson.



ensure the two systems could communicate. The Journal Tech System allows the Domestic Relations Court to have one program that handles case management and electronic filing with newer technology. Even the public portal for looking at cases will be included in this new system. The collaboration between divisions results in a cost-savings for the public, as well as a consistent platform for attorneys, law enforcement and other legal partners. Additionally, the system is such that court and clerk IT staff will be trained to maintain much of the development, resulting in further savings.

Domestic Relations Division

COURT OVERVIEW

JUDGES

Timothy D. Wood began serving as the Administrative Judge of Domestic Relations Court in May 2024. In addition to hearing cases, Judge Wood is charged with assigning work throughout the division, hiring staff to carry out specific functions and overseeing supervision of all personnel, as well as maintaining the Court's budget. He is also an advocate for the safety of all participants while enhancing access to justice. Jennifer A. Petrella serves as Judge for the division. Judge Petrella actively participates in Court operations in addition to hearing the cases assigned to her docket. Judge Petrella presents

information on the Court and its' services to various community members and serves on the Security Committee. Each Judge appoints a personal staff consisting of a bailiff and a judicial assistant. Amy Brandl serves as Bailiff and Kathy Everson as Judicial Assistant for Judge Wood. Suzanne Alder serves as Bailiff and Dannese Jackson as Judicial Assistant for Judge Petrella. Kathryn Shields serves as staff attorney to both Judges.

ADMINISTRATORS

Appointed by Judge Wood, two Administrators have the primary responsibility of overseeing Court departments and day-to-day functions. Duties are divided between court operations and legal matters.

Court Administrator

The Court Administrator's primary duties are to attend to public and staff relations, the safety and welfare of all participants, and to hear Court cases in the Domestic Relations Court. This administrator assists in program development, payroll, budget, inventory control, and contract oversight. The Court Administrator also manages staff directly related to the support of the courtrooms and daily operations, as well as assisting in case management and special projects in conjunction with the Legal Administrator. Court Administration includes the Court Operations Specialists focused on Purchasing and Interpreter Services, Customer Service Specialist,



Court Administration

Kristen Keebaugh-Chambers,
Court Administrator

Barbara Reno, Legal Administrator

Navigators, Facilities Service Worker, as well as Information Systems, Assignment, Compliance, Family Relations, and Parent Education Departments. In addition to the above, the Court Administrator is the point of contact for public record requests, as well as any concerns over interpreter or Guardian ad Litem performance.

Kristen Keebaugh-Chambers serves as Court Administrator with the direct supervision of five (5) Managers and six (6) staff.

Legal Administrator

The Legal Administrator’s primary duties are to provide oversight of the magistrates and legal support staff, to hear court cases, and to maintain relations among the attorneys and the legal community practicing in Domestic

Relations Court. This administrator assists in maintaining the Court’s Local Rules, providing legal training and assuring magistrates provide timely decisions. The Legal Administrator also assists on special projects and daily operations in conjunction with the Court Administrator. Legal Administration includes the Administrative Assistant, Magistrates, Legal Secretaries and Mediation Departments.

Barbara Reno serves as Chief Magistrate/ Legal Administrator with direct supervision of two Managers, the Magistrates, and an Administrative Assistant.

MAGISTRATES

Magistrates are attorneys appointed by the Judges who have the primary duty of



Domestic Relations Division Magistrates

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Barbara Reno (2002) | Kathryn Shields (2022) |
| Nicholas Sylvain (2002) | Kenneth Krochmal (2022) |
| J. Andrew Root (2018) | Kristen Keebaugh-Chambers (2024) |
| Erin Otis (2019) | Thomas Schiff (2024) |



Left: The Legal Secretary Department. Right: The Court Operations team.



hearing cases referred to them. Magistrates may answer procedural and other questions; however, they may not discuss a case with either party (or their attorney) if the other party / attorney is not present. Magistrates write articles for legal publications, make presentations at legal seminars and participate in special projects of the Court. While magistrates often encourage and facilitate party settlements via mediation or agreed orders, they also issue decisions on contested matters. Parties may object to decisions (per the Civil Rules), but even if there is no objection filed, the assigned Judge will review them before the decision becomes a permanent order of the Court. The Court has full-time and part-time Magistrates among its staff.

