



OHIO CRIMINAL SENTENCING COMMISSION MEETING

May 14, 2026, 10:00 am—12:00 pm
Ohio Judicial Center, Room 281

- I. Call to Order Chair Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
- II. Roll Call Director Melissa A. Knopp, Esq.
- III. Approval of Minutes from March 12, 2026, Meeting **(Vote Needed)**
- IV. Committee Reports
 - A. Adult Criminal Justice Committee Senator Nathan Manning
 - 1. Adult Rights Restoration & Record Sealing Guide **(Vote Needed)**
 - 2. Criminal Justice Overview **(Vote Needed)**
 - B. Juvenile Justice Committee Judge Robert DeLamatre
 - 1. Juvenile Justice Terminology Guide **(Vote Needed)**
 - 2. Traditional Juvenile Delinquency Case Flowchart **(Vote Needed)**
 - 3. Juvenile Transfer Flowchart **(Vote Needed)**
 - C. Data Committee Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
 - D. Personnel Committee Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
 - 1. Status on Legislative & Juvenile Counsel Job Postings
 - 2. Updates to Commission staff job descriptions **(Vote Needed)**
- V. Legislative Update Director Melissa A. Knopp, Esq.
- VI. Old Business
 - A. Approval of Commissioners and Staff Out of State Travel to National Association of Sentencing Commissions 2026 Conference Date: August 12—14, 2026, in Albuquerque, New Mexico **(Vote Needed)**
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Adjourn

2026 Full Commission Meeting Dates

Thursday, September 10, 2026, at 10:00 am, Room 281
Thursday, December 10, 2026, at 10:00 am, Room 101



Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Meeting
March 12, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Ohio Judicial Center, Room 281

Members Present

Sharon L. Kennedy, Chief Justice, Chair
Darren Shulman, Municipal Prosecutor, Vice-Chair
Amy Ast, Director, Department of Youth Services
Brooke Burns, Ohio Public Defender, Juvenile Department
Matthew Byrnes, Defense Attorney (Online)
Annette Chambers-Smith, Director, Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections
Eamon Costello, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Robert DeLamatre, Judge Juvenile Court
Kyle Erdeljac, Lieutenant, Columbus Police Department, FOP
Timothy France, Judge, Municipal Court
Gwen Howe-Gebers, County Prosecutor, Juvenile
Catherine Ingram, Ohio Senate (Online)
Kristen Johnson, Judge, Probate and Juvenile Court
Charles Jones, Colonel, State Highway Patrol
Timothy Lanzendorfer, Ohio State Bar Association
Teri LaJeunesse, Victim Representative
Nathan Manning, Ohio Senate
Charles McConville, County Prosecutor
Stephen McIntosh, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Elizabeth Miller, Ohio Public Defender
Jennifer Muench-McElfresh, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Janaya Trotter Bratton, Judge, Municipal Court
Josh Williams, House of Representatives (Online)
Donnie Willis, County Commissioner

Members Absent

Julia Dorrian, Judge, 10th District Court of Appeals
John Hinton, Sheriff
Latyna Humphrey, House of Representatives
Kyle Rohrer, Judge Municipal Court
Helen Wallace, Judge, Juvenile Court

Staff Present

Michael Crofford, M.Ed., LPC, Research Specialist
Will Davies, Esq., Criminal Justice Counsel
Angela Kay Garvey, Coordinator
Emily S. Haynes, Esq., M.L.S., Criminal Justice Counsel
Todd Ives, MPA, Research Specialist



Call to Order and Roll Call

1. Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Director Melissa Knopp took a roll call, and a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes from December 18, 2025

2. Chief Justice Kennedy asked if there were any corrections to the December 18, 2025, minutes. None were suggested. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Gwen Howe-Gebers and seconded by Judge Kristin Johnson. The motion passed, with Judge Eamon Costello abstaining.

Introduction of New Commission Members

3. Chief Justice Kennedy welcomed Judge Eamon Costello and Judge Janaya Trotter Bratton to the Commission and asked them to introduce themselves to the group.

Committee Reports

Adult Criminal Justice Committee

4. Judge Stephen McIntosh provided an update on recent committee activity and presented the updated Felony Sentencing Reference Guide and noted its major changes, including cell phones under illegal conveyance, updating the Alford Plea, and adding if the victim committed suicide to sentencing factors. After a brief discussion, Judge McIntosh motioned to approve the updated Felony Sentencing Reference Guide for publishing, with Judge Jennifer Muench-McElfresh seconding. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Judge McIntosh then introduced the updated Felony Sentencing Bench Card and explained it reflects the same changes as the reference guide. He moved to approve the Felony Sentencing Bench Card for publication, with Darren Shulman seconding. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Judge McIntosh presented the updated Competency Guide to the Commission, noting the revisions reflect the statutory changes in competency restoration timelines. Judge McIntosh moved to approve the Competency Guide for publication, with Chip McConville seconding. The motion passed unanimously.
7. Chief Kennedy moved to add all of the revised materials to the Resources for the Bench page on the Supreme Court website, with Judge Muench-McElfresh seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Juvenile Justice Committee

8. Judge Robert DeLamatre reported the committee had met a few times, and reintroduced the Juvenile Justice Terminology Resource Guide with the recommended modifications from the last meeting. Commission members complimented the changes, but made other

recommendations for the list. After a discussion, the Commission decided to send the document back to the committee for more changes.

Data Committee

9. Chief Justice Kennedy introduced two data maps for approval and publication, each of which were reviewed by their respective departments for accuracy. Chief Justice Kennedy motioned to approve the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) Data Map and was seconded by Director Chamber-Smith. The motion passed unanimously.
10. Chief Justice Kennedy moved to approve the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health (ODBH) Data Map and was seconded by Judge Jennifer McIntosh. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee

11. Chief Justice Kennedy reported the committee had met and removed the 'at will' employment language in the legislative counsel job posting after conferring with the Department of Administrative Services and the Attorney General's Office. Chief Justice Kennedy moved to accept the posting, with Gwen Howe-Gebbers seconding. The motion passed unanimously.
12. Chief Justice Kennedy asked Director Knopp to go through the other staff positions to make sure the legal language is correct, to bring before the Commission in May for approval. She also noted the committee will interview and suggest a candidate at the next Commission meeting.

Legislative Update

13. Director Knopp reported a paper copy of the update had been provided and an electronic copy would be sent out after the meeting. She noted the Legislative Service Commission asked the Commission to provide an opinion on Senate Bill 291, and the staff were working with ODRC to get the data to respond.

Old Business

14. No old business was discussed.

New Business

15. Director Knopp notified the Commission the National Association of Sentencing Commission's conference is August 12-14, 2026 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and asked any Commission members interested in attending to reach out to her. It is her intention to request the funds for three staff and two Commissioners to attend at the next meeting, however, if more than two Commissioners are interested, funds for additional attendees can be requested.

Adjourn

16. Chief Justice Kennedy motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Judge Costello. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

DRAFT



CRIMINAL SENTENCING COMMISSION

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Adult Rights Restoration & Record Sealing

The charts that follow detail the methods by which an individual may seek to have rights restored or the collateral consequences of criminal charges ameliorated through sealing, expungement, or other types of relief. It includes the provisions of recent legislative enactments regarding state-issued employment licenses which have historically been denied on the basis of criminal convictions. Information regarding Certificates of Qualification for Employment (CQE) is also included.

*Prepared in Collaboration with
the Ohio Judicial Conference*

Revised

May 2026~~October 2023~~

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Certificates of Qualification for employment are a mechanism for offenders with felony or misdemeanor convictions to have collateral sanctions on employment alleviated, with eligibility determined after application to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, and approval of a Common Pleas Court judge.

J. Executive Clemency – Pardon, Commutation, Reprieve 12

Ohio’s governor, through a recommendation from the Ohio Parole Board, can grant clemency for criminal convictions by pardon of a criminal conviction, commutation of a sentence, or reprieve from execution of that sentence. Clemency can result in relief from the collateral consequences of conviction including sealing of records.



This publication was prepared in collaboration with the Ohio Judicial Conference.

A. Sealing Records of Conviction [\[R.C. 2953.32\]](#)

1. Who is Eligible?	Any person can seek to have the records of any number of convictions sealed, provided the offenses are eligible for sealing. [R.C. 2953.32(A)]
2. Exceptions	<p>Offenses not eligible for sealing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All traffic offenses, including OVI or DUS; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(a)] • Felony offenses of violence that are not a sexually oriented offense; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(b)] • Sexually oriented offenses when the defendant was subject to Chapter 2950 as a result of the conviction; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(c)] • Any offense with a victim under 13, except for non-support; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(d)] • F1s and F2s; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(e)] • Domestic Violence (M1/M2) or Violating a Protection Order; and [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(f)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M 3 / M4 Domestic Violence convictions and Violation of Protection Orders are eligible to be sealed <u> </u> pursuant to R.C. 2953.32(A)(2) • F3s if the offender has more than one other felony conviction or if the offender has exactly two F3 convictions, has more convictions in total than those two third degree felony convictions and two misdemeanor convictions. [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(hg)] • Theft in Office (R.C. 2921.41)
3. Timing for Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F3: 3 years after final discharge; [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(i)] • F4 or F5: 1 year after final discharge; [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(ii)] • Misdemeanors: 1 year after final discharge; [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(iii)] • Convictions for violations of R.C. 2921.43 : 7 years after final discharge; [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(iii)] • Offenses where the defendant was subject to Chapter 2950: 5 years after the duty to register under R.C. 2950.07 has expired or been terminated;¹ [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(iv)]. This is specific to sex offenses described in R.C. 2907.04; or • Minor Misdemeanors: 6 months after final discharge. [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a)(v)]
4. Timing for Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court shall hold the hearing no less than 45 days and no more than 90 days from the date of the filing of the application; • The prosecutor's objection, if any, shall be filed no later than 30 days prior to the date set for the hearing; and • The prosecutor must provide notice of the application and the date for the hearing to the victim of the offense. [R.C. 2953.32(C)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When there is a victim, the court shall notify the prosecutor no less than 60 days prior to the hearing. [R.C. 2930.171(A)]
5. What Else May Prevent Relief?	Pending criminal charges. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(2)]

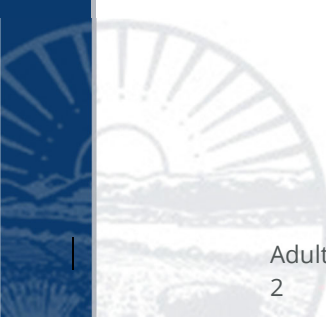
1 Eligible offenders convicted of unlawful sexual conduct with minor offenses committed while under the age of 21 may apply under the Conviction Record Sealing Law if the court issues an order to terminate the offender's SORN Law duties pursuant to [R.C. 2950.151](#) and the offender otherwise satisfies existing criteria to be an eligible offender. [\[R.C. 2953.36\(A\)\(3\)\]](#)

Under [R.C. 2950.151](#), a court can review and modify or terminate sex offender registration if an offender convicted under [R.C. 2907.04](#) (unlawful sexual contact with a minor): (1) is found to be low-risk for re-offending; (2) did not get a prison term, got community control sanctions and completed them (3) was younger than 21 at time of offense; (4) and the victim was at least 14 at time of offense; (5) the offense was consensual with no evidence of threat, duress, force or imbalance of authority; and (6) the offender has no similar convictions.

Note: The term "final discharge" is not defined by statute. The Supreme Court of Ohio has issued decisions that provide courts guidance on determining whether or not an applicant has achieved "final discharge" for purposes of record sealing and expungement. See [State v. P.I.F., 2022-Ohio-4152](#).

