



FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT

375 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4520

Chambers of
Judge Ted Barrows
Administrative & Presiding Judge
Telephone: 614/645-8207

March 31, 2021

Franklin County Municipal Court Clerk
Citizens of Franklin County

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In accordance with section 1901.14 of the Ohio Revised Code, it is my pleasure to provide you with the 2020 Annual Report of the Franklin County Municipal Court.

From all indications, the Franklin County Municipal Court remains the largest and busiest municipal court in Ohio. We continually strive to improve our services to every citizen who appears in this Court and to be wise and efficient stewards of taxpayer resources. We appreciate the financial support that we receive in these difficult economic times and hope that this continued support is a reflection of your trust in the way we conduct our operations and expend taxpayer dollars.

The increasing complexity of the laws and the desire to meet the needs of every citizen who appears in this Court present substantial challenges to our judges and staff. As you will see from the details in the report that follows, our judges, and staff remain fully committed to meeting the needs of our citizens and our community. We continually strive to improve our services and fulfill our obligation to fairly interpret the laws of Ohio.

Please feel free to contact me or Court Administrator Emily Shaw at (614) 645-8214 if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

Yours truly,

/S/ Ted Barrows

Ted Barrows
Administrative and Presiding Judge

Enclosure

THE FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT

**375 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4520
614-645-8214**



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Franklin County Municipal Court traces its origin to the creation of the Columbus Municipal Court in 1916. Now, the geographic jurisdiction of the Court is all of Franklin County and those portions of the City of Columbus that extend beyond the boundaries of Franklin County. The Court has 14 judges in the General Division and one judge in the Environmental Division. Judges serve six-year terms, unless appointed or elected to fill a vacancy. Annually, they elect one of their peers to serve as the Administrative and Presiding Judge.

The judges who served the Franklin County Municipal Court during the year 2020 Judge Ted Barrows, Administrative and Presiding Judge, and Judges James Green, H. William Pollitt, Jr., Paul M. Herbert, Andrea C. Peeples, David B. Tyack, Mark A. Hummer, James P. O’Grady, Cindi Morehart, Cynthia L. Ebner, Eileen Paley, Jodi Thomas, Jarrod Skinner, Jessica D’Varga, and Environmental Court Judge Stephanie Mingo.

Judges preside over civil, criminal, and traffic cases, conduct both jury, and court trials. In jury trials, judges interpret the law and the jury determines the facts. Court trials are the most common trials in this Court. In these trials, judges have the dual role of interpreting the law and determining the facts. The judges also conduct criminal arraignments and preliminary hearings on felony cases; set bond on criminal charges; issue search warrants; and impose sentence when a defendant is found guilty of a traffic or criminal charge. The judges hear civil cases with an amount in controversy of \$15,000 or less, and cases that are transferred from the Small Claims Division to the General Division of the Court. Other civil disputes resolved in this Court included evictions, rent escrow proceedings, and proceedings to aid in the collection of judgments.

The Environmental Division has exclusive jurisdiction to enforce local codes and regulations affecting real property, such as fire and building codes. The Environmental Division has injunctive powers, and there is no monetary limit on those cases that fall within the Division’s exclusive jurisdiction.

Each week a different judge is assigned to the Duty Session to handle a variety of responsibilities, such as applications from law enforcement officers for search warrants, probable cause hearings, and civil wedding ceremonies.

ASSIGNMENT OFFICE

The Assignment Office provides the Court with case management, case flow, and administrative support on all assigned judicial cases for the 15 Judges of the General and Environmental Divisions from the time of judicial assignment through termination, any post-sentence case management, which would include probation hearings, sealing of record hearings and any post-judgment case management for civil cases. The Franklin County Municipal Court is entitled through R.C. 1901.33(A), to appoint an assignment commissioner, deputy assignment commissioners, and other court aides. The office currently consists of an assignment commissioner, one assignment supervisor, six case coordinators, one unassigned case coordinator, and four full-time assignment clerks.

The Assignment Office is responsible for the assignment of cases to the judiciary, by random assignment or single assignment. The Rules of Superintendence for Municipal Courts, promulgated by the Supreme Court of Ohio, requires that cases be assigned to judges in a random manner. Random assignment occurs at the time a defendant enters a “not guilty” plea in criminal and traffic cases, and upon the filing of a motion or an answer in civil cases (Local Rule 1). The Court also employs a single assignment system (Local Rule 8). This means that when a person is charged with a criminal or traffic offense and already has a pending criminal or traffic case, or the person is on probation to this Court, the new case(s) will be assigned to the judge who is presiding over a current pending assigned case(s) or who presided over any previous case(s) with current active probation.

The Assignment Commissioner, Assignment Supervisor, and Case Coordinators assign all cases ripe for assignment, schedule all judicial pre-sentence and post-sentence hearings, review pleadings, and motions, prepare and monitor the judicial civil motions lists and case updating reports, as well as prepare the Form A and Individual Judicial Reports for the judges to be submitted to the Supreme Court of Ohio. Assignment Clerks will update, research, and prepare all case files for the assignment case coordinators to schedule, as well as logging and docketing sealing of record reports, update case information for notices, motions, and judicial entries. All staff members perform case updating in the current database system for attorneys, suburban prosecutors, and case pleadings.

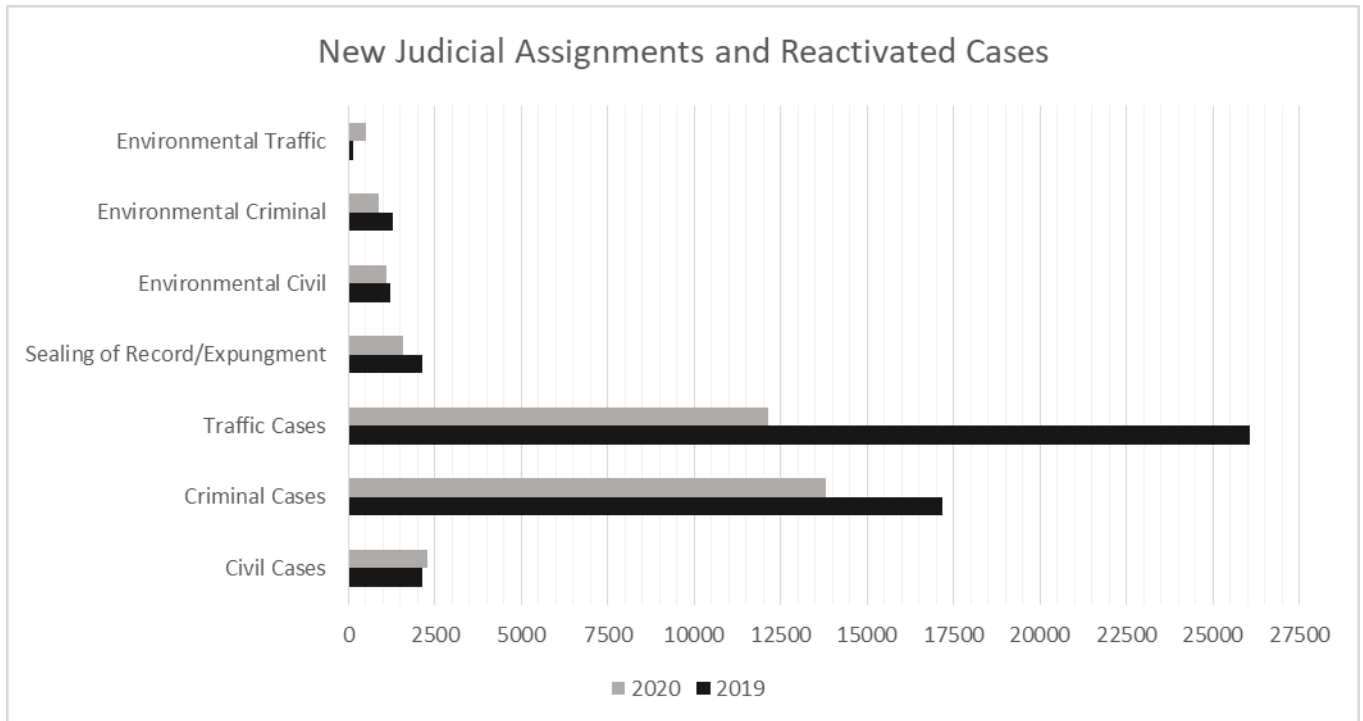
Staff will verify jail status and research defendants for single assignment, by determining if a defendant has pending and/or probation which would change the random judicial assignment of a newly assigned criminal, traffic, and sealing of records cases. The office reviews and updates civil case information and sends notice of filing on certain motions, entries, and objections per Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure and Local Rules. The Assignment Office services a public counter which is staffed by the Assignment Clerks. Personnel will assist Court and Clerk staff, Prosecutors, Attorneys, and the general public. Assistance includes providing case information, such as schedule dates and locations, accepting new attorney database registration and/or changes, notice of appearance of counsel, party address changes, scheduling court dates, notary service, and directions within the building, and other court information.

The Assignment Commissioner manages the single case judicial appointments made to the Supreme Court of Ohio, in conjunction with the Court Administrator, from the Court’s request, appointment, and through the termination of the case(s), and any subsequent post-sentence hearings. Appointments occur when there is a judicial court recusal on an assigned case(s). In 2020 the court had six cases that required judicial appointments, four special appointments for bench conflicts, and five general requests for judicial seat coverage.