LEGAL SECRETARIES

The Legal Secretary Department performs tasks in support of a Judge or Magistrate. Staff require considerable knowledge of office, secretarial and administrative practices and procedures. The legal secretaries prepare Court orders, Domestic Violence Wallet Cards, reports, forms, memos, and correspondence, in addition to decisions for the Judges and Magistrates. They receive, screen and refer telephone calls from the public and attorneys, as well as manage many documents that are e-Filed. Additional duties include tracking cases for appropriate sealing, searching and maintaining files for a variety of complex and confidential matters, as well as scanning documentation for the Court's internal system. There is one Manager and four (4) Legal Secretaries for the Court.

COURT OPERATIONS

The Court Operations focus is on the daily needs of the Court. There are six (6) team members, several of whom serve as Mediators for the Court, in addition to their primary duties.

The main responsibilities provided by this department include assuring parties and attorneys check in at the Court's electronic kiosks for Court hearings, assist parties filing for Civil Protection Orders, and answering phone inquiries. They oversee safety concerns before and after hearings, such as assisting the public in evacuation drills and providing separation between opposing parties in domestic violence cases. They are the point of contact for self-represented parties prior to working with the Compliance Office, as well as before / after hearings. Their main responsibility is to assist parties, in navigating the Court system. This assistance is especially critical for self-represented parties who are unfamiliar with technology and/or need interpreter services.

Additionally, they assist with inventory oversight, initiate budget functions, and assist on other special projects. The critical Language Access responsibilities are centralized here. They obtain interpreters for Court hearings and other Court events, and track billing. They are responsible for securing new interpreters as well as processing all requests for audio recordings and transcripts that are filed with the Court.



Left: The Compliance Office staff. Right: The Assignment Office staff.

COMPLIANCE OFFICE

The Compliance Office consists of a Manager and five (5) staff. Compliance Officers have the primary responsibilities of reviewing paperwork and preparing post-decree administrative orders. Paperwork being reviewed can be prepared by either attorneys or self-represented litigants. Compliance Officers review packets of information for self-represented litigants to assure they have the required paperwork and addenda to file a new case or post-decree matter before the Court. The Compliance Officers also review the Final Decree, post decree orders regarding child and / or spousal support, and agreed orders. In addition to the above, the Compliance Officers prepare modifications, terminations and establishment of arrearage payments for the Judges. They are a point of contact with the Court and answer procedural questions, prepare correspondence and initiate the paperwork for the annual emancipation project.

ASSIGNMENT OFFICE

The Assignment Office consists of a Manager and three (3) staff. Assignment Officers have the primary duties of scheduling hearings and assigning Magistrates to cases. To perform these duties, Assignment Officers facilitate calendar coordination between the Court, attorneys and self-represented parties, collect and maintain files for matters pending before the Court, and complete case inventory. They also track cases monthly and complete mandated reporting to the

Supreme Court of Ohio.

In addition to the above, they have the responsibility to review records of individuals with Seek Work Orders, and payment history of overdue support obligations to determine if a party is in compliance with the order and prepares reports for the Judges and Magistrates prior to contempt or imposition of sentence hearings. They may assist Parent Education by checking in parents for their parenting classes.

Assignment Officers are also responsible for overseeing parties who come to the Court to eFile a Petition for Civil Protection Order as a sworn Deputy Clerk. They process the submission and file the case. These duties result in an expedited hearing before a Magistrate, the same day the party comes in to complete the Petition. If granted, they print copies for the party, as well as the copy to be served by the Sheriff. Additionally, they prepare LEADS information for law enforcement. They are a point of contact for other Courts, out-of-county police, victim-witness advocates and the public.