6. Considerations Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections of the prosecutor; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(d)] and • Objections of the victim. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(e)]
7. Findings Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of the applicant to the satisfaction of the court; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(c)] • If the needs of the government to maintain the record outweigh the interests of the applicant to seal the record; [2953.32(D)(1)(f)] and • If the applicant is an eligible offender of the type described in R.C. 2953.36(A)(3), as it existed prior to April 4, 2023, whether the offender has been rehabilitated to a satisfactory degree. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(g)]
8. What Happens to the Record?	<p>Kept in a separate file, but not permanently deleted. All index references are to be deleted. The proceedings are deemed not to have occurred. Law enforcement and government officials have access to the record for new criminal investigations; employers in law enforcement, schools, health care, etc. can see sealed records. Criminal record checks for teachers are limited to the list of offenses dictated by the Ohio Department of Education. Records related to violations of R.C. 2921.43 where the offender has been forever disqualified from public office may be maintained.</p> <p>“Official records” are all records that are possessed by any public office or agency that relate to a criminal case, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The notation in the criminal docket; • All subpoenas issued; • All papers and documents filed by the defendant or the prosecutor; • All records of all testimony and evidence presented; • All court files, papers, documents, folders, entries, affidavits, or writs that pertain to the case; • All computer, microfilm, microfiche, or microdot records, indices, or references to the case; • All index references to the case; • All fingerprints and photographs; • All DNA and DNA records; and • All records that are possessed by any public office or agency that relate to a CQE. (R.C. 2953.25) <p>“Official records” are NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any records or reports that are the specific investigatory work product of a law enforcement officer or agency when in the possession of that officer or agency; • Records or reports maintained pursuant to R.C. 2151.421 by a public children services agency or the department of job and family services; • Any report of an investigation maintained by the inspector general pursuant to section 121.42; and • Records, reports, or audits maintained by the auditor of state pursuant to Chapter 117. <p>The clerk of court should notify the BMV (LicenseVerification@dps.ohio.gov) and the BCII (Expungement.Submissions@ohioattorneygeneral.gov) about orders to seal records.</p>
9. Filing Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50.00 regardless of the number of records the applicant requests to have sealed or expunged in the application.² [R.C. 2953.32(D)(3)] • The fee can be waived if the applicant presents a poverty affidavit showing that the applicant is indigent. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(3)]

² The applicant may also be required to pay a local court fee of not more than \$50. [\[R.C. 2953.32\(D\)\(3\)\]](#)



B. Sealing Records of Dismissal [\[R.C. 2953.33\]](#)

1. Who is Eligible?	Anyone found not guilty of an offense, any defendant named in a dismissed complaint, indictment, or information, any defendant who has successfully completed an intervention in lieu of conviction program pursuant to [R.C. 2951.041] , or any person who is granted an absolute and entire pardon, a partial pardon, or a pardon upon conditions precedent or subsequent by the governor. <i>*May also request expungement, except for offenses listed in R.C. 2953.33(C) which may only be sealed.</i>
2. Exceptions	If multiple charges resulting from or in connection with the same act have different dispositions (e.g. a conviction on one charge and a dismissal on another), in order for the dismissal to be eligible for sealing, the conviction also must be eligible for sealing, UNLESS the conviction is a single, non-OVI traffic offense. In that circumstance, the court MAY seal the entire record after consideration of the factors in sections 6 and 7 below. ³ [R.C. 2953.61]
3. Timing for Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings of not guilty, dismissals with prejudice, dismissals without prejudice,⁴ or successful completion of intervention in lieu of conviction: at any time; No bills: after 2 years; or Absolute and entire pardons, partial pardons, or pardons upon conditions precedent or subsequent: at any time after an absolute and entire pardon or a partial pardon is granted or at any time after all of the conditions precedent or subsequent to the pardon are met.
4. Timing for Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The court shall hold the hearing no less than 45 days and no more than 90 days from the date of the filing of the application; and The prosecutor's written objection, if any, must be filed no later than 30 days prior to the date set for the hearing. [R.C. 2953.33(B)(1)]
5. What Else May Prevent Relief?	Pending criminal charges. [R.C. 2953.52(B)(2)(b)]
6. Considerations Required of the Court	Objections of the prosecutor; [R.C. 2953.33(B)(2)(c)]
7. Findings Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the needs of the government to maintain the record outweigh the interests of the applicant to seal the record; [R.C. 2953.33(B)(2)(d)] and (B)(4) and If the person was granted a pardon upon conditions precedent or subsequent, whether all of those conditions have been met. [R.C. 2953.33(B)(2)(d)]
8. What Happens to the Record?	Kept in a separate file, but not permanently deleted. Accessible by an officer, or by law enforcement for civil actions relating to the officer's involvement in the case, as well as by prosecuting attorneys to determine a defendant's eligibility for pretrial diversion pursuant to R.C. 2935.36 and R.C. 4301.69 . [R.C. 2953.34(H)]

3 [R.C. 2953.61](#) allows a court the discretion to seal a conviction for a non-OVI traffic offense that otherwise would be unsealable, but only when that non-OVI traffic conviction is the sole impediment to the sealing of dismissed charges that otherwise would be permissible under [R.C. 2953.52](#).

4 See [State v. Dye, 152 Ohio St. 3d 11, 2017-Ohio-7823](#).

C. Relief from Weapons Disability [\[R.C. 2923.14\]](#)

1. Who is Eligible?	Someone who has full discharge from prison or community supervision or release on bail, no other prohibition from owning a firearm, and law abidance with likelihood of continued law abidance. If disability resulted from a factor other than a conviction or indictment, that factor must have been resolved.
2. Exceptions	May be revoked at any time for good cause shown and with notice; is automatically void if an offense of violence or drug trafficking is committed by applicant.
3. Timing for Eligibility	At any time after full discharge from imprisonment, community control [R.C. 2929.15] , post-release control [R.C. 2967.28] , or parole, or being released on bail or recognizance; or at any time after the factor that led to the disability no longer applies.
4. What Else May Prevent Relief?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Firearms that are illegally acquired, possessed, or used.• Domestic violence convictions.⁵
5. Considerations Required of the Court	The applicant meets the criteria described in section 1 of this chart.
6. What Happens to the Record?	No change to records.

5 [State ex rel. Suwalski v. Peeler, 167 Ohio St.3d 38, 2021-Ohio-4061.](#)

D. Expungement – Applicant a Victim of Human Trafficking [[R.C. 2953.36](#) and [R.C. 2953.521](#)]

<p>1. Who is Eligible?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) A person with a conviction under R.C. 2907.24, 2907.241, or 2907.25 (soliciting, soliciting when HIV+, loitering to solicit, loitering to solicit when HIV+, prostitution, or prostitution when HIV+) if the person's participation in the offense was a result of having been a victim of human trafficking; [R.C. 2953.36] or • (2) A person who is found to be a victim of human trafficking and has been found not guilty of a charge or named in a dismissed complaint, indictment, or information. [R.C. 2953.521] • (3) If the person does not have a conviction under (1) above, then Misdemeanor, Felony of the Fourth Degree or Felony of the Fifth Degree if the person's participation in the offense was a result of having been a victim of human trafficking [R.C. 2953.36(2)]
<p>2. Exceptions</p>	<p>Murder, aggravated murder, and rape convictions cannot be expunged. [R.C. 2953.36(A)]</p>
<p>3. Timing for Eligibility</p>	<p>At any time.</p>
<p>4. What Else May Prevent Relief?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For records of conviction: failure to assert grounds on which relief can be granted. [R.C. 2953.36(B)] • For records of a not guilty finding or dismissal: pending criminal charges. [R.C. 2953.521(E)(4)]
<p>5. Considerations Required of the Court</p>	<p>* Objections of the prosecutor; [R.C. 2953.36(D)(1)(a)] * May request multiple offenses, but court must consider each offense separately; [R.C. 2953.36(A)(3)]</p>
<p>6. Findings Required of the Court</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant must show by a preponderance of the evidence that the offense was a result of being a victim of human trafficking; [R.C. 2953.36(E)] and • For all F1 and F2 convictions, the court must determine whether the needs of the government to maintain the record outweigh the interests of the applicant to expunge the record. [R.C. 2953.36(D)(2)] • Additional factors listed in R.C. 2953.36(D)(2)
<p>7. What Happens to the Record?</p>	<p>The record should be destroyed, deleted, and erased as appropriate for the record's physical or electronic form or characteristic so that the record is permanently irretrievable. [R.C. 2953.31(B)(2)] The record cannot be used for any purpose, including a criminal background check; all index references are to be deleted; proceedings shall be considered not to have occurred. [R.C. 2953.36(F)(2)] and [R.C. 2953.521(G)]</p>
<p>8. Filing Fee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The filing fee for an application under this section is \$50.00. • The fee can be waived if the applicant presents a poverty affidavit showing that the applicant is indigent. [R.C. 2953.36(G)]



E. Expungement – Records of Conviction [\[R.C. 2953.32\]](#)

1. Who is Eligible?	Any person can seek to have the records of any number of convictions expunged, provided that they are offenses that are eligible for expungement. [R.C. 2953.32(A)]
2. Exceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All traffic offenses, including OVI or DUS; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(a)] • Felony offenses of violence that are not a sexually oriented offense; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(b)] • Sexually oriented offenses when the defendant was subject to Chapter 2950 as a result of the conviction; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(c)] • Any offense with a victim under 13, except for non-support; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(d)] • R.C. 2921.41 Theft in Office [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(e)] • F1s and F2s; [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(f)] • R.C. 2919.25 Domestic Violence (M1/M2)-or-Violating a Protection Order; and [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(g)] • F3s if the offender has more than one other felony conviction or if the offender has exactly two F3 convictions, has more convictions in total than those two third degree felony convictions and two misdemeanor convictions. [R.C. 2953.32(A)(1)(h)]
3. Timing for Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felonies: 10 years after the offense was eligible for record sealing pursuant to R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(a). [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(b)(iii)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - F3s: 13 years after final discharge; - F4s or F5s: 11 years after final discharge. • Misdemeanors: 1 year after final discharge. [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(b)(i)] • Minor misdemeanors: 6 months after final discharge. [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(b)(ii)]
4. Timing for Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court shall hold the hearing no less than 45 days and no more than 90 days from the date of the filing of the application; • The prosecutor's objection, if any, shall be filed no later than 30 days prior to the date set for the hearing; and • The prosecutor must provide notice of the application and the date for the hearing to the victim of the offense. [R.C. 2953.32(C)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note: R.C. 2930.171(A) requires that, when there is a victim, the court shall notify the prosecutor no less than 60 days prior to the hearing for sealing. R.C. 2930.171(A) does not mandate that this notice shall be given in cases involving a hearing for expungement, but best practice suggests the court still give the advanced 60-day notice to the prosecutor.
5. What Else May Prevent Relief?	Pending criminal charges. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(2)]
6. Considerations Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections of the prosecutor; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(d)] and • Objections of the victim; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(e)]
7. Findings Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of the applicant to the satisfaction of the court; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(c)] • If the needs of the government to maintain the record outweigh the interests of the applicant to seal the record; [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(f)] and • If the applicant is an eligible offender of the type described in R.C. 2953.36(A)(3), as it existed prior to April 4, 2023, whether the offender has been rehabilitated to a satisfactory degree. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(1)(g)]

<p>8. What Happens to the Record?</p>	<p>The official records should be destroyed, deleted, and erased as appropriate for the record's physical or electronic form or characteristic so that the record is permanently irretrievable. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(5)] All index references are to be deleted. The proceedings are considered not to have occurred. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(2)] BCI shall maintain the records to be used for the sole purpose of determining a person's eligibility for employment in law enforcement. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(5)]</p> <p>"Official records" are all records that are possessed by any public office or agency that relate to a criminal case, including, but not limited to: the notation in the criminal docket; all subpoenas issued;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All papers and documents filed by the defendant or the prosecutor; all records of all testimony and evidence presented; • All court files, papers, documents, folders, entries, affidavits, or writs that pertain to the case; • All computer, microfilm, microfiche, or microdot records, indices, or references to the case; • All index references to the case; • All fingerprints and photographs; • All DNA and DNA records; and • All records that are possessed by any public office or agency that relate to a CQE. (R.C. 2953.25) <p>"Official records" are NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any records or reports that are the specific investigatory work product of a law enforcement officer or agency when in the possession of that officer or agency; • Records or reports maintained pursuant to R.C. 2151.421 by a public children services agency or the department of job and family services; a • Any report of an investigation maintained by the inspector general pursuant to section 121.42; • Records, reports, or audits maintained by the auditor of state pursuant to Chapter 117. <p>The clerk of court should notify the BMV (LicenseVerification@dps.ohio.gov) and the BCI (Expungement.Submissions@ohioattorneygeneral.gov) about orders to expunge records.</p>
<p>9. Filing Fee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50.00 regardless of the number of records the applicant requests to have sealed or expunged in the application. ⁶ [R.C. 2953.32(D)(3)] • The fee can be waived if the applicant presents a poverty affidavit showing that the applicant is indigent. [R.C. 2953.32(D)(3)]

⁶ The applicant may also be required to pay a local court fee of not more than \$50. [\[R.C. 2953.32\(D\)\(3\)\]](#)

⁷ If Committed before March 20, 2026 the following convictions or dismissals are eligible for expungement:

- ⁶ R.C. 2925.11 Minor misdemeanor marijuana possession, minor misdemeanor or fourth degree misdemeanor hashish possession, felony of the fifth degree hashish possession (not more than 15 grams), felony of the third degree hashish possession (not more than 15 grams).