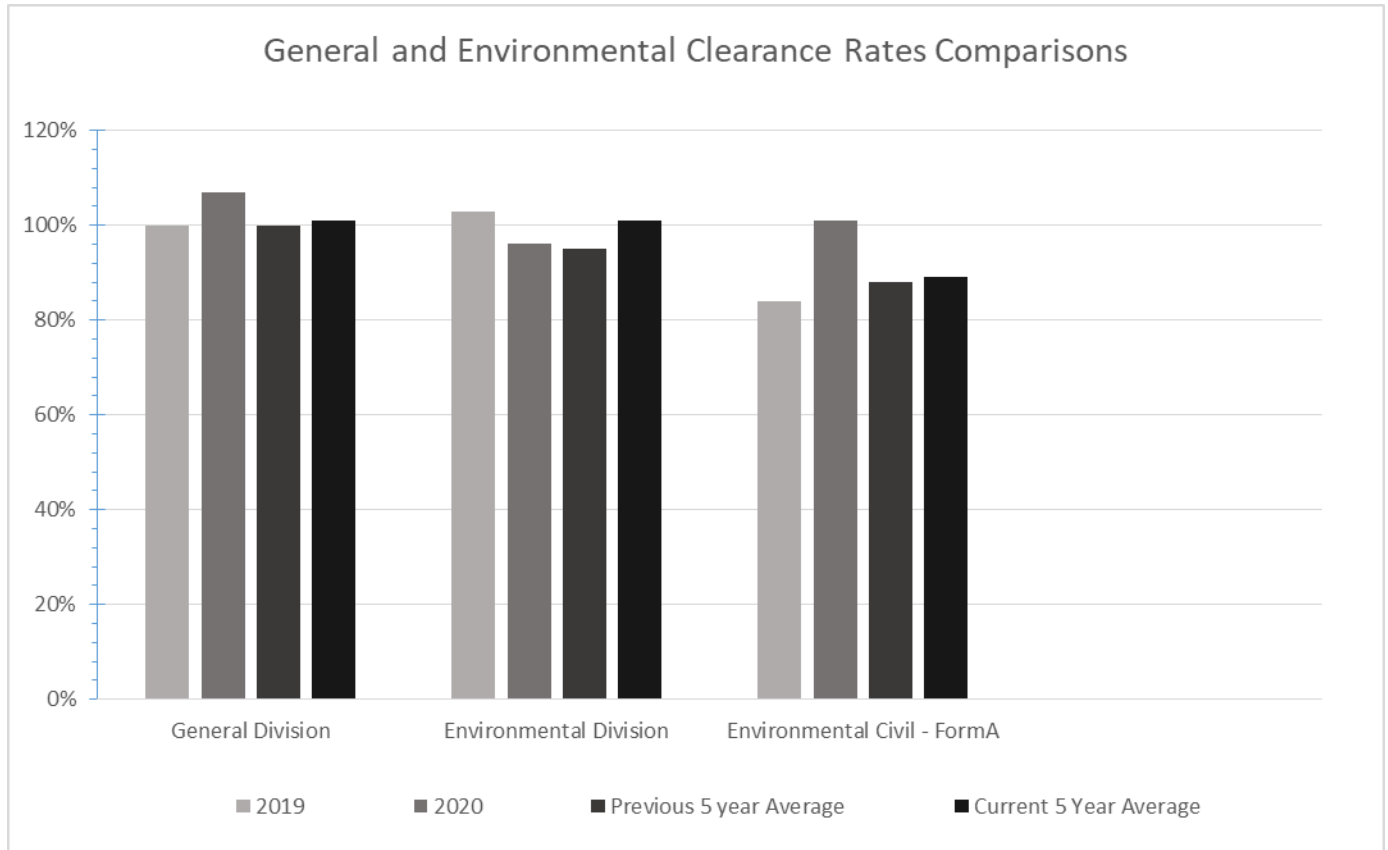
The Franklin County Municipal Court in 2020, started the year with 5 of its 14 General Division judges operating specialty docket programs along with their regular case docket and currently have 4 of the General Division judges operating the 5 programs. The specialty dockets are the CATCH (Changing Actions to Change Habits), MAVS (Military and Veteran’s Docket), h.a.r.t. (Helping Achieve Recovery Together), L.I.N.C. (Learning to Identify and Navigate Change), and Recovery Court. All pre-sentence and post-sentence hearings are scheduled in the Assignment Office by the case coordinator assigned to the judge who is elected to operating that particular program (Local Rule 8).

As COVID-19 restricted court appearances, the Assignment Office diligently supplied reactive case management to the judiciary. Throughout the pandemic, Assignment's official duties were considered essential to the overall functions of the court. During shutdowns within the state and country, assignment staff continued in court duties as attentively and efficiently as possible. In March, April, and May, judicial dockets were rescheduled and incarcerated defendant cases were still assigned, processed, and terminated. The court reopened to some minimal court appearances and arraignments in June, following recommendations of State, County and City health officials and the Supreme Court of Ohio. At this time cases are again being referred for assignment and case management to the judiciary.

On all assigned cases, parties are notified of pending hearing dates by mail for all initial hearings or by fax for incarcerated defendants. All subsequent hearings scheduled for civil cases are issued by mail and when requested for criminal, traffic, and sealing of record cases, otherwise, in-court notification is used for criminal, traffic, or sealing of record cases. In 2020 the Assignment Office scheduled approximately 101,000 hearings and mailed approximately 405,000 hearing notices to parties, which was only a reduction of 9% from the previous year. Even though there was a 37% reduction in the new and reactivated cases of 51,156 in 2019 to 32,277 in 2020. All case type categories in the graph below saw a reduction from 2019 to 2020 the exception of the environmental division traffic cases, which saw a 72% increase, from 136 assigned to 491.



The Office has the responsibility to prepare management reports for the judiciary, such as case statistic reports, hearing statistics, and monthly statistical reports for each judge for submission to the Ohio Supreme Court. The office also prepares the individual judge’s daily docket court sheets, board-sheets, and the judicial civil motion’s list. In 2020 the assignment office received, processed, updated, and managed 1,697 civil motions on assigned judicial cases.



The General Divisions clearance rate was up 7% from 2019 to 2020 to 107%, with the five-year average increasing 1% to 101%. The Environmental Division saw a decrease from 2019 to a rate of 96% in 2020, but a five-year average increase to 101%. The Environmental Division – Civil saw its clearance rate increase to 101%, with a 1% increase in the five-year average over the previous five-year average.

BAILIFFS

Bailiffs coordinate activities in the courtrooms, schedule cases, provide docket management, provide information to the public about the status of cases, and act as liaisons between their assigned judge or magistrate and attorneys, court personnel, and the general public. Each judge has an assigned courtroom bailiff, there is an unassigned bailiff who rotates among the judges to provide courtroom coverage when a judge’s bailiff is absent, and there is a duty room and two arraignment bailiffs. Each magistrate also has a bailiff.

COURT ADMINISTRATION

Court Administration oversees the administrative and operational functions of the Court. It carries out the non-judicial policies of the Court. In addition to providing overall support and direction to the Court's 260 employees, some of its specific functions include personnel management, budgeting and fiscal management, purchasing, liaison with other courts and agencies, public information, appointment of counsel, court services, court security, interpreter services, vehicle immobilization, and volunteer services. The Court Administrator is the chief non-judicial officer.

The Court's General Fund Operating budget for 2020 was \$20,215,446 with an additional \$1,631,903 Secure Facilities Fund budget and \$614,999 Computer Fund budget.

Breakdown of General Fund Operating Budget 2020

Personal services	\$17,669,897
Materials and supplies	60,300
Services	1,995,249
Other expenditures	490,000
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$20,215,446

COURT REPORTERS

Court Reporters make a verbatim record of court proceedings, prepare a transcript from the record of court proceedings upon request, and maintain records of exhibits introduced at court proceedings. The Court has an obligation to provide a transcript of all proceedings upon request of a party, and there must be a court record of all pleas and waivers. In 2020 the Department was staffed with 1 chief court reporter, 8 full-time court reporters, and 4 part-time court reporters and they provided 134 transcript and/or DVD requests.

COURT SECURITY

Court Security was established to maintain a safe environment in the courthouse for elected officials, Court employees, and all others having business in the courthouse. The staff consists of a security director, security supervisor, administrative assistant, control room operator, and 23 security officers on the first shift, plus a control room operator on each of the second and third shifts. In addition, the Court contracts with a private security company to provide daylight, evening, weekend, and holiday coverage.

During 2020 approximately **492,727** visitors to the Court were screened at the Court's entry points by security officers. These officers responded to **262** building incidents. Columbus Police Liaisons made **319** arrests in the building.

COURT SERVICES

The Court Services Unit assists in the day-to-day duties of the Duty Room, Court Services service counter, and vehicle sanctions. This Unit of the Court consists of 5 full-time and 1 part-time employees.

The Judges are assigned to the Duty Room on a weekly rotating basis. The Duty Judge approves Magistrate decisions, rules on motions filed on all non-assigned civil cases, performs civil ceremonies, signs search warrants, hold hearings for show cause, exemption requests, objections to a Magistrate's

decision, and warrant set asides, and performs myriad of other miscellaneous duties.

For 2020 the Duty Room handled:

- 25,910 civil files signed in the Duty Room, a decrease of 38.1%.
 - a. 3,635 or 14% of those files sought approval of Magistrate decisions.
 - b. 334 or 1.3% of those files sought hearings for show cause, exemption requests, and objections to a Magistrate's decision.
- 567 civil ceremonies were scheduled with 352 or 62% of those civil ceremonies actually taking place.