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The M.I.S. Department consists of a Manager and a Systems Technician. The department is primarily responsible for providing hardware options and software solutions to ensure staff have the proper tools to complete their tasks effectively. The department administers and maintains data collection in



Left: Family Relations Department staff. Right: Parent Education Department staff.

the Court’s case management system, assures regular back-up of stored information and provides protection for internal files and confidential communication. The department is responsible for all technological resources: computers, printers, check-in kiosks, telephones, audio recording equipment and software, laptops, storage and the Court website. M.I.S. is the point of contact for vendors, the Clerk’s Office, other county agencies and technology entities doing regular business with the Court. The department works with other information technology personnel under contract with the Court and with Montgomery County Data Processing. They also work to maintain the integrity of court communication and security systems.

investigative services and prepares reports on families. While parties may request involvement of the Family Relations Department, all referrals are made by the assigned Judge or Magistrate. The department provides family investigations and home studies, including home studies at the request of out-of-state courts or agencies. Family Investigators also meet with parents needing assistance in creating a workable parenting time schedule and provide recommendations. Licensed Family Investigators also offer counseling services to parties interested in preserving their marriage through conciliation. Several staff also serve as mediators on cases they are not investigating. The Family Relations Department includes a Manager and three (3) staff.



The Management of Information Systems department.

FAMILY RELATIONS

The Family Relations Department provides

PARENT EDUCATION

The Parent Education Department consists of one Manager and a Parent Education Specialist. They are responsible for conducting parent seminars. The seminar, entitled “Helping Children Succeed After Divorce,” is a mandatory three-hour presentation for parents who are in the process of a divorce, dissolution or legal separation and have minor children (under the age of eighteen (18)). The presentation provides information regarding the effects of divorce and parental conflict on children, giving parents the insights and tools to move toward an effective co-parenting model in



Domestic Relations Court has two dedicated staff members in its Mediation Department, along with 15 certified staff throughout the Court.

safe and separate homes. They highlight how children may attempt to manipulate the parents as communication between the parents may not be as effective following the family break. The presentation also includes topics such as the importance of regular and consistent child support payments, as well as regular and consistent parenting time. Additionally, Parent Education staff regularly support the Court as mediators, and provide coverage for customer service.

MEDIATION DEPARTMENT

The Court provides Mediation where parties can resolve disputes outside the formal legal process. Mediation services are available for most cases, and all pre-decree cases are screened for mediation. If the parties agree to mediate, they will meet in a private setting with two Ohio Supreme Court certified staff mediators. Mediators assist the couple in identifying issues and developing options and solutions, but they will not decide the issues for the couple. Mediation is a confidential process, and the mediators may not be subpoenaed into court. If the parties are able to reach an agreement, a “written agreement” is prepared, and signed by the parties and becomes an Order of the Court. This agreement is then given to the parties, the Court, and attorneys of record. There

is one Manager and one dedicated staff to the Mediation Department, along with 15 certified staff throughout the Court.



Domestic Relations Division
2024 Statistics

DOMESTIC RELATIONS STATISTICS	2021	2022	2023	2024
New Filings for Divorce	975	915	862	805
New Filings for Dissolutions	605	521	561	536
New Filings for Legal Separations	16	18	13	10
New Filings for Annulments	12	9	14	5
Custody Motions	219	167	166	147
Parenting Time Motions	109	142	129	153
Property/Other Motions	314	362	357	310
Support Motions	784	780	885	905
CS (New - Custody and Support Cases)	48	43	35	45
Motions Dismissed by Parties	574	709	712	552
Motions Dismissed by the Court	731	822	856	973
Final Orders - Divorce Decrees	877	848	799	774
Final Orders - Dissolution Decrees	564	553	516	529
Final Orders - Annulment Decrees	9	6	7	5
Final Orders - Legal Separation Decrees	7	4	8	7
Family Relations Investigations	57	62	81	70
Mediations	100	98	114	110
New Case/Motion reviews (Attorney/ Self-Represented)	3,661	4,189	5,832	7,810
Domestic Violence Petitions Filed	2,094	2,038	1,938	2,055
Notice of Withholding Orders Prepared	856	710	994	361
Child Support Emancipation Entries	2,137	2,528	2,538	1,205
Parent Education Seminar Attendance	919	821	934	807
Conciliation Counseling	16	29	47	37
Transcripts / CD's Prepared	315	148	443	353
Interpreters Scheduled* (NEW CATEGORY IN 2023)			321	341

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTS

41 N. PERRY ST


MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COURTS BUILDING
41 N. PERRY