F. Prosecutor Initiated Sealing and Expungement [\[R.C. 2953.39\]](#)

1. Who is Eligible?	Any person convicted of a low-level controlled substance offense. [R.C. 2953.39(A)(3)]
2. Exceptions	These applications are only applicable to convictions for fourth-degree or minor misdemeanor violations of Chapter 2925 or violations of an ordinance of a municipal corporation that are substantially equivalent to violations of any provision of Chapter 2925. and that, if charged under Chapter 2925, would be fourth-degree or minor misdemeanor violations. [R.C. 2953.39(A)(2)]
3. Timing for Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth-Degree Misdemeanors: 1 year after final discharge. [R.C. 2953.39(B)(1)] and [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(b)(i)] • Minor Misdemeanors: 6 months after final discharge. [R.C. 2953.39(B)(1)] and [R.C. 2953.32(B)(1)(b)(ii)]
4. Timing for Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court shall hold the hearing no less than 45 days and no more than 90 days from the date of the filing of the application. [R.C. 2953.39(D)(2)] • The court shall notify the applicant prosecutor of the date, time, and location of the hearing no later than 60 days prior to the hearing. [R.C. 2953.39(D)(1)]
5. What Else May Provide Relief?	Pending criminal charges. [R.C. 2953.39(E)(2)(a)]
6. Considerations Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections of the subject offender; [R.C. 2953.39(E)(2)(c)] and • Objections of the victim. [R.C. 2953.39(E)(2)(d)]
7. Findings Required of the Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of the subject offender to the satisfaction of the court; [R.C. 2953.39(E)(2)(b)] and • If the needs of the government to maintain the record outweigh the interests of the applicant to seal the record. [R.C. 2953.39(E)(2)(e)]
8. What Happens to the Record?	If expunged, the record should be destroyed, deleted, and erased as appropriate for the record's physical or electronic form or characteristic so that the record is permanently irretrievable. [R.C. 2953.39(G)] and [R.C. 2953.31(B)(2)]
9. Filing Fee	No more than \$50.00, unless the court directs the clerk of the court to waive some or all of the fee. [R.C. 2953.39(B)(3)]

G. Post-Conviction DNA Testing [[R.C. 2953.71-.81](#)]

1. Who is Eligible?	An offender sentenced to death, to a prison term, to a community-control sanction, or to SORN registration for a felony and currently is in prison, on parole, on probation, on post-release control, on community control, or on the SORN registry regarding that felony. [R.C. 2953.72(C)] An offender is not eligible if dead. [R.C. 2953.72(C)(3)]
2. Exceptions	The application cannot be in regard to any offense for which the offender pleaded guilty or no contest.
3. Timing for Eligibility	At any time after conviction.
4. What Else May Prevent Relief?	Specific considerations at R.C. 2953.74 ; ⁷ generally, the offender could not have had a prior “definitive” ⁸ DNA test and must show that a DNA test, which results in an exclusion, would have been outcome determinative at trial.
5. Considerations Required of the Court	Review is expedited. [R.C. 2953.73(D)] Under R.C. 2953.74(C) , all of the following must apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological material must have been collected and a parent sample must still exist; • A testing authority must determine that testing can still take place; • The identity of the person who committed the crime must have been at issue at trial; • The defense must have asserted a theory at trial that would have made a DNA exclusion outcome determinative; • The court must decide that a DNA exclusion would have been outcome determinative; and • The court must validate the chain of custody of the DNA parent and extracted sample.
6. What Happens to the Record?	The state must maintain the results of the testing and the samples used; the result of the testing remains state's evidence. [R.C. 2953.81(A)]

⁷⁸ Under [R.C. 2953.74\(A\)](#), there can have been no prior definitive DNA test. Under [R.C. 2953.74\(B\)](#), either (1) no DNA test was taken at the trial stage, the offender shows that a DNA exclusion would have been outcome determinative, and the DNA test was not taken because DNA testing was unavailable, the DNA was inadmissible, or DNA evidence was not generally accepted at the time; or (2) a DNA test was done at the trial stage, but the offender can show that in context of all available admissible evidence, the test would have been outcome determinative.

⁸⁹ “Definitive DNA test” means a DNA test that clearly establishes that biological material from the perpetrator of the crime was recovered from the crime scene and also clearly establishes whether or not the biological material is that of the eligible offender. A prior DNA test is not definitive if the eligible offender proves by a preponderance of the evidence that because of advances in DNA technology, there is a possibility of discovering new biological material from the perpetrator that the prior DNA test may have failed to discover. Prior testing may have been a prior “definitive DNA test” as to some biological evidence, but may not have been a prior “definitive DNA test” as to other biological evidence. [R.C. 2953.71\(U\)](#)

H. Professional Licensure Applications (Limitations Related to Licensing Refusal)

<p>1. Who is Eligible?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations are placed on a state licensing authority's ability to deny a license and apply to every profession or occupation that requires a license. • A licensing authority cannot refuse an initial license to an individual based solely or in part on a conviction of, judicial finding of guilt of, or plea of guilty to an offense; a criminal charge that does not result in a conviction, judicial finding of guilt, or plea of guilty; a nonspecific qualification such as "moral turpitude" or lack of "moral character"; or a disqualifying offense included on the list of specific offenses if consideration of that offense occurs after the applicable statutory waiting period. [R.C. 9.79(C)(1)] • Changes generally effective Oct. 1, 2021.
<p>2. Exceptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations do not apply to exempt occupations.⁹ [See R.C. 9.79(I)] • Any individual may be disqualified if they are convicted of, found guilty pursuant to a judicial finding of, or plead guilty to a disqualifying offense included on the state licensing authority's list of specific disqualifying criminal offenses. [R.C. 9.79(B)] • Applies to initial licensure only and does not affect any law related to renewing a license. However, a licensing authority cannot refuse to renew a license based on a conviction of, judicial finding of guilt, or guilty plea to an offense if the licensing authority issued the initial license after considering the conviction, judicial finding of guilt, or guilty plea. [R.C. 9.79(K)]
<p>3. Timing for Eligibility</p>	<p>If an individual has been convicted of, found guilty pursuant to a judicial finding of, or pleaded guilty to a disqualifying offense included in the state licensing authority's list, the licensing authority may consider the disqualifying offense only during certain time periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For an offense not involving breach of fiduciary duty that is not a sex offense or offense of violence: within 5 years of the date of conviction, release, or sanction; • For an offense that is a breach of fiduciary duty but not a sex offense or offense of violence: within 10 years of the date of conviction, release, or sanction; and • For sex offenses and offenses of violence: any time. [R.C. 9.79(D)(2)]
<p>4. What Else May Prevent Relief?</p>	<p>A licensing authority may consider past discipline when deciding whether to issue a license to an individual. [R.C. 9.79(I)]</p>
<p>5. Considerations Required of the Court</p>	<p>The licensing authority must consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature and seriousness of the offense; • The passage of time since the individual committed the offense; • The relationship of the offense to the ability, capacity, and fitness required to perform the duties and discharge the responsibilities of the occupation; • Any mitigating evidence of rehabilitation or treatment undertaken by the individual, including whether the individual has been issued a certificate of qualification for employment or a certificate of achievement and employability; and • Whether the denial of a license is reasonably necessary to ensure public safety. [R.C. 9.79(D)(1)]
<p>6. What Happens to the Record?</p>	<p>Licensing Authorities must provide the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) detailed annual reports related to licensing procedure, which will be compiled by DAS and published as a searchable website. [R.C. 9.78(C)]</p>

⁹10 Registrations issued by the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee (legislative agents and lobbyists) are exempted from these limitations [\[R.C. 4798.01\(A\)\]](#); [\[9.78\(A\)\(1\)\]](#); [\[9.79\(A\)\(1\)\]](#) by Am.Sub. House Bill 110 (2021).

I. Certificates of Qualification for Employment (CQE) [R.C. 2953.25]

1. Who is Eligible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with felony or misdemeanor convictions who are subject to one or more collateral sanctions as defined in R.C. 2953.25(A)(1). More information on CQE application is available on ODRC's website.
2. Exceptions	<p>Pursuant to R.C. 2953.25(C)(7) relief cannot be granted for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SORN requirements imposed under R.C. 2950; Suspension of a driver's license or commercial driver's license for specified offenses where other relief is available; Restrictions on employment as a prosecuting attorney or law enforcement officer or at a pain clinic; and Health care professional licensure decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For offenders granted intervention in lieu of conviction under R.C. 2951.041 for offenses specified in R.C. 2953.25(C)(7)(d); For individuals found to be addicted to or illegally distributing controlled substances under R.C. 3719.121; and For individuals in default on child support orders under R.C. 3123.43 (license suspension is mandatory).
3. Timing for Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For felony convictions: If sent to prison, one year after final release from incarceration and any postrelease supervision. If placed on community control, one year after final release from all community control sanctions. Some individuals may be eligible to apply early under O.A.C. 5120-15-1(C). For misdemeanor convictions: If incarcerated, six months after final release from incarceration and all supervision after release. If not incarcerated, six months after the offender is released from all sanctions imposed.
4. What Else May Prevent Relief?	<p>Failure to include in the petition all information required under R.C. 2953.25(F).</p>
5. Considerations Required of the Court	<p>A court has discretion to grant an application under [R.C. 2953.25(C)(3)] if it finds by a preponderance of the evidence that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The petition would materially assist the individual in finding a job or obtaining a license for employment; There is a substantial need for the CQE in order for the petitioner to lead a law-abiding life; or A grant of the petition would not pose an unreasonable risk to the safety of the public or any individual. <p>There is a rebuttable presumption in favor of granting the CQE for petitions filed in accordance with the timing requirements once three years have passed since a felony petitioner's final release or one year has passed from a misdemeanor petitioner's final release. [R.C. 2953.25(C)(5)] A denial of such an application requires proof by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant has not been rehabilitated. [R.C. 2953.25(C)(6)]</p> <p>Effective Sept. 30, 2021, applicants have no duty to include or disclose information contained in a sealed record, and courts are prohibited from questioning applicants about or reviewing information in sealed records. [R.C. 2953.25(C)(1)]</p> <p>The Court must file written notice of a petition denial and may include in that notice conditions necessary for any subsequent CQE petition. The denial may be appealed if abuse of discretion is alleged. [R.C. 2953.25(C)(8)]</p>
6. What Happens to the Record?	<p>The record of the criminal conviction remains intact; however, a granted application lifts most automatic bars to employment or licensure based on the conviction, and the hiring or licensure entity may then consider the applicant without reconsideration of any R.C. 2953.25(C)(3) factors. A CQE is not a guarantee of employment or licensure. [R.C. 2953.25(D)]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a criminal record is later sealed, all records related to a CQE application, issuance, or denial for that record are also sealed. [R.C. 2953.31(D)] Hiring of individuals with CQE provides limited civil immunity for an employer. [R.C. 2953.25(G)] A subsequent felony conviction results in revocation of the CQE. [R.C. 2953.25(H)]

J. Executive Clemency [[R.C. 2967.03](#)]

<p>1. Who is Eligible?</p>	<p>Individuals with felony or misdemeanor convictions may apply to the Ohio Adult Parole Authority (APA) for consideration. The APA processes the application for consideration by the parole board. The parole board then may schedule a hearing and make recommendations for the governor's consideration. More information on the clemency process, including application information, is available at drc.ohio.gov/clemency.</p> <p>In December 2019, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine created the Ohio Governor's Expedited Pardon Project, an effort with The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and the University of Akron School of Law to provide for application assistance and accelerated parole board review of pardon applications from individuals who completed their sentence and lived a law-abiding life for 10 years since that time. More information on the expedited pardon project is at ohioexpeditedpardon.org.</p>
<p>2. Exceptions</p>	<p>Anyone may apply to the parole board for clemency, including capital and non-capital defendants serving sentences at ODRC. Additional information on parole board clemency policies is available here. The only exceptions are for convictions for treason or cases of impeachment; treason cases may be referred by the governor to the General Assembly for clemency consideration, pursuant to the Ohio Constitution, Article III, Section 11.</p> <p>The Ohio Governor's Expedited Pardon Project publishes a list of convictions excluded from consideration under the program.</p>
<p>3. Timing for Eligibility</p>	<p>There are no timing restrictions on traditional clemency applications. However, pursuant to O.A.C. 5120:1-1-15(l), an individual whose application was denied must wait two years to re-apply, unless the application contains "significant new information."</p> <p>The Ohio Governor's Expedited Pardon Project requires applicants to have lived a law-abiding life (no criminal convictions other than traffic offenses) for 10 years since their sentence was completed.</p>
<p>4. What Else May Prevent Relief?</p>	<p>Both the traditional clemency process and the Expedited Pardon Project require written application and thorough documentation of all criminal convictions, employment history, and other required information.</p> <p>Notice (60 days prior) must be provided by the parole board of any hearing on a clemency application to victims, prosecutors, and the sentencing court.</p> <p>The governor has final discretion over recommendations made by the parole board; even a favorable clemency recommendation may be denied and neither parole board recommendations, nor the governor's decision, is subject to review.</p>
<p>5. Considerations Required of the Parole Board</p>	<p>In making a recommendation on a clemency application, the parole board considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there is reason to believe that clemency would both "further the interests of justice and be consistent with the welfare and security of society"; • The applicant's supporting information in their application, including their stated reasons for requesting clemency, letters of support, and other relevant information; • Written statements or testimony of the victim, victim's representative, or family members of the victim; and • Statements of fact of the case and circumstances relevant to the clemency consideration requested from the trial court or prosecuting attorney, including their recommendation on whether clemency should be granted. <p>The parole board generates a report indicating a favorable or unfavorable recommendation for clemency that is provided to the governor for final consideration.</p>

6. What are the Effects of a Grant of Clemency?

Clemency may come in three forms:

- Pardon – Relief from some or all consequences of the criminal conviction.
- Commutation – A grant of a reduction of the punishment imposed for a criminal conviction. For example, this can take the form of a reduced term of imprisonment or conversion of a capital sentence to life without parole.
- Reprieve – A temporary postponement of the sentence imposed for a criminal conviction. For example, this can take the form of a delay of the execution date for a capital sentence.