Court Services helps defendants resolve matters such as extensions of time to pay fines and court costs, delaying the start of court-ordered incarceration, issuance of or change in limited driving privileges, withdrawal of warrant or order-in that has been issued, assistance with impounded vehicles, assistance with Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) problems, and continuance of a court date.

For 2020 Court Services handled:

- 1,718 people for an average of 7.13 people a day. Of those who came in 652 people or 38% could not be assisted or were directed to another area.
- 285 people or 16.6% wanted their warrants set aside.
- 152 people or 8.9% wanted to be put on time payments for their fines and costs.
- 17 people or .05% wanted to either change their driving privileges or wanted to get driving privileges.
- 107 people or 6.3% wanted their fines and costs changed to community service.
- 409 people or 24.9% wanted a continuance for either their court date, driver intervention program, dates sentenced to jail, or fines and costs.
- 96 people or 5.6% came in for miscellaneous matters.

State law mandates the immobilization or forfeiture of vehicles operated by defendants who are convicted of the following offenses: repeat OVI offenses (operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs) and driving under certain court or BMV related suspensions. Immobilization or forfeiture of vehicles involved in suspension cases related to the Financial Responsibility Act or wrongful entrustment of a vehicle are at the Court's discretion.

This Unit also acts as a liaison and is responsible for the communications to and from the court, law enforcement, and defendants to ensure compliance with the Court's orders involving the defendant's vehicle.

For 2020 Vehicle Sanctions handled:

- 5,394 Driving Under Suspension cases filed representing an decrease of 49.6% from 2019.
- 245 or 4.54% of the Driving Under Suspension cases were related to driving under an OVI suspension. Driving under an OVI suspension requires a 30 day immobilization of the vehicle.
- 428 vehicles were released representing a 42.5% decrease from 2019.
- 160 vehicles were relocated representing a 50% decrease from 2019.
- 82 vehicles were immobilized representing a 45.3% decrease from 2019.
- 66 cases were filed where the Prosecutor and Court were seeking forfeiture of the vehicle, a decrease of 51.8% from 2019.
- 11 vehicles were forfeited in 2020 representing a 54.2% increase from 2019.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

In the Environmental Division, which is commonly referred to as “The Environmental Court”, Judge Stephanie Mingo has continued to successfully integrate a series of unique sentencing strategies to combat vacant and abandoned properties, along with chronically offending landlords in Franklin County. The impact of the COVID-19-19 Pandemic on the Environmental Division was unprecedented. Included within the Court's unique jurisdiction is the enforcement of Public Health codes and regulations. This required the Court to adjudicate several cases involving the implementation of protocols designed to prevent and slow the spread of the COVID-19-19 virus in various commercial establishments.

Under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Division, nuisance abatement cases filed within the County come before the Environmental Judge. These cases can involve derelict hotels, businesses violating health department orders, liquor establishments in violation of the law, drug houses, and other residential and commercial properties conducting illegal and nuisance activities. Nuisance activities can range from illegal drug sales, underage alcohol sales, operating contrary to health department orders, prostitution, and general violence. The Environmental Division also hears cases involving environmental crimes, violations, and similar matters filed within the County. Some examples of these cases include animal abuse and neglect, dog fighting, vicious animals, wildlife violations, poaching, littering, dumping, overweight trucks, hazardous waste transportation, unlicensed tire transportation, air pollution, water pollution, hoarding, health, zoning, code enforcement, and park district violations. In 2020, **2,429** new criminal cases and **646** new civil cases were filed within the Environmental Division.

As the only Court in the County handling code enforcement cases, the Environmental Division utilizes unique techniques to ensure our communities and neighborhoods are restored from the negative and often hazardous impact of nuisance properties. Property owners are ordered to bring their properties into compliance under the supervision of the Court’s Chief Environmental Specialist and the Field Services staff of the Environmental Division. Penalties range from daily fines, jail time, and community service hours to be completed within the Court’s Community Cleanup Crew program. Property owners are supervised by Environmental Division staff and are assigned reasonable compliance plans and timelines until compliance is achieved.

The Environmental Division operates two courtrooms simultaneously with Magistrate Ben Hoelzel conducting civil case conferences and Judge Stephanie Mingo presiding over civil and criminal hearings.

In 2020, the Environmental Division along with the Court’s Probation Department provided supervision to all non-code enforcement related cases that resulted in a probation sentencing. A dedicated probation officer is assigned to supervise these cases with the Chief Environmental Specialist and the Environmental Division’s Field Services staff providing field investigations and inspections for those cases. The Chief Environmental Specialist in conjunction with the field service staff member routinely conducts investigations and inspections to ensure compliance with the law, the conditions of probation, and other terms of sentencing.

The Environmental Division has continued its education and outreach programs throughout Franklin County, despite the COVID-19-19 Pandemic. Judge Mingo and the Environmental Division communicated remotely with many neighborhood groups and associations, area commissions, block watches, and community leaders in an effort to stay connected during the pandemic. The Environmental Division also maintains its website – www.EnvironmentalCourt.us – to provide helpful information to the public and to serve as a resource for area agencies.

In the face of the COVID-19-19 Pandemic, the Environmental Division has taken steps to adjust protocols and Court procedures to keep citizens as safe as possible when attending Court. This has been balanced with adjustments in scheduling to continue to accommodate an increasing caseload that is expected in the wake of the pandemic. As we head into 2021, the economic impact of the pandemic in our most vulnerable neighborhoods is likely to lead to an increase in housing and building code complaints. In addition, the alarming spike in violence in our community, especially instances concentrated in certain localities, has already lead to a dramatic increase in nuisance abatement cases involving illicit drugs and violence.

JURY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

It is the duty of the Jury Commissioner's Office to summon, orient, and assign prospective trial jurors to courtrooms when needed. The Jury Commissioner tracks *voir dire* (a preliminary examination of prospective jurors to determine their qualifications and suitability to serve on a jury, in order to ensure the selection of fair and impartial jury) results and trial verdicts, and collects demographic data to ensure the jury venire (those summoned for jury service) is a true sampling of all cognizable groups in Franklin County's qualified population.

Jury service is a two (2) week commitment. Jurors are paid \$15.00 a day for their attendance and they receive a parking voucher. The Jury Commissioner's office is now using new software that has the ability to text and email jurors. March 16, 2020 the Jury Commissioner's office started an on-call jury service. Jurors only reported if they were sent a message to report to Court. From 1/1/2020 through 3/16/2020 before coronavirus jurors reported each day. The number of jurors summoned during that time was 1,020 and the jurors that reported for service was 307. From 3/16/2020 through 12/18/2020 after coronavirus the number of jurors summoned was 3,992 and the jurors that reported for service was 466. During coronavirus there were ten (10) jury trials. Those trials went from voir dire all the way to a verdict. New software worked extremely to alert jurors by text and email with instructions to report for a trial or to stay on-call for the following day.

LANGUAGE SERVICES

During 2020 the Court employed two full-time Spanish language interpreters and one full-time Somali, MayMay, and Swahili language interpreter and contracted for one part-time Spanish and one part-time Somali language interpreters. Together they completed an estimated **4,571** requests for service (**4,051** in Spanish and **520** in Somali, MayMay, and Swahili). The Court has multiple contracts with outside vendors to provide foreign language and ASL interpreters. There were **1,604** requests for interpreters in **41** other languages, **1,423** requests were filled by **onsite interpreters** and there were **181** requests in languages of lesser diffusion like **Q'iche, Ixil, Mam, Mixteco, Zapoteca, Krio, Luganda, Soninke, Yoruba, Punjabi, and Hakha Chin** that were covered through remote interpretation. The foreign languages for which interpreters were most requested were **Spanish, Somali, Nepali, Arabic, French, Tigrinya, Mandarin, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Amharic**. Additionally, the Court filled **136** requests for **American Sign Language** and **Certified Deaf** interpretation and **Captionist**. The Interpreter Services Program continues to offer a mentoring program and training opportunities for judiciary interpreters to better serve the Court and all parties.

LEGAL RESEARCH

The Court employs a Legal Research Director who provides legal research, supervises the work of part-time law clerks, and serves as a part-time magistrate. The Director and Law Clerks research and prepare memoranda on issues pending before the Court, maintain research and reference materials, review new case law to ensure the Court's compliance with the decisions, review pending legislation that may affect the Court, and advise the judges and employees regarding new legal developments and applications of current law to court procedures. The legal research director also serves as a part-time magistrate and liaison to the Court's Self Help Resource Center.

MAGISTRATES

The Court employs five full-time General Division magistrates, and one part-time magistrate who preside over traffic arraignments, landlord-tenant actions, wage garnishments, small claims cases, and other civil matters. The Court also employs one Environmental Division magistrate who presides over criminal and traffic arraignments and hearings, all civil pre-trials and status conferences, other civil hearings, and manages the civil docket of the Environmental Division. Judges may also refer specific cases to magistrates to take testimony, make legal rulings, and render decisions that are subject to final approval by the referring judge. Magistrates have the authority to accept guilty and no contest pleas and to impose penalties in misdemeanor cases. Magistrates may hear minor misdemeanor criminal cases or civil cases tried without a jury as well as contested criminal cases and civil jury trials with consent of the parties.