OF BEAUTIFUL FOR
PATRIOT'S DREAM
SHE'S BEYOND THE YEARS





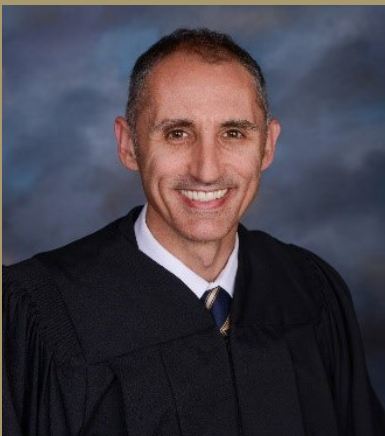
PROBATE DIVISION

ABOUT THE PROBATE DIVISION

Probate Court, a division of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, is a trial court with limited jurisdiction as granted by the Ohio Revised Code. Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction over the administration of estates and trusts, appointment of guardians for those deemed incompetent and estates of minors, adoptions, issuance of marriage licenses, name changes, commitment of mentally ill and various other actions. The court also approves settlements in wrongful death actions and minor injury actions. Probate Court is charged with more than 600 responsibilities pursuant to Ohio Revised Code.

An Ohio Probate Judge is elected for a six-year term. In our Court, five Magistrates, appointed by the Judge, assist in handling the voluminous caseload. A Probate Judge is also the Clerk of the Probate Court. Therefore, to assist the Judge in managing the court records, the deputy clerks maintain and make available to the public certain Probate Court records. Our clerks accept filings, issue service of summonses, and are responsible for docketing and maintaining the records of the cases.

The Probate Judge appoints board members to the County Board of Developmental Disabilities Services, Montgomery County Environmental Services Appeals Board, Greater Dayton Premier Management, and all members of the Five Rivers Metro Parks Board. The Probate Judge also has authority to make other appointments pursuant to statute including agents of the Humane Society of Greater Dayton, guardians, attorneys, and many other fiduciaries.



HONORABLE DAVID D. BRANNON, *ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE*
Montgomery County Probate Court

Judge David D. Brannon and his family are lifelong residents of Montgomery County, Ohio. He feels privileged to serve the citizens of Montgomery County and strives to improve government service every day. He feels blessed to hold a job he loves and to work with his fantastic team and the County's most vulnerable people.

Since being elected Judge in 2020, he has presided over thousands of probate matters, giving him extensive probate experience in adoption, guardianship, estate, and mental illness matters. Prior to being elected, Judge Brannon practiced law for fifteen years with his father and brother in the Dayton region. He focused his area of practice on probate law and eventually was certified as an Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law Specialist in 2015 by the Ohio State Bar Association, until he took the bench.

Since taking the bench, Judge Brannon, as Administrative Judge, coordinates and collaborates with other County agencies and leaders to address today's most serious issues facing our Community, including mental health, access to courts, and stewardship. He believes government works best when there is authentic accountability and transparency.



Left: Children Services Associate Director Craig Rickett, County Administrator Michael Colbert, County Commissioners Carolyn Rice and Debbie Lieberman, Assistant County Administrator Geraldine Pegues, Judge David Brannon and the Dameron Family on National Adoption Day. Right: Judge Brannon and the Lovette family look on as Payton hits the gavel after his case is finalized.

Probate Division 2024 IN REVIEW

Heartfelt Collaboration Brings Adoption Day Dreams to Life

November is National Adoption Month, and every year, Montgomery County Children Services and Probate Court come together to shine a light on the beauty and power of adoption for foster children looking for their forever homes.

During the November 1st celebration, 10 children joined their forever families. The annual celebration is an important reminder that family is not defined by genetics, last names or shared blood, but by love, commitment, and the support we give one another. At the heart of the celebration is a belief we all share—that every child deserves the love, safety and stability of a family to call their own. Each child received a personal proclamation of congratulations from the Board of County Commissioners, celebrating their journey and a new beginning. Judge David D. Brannon added extra magic to the day by presenting each child with a special medal and even letting them bang the gavel to make it official!