Commutations or pardons may be conditional or unconditional, meaning that the governor may require the applicant to accept certain conditions before the commutation or pardon is granted. [\[R.C. 2967.04\(A\)\]](#)

Upon receiving an unconditional pardon or completion of all conditions imposed for a conditional pardon, the individual is relieved of "... all disabilities arising out of the conviction or convictions for which it is granted."

[\[R.C. 2967.04\(B\)\]](#) This includes, but is not limited to:

- Relieving occupational prohibitions based on the conviction;
- Allowing the grantee to serve as a volunteer where previously prohibited by the conviction;
- Relieving the bar on holding public office; and
- Allowing the grantee to legally purchase and possess firearms.

Pardons do not seal or expunge the records of the criminal convictions involved. However, beginning Sept. 30, 2021, the governor may include a condition of the pardon that records related to the offense be sealed and issue a writ for the same. [\[R.C. 2967.04\(C\)\]](#)



The Criminal Justice System in Ohio: *An Overview*

The criminal justice system encompasses multiple interconnected systems: law enforcement, prosecution, defense, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice. All criminal justice systems in the United States arose organically and look different in every state. Ohio has an extra layer of distinction: we are a home rule state and allow each of the eighty-eight counties to decide many aspects of their own criminal justice system that fit their unique needs. This resource describes these interconnected systems.

The federal system and the Ohio criminal system are two different systems. The federal system involves different laws, investigators, prosecutors, courts, and even corrections. This overview discusses those systems that are involved when a crime that is a violation of an Ohio statute occurs.

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Law enforcement duties include:

- Law enforcement or applying legal sanctions to violations of state and municipal law, including arrests.
- Summons or citation.
- Order maintenance or taking steps to control events and circumstances that threaten or disturb the peace.
- Gathering information.
- Performing service-related duties that provide immediate short-term relief to personal problems, such as referring to social services, giving information to individuals.
- Providing care to those with drug, mental health or physical disabilities. Assisting with disaster relief.

Law enforcement agencies include: [🔗](#)

- Municipal police departments.
- Sheriff's offices for each county.
- The Ohio State Highway Patrol.
- The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and Natural Resource and Wildlife officers at the Ohio Department for Natural Resources.
- The Bureau of Criminal Investigation "is available at no cost to provide help from crime scene investigation to advanced criminal intelligence analysis, including crime scene analysis, criminal intelligence work, and laboratory processing of evidence gathered at a scene." [🔗](#)



While each county has an elected prosecutor, larger counties tend to have full-time prosecutors, while others have part-time prosecutors. [🔗](#) The Office of the Ohio Attorney General provides resources to "combat organized criminal activity, such as public corruption or drug conspiracies, including advanced audio/visual enhancement of analog or digital evidence."

The Special Prosecutions Section tries "serious felony cases throughout Ohio, provides pre-trial consultation on complex criminal matters and serve as trial litigators on serious or conflict-of-interest cases for County Prosecutors," with experts in homicides, child sex offenses, white collar crime, public corruption, and prescription drug abuse.

The Criminal Justice Section's Capital Crimes Unit works to uphold lawfully imposed death sentences in federal court. The Unit aids county prosecutors at the trial level in death penalty cases, when requested, and also participates with the County Prosecutor in responding to clemency requests prior to execution." (*Id.*)



Defense Attorneys

The Ohio Constitution and the United States Constitution guarantee adults and children accused of crimes the assistance of defense counsel, and counsel at public expense for people who are indigent. Ohio has a Public Defender Commission that sets standards and processes for providing indigent defense. Each of Ohio's 88 counties choose their preferred delivery methods for indigent defense in their community. All counties have appointed counsel – which is a list of private lawyers who agree to serve as indigent defense counsel. Some counties also have a county public defender office, a contract with a non-profit organization, or a contract with the Office of the Ohio Public Defender (“OPD”) to provide services. In addition to providing direct representation in a number of trial and post-conviction matters, the OPD provides technical assistance, research services, educational programs, and investigation and mitigation services to local public defenders and court-appointed counsel across Ohio. The OPD also supervises system compliance and reimburses counties for a portion of the cost of running local indigent defense systems.



Courts

The Ohio judicial structure is made up of one Supreme Court, twelve Courts of Appeals, Courts of Common Pleas in each county, one Court of Claims, and numerous Municipal and County Courts. Some cities, villages and townships have Mayor's courts. Courts of Common Pleas, General Division are responsible for, or have jurisdiction over, all criminal cases except minor offenses, which are handled by Municipal or County Courts.

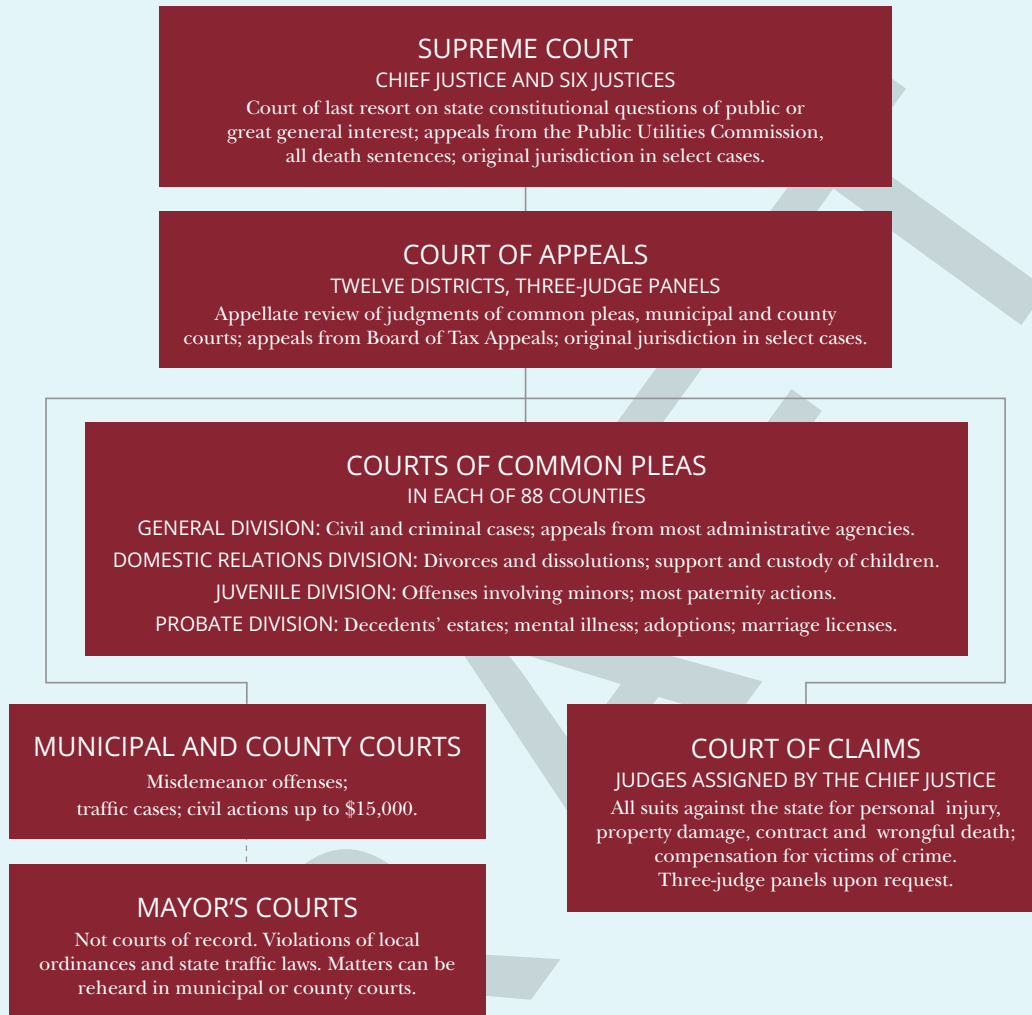


The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) provides comprehensive support and resources to individuals after incarceration that begins with pre-release engagement. [🔗](#) Reentry services connect individuals with communities, programs, and services to facilitate successful reintegration. ODRC supervises persons on post release control (supervised release following completion of a full prison term), parole (conditional and supervised release after incarceration), Transitional Control, and Treatment Transfer.

ODRC also supports vital community corrections programs around the state. These include community control/probation (court ordered supervision in lieu of incarceration), [🔗](#) preventive or diversionary corrections programs, release-on-recognizance programs, prosecutorial diversion programs, specialized treatment programs and courts for offenders with alcoholism and narcotic addictions, and community control sanctions. (R.C. 5149.30)

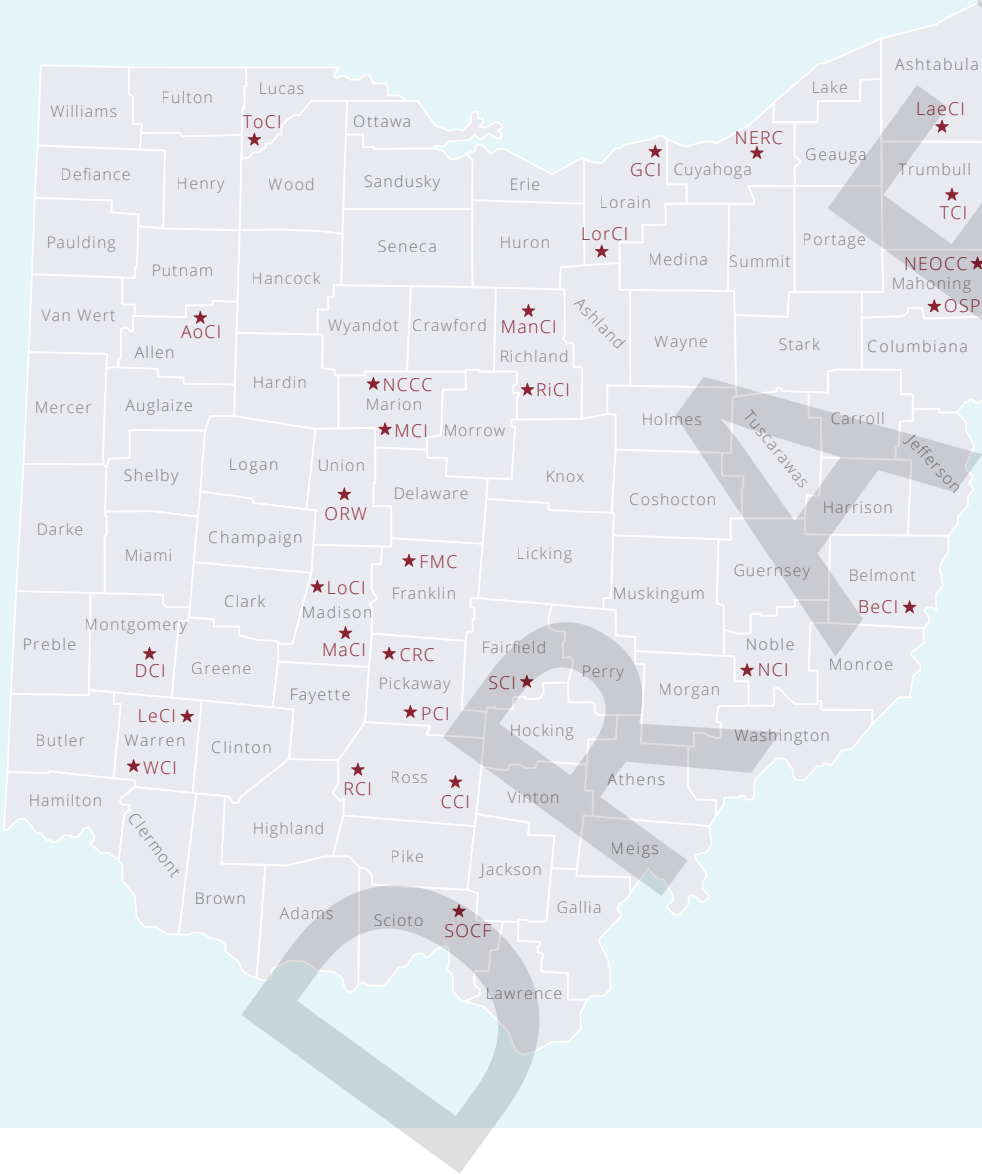
The terms community control/probation, parole and post release control are separate and distinct. Community control/probation is court-ordered supervision that allows a convicted individual to remain in the community instead of serving time in jail or prison; parole is a conditional and supervised release from prison after an individual has served a portion of their sentence; and post release control is a period of supervision after serving a full prison term. [🔗](#)

The following chart shows the structure of Ohio's courts.