DEPARTMENT OF PRETRIAL AND PROBATION SERVICES

The Department of Pretrial and Probation Services (DOPPS) serves the Franklin County Municipal Court Judges under the immediate direction of the Court Administrator. At approximately, one hundred staff, the DOPPS is the largest division of the Court. The vision of the DOPPS is *excellence in rehabilitation through evidence based practices* and the mission is to *promote community safety by reducing recidivism, changing offender behavior, and fostering accountability through effective use of evidence based practices*. The DOPPS follows an evidence-based paradigm that utilizes validated risk assessment tools and a differentiated, risk-based supervision construct. The DOPPS works with those under its supervision to achieve agreed upon goals aimed at reducing risk and gaining compliance with court-ordered conditions. The assessment-driven, supervision goals and requirements can include any of the following: residential programming, cognitive-behavioral based interventions, and behavioral health assessments, educational programs, counseling for mental health and/or substance abuse needs, and random urinalysis.

This year, in collaboration with the Judges of the Court, the DOPPS committed to becoming a data-driven department. Because of this commitment to transparency and to routinely evaluating our outcomes, the Department continues to prepare and share with stakeholders, a quarterly evidence based practices (EBP) outcomes dashboard report. This report helps inform our practices and any additional training or resource needs we may have. It also helps ensure that we are meeting our goals of risk-reduction and public safety.

The year 2020 proved to challenge many of our efforts due to the impact of COVID-19 and the need to swiftly adjust practices. Despite the challenges, the Department continued to provide support to the Judges and those under our supervision. We learned that many of the adjustments that were made to help ensure the safety and health of our employees and Department users, proved beneficial and removed barriers that can impact success. We look forward to continuing to evaluate these modified approaches and retain practices and process that move us closer to our goals.

Staff Overview

The DOPPS is proud to have highly trained and professional staff. In 2020, thirty-one percent (31%) of the probation officers held a Master's Degree. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the probation officers held a license in Counseling, Social Work or Chemical Dependency, thirty-six percent (36%) of the probation officers are State Certified Trainers for the Supreme Court Judicial College and eighty-five percent (85%) of the probation officers are certified in one either Thinking for a Change, UC-CC, Equip or the Duluth Model of Batterer Intervention.

Professional Development

The Department's Training and Development Project Manager, is a position that is funded through the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Bureau of Community Sanctions grant. Some of the goals of this function are to assist the Department in the implementation of and fidelity to its strategic plan, and to assist in the development of staff. The Department continues to prioritize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) of staff, however, the 2020, CQI process was halted in light of COVID-19 and modified practices.

During 2020, the Department sent an additional ten (10) staff through the University of Cincinnati's CBI-CC (Core Curriculum) Facilitator Training, increasing the total number of trained staff to eleven (11). The Department also has twenty-two (22) staff training in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) Program. Both T4C the CBI-CC are designed to provide a thorough intervention that broadly targets all criminogenic needs. They follow a cognitive-behavioral approach and teach participants strategies to manage risk factors with an emphasis on skill building activities. All groups were suspended during 2020 due to COVID-19. We look forward to re-instituting the groups in 2021 and being able to provide a combination of T4C and CBI-CC groups.

All in-person training was also suspended during 2020, however, the opportunities for virtual training events expanded. Staff completed a total of 2,408.25 hours of virtual/web-based trainings during 2020. Of which, 1,029.75 of the hours were designated Changing Offender Behavior hours.

The Court had been working with StepMobile on the development and implementation of the Ohio Community Supervision System (OCSS), a web-based, probation case management system, with plans to implement later in 2020. This effort was expedited due to COVID-19 and the need to support telework. Therefore, OCSS was implemented early in 2020. One of the many benefits of OCSS is the ability to conduct virtual interviews with defendants. Staff completed a total of 4,023 video appointments with defendants during 2020.

To help ensure meaningful and skill-based interventions with defendants, the Department invested in electronic intervention tools and techniques.

In an effort to support defendants who do not have access to WiFi or cellular data access, the Court applied for and received COVID-19-related grant dollars to purchase disposable smart phones and data plans to help ensure that all defendants have the opportunity to participate in virtual reporting. This has proven to be very beneficial.

Training and development goals for 2021 include continued enhancement and utilization of OCSS to best meet the Department's needs, booster trainings for officers on use of the electronic cognitive behavioral interventions, the continuation of its robust continuous quality improvement process, and re-implementation of in-person strategic trainings, to include the evidence based, BriefCASE Training,

Mental Health First Aid and Narcan administration training, to ensure staff certifications remain current.

Student Development/Internships

The DOPPS has been committed to providing internship opportunities for several students. The students and the Department identify objectives and expectations to strengthen the internship experience and help both the Department and student achieve a positive and productive partnership in learning, and further develop their professional skills in the field of community corrections.

In addition, the internship provides an opportunity to link the theoretical concepts that they have studied in the classroom setting with practical work related experiences. It is hoped that their experience fully demonstrates how probation/community control is utilized to promote change and rehabilitation.

The internship orientation process includes an overview of the Court and the Department and includes: the case assignment process, evidence based practices, supervision structure, and risk levels. There is also a mid-point review, wrap-up session upon completion and a final evaluation of the internship by both the intern and Department supervisor. There were three student placements during 2020. This is a lower number of placements than usual and can most likely be attributed to the hybrid schedules of the Court, colleges and universities.

Administrative Support Services

The DOPPS Support Unit upholds the mission of reducing recidivism by ensuring individuals placed on probation are assigned an appropriate officer for successful program completion. Throughout 2020 amidst a global pandemic, this Unit has maintained business-as-usual and effectively changed processes to promote the safety and wellbeing of the clients served, as well as the department as a whole. To maintain social distancing, the Reception window has conducted expedited intakes to minimize exposure. Clients fill out their own information and are contacted through their preferred method of communication their next steps of intake within three business days. All in-custody, holding cell interviews have been temporarily discontinued in lieu of the absentee intake process. Clients are instructed to call the next business day, but are also sent a letter about their next steps through USPS to their last known address. This has caused minimal disruption to the intake process, as clients are still able to be assessed and assigned as appropriate.

The Unit also set a goal to become certified in the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS). All team members were able to complete the certification process, and are now able to move forward with assisting in the completion of the Community Supervision Tool (CST) in 2021.

With the implementation of OCSS, the Support Unit has been responsible for ensuring its success. The Unit operates both out of CourtView and OCSS to maintain accurate records that enables officers to meet the needs of their clients. After the initial transfer of data from CourtView, 60% of all cases (both active and terminated) have been edited for accuracy in OCSS by the unit. This effort will remain ongoing throughout the rest of the implementation of the system, and the Support Unit is equipped for the challenge.

In the early months of 2021, the Unit has begun diligently updating previous processes, such as Violation Hearing communications and case modifications. The ongoing goal for the Support Unit in 2021 is to modernize DOPPS, by digitizing all available information and eliminating the passing of hard files. This is being accomplished through the constant monitoring of caseloads in OCSS, as well as scanning and uploading intake information for ease of use to the officer. By the end of the year, the implementation of OCSS will be completed, and the Unit will have standardized all processes associated with the intake of a

client, and will be utilizing the system to its maximum efficiency. This will include: scheduling and completing virtual intakes, assisting with the virtual Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) and ORAS assessments as necessary, and the installation and implementation of the OCSS self-service kiosk.

Assessment Services and Community Programming

The Department's intake assessment project began in May, 2018. The goal of this project is to lessen the amount of time between intake and supervision assignment and reduce the number of transfers between officers by having complete assessment information completed prior to case assignment. This project is supported by a variety of funding sources and is in collaboration with Alvis, Inc.

The Department contracts with Alvis for three assessment specialists, housed within the DOPPS, whose main function is to conduct risk assessments on defendants, in order to inform their placement within the evidence based supervision construct. These contracted staff completed approximately 1,100 assessments in 2020, on cases referred both from intake and other units who required assistance in this area. The average length of time from intake to assessment was thirty-one (31) days. That continues to be an improvement from the baseline of seventy-five (75) days that the DOPPS averaged before implementation of this function.

The impact on staff time, and the direct linkage of defendants to their assigned officers based upon their assessed risk level has improved dramatically through this process. In 2020, the assessment specialist's began completing alcohol and drug (AOD) screenings and making referrals to the Special Programs Unit for swift referral to the Department's Tri-C and Anchor4Me programs. This effort is being made to more swiftly connect defendants to these valuable programs and develop and expand their function within the Department. The completion of the AOD screenings also assists the receiving officer's ability to refer for further assessment and or programming in a timelier manner. Due to the pandemic, the assessors began completing assessments via video to stay in line with social distancing guidelines. This has proved to be beneficial and has improved the show and assessment completion rate for the Department.

The DOPPS Special Programs Unit (SPU) is comprised of one Community Resource Specialist (CRS), one Coordinator, and the Courthouse (CH) Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program Manager, and Case Manager. The CRS directly supervises the Department's Special Programs Coordinator and CH MAT staff. The SPU works in collaboration with one another to get those in need of behavioral health treatment linked with the appropriate program and services.

The Community Resource Specialist assists in the management of the Court's Suzanne Hopper Act or Form 95 Process that identifies individuals under supervision with specific mental health diagnoses and convictions and provides notification to law enforcement (approximately seventy-five (75) forms submitted in 2020). The CRS position also oversees the Department's Resource Committee and provides weekly reports to the Court of available community resources. This position along with the Special Programs Coordinator, coordinates placements into the Department's residential treatment programs and participates on planning teams for the Department's halfway house program (HHRP), day programming response (Comprehensive Community Care or TRI C), Safe Housing, and the Courthouse MAT programs. Approximately fifty (50) screenings were completed in 2020 for residential placement and another thirty-five (35) were referred to Tri-C Intensive Outpatient Programming.

