

# UNION COUNTY, OHIO

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COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, PROBATE & JUVENILE DIVISION

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## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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HON. CHARLOTTE COLEMAN EUFINGER, JUDGE

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Pursuant to R.C. 2151.18 and R.C. 2152.71(D), this annual report shall be filed with the Union County, Ohio Board of County Commissioners and the Supreme Court of Ohio. A digital copy will be posted on this Court's website. No additional printed copies will be generated or distributed by the Court.

# FROM THE DESK OF THE JUDGE

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## *The World of Law has changed...*

I have served this county as the Judge of the Probate and Juvenile Court for eighteen years and over the course of my judicial career, the Court system has flexed and flourished to meet the ever-changing needs of the people of our county. As I retire from the Bench in 2021, I make the following observations on its evolution – it looks very different than it once did.

## *COVID-19: The Coronavirus Pandemic*

The onset of the health crisis, the Coronavirus, changed the way all of us live our lives and the decisions we make about the health of ourselves, our families and our neighbors. In many ways, it divided us and, in many ways, it united us – but it definitely catapulted our Court into the 21<sup>st</sup> century deeper and more daringly than we expected. The Supreme Court of Ohio asked us to re-imagine the daily construct of justice and I am proud to say that the Union County Probate and Juvenile Court accepted the challenge. With the award of a Supreme Court Technology Grant, we purchased high-quality teleconferencing equipment and embraced the opportunity to provide remote court hearings for the public. Although there are cases that must be heard in person, the Court will continue to have some meetings and hearings using a virtual platform even after pandemic health restrictions are relaxed or lifted.

The changes we incurred with the pandemic forced us to look at how to handle the business of the Court. We modified internal procedures to allow our employees to remain healthy and safe. We improved our customer service to accommodate these changes, to reduce confusion and to continue to provide access to our justice system during a time of uncertainty.

We asked the public for patience, compliance and cooperation. We encouraged our staff members and community partners to adapt and evolve. The year of 2020 pushed us as individuals to think of the health of others over our own comforts and conveniences. Change can be messy, because that is its nature – but what an achievement. We faced momentous challenges and worked together to see ourselves through the difficult period.

## *Eighteen Years of Progress*

There have been many changes while I have served on the bench. We changed the electronic case management system that we used for countless years to Courtview 3 in 2019. The contemporary system allowed for more accessibility within the Court and has been a valuable asset to staff. There is still more training to be done, as it was interrupted by COVID-19, which will only broaden and enrich its quality to the benefit of those before the Court.

When I first took office in 2003, we did not have the Family Dependency Treatment Court or the Juvenile Treatment Court. As the tragic effect of drug abuse in our community became more apparent, the Court and several systems partners came together to combat the drug crisis through the conduit of the Court. The Family Dependency Treatment Court was initiated in 2007 and the Juvenile Treatment Court soon followed in 2010. With the Supreme Court's Specialized Dockets certification requirements, our Court recognized the need for a great

deal of data collection, which ultimately provided statistic-informed and data-based measures of the success of our dockets and informed improvements of Court strategies and procedures.

### *Court Appointed Special Advocates*

The Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA, of Delaware and Union Counties began March 21, 2016, when we swore in our first CASA Volunteers for Union County. As of January 1, 2020, our CASA Program expanded to include the role of Guardian ad Litem for our CASA volunteers in the Abuse, Neglect and Dependency docket. I am so appreciative for the work and collaboration of Judge David A. Hejmanowski and his predecessor, Retired Judge Kenneth J. Spicer, of the Delaware County Probate & Juvenile Court, and Tammy Matias, CASA Executive Director of Delaware & Union Counties. Over the course of four years, the CASA program has grown in its number of volunteers and in its advocacy for children.

### *Gratitude*

I want to express my gratitude to our community partners that have supported the work of the Probate and Juvenile Court throughout the years. If it takes a village to raise a single child, then it takes a county to support the children and families who are affected by the issues we face each day in the court system. Union County has a wealth of agencies, services and elected officials whose continual support of the Probate and Juvenile Court is most appreciated.

I would like to extend a special thank you to those with whom we work closely such as Judge Don W. Fraser, Judge of the Union County Common Pleas Court, and his magistrates and staff; Judge Michael J. Grigsby of the Marysville Municipal Court, and his magistrates and staff; Teresa Nickle, former Clerk of Courts, and Danielle Sullivan, Clerk of Courts; our commissioners past and present, and their staff; Prosecuting Attorney David W. Phillips and his attorneys and staff; and Sue Ware, Director of Job and Family Services, and the caseworkers and staff. I also want to thank our schools, Marysville, North Union, Fairbanks, Jonathan Alder, Dublin and all the private and public schools with whom our Court works in caring for our youth.

I would also like to thank the many elected officials and agency directors with whom we coordinate: Andrea Weaver, Auditor, and her staff; Kara Brown, Superintendent of the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities and her staff; Sheriff Jamie Patton and his deputies and staff; Marysville Police Chief, Floyd Golden and his officers and staff; Monte Asher, Richwood Police Chief, and his officers and staff; and Plain City Chief Dale McKee and his officers and staff. Stephen Badenhop, Coordinator of the Records Center & Archives, has also been of great assistance regarding maintaining current and archived records.