Correctional facilities vary. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) oversees 28 facilities, while other correctional facilities, including jails, may be operated by counties or other political subdivisions, or a combination of political subdivisions. [R.C. 2929.01] ODRC provides intensive support and resources to individuals both during incarceration. Services provided during incarceration include education and training, medical services, behavioral health services, and substance abuse recovery.



- AOCI: Allen-Oakwood Correctional Institution
- BECI: Belmont Correctional Institution
- CCI: Chillicothe Correctional Institution
- CRC: Correctional Reception Center
- DCI: Dayton Correctional Institution
- FMC: Franklin Medical Center
- GCI: Grafton Correctional Institution
- LAECI: Lake Erie Correctional Institution
- LeCI: Lebanon Correctional Institution
- LoCI: London Correctional Institution
- LorCI: Lorain Correctional Institution
- MaCI: Madison Correctional Institution
- ManCI: Mansfield Correctional Institution
- MCI: Marion Correctional Institution
- NCI: Noble Correctional Institution
- NCCC: North Central Correctional Complex
- NEOCC: Northeast Ohio Correctional Center
- NERC: Northeast Reintegration Center
- ORW: Ohio Reformatory for Women
- OSP: Ohio State Penitentiary
- PCI: Pickaway Correctional Institution
- RICI: Richland Correctional Institution
- RCI: Ross Correctional Institution
- SCI: Southeastern Correctional Institution
- SOCF: Southern Ohio Correctional Facility
- ToCI: Toledo Correctional Institution
- TCI: Trumbull Correctional Institution
- WCI: Warren Correctional Institution



Juvenile Justice

Each county has a court that hears juvenile justice concerns, but the name and make up of that court varies across the state. While intertwined at times, the juvenile system is distinct from the adult criminal system and will be the subject of a separate report.

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Juvenile Justice Terminology Guide

DRAFT

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Juvenile Justice Terminology

Youth are developmentally different from adults and require responses grounded in adolescent brain science, trauma awareness, and rehabilitation. As such, children in Ohio’s juvenile justice system are treated differently than adults in the criminal justice system. Juvenile justice in Ohio focuses on graduated sanctions and services to “provide for the care, protection, and mental and physical development of children;” “protect the public interest and safety;” “hold the offender accountable for the offender’s actions;” “restore the victim;” and “rehabilitate the offender.”¹ Terminology in the juvenile system does not always track terminology in the adult system. This list of juvenile justice terminology highlights those terms that may not be familiar to the average person.

Abused Child: See Child.

Adjudicatory Hearing: A hearing to determine whether a child is a juvenile traffic offender, delinquent, unruly, abused, neglected or dependent or otherwise within the jurisdiction of the court.² A child adjudicated a delinquent is not a criminal because of the adjudication.³

Admission or Denial: The court asks the child to admit or deny the allegations contained in the complaint. A child who admits the allegations waives their right to an adjudicatory hearing.⁴

1 R.C. 2152.01.

2 Juv. R. 2(B). Chapter 2152 of the Revised Code also uses the term “adjudication” to mean the determination of the adjudicatory hearing.

3 R.C. 2151.357(H)

4 Juv. R. 29(C).



Amenability: Before considering a discretionary transfer, the juvenile judge orders “an investigation into the child’s social history, education, family situation, and any other factor bearing on whether the child is amenable to juvenile rehabilitation, including a mental examination of the child by a public or private agency or a person qualified to make the examination.” The juvenile judge considers specific factors to determine whether the child is transferred to adult court or is amenable to staying in juvenile court.⁵

Bindover: The term used to describe the transfer of jurisdiction from juvenile court to adult court for prosecution.⁶

- **Discretionary Bindover:** A discretionary transfer or bindover means that the child may be transferred to adult court upon the finding of probable cause and amenability. If the child is not subject to a mandatory transfer, a discretionary transfer is based on whether the child is 14 or older at the time of the offense, the level of felony, and additional factors.⁷
- **Mandatory Bindover:** A mandatory transfer or bindover means that the child must be transferred or bound over to adult court upon a finding of probable cause. Mandatory transfer is based on the age of the child at the time of the offense and whether the offense was a Category 1 or 2 offense⁸ (aggravated murder, murder, attempted aggravate murder, attempted murder, voluntary manslaughter, kidnapping, rape, aggravated arson, aggravated robbery, or involuntary manslaughter). Additional factors of prior commitment to the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) for Category 1 or 2 offenses and firearms come into play based on the age of the child.⁹

Child: A child is a person under eighteen. Once the child is in the juvenile justice system, the juvenile court has jurisdiction over the child until they reach twenty-one. Exceptions are made for a child who is transferred to adult court or who is a serious youthful offender.¹⁰

- **Abused Child:** An abused child includes any child who is the victim of sexual activity, endangered, or who shows evidence of non-accidental physical or mental injury or death.¹¹
- **Delinquent Child:** A child who violates any law that would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult or who violates certain juvenile court orders.¹² The term “delinquent” is used in juvenile court instead of “guilty.”

5 R.C. 2152.12.

6 R.C. 2152.12.

7 R.C. 2152.10; 2152.12.

8 R.C. 2152.02.

9 R.C. 2152.10.

10 R.C. 2152.02(C).

11 R.C. 2151.031.

12 R.C. 2152.02(E); Juv. R. 2(K).



- **Dependent Child:** A dependent child includes any child who, through no fault of their parents, guardians or custodians, is homeless or destitute or lacks parental care.¹³
- **Juvenile Traffic Offender:** A child who violates any traffic law, traffic ordinance, or traffic regulation.¹⁴
- **Neglected Child:** A neglected child includes any child who is abandoned, or because of omission lacks basic parental care or special medical care or suffers physical or mental injury.¹⁵
- **Unruly Child:** An unruly child is one who does “not submit to the reasonable control of the child’s parents, teachers, guardian, or custodian, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient;” is habitually truant from school, injures or endanger “the child’s own health or morals or the health or morals of others; or who violates a status offense, with some exceptions.¹⁶

Collateral Consequences: Collateral consequences are the ways a juvenile record can impact on a youth’s life beyond detention and probation. Examples include FBI background checks for employment, occupational licenses, school enrollment,¹⁷ driving until the child turns 21,¹⁸ immigration issues,¹⁹ enlisting in the military,²⁰ housing issues,²¹ gun ownership,²² and having to register as a sexual offender.²³

Community Control: A juvenile court may place the child under community control under any sanctions, services, and conditions.²⁴ Community control can include basic probation supervision, reporting to an approved location for work, education, training, treatment or other program, community service, completing high school or other education programs, drug or alcohol monitoring, curfew, monitored time, house arrest, suspension of a driver’s license, including probationary or temporary licenses/permits.

13 R.C. 2151.04.

14 R.C. 2152.02.

15 R.C. 2151.03.

16 R.C. 2151.022.

17 R.C. 3313.662(A), (B).

18 R.C. 2152.19(A)(4)(1); In re R.K., 2004-Ohio-6918, 2004 WL 2931013, at *1 (Ohio Ct. App. 2004) (prohibiting a juvenile court from imposing a driver’s suspension beyond age 21; R.C. 4510.17(D), (G)(2)(a); 4510.31(A)(1); 4510.34.

19 8 U.S.C.A. 1227(a)(2); 1182(a).

20 See generally, 32 C.F.R. 66.6 (listing the military’s basic enlistment rules). See also www.usa.gov/join-military

21 R.C. 24 C.F.R. 966.4(I)(5)(i)(B), (I)(5)(iii); 24 C.F.R. 982.553(a)(1)(ii)(C)-(a)(2)(i), 960.204(a)(3)-(4).

22 R.C. 2923.13(A)(2)-(3). See also R.C. 2901.01(9) (An offense of violence includes “offenses that involve physical harm to persons or a risk of serious physical harm to persons.”).

23 R.C. 109.57 (E)(2).

24 R.C. 2152.19(A)(4). For resources, see <https://dys.ohio.gov/courts-and-community>.



Complaint: A complaint is the charging document that initiates a case in juvenile court. The complaint sets forth the charges which are allegations, based on the “information and belief,” that the child has engaged in conduct that constitutes a delinquent act.”²⁵

Concurrent/Consecutive Sentencing: Concurrent sentencing is when a term of imprisonment is served at the same time as another term of imprisonment; consecutive sentencing requires the first term of imprisonment to be served before starting the second term.²⁶

Delinquent Child: See Child.

Dependent Child: See Child.

Detention: “The temporary care of children pending adjudication or disposition, or execution of a court order, in a public or private facility designed to physically restrict the movement and activities of children.”²⁷

Dispositional Hearing: A hearing in which the court decides what action shall be taken concerning a delinquent child.²⁸

25 R.C. 2152.021 (A)(1).

26 R.C. 2929.41.

27 R.C. 2151.011(A)(13).

28 Juv. R. 2(O).



Diversion: “Diversion is the redirection of youth from the formal processing of juvenile court and occurs prior to the youth’s initial appearance before the judge. Rule 9 of the Rules of Juvenile Procedure calls for “formal court action” to be “avoided and other community resources utilized to ameliorate situations brought the attention of the court.”²⁹ “By creating informal alternatives to court processing, diversion interventions serve as an opportunity to reduce the criminogenic effects that entry into the juvenile justice system and incarceration have on long-term youth development such as increased recidivism, stigmatization, and increased criminal-justice costs.”³⁰

Diversion can be initiated by many entities to redirect youth from formal processing. Entities include communities, schools, resource and assessment centers, law enforcement, prosecutors and courts.³¹

Diversion can be initiated at many points as well, including pre-initial appearance, pre-trial, and post-adjudication. In 2025 the Supreme Court of Ohio Task Force on Judicial Diversion developed a working definition for pre-initial appearance diversion: “the redirection of youth in intervention services prior to an initial appearance before a judge or magistrate. This does not apply to any pre-trial or post-adjudication diversion.”³² The Task Force recommendations “aimed at providing uniformity and additional transparency in how juvenile courts administer pre-initial appearance diversion, with particular emphasis on complying with victim rights protections found in Marsy’s Law statutes. The recommendations also seek to build upon successful practices by encouraging the expansion of resource and assessment centers statewide through continued support by the ODYS and the Ohio General Assembly.”³³

Expunged: A court ordered process in which the legal record of an arrest or an adjudication that is already sealed is erased in the eyes of the law.³⁴

29 [Juvenile Diversion Toolkit for Judicial Use](#), 2 (citing Juv. R. 9(A)), 2021.

30 *Id.* at 6.

31 For more information, see Supreme Court of Ohio, *Juvenile Diversion: Toolkit for Judicial Use* (2021), <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/JCS/CFC/resources/juvenileDiversionToolkit.pdf>

32 *The Supreme Court of Ohio Task Force on Juvenile Diversion: Final Report and Recommendations*, (June 2025). <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/juvDiversionTF/FinalRR.pdf>

33 *Id.* at 23.