An essential function of the CRS is maintaining data and outcomes for the Court's myriad of community programs. In 2020, this position conducted approximately thirty (30) behavioral health and risk

assessments both in the community and in the jail to help inform specialized supervision needs and appropriate treatment level of care. In 2020, the SPU also began outreach to public defenders and judges in effort to help ensure that violation hearings are scheduled in a timely fashion.

The CRS also serves as the chair and advisor to the Department's Resource Committee. One of the strategic goals for 2020 was to work The Carey Group in the creation of a community provider assessment process which will aid the Department in ensuring that the agencies where defendants are referred for programming, follow evidence based practices, and provide quality services. The Resource Committee worked closely with The Carey Group in 2020 on the development of the process with the goal of implementing during 2021.

In 2020, the CH MAT Program was met with many COVID-19 related challenges. Although clinic operations were deeply impacted by a decrease in referrals from the jail and the Court, the needs of these individuals remained high. Many clients felt unsafe about returning to the Courthouse for their follow-up Vivitrol injections. Despite these challenges, the CH MAT Program remained open and initiated enhanced safety protocols to make sure that everyone felt comfortable and safe. For clients who were ill, who may have been exposed to COVID-19, or who were uneasy about coming into the Courthouse, the medical provider was able to reschedule them or call in a limited supplies of "comfort" meds until their symptoms (illness) had ceased. Many clients were lost in care as a result of COVID-19.

In 2020, there were 61 screenings completed for MAT at the request of the Court. Of those 61 screenings, 57 were deemed eligible for MAT services and 47% received their first Vivitrol injection. Of those participants who received their second injection, 50% completed the Program (completion is based on receiving three injections or being successfully linked to another MAT Program). This decrease in numbers of new clients into the Program is a direct correlation of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the increase in over-dose deaths during the first two quarters of 2020, the CH MAT Program began increasing case management efforts. The Program also incorporated a community needs assessment. This assessment allows for the assessment of barriers to recovery and the unique needs of each individual, outside of their MAT/SUD concerns. Based on the initial results of the community needs assessment, it was learned that clients needed assistance with housing, food, utilities, mental health, employment, and transportation. This information was communicated to the assigned probation officer and CH MAT Program staff assisted in making the appropriate referrals and linkages.

During 2020, Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) BJA grant funding was received to expand the Program. This expanded Program is called MARCH or Medication Assisted Treatment Assessment Referral Care and Hope Program.

The goals of the MARCH Program are to:

- Expand its partnerships to include additional, on-site service providers
- Increase the availability of on-site MAT intervention
- Provide immediate, comprehensive and individualized screening, assessment, and case management services for all Court visitors on a walk-in or scheduled basis.
- Expand a relationship with the Court's Self-Help center.
 - This relationship will also provide assistance with food, housing, and transportation needs, as well as, Medicaid applications.
- Increase case management capabilities and provide a certified peer support specialist

Pretrial Services

The Court continues to embrace the Pretrial Services performed by the Department. The Pretrial Services Unit is supported by a grant from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Bureau of Community Sanctions. In 2020, the Unit furthered its goals of providing programming and services in domestic violence cases at the pretrial phase. The pretrial officers continued in the use of the Ontario Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (ODARA) tool, utilizing it as part of the pretrial investigation process. The pretrial unit also expanded the use of the Healthy Relationships Pretrial Domestic Violence Program, a unique educational program aimed at providing access to programming and support during in the pretrial phase. This valuable program was able to continue during 2020 using a virtual format.

To guide growth of the pretrial officer and program functions, the DOPPS had the opportunity to work with a national consultant to review the program policies and procedures and provide pretrial specific training. This technical assistance will continue through 2021.

The Pretrial Services Unit is staffed by seven (7) bail investigation and pretrial supervision Officers and one Supervisor. The goals of the Pretrial Services Program are to: 1) prepare and provide the Court with bail investigation reports that include validated pretrial risk assessment information and release recommendations on eligible defendants who are in custody awaiting initial appearance, in order to provide Judges with the information they need to make informed bail decisions; 2) reduce the overall length of stay for pretrial detainees; 3) to provide appropriate supervision and monitoring of defendants who are released by the Court on pretrial supervision to help ensure that they are engaging in their community-based release plan, making their Court appearances, and not engaging in new criminal activity. In 2020, the Pretrial Services Unit completed 1,542 bail investigations and supervised a total of 1,384 pretrial defendants. This was a reduction from 2019 where the unit completed 2,688 bail investigations and supervised 1,902 pretrial defendants and was the direct result of modifications made due to COVID-19.

In response to COVID-19 precautions, the FCMC reduced its arraignment days and implemented a video arraignment process. The inability for pretrial officers to access defendants early in 2020 created significant challenges, however, mid-way through the year, the jail was able to accommodate virtual interviews with defendant's in custody for the pretrial officers. This ability allowed the officers to once again provide the court with valuable pretrial risk assessment and other related information.

Two pretrial services goals for 2021, are to implement a sequential bail review process to provide updated assessment and release planning information to Judges for defendants who remain in custody greater than three days on a financial bond and develop a delegated release matrix to maximize pre-booking release for low risk and low-level charged individuals.

Investigation Services

The DOPPS also provides investigation services for the Court. The Investigation Unit is staffed by four officers and is overseen by one probation officer supervisor. In 2020 the Investigation Unit was assigned 68 presentence investigations and 1,558 sealing of record investigations. The decrease in sealing of record applications processed is likely attributable to the pandemic, however the legislative changes enacted for 2019 have continued to result in an expanded opportunity for defendants to seal their records. The Investigation Unit continues to incorporate the Department's risk assessment tools into its presentence investigation reports in order to provide the Court with the defendant's assessed risk level and appropriate supervision placement, should the Court place the defendant on community control supervision.

Post Disposition, Differentiated Supervision

The DOPPS supervision construct is staffed by 46 post-disposition, supervision officers who report to four probation officer supervisors. These evidence-based supervision responses include: Risk-Based (Low, Low-Moderate, Moderate and Intensive) Supervision; Domestic Violence Supervision (includes an extremely high risk supervision and LGBTQ+ specific responses); Sex Offender Supervision; Specialized Mental Health Supervision, Specialized Soliciting/Human Trafficking Supervision, Electronic Monitoring/Home Confinement, Work Release and supervision of the Court's specialized docket programs. The Court's specialized dockets include: Learning to Identify and Navigate Change (LINC); Military and Veteran Service (MAVS); Changing Actions to Change Habits (CATCH); Recovery Court; and Helping to Achieve Recovery Together (HART). Officers assigned to each of these supervision functions receive specialized training specifically related to the risk level and needs of population they oversee.

During 2020, the Department supervised a total of 10,414 post-disposition cases, including 3,999 new supervision placements. At year's end, a total of 13,209 cases remained assigned to, or on warrant status with, the Department. This represents a slight reduction from 2019, when the Department supervised a total of 12,605 cases with 6,295 new placements.

Supervision outcomes for 2020 reveal:

- 85% of our low risk defendants completed supervision
- 67% of our low moderate risk defendants completed supervision
- 52% of our moderate risk defendants completed supervision
- 37% of our high risk defendants completed supervision
- 33% of all of our domestic violence unit defendants completed supervision
- 1% of our low risk defendants were sentenced to jail after a hearing for a technical violation
- 5% of our low moderate risk defendants were sentenced to jail after a hearing for a technical violation
- 6% of our moderate risk defendants were sentenced to jail after a hearing for a technical violation
- 14% of our high risk defendants were sentenced to jail after a hearing for a technical violation
- 15% of our domestic violence unit defendants were sentenced to jail after a hearing for a technical violation

Post Disposition, Specialized Supervision

Domestic Violence Supervision

In 2019, the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) incorporated the ODARA to better differentiate defendants by risk level. This tool allowed for the addition of a low and low moderate risk supervision response. Currently, defendants convicted of a domestic violence related offense with a current or past intimate partner are separated into four distinct risk levels: Low, Low Moderate, Moderate or Intensive. Intensive supervision also encompasses the specialized populations of extremely high risk and LGBTQ+ population (Comprehensive Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment -CAP IT Program). In 2020, DVU implemented the use of the ODARA on all cases and began to collect data regarding the use of the ODARA for the purposes of validating the assessment tool in Franklin County.

During 2020, the DOPPS continued its development of the Strategic Enforcement Response Team (SERT), a specialized and intensive supervision response. Enhancements were made to the program including: the development of tactics for warrant apprehension; more intentional and comprehensive outreach to survivors through increased community contacts; and a close working relationship with the designated, the

Department's designated SERT victim assistant. The Department has continued to work with the designated batterer intervention program to incorporate regular case staffing's. A group reporting process has been established for defendants in order to increase cohesiveness and professional alliance. A total of 273 community contacts have been made by the SERT team since its inception in 2018. COVID-19 dramatically reduced the number of community contacts; since a staffing change in September 2020, the new officer was able to conduct 52 community contacts.

The Department continued its work with Dr. Christopher Lowenkamp to locally validate both the ODARA and the Domestic Violence Risk Need Assessment (DVRNA) tools. In December of 2020, 900 cases were given for review for purposes of validation and the results will be used to validate or make necessary modifications to existing risk thresholds and procedures.

During 2020, there was an increased effort to train staff and community stakeholders in the DVRNA tool. Two batterer intervention programs (BIP) worked with the DVU supervisor to train all staff in the use of the DVRNA. Additionally, the DVU supervisor conducted training sessions for staff certification.

Although the pandemic limited in-person interactions, the DVU supervisor was directly involved with the following groups and committees: Firearm Technical Assistance Program (FTAP), Franklin County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, and The Conference on Crimes Against Women National Planning Board (CCAW).