As the population of Union County has grown and the need for Mental Health and Substance Abuse treatment has increased, our local Mental Health & Recovery Board, led by Dr. Phil Atkins, Executive Director, and various treatment providers have risen to meet that need. Ohio Guidestone, Maryhaven and now Light House Behavioral Health Solutions have expanded to create more treatment and recovery options within their organizations. Light House continues to provide more sober housing and WINGS Support and Recovery offers sober support programming, with both providing Certified Peer Support. Lower Lights Union Star now offers medical and mental health care and filled a need for many of our families who previously did not have a medical provider.

There are two organizations that were created for Court-related specific purposes. Families Matter, currently led by Board President Nan Streng and previously by Avanelle Oberlin, is a not-for-profit under the umbrella of the Union County Foundation, that raises funds to purchase items for the Family Dependency Treatment Court and the Juvenile Treatment Court. Families Matter purchases items that the Court could not provide using taxpayer dollars, including but not limited to gifts for incentives for participants and training opportunities for Court staff.

The Union County Guardianship Services (UCGS, previously known as the Union County Volunteer Guardian Program), led by Linda Fisher, Executive Director, and its Board of Trustees are unique to Union County. The Probate Court appoints and oversees the care and assistance guardians give to their wards. It became apparent that there were many adults who needed additional persons, outside of family members, to assist them in making medical, legal and daily life decisions. The UCGS was established to provide guardians who are neither attorneys nor family members to serve in that capacity and has been an immense aid to many of our wards.

Over the years, the Court has contracted several professionals to carry out specific duties of the court. I am grateful for Marilyn L. Davis, MS, LSW, who recently retired from years of service to Union County as a caseworker and then as Adoption Assessor for the Union County Probate Court. She tendered her resignation in 2020 after a full and rewarding career in the county. During her work with Children's Services and the Probate Court, Ms. Davis worked with three consecutive Judges: Judge Robert F. Allen, Judge Gary F. McKinley, and myself. Ms. Davis showed a real empathy and concern for the children and families she worked with over the years.

The Probate and Juvenile Court has hired a mediator to assist in truancy and custody matters in the Juvenile Court and some cases in the Probate Court where mediation is essential to help families overcome the conflicts that bring them before Court. Nicole R. McDonald, Esq., has filled this position for the last three years and has done a wonderful job.

Our CASA Program decided to contract a Staff Attorney to represent the CASA Program their CASA/Guardian ad litem volunteers in hearings and the Juvenile Court offered the position to Shannon Rust, Esq., in 2020. Ms. Rust's contributions to the program have been a tremendous benefit to advance the role of the CASA/Guardians ad litem.

Jon Kleiber has served as Probate Court Investigator for more than 20 years and Kim Zacharias began as Probate Court Investigator just a few short years ago. Aaron Orr, who is a full-time employee with the Probate Court and not a contracted employee, has also served as a Probate Court Investigator. They fulfill their assignments with compassion, fairness and wisdom, reporting to the Court their assessment of a prospective ward's needs and the prospective guardian's ability to serve those needs. I thank each of them for their work.

Union County has been blessed with remarkable leadership, compassion, and talent in our service providers and it has been an honor to serve alongside each of our elected officials and systems partners.

### *Court Staff*

I cannot leave this office without expressing my deep gratitude to the remarkable internal staff of the Union County Probate and Juvenile Court with whom I have had the privilege to work during these past 18 years. I thank them for their support and the care with which they have served the people whose cases came before our Probate and Juvenile Court system.

Thank you to Magistrates Sharon Robinson-Walls, Louis P. Endres and Victoria Stone-Moledor. It has been a privilege to work with you.

Jenna Griffith served as my Court Administrator and Chief Probation Officer. She has been a great support to me and a guide to those she has supervised. Chris Schalip and Nicole Gardner have both served in various positions within the Court, but as Chief Financial Officer they were both conscientious and trustworthy. Leigh Ann Moots was my Administrative Assistant for many years and has since been followed by Julie Harvey, both of whom I so appreciate for the aid they have given me.

With the development of the Treatment Courts, came a new position as Treatment Court Coordinator, which was originally filled by Dr. Robert W. Ahern, to whom I am grateful for his wisdom, expertise and friendship during his employment with us. Lauren Levingston, our current Treatment Court Coordinator, continues the high standard of service and I thank her for her good work.

To the Probate Clerks, the Juvenile Clerks and the Probation Officers, you are the reason we can do what we do. You face the field and the public each day, helping individuals through some of their worst days or celebrating their best days by being constant, professional, compassionate, and friendly. I thank you.

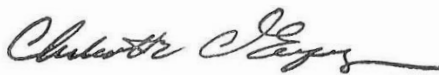
### *A New Judge*

And now, a new Judge will sit at the bench of the Union County Probate and Juvenile Court. Please welcome Judge-Elect Rick Rodger who assumed the bench February 9, 2021. I am confident in his character and his devotion to improving the lives of our community members. I was honored to swear him into office, and I wish him the very best.

### *Conclusion*

With the end of 2020, I look back on eighteen years of change and I am well-pleased. The Probate and Juvenile Court of Union County has grown and changed to the meet fluctuating needs of the children and families in our community. Again, I thank each of you for your support over many years and I am pleased to present the Court's Annual Report for 2020.