34 R.C. 2151.358.



Facilities:

- **Community Corrections Facility (CCF):** As of publication, there are ten DYS subsidized “Community Corrections Facilities. DYS is statutorily mandated to confine age eligible felony offenders up to age 21 who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio’s 88 county juvenile courts.³⁵
- **Juvenile Correction Facility (JCF):** There are three DYS facilities that “are accredited by the American Correctional Association and provide a variety of services and treatment for youth including a fully-accredited high school, behavioral-health services, unit management, medical and dental care, recreation, religious services, community service opportunities, victim awareness, and reentry services.”³⁶ The facilities are Cuyahoga Hills JCF, Indian River JCF, and Circleville JCF.
- **Juvenile Detention Center (JDC):** Upon recommendation of the juvenile judge, Ohio counties must establish a single or joint county juvenile detention center to “detain alleged delinquent children until final disposition, to confine children who are adjudicated delinquent children” or juvenile traffic offenders.”³⁷
- **Juvenile Residential facility (Detention home):** Ohio counties may establish single county or joint county juvenile residential facilities for the training, treatment and rehabilitation of children who are adjudicated delinquent, abused, neglected, unruly or juvenile traffic offenders.³⁸

35 <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/JuvenileDisposition.pdf>

36 [Facilities | Department of Youth Services](#)

37 R.C. 2152.41; For a list of current Juvenile Detention Centers, see [SECTION I. DYS CONTACTS](#).

38 R.C. 2151.65. This includes forestry camps.



Guardian Ad Litem (GAL): A guardian ad litem is a person appointed by the court to assist the court in its determination of the best interests of a child.³⁹

Indigent: An individual who is unable to pay for a defense attorney. Children under 18 are presumed indigent, and those children accused of committing delinquent acts are guaranteed the right to a cost-free, court-appointed attorney.⁴⁰

Juvenile Court: A juvenile court has jurisdiction over a child who is adjudicated delinquent prior to age eighteen until the child turns twenty-one.⁴¹

Juvenile Traffic Offender: See Child.

Neglected Child: See Child.

Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS): The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio. DYS is statutorily mandated to confine age eligible felony offenders up to age 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio's 88 county juvenile courts.⁴² ODYS engages youth in programming that is designed to address their criminological and behavioral needs.

Each of the DYS facilities also operates a year-round school that offers general high school curriculum and many vocational opportunities. DYS reaches thousands of youth in Ohio.

Beyond youth in facilities and those on parole, DYS funds and supports 625 community programs throughout the state offering more than 93,000 youth (based on annual program admissions) opportunities and services to encourage positive change. These range from prevention and diversion programs to residential treatment and community treatment in areas such as mental health, sex offending and substance abuse.⁴³

Parole: The supervision given to a child, for a limited period, following the child's release from Ohio Department of Youth Services.⁴⁴

Probable Cause: Probable cause requires a reasonable belief, based on factual evidence, that the child committed the act charged. It is based in Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution, and Article I, Section 14 of the Ohio Constitution.⁴⁵

Probation: The court supervision given to a child, for a limited period, while the child is still in the community. County probation departments are part of the juvenile court.

39 Sup. R. 48.01(C).

40 Juv. R. 4.

41 R.C. 2152.02(C).

42 For more information, please see Juvenile Disposition Benchcard at <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/JuvenileDisposition.pdf>

43 [About DYS | Department of Youth Services](#)

44 [Parole | Department of Youth Services](#)

45 U.S. Const. Amend. IV; Ohio Const. Art. I, 14.



Sealed: If a juvenile record is sealed, the court and police paperwork related to the juvenile case is set aside from other court and police files and only available to juvenile court judges and their staff, with some exceptions for prosecutors and police.⁴⁶

Serious Youthful Offender (SYO): A blended sentence disposition available in Juvenile Court for certain children, based on offense type and age at the time of an offense. Children with a SYO disposition are given a juvenile-court sentence, which remains in effect until the child reaches 21. In addition, they are given a suspended adult sentence, which could be served if the juvenile disposition is not successfully completed.⁴⁷

- **Discretionary serious youthful offender:** A person who is eligible for a discretionary SYO under section 2152.13 and who is not transferred to adult court under a mandatory or discretionary transfer.⁴⁸
- **Mandatory serious youthful offender:** A person who is eligible for a mandatory SYO under section 2152.13 and who is not transferred to adult court under a mandatory or discretionary transfer. Includes a person upon whom a juvenile court is required to impose such a sentence under division (B)(3) of section 2152.121 of the Revised Code.⁴⁹

Status Offenses: Status offenses are those offenses that would not be an offense if committed by an adult. These include truancy, violating curfew, running away from home and underage drinking. A child who violates one of the laws can be adjudicated as an unruly child.⁵⁰

Suspended Commitment: A juvenile judge may suspend a disposition that includes commitment, before or during the commitment, upon such conditions as the juvenile judge imposes.⁵¹ Suspended commitment allows the child to remain in the community under certain conditions set by the judge and encourages rehabilitation.

Unruly Child: See Child.

46 R.C. 2151.355(B), 2151.357 (E)(1)-(5).

47 R.C. 2152.02(W); R.C. 2152.121.

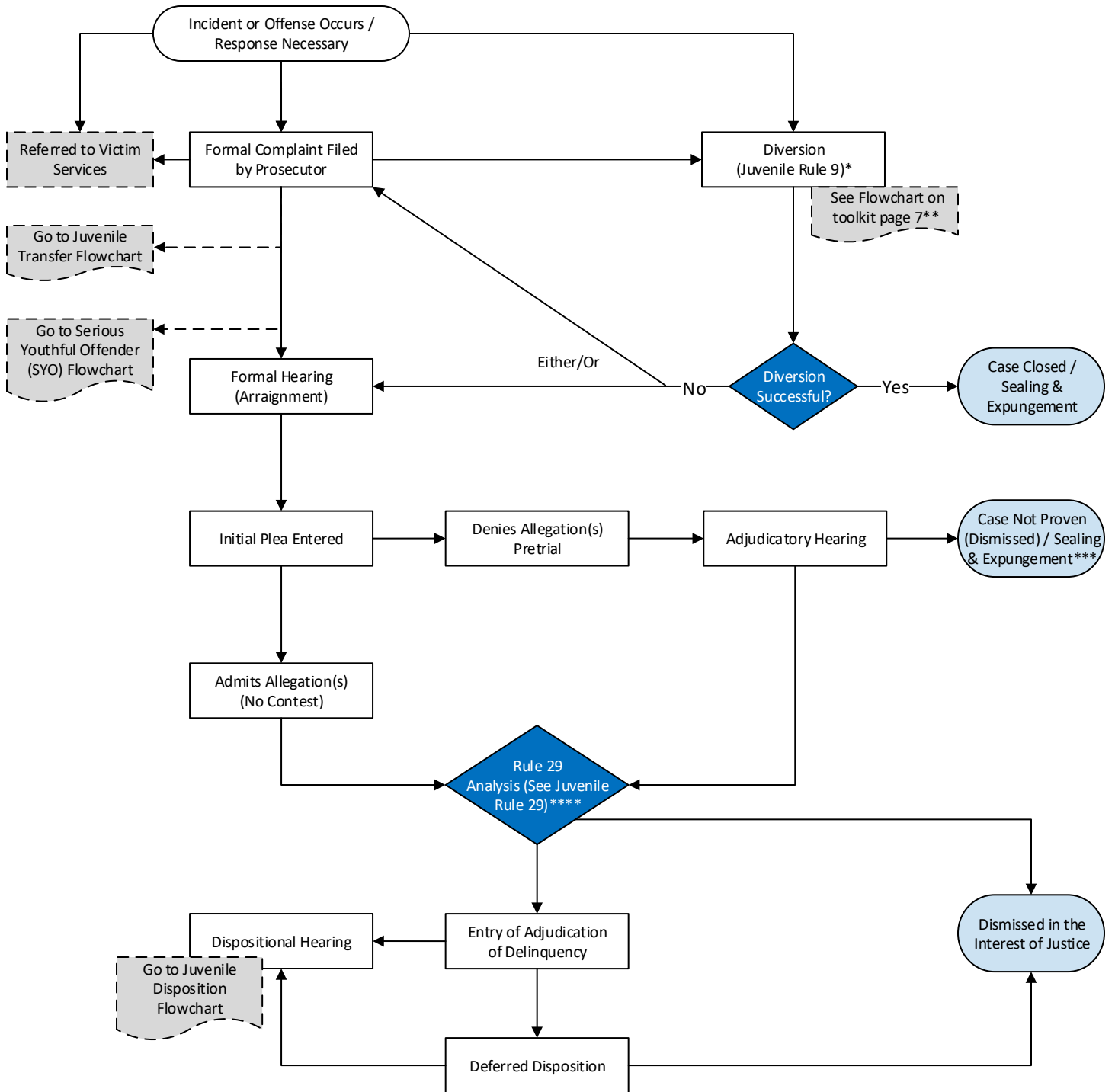
48 R.C. 2152.02.

49 R.C. 2152.02.

50 R.C. 2151.022.

51 R.C. 2151.49.

Traditional Juvenile Delinquency Case Flowchart



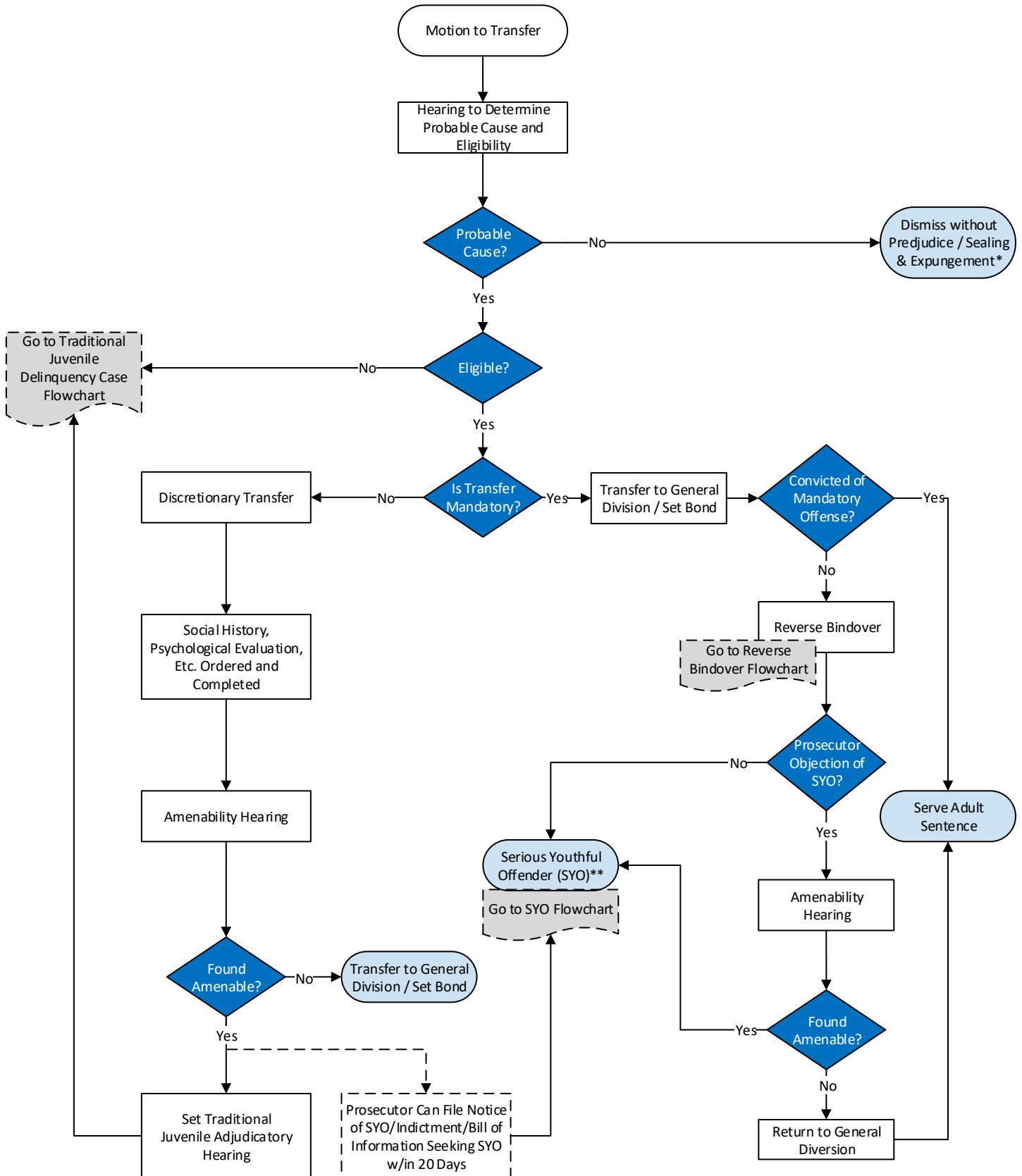
*For additional information see *The Supreme Court of Ohio Task Force on Juvenile Diversion Final Report and Recommendations* page 1 (2025).

** Diversion is possible at multiple points in the process. Examples of possible points of Diversion include: community, school, police, prosecutors, resource/assessment centers, the court, etc. See *Supreme Court of Ohio Juvenile Diversion Toolkit* (2021) for additional details.