Due to COVID-19, trends in increased violence, higher lethality, and more arrests for intimate partner violence were seen globally as well as here in Franklin County. These issues were largely due to isolation because of stay at home orders, increased stressors from financial issues related to the virus, and lack of outside support systems. There were instances of decreased reporting of minor incidents, increased reporting of more serious, potentially lethal incidents, and more serious violence overall.

The Franklin County Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Response (FCDVCCR) group was formed in an effort to streamline batterer intervention programming during the implementation process of evidence based programming. This group is comprised of probation officers, BIP programs, advocates, and other stakeholders.

In early 2020, new goals for the FCDVCCR group were established and smaller work groups were formed with an eye toward meeting these goals. Those efforts were halted due to COVID-19, however, plans have been made to reestablish those goals, efforts, and work groups for 2021.

In 2020, the CAP IT program also saw some modifications. After a staffing change, there was a review and overhaul of existing processes to better streamline the referral process and communication between the court and the CAP IT program provider. As of this writing the current class will graduate in the summer.

Mental Health and Developmental Disability Supervision

The DOPPS has two Mental Health Specialized Caseloads to appropriately respond to individuals with a mental health and/or developmental disability diagnosis. The purpose is to ensure that individuals receive the appropriate level and type of supervision to best attend to their unique needs.

The mental health specialized caseload falls under the intensive supervision structure. The Mental Health Specialist will conduct or review the applicable assessment(s), develop a case plan, and refer defendants according to their identified criminogenic and responsivity needs. A referral will be made to the

appropriate behavioral health treatment program to address the specific needs indicated by the assessment tool(s) and case plan, as well as, medication and case management services. Regular communication with partner agencies will verify that defendants are receiving the services, support and monitoring they need to be successful in reaching the goals identified through the assessment, and case planning process. In 2020, there were approximately seventy five (75) cases under supervision.

In an effort to provide the appropriate level of supervision intensity to mental health defendants who have demonstrated sustained compliance with supervision and mental health treatment goals, the DOPPS created a specialized Mental Health Step-Down caseload. This caseload falls under the moderate supervision structure in the DOPPS. This caseload allows mental health defendants with the highest level of needs to receive an intensive supervision response. During 2020, fourteen (14) cases were assigned to this specialized supervision response.

Human Trafficking/Soliciting

The Department's Partnership for Advocacy, Care and Treatment (PACT) Program continues to be an essential supervision and program response for defendants convicted of soliciting and who are not participating in the CATCH Court. The PACT Program provides a community response that incorporates specialized and intensive supervision, along with holistic, comprehensive, and coordinated community programming, to assist with the success of this population. The PACT Program is a joint initiative of community partners and provides: individualized and comprehensive bio-psycho-social assessment; specialized case management; alcohol and drug treatment; the option of medication assisted treatment; trauma services; mental health services linkage; and wrap-around services such as, safe housing, transportation, peer mentors, and GED.

The PACT program continues to pilot and collect data on its use of the Women's Risk Need Assessment (WRNA). This gender-responsive risk and needs assessment scoring tool accounts for women's risk factors, or criminogenic needs, associated with recidivism and future misconduct, and assists in the case planning with this specialized population.

In 2020, the PACT program had a total of twenty four (24) clients enrolled in treatment. Eight (8) of the participants successfully completed this intensive, two-year program and four (4) were unsuccessful due to the participants not returning to treatment.

In 2020, the DOPPS, in collaboration with Alvis, developed a specialized PACT residential program at its Chillicothe facility. The goal of the program is to provide customized treatment and case management outside of Franklin County.

The PACT Program applied to present at the 2020 Attorney General's Human Trafficking Conference 2020.

Electronic Monitoring

The Electronic Monitoring/Home Confinement (EMHC) Program is a cost effective sentencing option that permits a defendant to reside in the community while simultaneously allowing for continuous electronic monitoring of a defendant's whereabouts. Judges may impose EMHC as a condition of pretrial release or post-disposition supervision or as a response to non-compliance/probation violation. The EMHC Program allows defendants the ability to seek or maintain employment, participate in approved programming/treatment, and attend to any critical medical needs or conditions.

During 2020 the EMHC officers kept track of the location of 206 defendants as they served 13,346 days on community supervision. Of the 206 defendants, 138 or 67% of them successfully completed their EMHC condition and 32 or 16% of these successfully carried over into 2021. Of the 206 defendants placed on EMCH there were 37 or 18% were terminated unsuccessfully. The 206 defendants placed on EMHC were comprised of 184 men and 22 women. Of the 184 men on EMCH, 120 or 65% of the men successfully completed supervision and 24 were still being monitored into 2021. Of the 22 women placed on EMHC, 18 or 82% successfully completed supervision.

The defendants sentenced to an EMHC condition served an average of 65 days of monitoring. All of the 14 seated General Division Judges of the Franklin County Municipal Court (FCMC) utilized the services of the EMHC program at some point during 2020. Defendants placed on EMHC were placed on as both a condition of pretrial release as well as post disposition sentencing. They were placed on EMHC for a variety of charges that included but was not limited to: OVI, domestic violence, resisting arrest, theft, menacing by stalking, violation of protection order, possession of drugs, and soliciting. During 2020, of the 206 defendants placed on EMCH there were 165 or 80% who were declared indigent by the Court for purposes of EMHC monitoring payment.

With the COVID-19 pandemic necessitating that in-person contact be limited and in an effort to remove barriers to program eligibility and help ensure that defendants have adequate access to virtual technology; the DOPPS obtained disposable cell phone and data plans for those without access.

In 2020 the DOPPS GPS vendor (Securus Technologies) made improvements to their active GPS ankle bracelet unit. Among the improvements were a longer battery life, the ability to obtain a stronger signal, and thicker strap connectors that are connected differently to allow a more secure fit of the unit.

Electronic monitoring quickly became an even more valuable resource during COVID-19 as Judges looked to find appropriate alternatives to jail/incarceration. It is anticipated that this trend may continue beyond the pandemic as the potential negative impact of incarceration is considered.

Work Release

The Work Release Program (WRP) is a jail alternative program that provides residential services to court-ordered individuals. Judges may impose this community response as an alternative to a mandatory jail sentence, as a condition of pretrial release or probation supervision or as a response to non-compliance/probation violations. The program is designed to help facilitate an individual's successful reentry into the community, by providing monitoring, programming, and management of an individual's community access. Individuals are confined to the stipulations of the WRP except for attending verified employment and/or court-approved programming. Program participants are randomly tested for drug and/or alcohol testing. The WRP allows the individual to maintain his/her employment and provides an opportunity for the participant to pay toward court-ordered restitution, fines, costs, and child support.

During 2020, the WRP admitted 87 individuals. These 87 participants served a total of 1,970 days in work release in lieu of jail time. Of the 87 defendants, 84 or 97% of them successfully completed their work release condition. Of the 87 defendants three or .03% were terminated unsuccessfully. The 87 defendants placed in work release consisted of 64 men and 23 women. Of the 64 men on work release, 61 or 95% successfully completed this supervision. All of the 23 women successfully completed.

The defendants sentenced to a work release term are assigned to a facility for supervision and served an average of 23 days. Fourteen (14) of the 15 seated Judges of the Franklin County Municipal Court utilized

the services of the WRP at some point during 2020. Defendants were placed on work release for a variety of charges that included but was not limited to: OVI, domestic violence, theft, drug abuse, aggravated menacing, disorderly conduct, assault, telephone harassment, and driving under suspension.

During 2020 the WRP collected \$35,003.00 from participants during their work release term. Additionally, the Program saw a savings of \$90,476.00 in jail per diem costs during 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the WRP. The Program experienced two months without any participants due to job loss, illness, and other employment-related factors. The effects of COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of employment and the impact that unemployment has on the community. It also reinforced the program's resiliency and positive impact it can have on the community even during a pandemic.

Behavioral Management System

An important component of the Department's transition to an evidenced based paradigm is the adoption of a Behavior Management System (BMS). In late 2016, the Court committed to developing and adopting a BMS policy framework and in 2017, a BMS workgroup and policy team were created to develop and approve of a policy framework. The Court commenced a pilot of the BMS in the spring of 2018 and continued it through 2019.

The Department formed an implementation team in 2020, whose charge is to make final preparations for an effective and successful full launch of the BMS to include all the judges and the entire Department. The primary areas of focus for the Implementation Team are: ensuring that the stakeholders and staff are fully prepared for full implementation, development of a BMS-specific quality assurance and continuous quality improvement process, and development of a data collection processes. Full launch of the BMS is planned for the third quarter of 2021.

Attention to appropriately utilizing community based responses to violation behavior was even more important during 2020. During 2020, there was a total of: forty-two (42) arrests that were conducted within the Department. Thirty-three of 70% of the arrests were the result of a technical violation and fourteen (14) or 30% were the result of a new charge or arrest. Eighteen or 55% of the arrests for a technical violation were related to a judicial order of no consumption.

Community Sanctions Unit

The Community Sanctions Unit (CSU), helps support and manage many critical functions of the Department. The Unit is staffed with four (4) full time officers and one full time supervisor. One of the functions of the CSU is to monitor defendants who are not placed on community control but who are ordered to complete community service hours in lieu of their fine and court costs or as a condition of a plea agreement. The community sanctions officer monitors the case for compliance with the required hours. Once the completion deadline has passed, the officer files a notice with the clerk's office regarding the completion or non-completion with the hours. In 2020, there were 372 cases that were monitored by the CSU for compliance. This number does not include the volume of cases that were referred to the unit by a probation officer for placement and monitoring of community service.