Sincerely,



**Charlotte Coleman Eufinger, Judge**  
Union County Probate & Juvenile Court

# HON. CHARLOTTE COLEMAN EUFINGER

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JUDGE OF THE UNION COUNTY PROBATE AND JUVENILE COURT

*February 9, 2003 - February 8, 2021*

On February 9, 2003, the Honorable Charlotte Coleman Eufinger became Judge of the Union County Probate and Juvenile Court. Judge Eufinger is the seventeenth Judge of the Union County Probate Court and the tenth to serve as Judge of both the Probate and Juvenile Courts. She completed three terms as Judge.



Judge Eufinger was actively involved in a variety of professional boards, agencies, and activities. She is a member of the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on Specialized Dockets, and previously served on the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on the Rules of Superintendence, the Ohio Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Courts, and the Subcommittees of Legal Representation, Family Law Reform Implementation and Adult Guardianships.

Judge Eufinger is a member of the Ohio Judicial Conference, and serves on the Probate Law and Procedure Committee, the Juvenile Law and Procedure Committee, and the Specialized Dockets Committee. She has previously served on the Board of Directors of the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges and as a member and chair of the Ohio University Board of Trustees and of the Ohio University Foundation Board of Trustees.

Prior to taking office, Judge Eufinger was a partner in the Marysville, Ohio law firm of Coleman, Eufinger & Aslaner, and she practiced law with her father, William L. Coleman (1914-1981), her husband John M. Eufinger, her brother, Stephen G. Coleman, and Tim M. Aslaner.

Judge Eufinger is a life-long resident of Union County and graduated from Marysville High School. She graduated with an A.B. in history from Miami University in 1969, where she also obtained a teaching certificate in history for grades 7-12. Judge Eufinger attended The Ohio State University College of Law, where she received her J.D. in 1972. Judge Eufinger has been married for 49 years to John M. Eufinger, and has a daughter, Mary; a son, Tony, daughter-in-law, Megan, and a granddaughter, Kate.

# PROBATE & JUVENILE DIVISION STAFF

HON. CHARLOTTE COLEMAN EUFINGER, JUDGE

## MAGISTRATES

**Sharon Robinson-Walls**  
*Chief Magistrate*

**Louis P. Endres, III**  
*Magistrate*

**Victoria L. Stone-Moledor**  
*Magistrate/Staff Attorney*

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**Jennifer N. Griffith**  
*Court Administrator &  
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer*

**Nicole Gardner**  
*Chief Financial Officer*

**Julie Harvey**  
*Administrative Assistant to the Judge*

**Lauren Levingston, LSW**  
*Treatment Court Coordinator*

## JUVENILE DEPUTY CLERKS OF COURT

**Leigh Ann Moots**  
*Chief Deputy Juvenile Clerk*

Jackie Dillahunt  
Meghan Howard  
Pamela O'Brien

Lorli Patterson  
Jerika Risner  
Christine Schalip  
Pam Vance

## PROBATE DEPUTY CLERKS OF COURT

**Jennifer La Fayette**  
*Chief Deputy Probate Clerk*

Sarah Johnson  
Aaron Orr

## JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

**Joshua Levingston**  
*Senior Juvenile  
Probation Officer*

Darby Hoseus  
Lindsey Keller

Abby Sullivan  
Tyquan Wakefield

## DELAWARE COUNTY EMPLOYEES WORKING WITH CASA/GAL PROGRAM

**Tammy Matias**  
*CASA Executive Director*

**Melanie Kempton**  
*Assistant CASA Coordinator*

**Meagen Belcher**  
*Program Assistant*

## SERVICES PROVIDED PURSUANT TO CONTRACT

**Nicole R. McDonald, Esq.**  
*Juvenile Division Mediator*

**Shannon Rust, Esq.**  
*CASA Staff Attorney*

**Marilyn Davis**  
*Probate Court  
Adoption Assessor*

**Taylor Cutteridge**  
*Juvenile Division  
Legal Assistant*

**Jon Kleiber**  
*Probate Court Investigator*

**Adoption Circle**  
*Probate Court  
Adoption Assessor*

**Kim Zacharias**  
*Probate Court Investigator*



# HISTORY OF OHIO PROBATE & JUVENILE COURTS

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Courtesy of **Stephen Badenhop**, *Union County Record Center & Archives Coordinator* & **The Ohio Historical Society**

## PROBATE COURT

Probate courts existed in the Northwest Territory prior to Ohio's statehood, with authority in probate, testamentary and guardianship cases. In 1802, Ohio's first constitution abolished separate probate courts and transferred their authority to the common pleas courts. Separate probate courts reappeared in 1851, when Ohio drafted a new constitution, giving probate court jurisdiction to grant marriage licenses and control land sales by appointed executors, administrators, and guardians. As a result of a 1912 constitutional amendment, voters could decide by referendum to combine the probate court with the court of common pleas, which voters decided not to do in Union County.

The probate court has original jurisdiction in the settlement of estates. The court held limited jurisdiction in minor criminal offenses from 1851 to 1932. The probate judge maintained a permanent record of births and deaths from 1867 to 1908. Since the 1850s, the court has had jurisdiction over the appointment of guardians for minors and the mentally ill; the judge can also commit the mentally ill to institutional care. The probate court exercised jurisdiction in naturalization proceedings from 1860 until 1906, when the federal government assumed this power.