*** See *Cincinnati v. Bloom*, 177 Ohio St.3d 174 (2023).

**** Juv. R.29(F) permits a court after finding the allegations are admitted or proven to either (2)(b) postpone disposition or (c) postpone adjudication.

Juvenile Transfer Flowchart



*See Cincinnati v. Bloom, 177 Ohio St.3d 174 (2023).

**R.C. 2152.121(3)(a) the court and all other agencies that have record of the conviction of the child or the child's guilty plea shall expunge all of the convictions and guilty pleas shall be considered and treated for all purposes other than as provided in this section to never have occurred.



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Criminal Justice Counsel

Classification: Criminal Justice Counsel/unclassified pursuant to R.C. 124.11(A)(30)	Position Control Number:
Pay Grade: E1 Range 15	FLSA Status: Exempt
Office/Section: Criminal Sentencing Commission	EEO Status: Professional
Division: Affiliated Offices	Date Created: February 2021
Reports to: Director	Date Revised: September 2024 May 2026

JOB PURPOSE

The Criminal Justice Counsel assists the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (OCSC) in researching, developing, and recommending effective strategies relative to criminal justice issues, e.g., sentencing, diversion, access to justice, community supervision, etc. Assists the Criminal Sentencing Commission in its work to revise Ohio's criminal statutes, to prepare summary materials designed to make the law more workable for practitioners, and to assist the commission in responding to routine inquiries.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Assists the director in preparing commission work products and facilitates commission and committee meetings and general duties of the office.

Monitors trends developed through case law and promising practices relative to criminal justice issues and disseminates pertinent information to the commission director, the commission and its committees, interested parties, and justice system partners.

Conducts legal and non-legal research.

Writes memos and other documents on criminal justice issues for the commission and provides legal advice on commission matters, as needed.

Makes presentations on the work of the commission and its committees, other working committees and criminal justice seminars, judicial and court personnel educational courses, and other meetings and sessions.

Writes and edits Commission documents, including legislative drafting.

May serve as liaison to the administration, relevant agencies, and other interest groups as designated by the commission director.

May provide work direction as it relates to specific tasks and/or projects to administrative staff and/or interns.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Regular, reliable, and punctual attendance is required.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Requires a law degree, membership in good standing of the Ohio bar.

Requires two or more years' relevant experience in the criminal justice field; prior experience in the Ohio Court System strongly preferred.

The position also requires exceptional organization, communication and interpersonal skills and requires demonstrated understanding of the commission's work, procedures, and research.

Requires the ability to exercise judgment, decisiveness, and creativity in situations involving the evaluation of information.

The position also requires the ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions; the ability to prepare meaningful, concise and accurate reports; the ability to distill and simplify complex statutes; the ability to work with diverse groups on policy development; proficiency in the use of legal research methods, performing complex analyses and exceptional writing skills; and good communication skills.

Requires a high level of proficiency with Microsoft Word, Outlook, and PowerPoint; the Internet, and Westlaw or Lexis and other legal-research resources.

Requires occasional travel within Ohio and occasional out of state travel and the ability to work non-standard work hours when appropriate.

Requires the ability to perform all aspects of the job with fairness, equity, patience, discretion, and confidentiality.

Must possess proven skills to demonstrate strong public speaking and sound grammar/writing abilities.

Special Requirements: This position is regularly exposed to sensitive information and the incumbent is expected to keep any such information strictly confidential.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position operates in a professional office environment. Travel on commission business, including the possibility of some overnight travel, is expected and required. This role routinely uses standard office equipment, such as computers and phones.

This is a largely sedentary role; however, the employee may also be required to move about the office and building, and other locations while traveling on commission business. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will regularly be required to communicate and exchange information.

COMMISSION EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEE

In completing the duties and responsibilities of the position, the commission expects the incumbent will adhere to all commission policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model; exhibit a professional manner in dealing with others; and work to maintain constructive working relationships. In addition, the commission expects the incumbent to maintain a positive and respectful approach with superiors, colleagues, and individuals. Further, the commission expects the incumbent to demonstrate flexible and efficient time management, the ability to prioritize workload, the ability to perform duties in a timely, accurate and thorough manner, and to communicate regularly with the incumbent's supervisors about work-related issues.

~~AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT~~

~~The OCSC is statutorily created within the Supreme Court of Ohio and is an at-will employer that seeks to attract, employ, and retain highly skilled and motivated individuals, maintain staff continuity for the efficiency of its operation, and desires to foster and maintain an ethical, professional, and impartial work environment. Pursuant to Adm. P. 4 (At-Will Employment), no person shall be offered or denied a position of employment with OCSC, and no employee shall have their employment terminated based solely upon political party affiliation, political activity permitted under Adm. P. 17 (Employee Code of Ethics), or other partisan considerations. Further, no employee shall have their employment terminated without cause, unless upon the concurrence of the OCSC.~~

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Director Criminal Sentencing Commission

Classification: Director/unclassified pursuant to R.C. 124.11(A)(30)	Position Control Number:
Pay Grade: E2 Range 45	FLSA Status: Exempt
Office/Section: Criminal Sentencing Commission	EEO Status: Officials And Managers
Division: Affiliated Offices	Date Created: April 2006
Reports to: Chief Justice & Commission	Date Revised: July 2023 May 2026

JOB PURPOSE

Directs the operations of the Criminal Sentencing Commission and the staff. This position serves as the primary contact for the Commission with the General Assembly and others.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Plans, direct and administers the Sentencing Commission in conjunction with Chairman, assures compliance with enabling laws, develops meeting agendas, and develops Commission's budget.

Develops staff policies and goals. Supervises staff, oversees legal and non-legal research as well as conducts some additional research as needed.

Writes and edits Commission documents, including legislative drafting.

Serves as the Commission's primary liaison to the General Assembly, Administration and other interest groups.

Testifies before the General Assembly; prepares and conducts speeches to interest groups.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree required. Master's degree or Juris Doctor preferred.

Extensive familiarity with state and local government practices, including how the General Assembly interacts with the Judicial Branch.

Minimum of eight years of relevant experience and familiarity with the Executive and Legislative branches of state and local government required.

***Special Requirements:** The person in this position is regularly exposed to sensitive information and is expected to keep that information strictly confidential.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position operates in a professional office environment and routinely uses standard office equipment, such as computers and phones.

This is a largely sedentary role; however, the employee may also be required to move about the office and building. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will regularly be required to communicate and exchange information.

COURT EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEE

In completing the duties and responsibilities of the position, the Court expects the incumbent will adhere to all Court policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model both inside and outside the Court; exhibit a professional manner in dealing with others; and work to maintain constructive working relationships. In addition, the Court expects the incumbent to maintain a positive and respectful approach with superiors, colleagues, and individuals inside and outside the Court. Further, the Court expects the incumbent to demonstrate flexible and efficient time management, the ability to prioritize workload, the ability to perform duties in a timely, accurate and thorough manner, and to communicate regularly with the incumbent's supervisors about work-related issues.

~~AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT~~

~~The Supreme Court of Ohio is an at-will employer that seeks to attract, employ, and retain highly skilled and motivated individuals, attempts to maintain staff continuity for the efficiency of its operation, and desires to foster and maintain an ethical, professional, and impartial work environment. Pursuant to Adm. P. 4 (At-Will Employment), no person shall be offered or denied a position of employment with the Court, and no employee shall have the employee's employment terminated based solely upon political party affiliation, political activity permitted under Adm. P. 17 (Employee Code of Ethics), or other partisan considerations. Further, no employee shall have the employee's employment terminated with or without cause unless upon the concurrence of a majority of the Court.~~

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Legislative Criminal Justice Counsel

Classification: Legislative Criminal Justice
Counsel/unclassified pursuant to R.C.
124.11(A)(30)

Pay Grade: E1 Range 15

Office/Section: Criminal Sentencing Commission

Division: Affiliated Offices

Reports to: Director

Position Control Number:

FLSA Status: Exempt

EEO Status: Professional

Date Created: February 2021

Date Revised: ~~March 2026~~ May 2026

JOB PURPOSE

The **Legislative** Criminal Justice Counsel assists the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (OCSC) in researching, developing, and recommending effective strategies relative to **sentencing and** criminal justice issues, e.g., ~~sentencing, diversion, access to justice, community supervision, etc.~~ This position assists the director and the commission in its work to revise Ohio's criminal statutes, to prepare summary materials and resources designed to make the law more workable for practitioners, and to assist the commission in responding to routine inquiries. **The Legislative Criminal Justice Counsel serves as liaison on legislative matters to the Ohio General Assembly, executive branch officials, state agencies, governmental entities, and judicial branch associations, monitors legislation, attends committee meetings, discusses initiatives, and drafts testimony for legislative committee hearings.**

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Assists the director in preparing commission work products and facilitates commission and committee meetings and general duties of the office.

Serves as liaison to the Ohio General Assembly, executive branch officials, state agencies, regulatory bodies, governmental entities, judicial associations, bar associations, court personnel associations, and other interest groups as designated by the commission director.

Monitors legislation, handles legislative program activities and public affairs as one of the commission's registered lobbyist, attends legislative committee meetings, discusses initiatives with interested parties, and drafts testimony for legislative committee hearings.

Prepares and makes presentations on the status of legislation, on legislative activities during the session, and on new laws after adjournment.

Prepares, drafts, analyzes, and monitors, new legislation. Tracks and monitors pending legislation affecting the criminal justice system, informing affected parties of its status, taking appropriate action, and drafting talking points and other communication tools.

Advises the director, the commission and its committees, interested parties, and justice system partners regarding legislative issues and initiatives and provides updates on the status of legislation that is proposed or pending before the Ohio General Assembly. Makes presentations, including preparing and providing updates regarding the status of legislation that is proposed or pending before the Ohio General Assembly.

Monitors trends developed through **legislation**, case law, and promising practices relative to criminal justice issues and disseminates pertinent information to the commission director, the commission and its committees, interested parties and justice system partners. Tracks bills in the Ohio Legislature and prepares written and oral updates for the commission.

Conducts legal and non-legal research.

Writes memos and other documents on criminal justice issues for the commission and provides legal advice on commission matters, as needed.

Makes presentations on the work of the OCSC, its committees, other working committees and criminal justice seminars, judicial and court personnel educational courses, and other meetings and sessions.

Writes and edits commission documents, including legislative drafting.

~~May serve as liaison to the General Assembly, administration and other interest groups as designated by the Commission Director.~~

May provide written and oral testimony at legislative committee hearings.

Serves as a staff liaison to committees, boards, task forces, commissions, and workgroups.

May provide work direction as it relates to specific tasks and/or projects to administrative staff and/or interns placed at the OCSC.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Regular, reliable, and punctual attendance is required.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Requires a law degree, membership in good standing of the Ohio bar.

Requires two or more years' relevant experience in the criminal justice field; prior experience in the Ohio Court System strongly preferred.

Prior experience in developing positive relationships with legislators and in advancing legislative agendas is preferred.

Registration as lobbyist or legislative agent must be obtained pursuant to Section 101.72 of Revised Code.

Requires thorough knowledge of the legislative process; Ohio state government; and of the structure, organization, and operation of the Ohio judicial system.

The position also requires exceptional organization, communication and interpersonal skills and requires demonstrated understanding of the commission's work, procedures, and research.

Requires the ability to exercise judgment, decisiveness, and creativity in situations involving the evaluation of information.

The position also requires the ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts & draw valid conclusions; the ability to prepare meaningful, concise & accurate reports; the ability to distill and simplify complex statutes; the ability to work with diverse groups on policy development; proficiency in the use of legal research methods, performing complex analyses and exceptional writing skills; and good communication skills.

Requires a high level of proficiency with Microsoft Word, Outlook, and PowerPoint; the Internet, and Westlaw or Lexis and other legal-research resources.

Requires occasional travel within Ohio and occasional out of state travel and the ability to work non-standard work hours when appropriate.

Requires the ability to perform all aspects of the job with fairness, equity, patience, discretion, and confidentiality.

Must possess proven skills to demonstrate strong public speaking and sound grammar/writing abilities.

Special Requirements: This position is regularly exposed to sensitive information and the employee is expected to keep any such information strictly confidential.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position operates in a professional office environment. Travel on commission business, including the possibility of some overnight travel, is expected and required. This role routinely uses standard office equipment, such as computers and phones.

This is a largely sedentary role; however, the employee may also be required to move about the office and building, and other locations while traveling on Commission business. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will regularly be required to communicate and exchange information.