Behavioral Task Force Honored with Local Award

On March 19, the Board of County Commissioners recognized the Behavioral Health Task Force for being honored with an Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA) Innovation in Local Government award. The task force coordinates treatment across Montgomery County by bringing together hospitals, behavioral health providers, administrative agencies and criminal justice especially Probate Court. This achievement wouldn't have been possible without everyone involved in this initiative. These efforts help in offering invaluable support in enhancing access to treatment and services for Montgomery County Residents.

Probate Division COURT OVERVIEW

JUDGE BRANNON

The Judge of the Probate Court Shall be assigned all cases coming before the Court. The judge is also charged with the supervision of all personnel of the Probate Court, which is approximately 35 staff total.



Left: On May 1st the court celebrated Law Day by presenting Attorney Cynthia Westwood with an award. Attorney Westwood's dedication to the practice of law and commitment to her clients throughout the adoption process is commendable. The entire staff applauds and appreciates her hard work. Right: The Board of County Commissioners recognized the Behavioral Task Force with an Ohio City/County Management Association Innovation in Local Government Award.

MAGISTRATES

Five (5) Magistrates assist the Judge in handling the case load. A magistrate is an attorney appointed by the Court who hears cases referred by the Judge. Magistrates hear and consider cases in the same manner as a judge. Magistrates have discretion to issue recommendations and orders in all case types handled by the Probate Court. All magistrate decisions are reviewed and approved by the Judge. Magistrates are available to answer procedural and other substantive questions, but may not discuss a case with either a litigant or attorney in the absence of the other party, or that party's attorney to the case.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department is responsible for

the preparation and maintenance of budgets, financial reporting and analysis, support for financial and analytical needs of other court departments, control over all the payments and purchasing, and continual monitoring of all aspects of finance for the Court

CLERK'S OFFICE

The Clerk's office files, maintains, and makes available to the public, records of all non-confidential case files for the Probate Court. The Clerk's office assists customers at the Court and over the telephone with filings, scheduling, and other administrative functions. The Clerk's Office also collects any costs or fees required, issues receipts, and posts the collected monies. Appropriate information for case files is docketed in a timely manner and maintained, including



Probate Division Magistrates

**Brandon Allen
Heather Shannon
Lisa Wiseman
Brittney Doggett
Joe Gallagher**



Court Administration

Lynn Cooper, Court Administrator

Ryan Colvin, Deputy Court Administrator

entering information in the computer system and issuing appropriate notices and service.

COURT ADMINISTRATOR

The Judge appoints the Court Administrator. The Administrator is responsible for the general administration and supervision of all support services for the Court. In addition, the Court Administrator supervises the implementation of all special projects the court may undertake.

COURT INVESTIGATORS

The Probate Court has four court Investigators. They serve notice of proceedings and hearings in guardianship, adoption, and mental health cases. They also provide guardianship, adoption, and mental health case management support for the Magistrates and Judge, including investigating complaints of financial and physical abuse. Investigators conduct wellness visits with wards and completes home studies in adoption cases.



Left: Probate Court Staff decked out in green for Mental Health Action Day. Right: Love was in the air in Montgomery County Probate Court on Sept. 4! That is when Judge David Brannon presided over the wedding of one of the Court's front-line clerks. Dailaquan Fuller married his sweetheart, Chanteal. The entire office had a wonderful time celebrating the union of the Fullers. We wish many years of happiness to Dailaquan and Chanteal!

MARRIAGE DEPARTMENT

The Marriage Department’s principal function is to issue marriage licenses and complete marriage certificates. Further duties include providing statistical reporting concerning case management and providing marriage abstracts upon request.

ADOPTION DEPARTMENT

One of the most rewarding responsibilities of the Probate Court is to ensure a child is placed in a safe, loving, and permanent home. The primary function is to provide case management of the adoption cases. Adoption filings are accepted by the department, reviewed and set for hearings as appropriate. All adoptions proceedings and records are confidential unless excused by law or by the Judge.

MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

It is the responsibility of the Probate Court to oversee the involuntary commitment process of individuals who are alleged to be mentally ill subject to court order, while protecting their rights and ensuring they receive treatment in the least restrictive environment.