## JUVENILE COURT

The origins of the juvenile court system trace back to the reform spirit of the Progressive Era. Prior to the establishment of the juvenile court system, juvenile offenders were tried with adults and imprisoned with them. On April 25, 1904, the Ohio General Assembly passed an act to "regulate the treatment and control of dependent, neglected and delinquent children" through the establishment of a juvenile court. The law focused on the reformation and rehabilitation of minors, rather than punishment. The law applied only to children under the age of sixteen. The law provided for juvenile probation officers and prohibited sending children under the age of twelve to jail, while allowing those children twelve to sixteen years of age to be sentenced to jail, industrial schools, other state institutions or into the homes of responsible individuals, but provided that those sentenced to jail could not be confined with adult prisoners. Jurisdiction was originally given to the court of common pleas or the probate court.

In 1906, the juvenile court act was extensively amended. The revised law extended the court's jurisdiction to punish any person or parent responsible for the delinquency or dependency of any child, while also raising the age of a minor to seventeen years. The law also provided that the probate court judge in all counties, except those otherwise provided for, serve as ex-officio judge of the juvenile court.

By the approval of voters, the juvenile court can be placed under the jurisdiction of an independent juvenile court, or as a division of the common pleas, probate or domestic relations courts. In Union County, the juvenile court has been under the jurisdiction of the probate court judge since the juvenile court's creation in 1906. Originally in Union County the cases were kept with the probate court but beginning in 1910 they were stored and filed separately.

# JUDGES OF THE PROBATE & JUVENILE COURT

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Union County was created by the Ohio General Assembly in 1820 by uniting portions of Delaware, Franklin, Madison and Logan counties.

The Union County Probate Court was established in 1852. Prior to 1852, probate matters in Union County were heard and decided by a judge of the Union County Common Pleas Court. The Union County Juvenile Court was established in 1906. They were two separate courts until the Juvenile Court was combined with the Probate Court pursuant to an act passed on April 29, 1937, which reorganized and recodified the existing juvenile laws. With the passage of the Modern Courts Amendment to the Ohio Constitution in May 1968, Ohio's Probate Courts became divisions of the Courts of Common Pleas.

## **JUDGES OF THE PROBATE COURT**

**HON. THOMAS BROWN** (1852-1855 AND 1859-1861)

**HON. JAMES TURNER** (1855-1859)

**HON. JAMES R. SMITH** (1861-1870)

**HON. JOHN B. COATS** (1870-1888)

**HON. LEONIDAS PIPER** (1888-1894)

**HON. JAMES McCAMPBELL** (1894-1900)

**HON. JOHN M. BRODRICK** (1900-1906)

## **JUDGES OF BOTH THE PROBATE COURT AND THE JUVENILE COURT**

**HON. DUDLEY E. THORNTON** (1906 – 1913)

**HON. EDWARD W. PORTER** (1913 – 1921)

**HON. WILLIAM H. HUSTED** (1921 – 1932)

**HON. CARRIE HORNBECK** (1932 – 1933)\*

## **JUDGES OF THE COMBINED PROBATE & JUVENILE COURT**

**HON. L. W. HAZEN** (1933 – 1941)

**HON. JOHN W. DAILEY, SR.** (1941 – 1955)

**HON. LUTHER L. LIGGETT** (1955 – 1960)

**HON. ROBERT F. ALLEN** (1960 – 1979)

**HON. GARY F. MCKINLEY** (1979 – 2003)

**HON. CHARLOTTE COLEMAN EUFINGER** (2003 – 2021)

\* Ms. Hornbeck, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Probate Court, was appointed by Governor George White to serve the unexpired term of Judge Husted, who unexpectedly passed away.

# PROBATE DIVISION

## JURISDICTION OF THE PROBATE DIVISION

The Probate Division of the Court of Common Pleas assists the public through the legal necessities of life, including matters from Correction of Birth Records to Marriage Licenses to the filing of Estates. The staff of the Probate Court participate in annual Probate Court Clerks conferences, roundtables, and webinars to learn updates from the Ohio Supreme Court and maintain positive customer service policies.

Packets of forms for many of the matters under the jurisdiction of the Probate Court are available in the clerks' office.

The types of matters addressed in the Probate Court include, but are not limited to, the following:

<b>Probate Division</b>					
New Matters Filed, Concluded by Court (2016-2020)					
<i>New Matters</i>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Estates	158	172	165	168	198
Adoptions	22	33	19	31	16
Guardianships & Trusteeships	20	36	29	24	26
Civil Actions	5	1	1	5	1
Civil Commitment/ Mental Illness	2	2	0	0	0
Delayed Registrations & Corrections of Birth	6	8	7	7	5
Minor's Settlements	5	2	5	4	3
Wrongful Deaths	3	2	1	0	0
Changes of Name	29	25	22	47	32
Other	7	1	2	1	5
<b>New Matters Filed</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>Matters Pending at Close of Year</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>402</b>
<b>Marriage Licenses</b>	316	309	319	317	314

Adoptions  
 Adult Paternity  
 Birth Certificate Correction  
 Change of Name  
 Civil Commitment of the Mentally Ill  
 Conservatorships  
 Delayed Registration of Birth  
 Determination of Death  
 Disinterment  
 Guardianship  
 Land Sales by Executors, Administrators and Guardians

Marriage Licenses  
 Settlement of Claims for Minor  
 Trusts  
 Wills & Estates  
 Accounts of Estates  
 Deposit of Wills  
 Determination of Heirship  
 Distribution of Estates  
 Release from Administration  
 Will Construction & Contest  
 Wrongful Death Settlement

## PROBATE DIVISION: GUARDIANSHIPS & ADOPTIONS

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In 2015, Ohio law regarding **Guardianships** changed to require background checks and education requirements for guardians, which provide additional protections for the adult wards of the Court. Since that time, the Union County Probate Court continued to track and ensure the compliance of guardians with these requirements.