In 2020, the CSU was assigned 1,758 new provided no convictions (PNC) cases and continued to monitor 1,569 PNC cases that were carried over from the previous year. The CSU monitors PNC cases for new criminal convictions. In 2020, a total of \$273,633 in restitution was ordered in 326 cases, and \$232,109 was collected and disbursed. The remaining cases are those that are still paying, have been revoked, or are

in warrant status. In addition to these functions, the CSU also assists with the management and supervision of the Department's low risk (Team Supervision) response, as well as, oversight of the Court's non-reporting community sanction response (NRCS). During 2020, there were 903 new cases assigned to the NRCS caseload for monitoring of new criminal activity and compliance with Court-ordered conditions. In 2020 there was a total of 1,666 NRCS cases that were monitored.

The volume of cases received by the CSU, with community service hours ordered, decreased as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The CSU also includes oversight of the Community Cleanup Crew program. The Cleanup Crew provides an additional sentencing alternative for non-violent offenses and provides defendants an opportunity to contribute something that is beneficial and constructive to their local communities and improve the environment.

In 2020, the Community Clean-up Crew supervised 200 individuals who provided a combined 3,645.50 hours of work in the communities of Franklin County. The Community Clean-up Crew removed 55.08 tons of solid waste, 539 bags of trash from public alleys, and an additional 6.23 tons of trash from hoarder cleanouts with the Environmental Court. This brings the combined total of 61.31 tons of solid waste removed from Franklin County. They safely disposed of 136 used needles and recycled 3,234 discarded tires from Columbus and other communities within Franklin County.

A dedicated community service officer supports the program to identify and coordinate projects and to continue to develop community relationships. The Community Clean-Up Crew looks to expand the program to offer its services to more community partners, including: area commissions, block watch groups, and neighborhood pride organizations. These efforts will allow the program to have regularly occurring clean-ups in areas throughout the City and County. Other services provided include: waste removal from City and County owned vacant properties and graffiti clean-ups that helps to assist the City and County in their efforts to provide clean, safe neighborhoods for their residents.

Victim Assistance

The Department's Probation Assisted Victim Empowerment Division (PAVED) program is partially funded by a grant through the Attorney General's Office. Because of the sustained support of this grant, the PAVED Program is staffed with three victim assistants and one victim assistant supervisor.

The PAVED Unit continues to take a pro-active approach to help ensure that the Court is in compliance with Marsy's Law. The PAVED Unit makes every effort to reach out to the victims in cases where a defendant is eligible for an early release from supervision, to ensure that victims have the opportunity to provide input into the decision prior to the case being terminated.

The PAVED staff continue to partner with the EMHC officers to ensure that victims are notified when program violations occur. In addition to this being good practice, this response helps the Court remain compliant with Marsy's Law. This notification protocol is initiated anytime an individual removes the GPS tracker, enters an exclusion zone, or allows the GPS tracker's battery to die, regardless of what time of day the violation occurs.

The PAVED Unit continues to work closely with the extremely high risk (SERT) Domestic Violence Unit officer to provide extra support to the victims of domestic violence in these cases.

PAVED staff routinely utilize the danger assessment and a stalking assessment tools to help victims of

domestic violence and stalking understand the risks they face and to develop safety plans. The PAVED Unit continues to collaborate with the City Attorney's Office, Domestic Violence Prosecutors and Victim Advocates to provide a continuity of support for the victims once the defendant has been placed on probation.

In 2020, PAVED staff made 3,397 contacts with victims of crime, and had over 1,500 new cases assigned to the four PAVED staff members.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and while adjusting to hybrid telework schedule, the PAVED staff continued to have onsite availability every business day, meeting with victims in the PAVED lobby for all office/Court contacts that did not occur in the courtrooms. While much of the work that the victim assistants perform can be done over the phone or through mailing letters to victims, there are several aspects of the Victim Advocate's duties that require face-to-face contact, and cannot be handled over the phone or through video appointments. These include collecting documentation of violations of the stay away orders, or other documentation from individuals who have limited knowledge of how to send pictures, screenshots, video evidence, or other evidence via electronic means. In addition, victim advocates cannot notarize any documents/affidavits without meeting with the individual in person.

The PAVED program experienced a decrease in engagement with victims during 2020. The program participation slowed during the 2nd quarter of the year, April – June, but began seeing an increase again near the end of June. During 2020, there was an increase in contact related to hearings due to the increase in continuances due to the pandemic.

The PAVED Unit designates a victim assistant to work specifically with the DVUs CAP IT Program. This victim assistant maintains a list of resources for the LGBTQ+ population. This victim assistant also works closely with the designated CAP IT Officer to ensure that the victims of same sex domestic violence cases receive a specialized response with appropriate and relevant referrals for this population.

The Chief Probation Officer (CPO) is responsible for the overall operation of the DOPPS and is supported by the Department's Management Team in facilitation of these efforts. The CPO is also charged with overseeing the Department's operating budget. Careful management and utilization of this budget is essential Department operations. Especially with the challenges posed by COVID-19, attention to budgetary constraints was especially important. Probation user fees provide critical support to many essential DOPPS supervision programs and initiatives. These services include: staff training, contracted programming for indigent defendants, urinalysis services, defendant bus passes, grant matches, and supervision-related equipment. Defendants paid a total of \$309,036.06 or an average of \$25,753 each month in Probation User Fees in 2020. This was down from previous years due to challenges created by COVID-19 and decreased emphasis on financial collections.

The FCMC DOPPS works hard to leverage its resources, and acquire grant funding to support its many programs and initiatives whenever possible. In 2020, the DOPPS maintained, and in some areas expanded, the external funding streams that support its Pretrial, Victim Assistant, Intake Assessment, Electronic Monitoring, Work Release, and other community programming partnerships that benefit our clientele. In all, the DOPPS managed \$1,969,391 in grant expenditures in 2020, meeting - or in most cases exceeding - the goals that were outlined in the proposals. The DOPPS was fortunate to receive funding specific to assessment and supervision practices during COVID-19, from the CARES Act and OCJS. The majority of these grants require an annual application that requires the review and expansion of project goals and objectives to reflect the ongoing evolution of the Department. The DOPPS enjoys a well-established rapport with criminal justice partners across the Franklin County executive landscape which augments

these applications and highly collaborative projects.

The Department continues its partnership with Job and Family Services (JFS) for onsite Benefits Specialist assistance, however, during the COVID-19 pandemic, JFS had to remove its two onsite Specialists and instead created a direct, remote referral process. This customized process assists officers in referring individuals for assistance related to Medicaid, food insecurities, housing needs and child care benefits.

The DOPPS remains committed to: transparency, data collection, analysis and sharing; and strives to ensure that the tools and resources we utilize are appropriate and valid for use with the population of Franklin County. To further this goal, the Department has contracted with a national researcher to locally validate the ODARA and DVRNA assessment tools and with the American Pretrial, Probation and Parole Association, to locally validate the Impaired Driving Assessment Tool (IDA). This project will continue into 2021.

SELF HELP RESOURCE CENTER

The Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center assists *pro se* litigants in navigating the Court. Established in 2016, the Center's main objectives are to improve the quality of filings by *pro se* litigants, increase access to the justice system for individuals who cannot afford attorneys, and provide a positive point of contact between the Court and the community. It can assist Visitors with civil issues in Municipal Court but does not give legal advice. The most common issues addressed at the Center are the sealing and expungement of criminal records and landlord/tenant disputes.

The Center has continued to grow since moving to the sixth floor of the Municipal Court in early 2018. Despite only offering online services from March until June, Center Staff served over 8,641 Visitors in 2020, an increase from the 8,384 Visitors served in 2019. Currently, the Center is addressing the unique needs of the COVID-19-19 pandemic by providing services via webchat on its website and providing in-person services at both the Greater Columbus Convention Center and Municipal Court home office. The Center also hired an additional staff attorney and launched a Social Work Navigator Pilot Project to help individuals facing eviction. To fund this pilot project, the Center received grant funding from the State Justice Institute and the Columbus Bar Foundation. Center Staff aim to serve over 11,000 Visitors in 2021 and look forward to continuing the growth of this valuable Court service.

SERVICE BAILIFFS

Service Bailiffs assist litigants, attorneys, and the Court by delivering court documents to parties and enforcing both pre-judgment and post-judgment remedies. Responsibilities include service of complaints, summonses, criminal and civil subpoenas, garnishments, juror letters, and probation revocation hearing notices. Writs of replevin are enforced through seizure of property to be returned to the rightful owners, and writs of execution through levy and sale of personal property for the purpose of satisfying judgments. These writs are enforced and supervised by the deputy bailiff officers. Additionally, deputy bailiff officers supervise the set-out of tenant's property during the eviction process.

The Service Bailiffs' Department processed or served in excess of 30,000 legal documents in 2020 there were 1,429 set-outs scheduled. Of those scheduled, 819 set-outs were completed and 3,876 set-outs were cancelled at the plaintiff's request. The department currently employs 13 full-time individuals consisting of 1 chief, 1 deputy chief, 10 deputy bailiffs and a deputy bailiff/administrative assistant.

SMALL CLAIMS DIVISION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION DEPARTMENT

The **Small Claims Division** processes Small Claims cases for the Municipal Court and assists individuals and businesses with court forms. Small Claims are claims for money damages up to \$6,000. The Small Claims Court and its processes are governed by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1925. The Division provides information, forms, instructions, and videos for small claims cases and collections. The Division maintains a user-friendly website that contains all of the information required to initiate and complete a small claims case (smallclaims.fmcclerk.com).