The Probate Court has made the mental health crisis a primary focus as this emergency has devastated many communities, including many in Montgomery County. This Court has been directly involved in the following initiatives, including:

- Facilitating bi-monthly meetings with the Mental Health Collaboration and Innovation Team;
- Actively participating in the Behavioral Health Taskforce;
- Drafting Ohio Supreme Court standard forms for recommendation to the Ohio Supreme Court for adoption State-wide;
- Co-chairing the Competency Restoration and Probate Issues Committee on the Attorney General’s Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness;
- Drafting proposed legislation, Rules of Superintendence, and other statutes involving mental illness and criminal matters;
- Data sharing on the County’s JusticeWeb and other databases with justice partners;
- Starting an Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program administered by the Court.

**Probate Division
2024 STATISTICS**

CASES FILED STATISTICS	2022	2023	2024
Adoptions	157	153	160
Estates/Trusts	2,777	3,000	2,632
Guardianships	458	519	578
Mental Health	559	672	869
Miscellaneous	519	566	578
Total	4,470	4,910	4,910
MARRIAGE STATISTICS	2022	2023	2024
Licenses Issued	2,928	2,975	2,840
Marriage Certificates	5,504	4,835	4,974





CLERK OF COURTS

ABOUT THE CLERK OF COURTS

The Montgomery County Clerk of Courts is a complex organization that serves the Common Pleas Court; General Division; Domestic Relations Court; County Municipal Courts; and the Second District Court of Appeals. The Auto Title Division offers a wide variety of services including titling of motor vehicles, titling and registration of watercraft, processing passport applications, TSA Enrollment Services, and BMV Driver Exams.

The Clerk's Office has a variety of functions, including:

- Receive, docket, index, certify, and preserve the pleadings, court orders, and other legal documents that are filed with the courts
- Serve court papers as required by law and as directed by the parties
- Furnish preliminary case schedules and notices of hearings
- Issue such writs as summonses, subpoenas, warrants, and executions
- Receive, account for, and disburse deposits of money to cover court costs, fines, fees, and restitution according to statute and court order
- Issue Certificates of Title for automobiles, motorcycles, mobile homes, travel trailers,



MIKE FOLEY, *CLERK OF COURTS*
Montgomery County Clerk of Courts

Mike Foley serves as the Montgomery County Clerk of Courts, having been elected to the position in 2018. In his role as Clerk, Mike oversees an office of 100 employees, with an annual budget of more than \$15 million dollars.

Prior to his election as Clerk of Courts, Mike Foley served as an Ohio Deputy Registrar for 12 years. In that role, he was charged with operating the regional Bureau of Motor Vehicles in Huber Heights, Ohio.

A native of Cincinnati, Mike Foley moved to the Dayton Area in 1996 to embark upon an entrepreneurial path where he became proficient in restaurant franchise management, including the launch and operation of the initial First Watch restaurants in Montgomery County.

Prior to serving as Clerk of Courts, Deputy Registrar, and the owner of multiple local businesses, Mike Foley served his Country as a Medic in the United States Army and the Ohio National Guard.

Mike Foley is a graduate of The Ohio State University and resides in Oakwood with his wife Lisa and has four adult children.

Clerk Foley enjoys golfing, traveling and has a newfound love for playing pickleball year-round! He loves his Ohio State Buckeyes, and always roots for his hometown Cincinnati Reds and Bengals.



The Clerk of Courts Office held its annual team building retreat in September.

campers, motor homes, and watercraft

- Process U.S. passport applications as an authorized Passport Acceptance Agency

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Montgomery County Clerk of Courts is to provide progressive and efficient records management and financial services for the justice system, the legal community, and the public through our core values of respect, fairness, and honesty.

MUNICIPAL COURTS DIVISION

- The Montgomery County Clerk of Courts Office had a booth at the Montgomery County Fair in July 2024. We provided information to citizens of Montgomery County.
- Collaboration with Clerk/Judicial Staff for annual retreat for team building initiatives in September 2024.
- Montgomery County Municipal Court had Amnesty events February 16, 2024 – March 1, 2024 & October 21, 2024 – November 1, 2024. During the amnesty event, all persons were eligible to request suspension of one half (½) of their fines and court costs; if they paid one half (½) of all fines and court costs the remainder was waived.
- Provide free notary services to

customers.