The Court is supported in its efforts by the Union County Guardianship Services (UCGS). The UCGS employs staff guardians to serve as guardians for adult wards and serves as a valuable resource of information and guidance to other guardians throughout the county. UCGS also offers guardianship education courses that comply with Ohio Rules of Superintendence in the form of both Supreme Court of Ohio video presentations and locally held live courses.

The Probate Court is also assisted with guardianship cases by court-appointed investigators who aid in personal service

and investigation of prospective and current adult wards. Investigators participate in annual training conferences to fulfill their education requirements.

Families are often formed through **Adoptions**, which are processed through the Probate Court. The Probate Court may hear petitions for Placements, Private Adoptions, Step-Parent or Grandparent Adoptions, Re-finalization of Foreign Adoptions, and Adult Adoptions.

Adoption assessors are appointed by the Court to meet with prospective adoptive families and file a report. Assessors must meet the certification requirements relative to their field to be eligible for court-appointment.

As part of the celebration of granted adoptions, the Probate Court has provided adopted children with a personalized certificate of adoption and a miniature gavel or a hand-made fabric toy. The toys are donated to the Court by the Ohio Reformatory for Women.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS OF THE PROBATE COURT

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More than 30,000 Union County Probate Court historical and closed records are available for review at the Union County Records Center and Archives (128 S. Main St., Marysville). Records may be viewed with the assistance of an archivist. Many historical records have been microfilmed and digitally indexed.

A computer terminal is available for public use at both the Union County Records Center and the Union County Recorder's Office (233 W. Sixth St.). The computerized, searchable index references all Probate matters from 1820 through May 2019. Beginning June 1, 2019, the Probate Courts' records are available on this and can be accessed online through the Union County Common Pleas Court website.

The following records are also available: Birth and Death Records from 1867 to 1909; Marriage records 1820 to present (May 28, 1996 and after on the computer); and Delayed Registration and Correction of Birth records from 1941 to the present. Mental illness and mental retardation cases are confidential. Adoption records are confidential; however, limited access may be granted according to the controlling provisions of the Ohio Revised Code.

Copies are available for a fee.

Open matters are held in the Probate Clerk's Office, located at the Union County Courthouse (215 W. Fifth St.), and may be viewed with the assistance of a deputy clerk.

# JUVENILE DIVISION

## JURISDICTION OF THE JUVENILE DIVISION

The Juvenile Division is one of the divisions of the Court of Common Pleas. The jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court includes the following matters:

**Unruly Children** – children who will not subject themselves to the reasonable control of their parents, guardians, custodians, or teachers, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient. Includes children who are truant from school or violate curfew.

**Delinquent Children** – children who violate any federal, state or local law or ordinance that would be an offense if committed by an adult; violate a lawful order of the court; and attempt or complete acts forbidden to those less than 18 years of age.

**Dependent, Neglected and Abused Children** – children who are dependent on the state for their care because of homelessness, lack of parental adequate care, or actual or imminent abuse or neglect.

**Juvenile Traffic Offenders** – children who violate a federal, state or local traffic law, or traffic ordinance or regulation, other than parking violations.

**Juvenile Tobacco Offenders** – children who have purchased, attempted to purchase, used, consumed or possessed cigarettes, tobacco products, or papers used to roll cigarettes.

**Custody** – matters in which the Court determines paternity and parental rights and

### Juvenile Division

New Matters Filed, Concluded by Court (2016-2020)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Delinquency	161	270	152	148	110
<i>Individual Youth Adjudicated of Felony*</i>	11	17	20	18	9
Committed to DYS	0	0	0	2	1
Committed to CCF	1	1	2	3	3
Unruly	47	50	48	45	29
Juvenile Traffic	325	260	191	235	246
Diversion	0	0	26	44	31
Abuse/Neglect/Dependency	61	41	47	75	63
Permanent Custody	7	5	2	0	0
Custody/Visitation	84	73	46	78	70
Parentage	7	5	4	1	0
Child Support Enforcement/Modification	349	266	455	424	339
UIFSA	16	5	2	0	5
Adult**	23	8	13	5	7
Other***	40	29	27	22	20
<b>All New Matters Filed</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>1,008</b>	<b>1,047</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>889</b>
<b>Matters Terminated</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>1,017</b>	<b>840</b>

\* Per Union Co. DYS Fiscal Year reports.

\*\* Including Failure to Send matters and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor.

\*\*\* Other: Applications to Seal and Expunge Records; Petitions for Juvenile Civil Protection Orders, Grandparent Powers of Attorney; Motions to Show Cause that reactivate matters (not including child support).

responsibilities of children born to unwed parents.

**Child Support** – matters regarding the establishment, modification or enforcement of court or administrative orders for the financial support of children.

**Adult (Criminal)** – includes matters in which adults are charged with misdemeanor violations of nonsupport or contributing to nonsupport of dependents; parental educational neglect; and contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child.

## MEDIATION PROGRAM

The Juvenile Court's Mediation Program has served the families and local school districts of Union County for more than 20 years.

The mediator serves all schools in Union County in responding to truancy-related issues.

Mediation also assists parents whose cases are before the Court as the result of paternity, legal custody, decision-making and visitation issues. Meeting with the mediator provides a structure for the parents to discuss their concerns and disagreements and arrive at agreement regarding their child's care. Some

parents require the assistance of the mediator when an Abuse, Neglect or Dependency matter has come before the Court.