The Division has six full-time employees who support the Court and its magistrates. Division staff initiate new cases, assign magistrates, process notices and summonses, and answer questions about Small Claims Court and other court services. **Division staff managed 2,651 small claims cases in 2020.**

The **Dispute Resolution Department (Department)** coordinates and facilitates mediations for the General and Small Claims Divisions. The Division also maintains an online negotiation and mediation platform to facilitate early case resolution. Parties may participate in mediation either in-person, by telephone, or online. **The Department managed a total of 2,508 mediations in 2020, and increase of 2% from 2019. These cases were made up of 1,367 General Division/Small Claims Cases, 173 Rent Escrow Cases, 137 Pre-Lawsuit Self Referrals, and 831 Pre-Filing/Online/Check and Account Resolution Self-Referrals.**

The Small Claims Division and Dispute Resolution Department was featured in the National Center for State Court's *2020 Trends* publication for its online dispute resolution program and positive impact on case dispositions and court user perceptions of fairness and justice.

SPECIALIZED DOCKET DIVISION

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

The vision of the Specialized Docket Department is to enhance public safety, rebuild lives, and reduce recidivism through the use of restorative justice programs. We champion innovation, prioritize diversity, strive to contribute to the national conversation, and work to advance the mission of Specialized Dockets and restorative justice wherever possible.

The mission of the Specialized Docket Department is to return contributing members to society by implementing best and promising restorative practices. We provide quality programming to high risk/high need participants to link them with individualized treatment, reduce barriers to success, hold participants accountable for the impact of their behaviors, and encourage independent recovery. We value community and stakeholder investment and involve them through education, engagement, and support.

OVERVIEW

The Specialized Docket Department serves the Judges of the Franklin County Municipal Court and is under the direct supervision of the Court Administrator. The specialized docket department manager is responsible for the overall operation, supervision, and certification, and is charged with ensuring funding and overseeing the operating budget. The manager works closely with the Specialized Docket Judge's Committee and meets bi-annually with the Specialized Docket Advisory Board to set the goals and direction of the department. The department is staffed by eleven coordinators who maintain the day to day operations of the department.

Restorative justice is the philosophical foundation of the department. In the context of the municipal court, restorative justice is a process by which offenders take responsibility for their actions, understand the harm they caused, redeem themselves through the process of recovery, become contributing members of their families and the community, increase public safety by ceasing criminal behavior, and reduce the emotional and financial burden on society. This approach considers the impact of the crime on the victim and the community and gives the person who committed the crime the opportunity to repair the damage of their offenses through their actions and meaningful activity.

PROGRAMS

Specialized Dockets are certified by the Supreme Court of Ohio to provide intensive programs, up to two years in duration, to high risk, high need defendants. Admission to a specialized docket requires a referral by a defense attorney, prosecutor, or judge. The defendant must be assessed for eligibility, volunteer, and plead guilty to an active charge to enter the program. Some cases are eligible for sealing and expungement upon successful completion of the program.

The Court established Learning to Identify and Navigate Change (L.I.N.C.) in 2004, adding Changing Actions to Change Habits (CATCH) and Recovery Court in 2009, Helping Achieve Recovery Together (h.a.r.t.) in 2010, and Military and Veterans Services (MAVS) in 2012. The department also provides two educational programs that are sentencing options: CATCH 101 for victims of human trafficking and Drug Education Program (DEP) for felony drug charges reduced to a misdemeanor. In addition, the department provides administrative coordination for all forensic competency cases.

The specialized dockets, often called treatment courts, are a judicial response based on a treatment team approach. Treatment court is a voluntary program of up to two years. Once a defendant has plead into the docket, the process becomes non-adversarial. The participant is placed on probation for two years which provides the compliance mechanism.

The treatment team consists of the presiding judge, who has final decision-making authority, the coordinators, the designated probation officer, public defender, prosecutor, and representatives of various treatment providers. The treatment teams meet weekly to review new admissions and to review participants' individualized goals and progress. The goal is to build a strong support network, to help participants engage in community treatment, and to find a path to independent recovery. Rewards are frequently used; successes celebrated, and as needed, sanctions that are up to and include limited jail, can be imposed. Participants self-determine their progress through program phases as they demonstrate their ability to internalize concepts and apply coping skills in their daily lives.

The Judge presides over weekly status review hearings which provide participant check-ins. A strong sense of community develops among the participants and the Judge initiates a progress check with each participant to ensure they are receiving individualized care and complying with the agreed upon treatment plan. Due consideration is given to a participants capacity, barriers, and life events as they progress through the phases of the program at a self-determined pace that may last up to two years. The emphasis is placed on engagement, open discussion, increasing recovery competency, compliance, building trust, and self-efficacy. The Judge and the treatment team ensure that the participant is supported through their recovery process and that expectations are appropriate to the participants' stage of change.

SPECIALIZED DOCKET CERTIFICATION

As a home rule state, the Supreme Court of Ohio requires all specialized dockets to become fully certified. There are two stages to the certification process. First, submission of documentation, including the

administrative order, the program description, the participation agreement, and the participant handbook. Secondly, Supreme Court staff complete a site visit to observe the treatment team meeting, the Status Review Hearing, and to provide feedback to the presiding judge and the staff. All certification standards and current practice guidelines must be met or exceeded to receive full certification. The final certification is valid for three years.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CATCH 101

CATCH 101 is a 3-day educational program designed as an introduction to human trafficking. It is held once a month. The program includes education, community resources, and an observation of CATCH's status review hearing. The goal is to offer the program to people who have an active charge in the court and when there is concern that the person may have been trafficked.

The education component focuses on human trafficking, addictive illness, trauma bonding, and recovery opportunities. Representatives from community partners such as Salvation Army, Amethyst, and law enforcement will present information on current community resources available to defendants including case management and hotline numbers.

Judges and attorneys refer defendants who are not interested in the two year CATCH commitment to CATCH 101. CATCH staff track attendance and report progress back to the referral source.

DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAM (DEP)

DEP is an educational program that provides expedited court arraignments and prosecution, as well as a reduction in jail time. Participants who have 4th and 5th degree felony drug possession charges are identified by the County Prosecutor's Office and referred to the program. The felony charges are reduced to a first degree misdemeanor in exchange for the defendant's guilty plea. The majority of referrals are made by the County Prosecutor; however, admission is also open to defendants charged with misdemeanors. Participation in DEP is ordered at the time of sentencing.

In late 2017, the DEP program was streamlined to reduce barriers to successful completion. Currently, a participant must complete one court facilitated education session and six verified recovery support meetings within a thirty day period. The previous program required three afternoon classes and ten meetings.

The current three-hour educational session is held once a month. The content is practical and intended to motivate change. The curriculum focuses on the disease model of substance use, the recovery model of healing, peer lived experience, and a review of community resources. The revisions to the program have increased participant completion rates significantly.

STAFF

The Department is staffed by twelve program coordinators who are highly educated behavioral health specialists with expertise in mental health, substance use disorders, and criminal justice.

The emphasis on behavioral health staff supports in-house clinical services such as diagnostic assessments that establish clinical eligibility, prognosis, individualized treatment, and level of care recommendations which makes treatment referral more efficient. Staff build strong treatment team rapport, coordinate seamlessly with treatment providers, enhance participant engagement, support strength based intervention, develop self-efficacy in participants, provide trauma informed interventions, generate individualized

program response, encourage stronger use of rewards to support progress, facilitate group discussion and strong sense of community within the dockets, and incorporate stages of change in the program structure. This approach has led to increased participant retention and increased successful completion rates.

BEST PRACTICES

The Specialized Docket Department is committed to the development and implementation of best and promising practices. The department generates programming to fill gaps in service, participates in research and pilot projects, and leads innovation that contributes to the development of the field.

FACILITY

The 6th floor of the Municipal Court Building continues to house the Specialized Docket Department and provide flexible space for status review hearings, education classes, community meetings, and a medically assisted treatment clinic.

The Self Help Resource Center is also located on the 6th floor and this co-location has enhanced specialized docket alumni access to the self-preparation of civil documents including applications for sealing and expungement.

In 2020, the Specialized Docket Department served a total of 665 people. The Specialized Dockets and educational programs served 192 participants. There were 247 forensic psychological referrals in 2020. Of the participants who were discharged between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020, the recidivism rate for those in the Specialized Dockets was 29%, which is well below the national average for high risk/high need defendants.

There is a strong correlation between addiction and criminal activity; studies indicate that a practicing addict is likely to commit an estimated 63 crimes per year. For individuals who receive treatment, this decreases to just six crimes per year.^[1] Specialized Dockets are a major part of this solution, particularly in providing the supportive structure that participants need to remain engaged in treatment. In a 2014 national survey of drug courts, programs reported average graduation rates of 50-75%, which is more than twice the rate of successful probation completion rates for individuals with severe substance use disorder.^[2] “At least nine meta-analyses, systematic reviews, and multisite studies conducted by leading scientific organizations have concluded that adult drug courts significantly reduce criminal recidivism—typically measured by re-arrest rates over at least two years—by an average of approximately 8% to 14%. The best

[1] Fulkerson, Andrew. (2012). Drug treatment court versus probation: An examination of comparative recidivism rates.. *The Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice*. 8. 46-61.

[2] Huddleston, C. W., Marlowe, D. B., & Casebolt, R. (2016). Painting the current picture: A national report card on drug courts and other problem solving court programs in the United States (Vol. 2, No. 1). *Alexandria, VA: National Drug Court Institute*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndci.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Painting-the-Current-Picture-2016.pdf>