We serve as a “one stop shop” for customers, during our arraignment dockets as follows:

- Customers appear in court for arraignment hearings.
- Customers receive notification from Montgomery County Clerk of Courts team members for the court next hearing.
- Customers have an opportunity to meet with the onsite Montgomery County Public Defender Intake personnel to qualify for an attorney.
- Complete fingerprints for applicable offenses. Fingerprint services are provided by Montgomery County Clerk of Courts team members.
- Customers don’t need to appear again, until their next court hearing, unless directed otherwise.

Achievements

Promotions

- Summer Leonhardt, Assignment Clerk III
- Annette Gaulding, Deputy Clerk II

Completed CPR Training

- Annette Gaulding



Left: The Clerk of Courts Office had an informational booth at the Montgomery County Fair in July. Right: Legal Division staff dressed in costume for Halloween.

AUTO TITLE DIVISION

We are excited that we launched two new services in 2024:

- On February 8th, we scheduled/facilitated our first Driver’s Exam test.
- On March 2nd, we registered our first watercraft.

We also conducted four offsite passport outreach events at Carroll High School, Sinclair Community College, the University of Dayton, and the Hubers Chamber of Commerce.

LEGAL DIVISION

We are now providing free notary services to the citizens we serve! Whether you need to notarize documents for personal, legal, or business purposes, we’re here to make the process simple and efficient.

Collaboration with Montgomery County Prosecutor’s Office, General Division and Domestic Relations to review/streamline processes and use technology as a tool to become more efficient

We are excited to announce the creation of two new Team Lead positions within our Legal Division. In line with our strategic growth and commitment to enhancing leadership in key areas, we are pleased to promote Yvonne “Eve” Woodbridge and

Jamie Allen to their respective roles.

The Legal Division got into the spooky spirit, and our team came together to celebrate Halloween in style! From creative costumes to ghoulishly good vibes, we certainly know how to have fun while still being serious about serving the community!



Location and Phone Directory

GENERAL DIVISION

Montgomery County Courts Building

41 N. Perry Street
First, Third or Fourth Floors
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2150
937.225.6000
www.montcourt.oh.gov

JUVENILE DIVISION

Montgomery County Juvenile Justice Center

380 W. Second Street
Dayton, Ohio 45422-4131
937.496.7913
www.mcjcoho.org

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Dayton-Montgomery County Courts Building

301 W. Third Street
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2156
937.225.4063
937.496.7443 Fax (Administration)
937.496.7835 Fax (Case Specific)
www.mcoho.org/dr

PROBATE DIVISION

Montgomery County Courts Building

41 N. Perry Street
Second Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2155
937.225.4640
937.496.3181 Fax (Administration)
www.mcoho.org/probate

CLERK OF COURTS

Montgomery County Courts Building

41 N. Perry Street
First Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45422-2150
937.496.7623
www.mcclerkofcourts.org

Structure of the Ohio Judicial System

THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

There are six Justices and a Chief Justice. Court of last resort on state constitutional questions and questions of public or general interest; appeals from Board of Tax Appeals, Public Utilities Commission, and death penalty cases.



SECOND DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS

There are five Appellate Judges. Original jurisdiction in select cases. Appellate review of judgments of Common Pleas, Municipal, and County Courts, and appeals from Board of Tax Appeals.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

GENERAL

There are 11 General Division Judges. Civil and criminal cases, appeals from most administrative agencies. Unlimited civil and felony criminal jurisdiction. Civil stalking orders and temporary protection orders on non-Domestic Relations matters.

JUVENILE

There are two Juvenile Division Judges. Offenses involving minors, most paternity actions, abuse, neglect, dependency and child support. Juvenile civil protection orders where the respondent is under 18.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

There are two Domestic Relations Division Judges. Divorces, dissolutions, legal separations and annulments, allocations of parental rights and responsibilities, parenting time, child support, and spousal support, civil protection orders for domestic and dating violence.

PROBATE

There is one Probate Division Judge. Decedents' estates, mental illness commitments, guardianships, adoptions and marriage licenses.



MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY COURTS

Civil cases up to \$15,000, traffic cases, and misdemeanor offenses. Preliminary jurisdiction in felony matters.



MAYORS COURTS

Not courts of record. Violations of local ordinances and state traffic laws.