The mediator will also assist with crafting agreements for custody and visitation. All agreements in such matters are subject to the approval of the Court.

<b>Mediations</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Unruly – Truancy</b>	180	150	18	37	31
<b>Unruly – Disobedience</b>	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Custody – Private</b>	2	1	4	10	3
<b>Custody – A/N/D</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Probate – Civil</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
<b>Total Mediations</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>35</b>

## DIVERSION PROGRAM

Juvenile delinquency or unruly behavior cases originate by the filing of a complaint by the Union County Prosecuting Attorney. The Prosecuting Attorney may append to the complaint a notice that the Prosecuting Attorney endorses the juvenile's participation in diversion program together with a statement of the victim of the offense, if any.

Complaints are reviewed and selected if they appear appropriate for diversion based upon criteria established by the Court. Typically, youth who have no prior official or unofficial record (first-time offenders) who are alleged to have

<b>Youth in Diversion</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>All Delinquency &amp; Unruly Complaints Filed</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>139</b>
Entered Diversion	0	0	25	49	38
Successful Completion	0	0	20	34	36
Unsuccessful Completion	0	0	5	6	2
<b>Diversion of Truancy Matters</b> [R.C. 2151.18]					
<b>All Unruly-Truancy Complaints Filed</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
Entered Diversion	**	0	0	0	0
Successful Completions	**	0	0	0	0
Unsuccessful Completions	**	0	0	0	0

\*Includes matters charged as Habitual Truancy per R.C. 2151.022(B) and Chronic Truancy per R.C. 2152.02(F)(5).

\*\* Data unavailable.

committed status (unruly, truancy, or curfew violations) or misdemeanor-level, non-violent offenses are eligible for diversion.

The Probation Department conducts an eligibility screening of the youth and

parent/guardian. If the youth is determined eligible for diversion, the youth and family must acknowledge the youth committed the offense described in the complaint and a Diversion Program fee must be paid. Depending on individualized programming needs, additional fees may apply. All the terms, plus a deadline to complete them, will be included in the youth's Diversion Contract.

The Diversion Contract includes tasks and requirements designed to remediate the offense, to provide a learning opportunity for the youth and to serve as a consequence or deterrent for further illegal behavior. Possible terms could include: appropriate skills-building instruction; letters of apology to any victims; restitution; community service

hours; a written essay on a subject related to the offense or to the youth's future goals; mental health screenings and full participation in recommended services; drug screening; and other terms that the officer believes are appropriate that relate to the youth's needs and/or the offense.

If appropriate, parenting skills instruction will be required for the parent/guardian.

If the youth successfully completes diversion, the Court will order the sealing of the entire matter, and there shall be no official record of the matter. If the terms of the Diversion Contract are not fulfilled, diversion will cease, the original complaint will be filed and the matter will proceed formally.

## DIVERSION OF TRUANCY MATTERS

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The Union County Juvenile Court began aggressively targeting truancy more than 20 years ago with the implementation of its Mediation Program. Mediation successfully aids many families in correcting truancy issues that would otherwise have been filed in the court.

With the implementation of changes to Ohio truancy law in 2017, the Court's mediators are available to the school districts after their Absence Intervention Teams recognize that a Written Intervention Plan put in place by the school is likely to fail.

Mediation takes place before the matter is submitted to the Court for filing as a complaint. Like all Unruly and Delinquency matters, truancy complaints are considered for diversion if diversion is in the best interests of the child.

The Court estimates that hundreds of children and their families have been diverted from Juvenile Court because of the Court's Mediation Program.

# JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

The officers of the Juvenile Probation Department dedicate their time, effort, and resources to improve the lives of youth under the jurisdiction of the Court due to delinquent or unruly behavior.

Through the Probation Department, the Court utilizes a proactive approach to support family enrichment, by invoking various resources to strengthen parent and child relationships to promote unity and family stability. Probation officers support a youth's academic growth by facilitating communication and interaction between schools and families.

Juvenile are also required to engage in tasks, such as community service, that hold them accountable for their past actions. Probation officers assist in and promote the development of family-managed responsibility through structured rewards and consequences to promote healthy future decision-making.

In 2020, the probation department supervised a total of 78 youth on probation: 56 were on probation from 2019, and 22 new youth were added to the caseload by the end of 2020. For every youth whose case proceeds to disposition, or sentencing, a probation officer will meet with that child and family to assess them and determine recommendations for the Court. The Court has wide discretion to make orders designed to accomplish the goals of holding the youth accountable and to rehabilitate the offender.

<b>Juvenile Probation Department</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Youth on Probation</b>					
Continuing from preceding year	60	94	104	52	56
New Youth	84	63	71	49	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Probation Completions</b>					
Successful Completions	47	43	72	59	52
Unsuccessful Completions	3	10	11	7	5
Neutral Completions	0	0	2	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Specialized Assessments</b>	13	14		14	7

\*Specialized Assessments: i.e. psychological assessments; competency assessments; specialized offenses assessments.



## THE PARENT PROJECT®

Specially trained staff members of the Juvenile Court facilitate The Parent Project®, a 40-hour clinical group and parenting course for the families of delinquent and unruly children under the jurisdiction of this Court.

In 2013, several staff members received training that was funded by a grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services. Although most parents feel skeptical that the program will benefit them and their families, the majority conclude the program with a deep appreciation for the positive impact their new, learned skills have benefitted their child.

\* Seven parents were enrolled in Parent Project during 2020. However, they were unable to complete the program due to the challenges of COVID-19.

<b>Parent Project Participants</b>	
	<b>Parents</b>
<b>2013</b>	23
<b>2014</b>	55
<b>2015</b>	49
<b>2016</b>	30
<b>2017</b>	14
<b>2018</b>	20
<b>2019</b>	6
<b>2020</b>	7*
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>

## COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS®

In the summer of 2019, the Juvenile Probation Department instituted a new program - Cognitive Behavioral Intervention® (CBI), in which qualifying Juveniles participate in an 18-session program focusing on identifying high-risk situations, developing problem solving skills, forming support networks, and choosing positive pro-social activities and behaviors.

In 2020, CBI moved to a virtual platform in order to maintain the program and continue to benefit enrolled Juveniles even through the Coronavirus pandemic.

<b>CBI Participants</b>	
	<b>Juveniles</b>
<b>2019</b>	5
<b>2020</b>	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

# TREATMENT COURTS

The **Family Treatment Court (FTC)** was established in November 2007 and manages adult participants whose children have open abuse, neglect or dependency cases before the Court. The FTC functions as a collaboration of multiple systems: the court, child welfare,

substance use disorder and mental health treatment providers, and community partners. No single system has the authority, capacity, resources, or skills to respond to the array of challenges faced by families affected by substance use disorders. Collaboration is required if families are to succeed.

The **Juvenile Treatment Court (JTC)** is designed for legal-system involved youth whose drug and alcohol abuse issues continue without abatement on regular probation. A youth's family is asked to participate in parenting education and to assist the Court in monitoring and holding the youth accountable.

<b>Family Treatment Court</b>					
<i>Parent Participants 2016-2020</i>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Parents Referred</b>	27	14	15	29	23
<b>Parents Admitted</b>	11	6	3	11	7
<b>Children of the Parents Admitted</b>	16	8	20	25	15
<b>Parents Graduated</b>	2	4	4	3	5
Children Reunified*					12
<b>Parents Terminated as Unsuccessful</b>	2	3	3	0	3
<b>Parents Terminated Neutrally</b>	0	0	0	2	0

\*Of the graduated parents, the number of children reunified with their parents. Reporting begins in 2020.

The program goals and objectives of both treatment courts are: to establish mental health and addiction treatment services; to create a framework for the participant to live his/her life in recovery from addiction or free from substance abuse; and to provide education and supports for effective and safe parenting. For parent addicts, the FTC seeks to safely reunify the child with the participant within the time permitted by law; and to prevent future removal due to abuse, neglect and dependency of that child or his/her siblings. For substance-abusing youth, the JTC seeks compliance with the terms of probation and to prevent recidivism.

<b>Juvenile Treatment Court</b>					
<i>Juvenile Participants 2016-2020</i>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Referred</b>	*	24	19	12	10
<b>Admitted</b>	9	14	13	3	3
<b>Graduated</b>	4	9	6	0	1
<b>Terminated: Unsuccessful</b>	2	3	1	0	0
<b>Terminated: Neutral</b>	2	1	3	0	2

\* Information not available.

To successfully complete or "graduate" from treatment court, a participant must: demonstrate sobriety (accumulate clean drug screens and make sober life choices); complete substance abuse treatment (at assessed levels of care); address mental health issues (current and long-term).

# CASA PROGRAM OF DELAWARE & UNION COUNTIES

**Tammy Matias**  
Executive Director

**Jonathan Klemanski**  
Assistant Coordinator, Delaware County

**Melanie Kempton**  
Assistant Coordinator, Union County

**Shannon Rust, Esq.,** Staff Attorney

**Meagen Belcher,** Program Assistant

**Elizabeth Neff,** Program Assistant

The year 2020 brought a great deal of challenges and successes for the CASA Program of Delaware and Union Counties. The COVID-19 Pandemic was an unexpected event and presented potential challenges in advocating for abused children. Thankfully, CASA Volunteers continued to advocate and protect children throughout the pandemic with several alternatives made available through the courts. Electronic measures were put in place to ensure court hearings could proceed without appearing in-person and volunteers were permitted to visit with their children via Zoom, Facetime, or Skype. Fortunately, these alternative methods preserved the CASA Volunteer pool and not one person left the program due to the pandemic. Another potential challenge was new volunteer training and recruitment. Without the ability to connect with the community face to face, a potential increase of much needed volunteers was uncertain.

Once again, the program was very fortunate to not only maintain but increase its volunteer numbers. Over 65 inquiries were made to the program in 2020, 30 interviews were conducted and over 20 new volunteers were sworn in to be CASA/GAL's. Following are some other program statistics:

<b>CASA Program</b> of Delaware & Union Counties <b>2020 Statistics</b>	
Total Volunteer <b>CASA Advocates</b>	58
Total Volunteer <b>Hours</b>	4500
Total <b>Miles</b> driven by Volunteers for casework	Over 39,000 miles
Total <b>Children</b> Served	<b>250</b>
<b>Girls</b>	126
<b>Boys</b>	123
<b>Unknown</b>	1
<b>Outcomes for Cases Closed in 2020</b>	
<b>Reunification</b> Achieved	<b>43</b>
Long-Term <b>Relative/Kinship</b> <b>Care</b>	<b>26</b>
Long-Term <b>Foster Care or PPLA</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Adopted</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Volunteer/Case Statistics:**

- 58 Volunteer CASA Advocates in Union and Delaware counties
- 4,500 Volunteer total case hours
- Over 39,000 miles driven by volunteers for casework
- **250 children served**

- Of Children served:
  - 126 females
  - 123 males
  - 1 unknown

## **Child Age Ranges**

- 119** [0-5 years of age]
- 78** [6-11 years of age]
- 16** [12-15 years of age]
- 16** [16-17 years of age]
- 3** [18+ years of age]

## **Case outcomes:**

In 2020, 90 children's cases were closed with a CASA Volunteer involved. Of those 90 children, following are some important outcomes:

- 43 reunifications achieved
- 3 children adopted
- 26 kinship placements (long term relative care)
- 1 child turned 18/21
- 17 other outcomes (case transferred, removed from docket, etc., legal custody to non-relative)

In January of 2020, the CASA Program in Union County made the transition to a CASA/GAL Program where the volunteers serve as the Guardian ad litem and are represented by a contract attorney. This change was embraced by the volunteers, the court, and agencies across the county. CASA volunteers could now through the assistance of an attorney file motions, question witnesses, and have counsel represent them when testifying. In 2020, 64 abuse, neglect, dependent referrals were made to the CASA/GAL program in Union County and 61 were accepted. In Delaware County, 31 referrals were made to the CASA Program and 100% of those referrals was served by a CASA Volunteer.

The Annual Judicial Panel was held in November of 2020 via Zoom with over 60 people in attendance. As in the past, the Judges and Magistrates of both counties all participated and answered questions submitted by the CASA/GAL Volunteers regarding their casework. Despite being in an electronic environment, the evening was very informative and well-received. This year, Judge Charlotte Coleman Eufinger, Probate/Juvenile Judge Union County

was honored during the event due to her retirement in February 2021. Additionally, CASA/GAL Volunteer Carole McCague was honored as she received the prestigious Ohio CASA Pro Star of the Year Award. Carole was among many CASA Volunteers across the state who were nominated for this award, which recognizes excellence in advocacy and dedication to the CASA Mission. Doug Stephens, Executive Director for Ohio CASA, made the presentation.

Although the COVID-19 Pandemic presented many challenges in 2020, the CASA Program of Delaware and Union Counties continued to progress in both advocacy for abused children and increased numbers of new volunteers. The flexibility and generosity of Judge David Hejmanowski, Probate/Juvenile Judge Delaware County and Judge Charlotte Coleman Eufinger, Probate/Juvenile Judge Union County attributed to the success and continuation of the program in its efforts to provide valuable advocacy during this unprecedented time. The volunteers of course are the heart and soul of the CASA Mission and their dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic was nothing short of heroic.

# CENTRAL OHIO YOUTH CENTER

Located at 18100 State Rt. 4, just north of Marysville, the Central Ohio Youth Center primarily serves detained youth from four counties: Union, Champaign, Madison and Delaware. Youth from other counties are often housed in COYC as well. COYC offers programming for chronic juvenile offenders. When juvenile offenders under the jurisdiction of the Union County Juvenile Court are sentenced to detention, most youth will be placed in COYC.

The Community Residential Center (CRC) is a secure program for adjudicated juvenile offenders.

Within seven days of admission as a resident in the CRC program, the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) residential

<b>Juvenile Division</b> Youth in COYC (2009-2020)			
Year	Youth	Days	CRC*
<b>2009</b>	209	1,413	
<b>2010</b>	179	1,270.5	
<b>2011</b>	181	1,059	
<b>2012</b>	206	1,470	
<b>2013</b>	187	945.5	0
<b>2014</b>	154	925.5	0
<b>2015</b>	220	1,227.5	5
<b>2016</b>	287	1,830	3
<b>2017</b>	302	1,789	3
<b>2018</b>	277	1,140	2
<b>2019</b>	200	1,267	4
<b>2020</b>	63	396.5	1
<b>2019 Total Percentage of Use: 13.9%</b> <b>2020 Total Percentage of Use: 13.7%</b>			

\* The Community Residential Center (CRC) is a secure program for adjudicated juvenile offenders.

## COYC ADMINISTRATION

**Natalie Landon**

*Superintendent*

**Betsy Hauck**

*Deputy Operations Administrator*

**Emily Giametta, MSW, LISW-S**

*Clinical Administrator*

**Kathy House, MEd**

*Education Administrator*

**Tami Sowder**

*Business Administrator*

**Kristin Preston, RN**

*Health Care Coordinator*

**Steve Harmon**

*Intake Manager*

interview is completed with each resident youth, as well as a comprehensive psycho-social interview. The information obtained from the interview is utilized to develop an Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) for each resident. The ITP lists objectives to be completed to achieve each goal.

Residents are assigned a therapist upon admission. The therapist develops a case management plan and provides individual and family therapy. The frequency and duration of individual and family therapy sessions are determined on a case-by-case basis, but each CRC resident receives individual therapy at least once per week.

Youth are required to satisfy their current school requirements while they reside in COYC. For those who have dropped out of school, the staff will provide instruction to assist the resident in obtaining his or her GED.

COYC has been recognized by the National Center for Child Traumatic Stress for providing the organizational leadership and support necessary for the implementation of Trauma and Grief Component Therapy for Adolescents (TGCTA).