COMMISSION EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEE

In completing the duties and responsibilities of the position, the commission expects the employee will adhere to all commission policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model; exhibit a professional manner in dealing with others; and work to maintain constructive working relationships. In addition, the commission expects the employee to maintain a positive and respectful approach with superiors, colleagues, and individuals. Further, the commission expects the employee to demonstrate flexible and efficient time management, the ability to prioritize workload, the ability to perform duties in a timely, accurate and thorough manner, and to communicate regularly with the incumbent’s supervisors about work-related issues.

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Criminal Sentencing Commission Coordinator

Classification: Coordinator/unclassified pursuant to R.C. 124.11(A)(30)	Position Control Number:
Pay Grade: E1 Range 12	FLSA Status: Exempt
Office/Section: Criminal Sentencing Commission	EEO Status: Professional
Division: Affiliated Offices	Date Created: January 2024
Reports to: Director	Date Revised: May 2026

JOB PURPOSE

Provides administrative support to the operations of the commission, the director, and staff in matters relating to the work of the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission and its committees, including tracking the status of relevant legislation, reviewing and editing summary materials developed, and assisting in identifying and obtaining relevant information and data necessary to fulfill the duties statutorily mandated to the commission.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Assists the director in preparing commission work products, facilitating commission and committee meetings, and general duties of the office.

Monitors promising practices relative to criminal justice issues and disseminates pertinent information to the commission director, the commission and its committees, interested parties and justice system partners.

Assists in planning and implementing non-legal research, including monitoring the impact of changes in sentencing policy. Duties include managing outreach with key stakeholders across the criminal justice system and collating extant sources of information to produce original analysis.

Works with the director and criminal justice counsel to track the status of relevant legislation, including legislative calendar, bill introduction, bill committee hearing status, and bill passage.

Coordinates special projects and assignments for the director and commission. Serves as a liaison and/or represents the commission on relevant committees and task forces.

Monitors and updates the commission's website and supports the director in coordinating with the Supreme Court of Ohio Office of Public Information on website maintenance, meeting information and materials, announcements, and print materials to ensure materials are publicly available and current.

Works with research specialists to manage non-legal, undergraduate interns assigned to the commission.

Oversees and manages third party contracts regarding administrative office operations. Administers and manages successful grant applications.

Assists the director and staff with scheduling meetings and preparing materials and/or coordinating arrangements for meetings and conferences; makes arrangements for meeting rooms, meals, and overnight accommodations; makes travel arrangements for director and staff as needed.

Responsible for reconciling daily and monthly fiscal reports, issuing invoices, receipts, refunds, Inter-State Transfer of Funds, and proper accounting for payments. Researches and handles payment issues and commission member reimbursements. Prepares for audit and responds to Auditor inquiries for request for information. Works with third party processing entities, the Supreme Court of Ohio fiscal and technology departments to resolve payment issues.

Responds to inquires regarding public records, including researching and obtaining records for review by director.

Provides staff support for the commission and commission committees, including drafting comprehensive minutes.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

Regular, reliable, and punctual attendance is required.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Requires a bachelor's degree or equivalent in criminal justice or related discipline and the ability to learn and understand complex policies and procedures. The degree may be substituted by six or more years of progressive and related experience with the Sentencing Commission or related area in the court system.

Requires the ability to handle sensitive information and meet various deadlines. Must be proficient in computer applications such as Microsoft Office products, excellent interpersonal communication, and problem-solving skills.

Skilled in performing technical, specialized, complex, and difficult office administrative work requiring the use of independent judgment; interpreting policies and procedures related to the office; analyzing and resolving office administrative and procedural problems.

Skilled in communicating effectively with co-workers, commission members, director, the general public, and private organizations and others sufficient to exchange or convey information.

Special Requirements: This position is regularly exposed to sensitive information and the employee is expected to keep any such information strictly confidential.

The intent of this job description is to provide a representative summary of the major duties and responsibilities performed by employees. It is not intended to be an exhaustive or all-inclusive list of all job-related duties that an employee may be requested to perform.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position operates in a professional office environment and routinely uses standard office equipment, such as computers and phones.

This is a largely sedentary role; however, the employee may also be required to move about the office and building. Preparing and moving documents and files requires an ability to occasionally lift up to 20 pounds and may require bending, pushing, pulling, or reaching. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will regularly be required to communicate and exchange information.

COMMISSION EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEE

In completing the duties and responsibilities of the position, the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission expects the incumbent will adhere to all commission policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model; exhibit a professional manner in dealing with others; and work to maintain constructive working relationships. In addition, the commission expects the incumbent to maintain a positive and respectful approach with superiors, colleagues, and individuals. Further, the commission expects the incumbent to demonstrate flexible and efficient time management, the ability to prioritize workload, the ability to perform duties in a timely, accurate and thorough manner, and to communicate regularly with the incumbent's supervisors about work-related issues.

~~AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT~~

~~The Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission is a legislatively created entity within the Supreme Court of Ohio and is an at-will employer that seeks to attract, employ, and retain highly skilled and motivated individuals, maintain staff continuity for the efficiency of its operation, and desires to foster and maintain an ethical, professional, and impartial work environment. No person shall be offered or denied a position of employment with the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, and no employee shall have their employment terminated based solely upon political party affiliation, political activity permitted under the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Operating Guidelines, or other partisan considerations. Further, no employee shall have their employment terminated without cause unless upon the concurrence evinced by a majority vote of the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission.~~

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Research Specialist

Classification: Research Specialist/unclassified pursuant to R.C. 124.11(A)(30)	Position Control Number:
Pay Grade: E1 Range 14	FLSA Status: Exempt
Office/Section: Criminal Sentencing Commission	EEO Status: Professional
Division: Affiliated Offices	Date Created: April 2006
Reports to: Director	Date Revised: September 2022 May 2026

JOB PURPOSE

Performs research and statistical analyses and drafts reports to support the work of the commission, the director, and staff in matters relating to the work of the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission and its committees, including identifying and collecting relevant information and analyzing data using recognized research standards to fulfill the duties statutorily mandated to the commission.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Plans and implements non-legal research, including monitoring the impact of changes in sentencing policy.

Analyzes relevant research and statistical data and/or uses computerized tools to expedite research. Prepares reports, presentations and memoranda relating to this research.

Manages data collection projects for the commission, including assisting with the planning and implementation of the collection process. Identifies and proposes the appropriate data elements to collect and research methodology to use.

Monitors promising practices relative to criminal justice issues and disseminates pertinent information to the director, the commission and its committees, interested parties and justice system partners.

Serves as a liaison and/or represents the commission on relevant committees and task forces.

Manages research projects to determine impacts of policy changes as required by the Ohio General Assembly.

Makes presentations on the work of the commission, other working committees and criminal justice seminars, judicial and court personnel educational courses, and other meetings and sessions.

Manages multiple and ongoing research projects driven by the mission of the commission and relevant legislation that requires reviewing literature, developing research questions, meeting with interested

parties, developing memoranda of understanding with outside agencies regarding data sharing, and collecting and analyzing data.

Reviews and summarizes materials from other jurisdictions and academia that relate to the commission's work and disseminates pertinent information to the director, the commission, interested parties and justice system partners.

Coordinates special projects and assignments for the commission, its committees, and the director. Serves as a liaison and/or project leader regarding research issues for the commission.

Supervises staff, which may include interns assigned to the commission.

Oversees and manages entities contracted to conduct research projects for the commission. Prepares and submits grant applications.

Provides staff support for the commission's committees, as needed.

Performs other related duties as assigned by the director.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Requires a bachelor's degree in an analytical field or equivalent, graduate degree or law degree preferred.

Requires two to four years' experience in a research function or related field and demonstrated ability to implement effective research projects. Experience using spreadsheets and STATA (or other statistical software) required.

Requires the ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions; use qualitative and quantitative research methods in gathering data; prepare meaningful, concise and accurate reports; present complex subjects to a variety of audiences.

Requires exceptional organization, communication and interpersonal skills and requires demonstrated understanding of the commission's work, procedures, and research.

Requires the ability to exercise judgment, decisiveness, and creativity in situations involving the evaluation of information.

The position also requires the ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions; the ability to prepare meaningful, concise and accurate reports and the ability to distill and simplify complex statutes and information.

Requires a high level of proficiency with Microsoft Word, Outlook, and PowerPoint.

Requires occasional travel within Ohio and occasional out of state travel and the ability to work non-standard work hours when appropriate.

Requires the ability to perform all aspects of the job with fairness, equity, patience, discretion, and confidentiality.

Skilled in communicating effectively with co-workers, commission members, director, the general public, and private organizations and others sufficient to exchange or convey information.

Must possess proven skills to demonstrate strong public speaking and sound grammar/writing abilities.

Special Requirements: This position is regularly exposed to sensitive information, and the incumbent is expected to keep any such information strictly confidential.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position operates in a professional office environment and routinely uses standard office equipment, such as computers and phones.

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Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

May 2026

Including bills introduced up to May 6, 2026



Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission

Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy, Supreme Court of Ohio, Chair
Darren Shulman, City Attorney, City of Upper Arlington, Vice Chair
Director Amy Ast, Ohio Department of Youth Services
Interim Director Ed Banks, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
Brooke M. Burns, Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Youth Defense Department
Matthew Byrnes, Attorney, Adult Criminal Defense
Judge Eamon Costello, Madison County Common Pleas Court
Judge Robert DeLamatre, Erie County Common Pleas Court, Juvenile Division
Judge Julia L. Dorrian, Ohio 10th District Court of Appeals
Lieutenant Kyle Erdeljac, Columbus Division of Police
Judge Timothy France, Coshocton Municipal Court
Sheriff John Hinton, Morrow County Sheriff's Office
Gwen Howe-Gebers, Henry County Prosecuting Attorney, Juvenile
Representative Latyna Humphrey, Ohio House of Representatives
Senator Catherine Ingram, Ohio Senate
Judge Kristen Johnson, Hancock County Common Pleas Court, Probate and Juvenile Divisions
Colonel Charles A. Jones, Superintendent, Ohio State Highway Patrol
Teri LaJeunesse, Victim Representative
Timothy Lanzendorfer, Attorney at Law, Ohio State Bar Association
Senator Nathan Manning, Ohio Senate
Charles T. "Chip" McConville, Knox County Prosecuting Attorney
Judge Stephen McIntosh, Franklin County Common Pleas Court
Elizabeth Miller, State Public Defender, Office of the Ohio Public Defender
Judge Jennifer Muench-McElfresh, Butler County Common Pleas Court
Judge Kyle Rohrer, Delaware Municipal Court
Judge Janaya Trotter Bratton, Hamilton County Municipal Court
Judge Helen Wallace, Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, Juvenile Division
Representative Josh Williams, Ohio House of Representatives
Commissioner Donnie Willis, Jackson County Commissioner

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Michael Crofford, M.Ed., LPC, Research Specialist
William J. Davies, Esq., Criminal Justice Counsel
Angela Kay Garvey, Coordinator
Emily S. Haynes, Esq., M.L.S., Criminal Justice Counsel
Todd Ives, MPA, Research Specialist



Legislative Update

May 2026

Consistent with [R.C. 181.23](#) through [181.26](#), the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (“Commission”) staff regularly monitors, analyzes, and summarizes all bills that are introduced in the General Assembly that provide for new criminal offenses, change the penalty of any criminal offense, impact the sentencing or juvenile disposition structure in Ohio, and impact the number and type of offenders who are imprisoned or committed to the custody of the Department of Youth Services. Additionally, the Commission staff monitors, analyzes, and summarizes all bills that impact the provisions outlined in [R.C. 181.27](#).

UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS:

House: May 13th, May 20th, June 3rd, June 10th

Senate: May 13th, May 20th, June 3rd, June 10th

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136th General Assembly

Enacted House and Senate Bills

House Bill 29 (Humphrey, John)

Regards inmates' access to feminine hygiene products and showers

Status: Enacted

House Bill 29 (HB 29) was signed by Governor Mike Dwine on December 19th, 2025, the following provisions are effective March 20th, 2026. County correctional facilities, municipal correctional facilities, and state correctional institutions are required to provide female inmates with free feminine hygiene products (tampons and sanitary napkins) in various sizes, based on individual needs, without reprimand. The facilities must develop written policies that protect inmates from discrimination in accessing these products, establish proper storage and disposal methods, and create sanitary procedures for handling these products.

Additionally, except during emergencies (which are broadly defined to include situations like riots, staff shortages, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters), these facilities must provide inmates experiencing menstruation with at least one daily shower with hot water access, regardless of their disciplinary status.

House Bill 96 (Stewart)

Make state operating appropriations for FY 2026-27 (State Budget Bill)

Status: Enacted

House Bill 96 (HB 96), the state's FY 2026-27 operating budget, was signed by Governor DeWine on June 30th, 2025. While Governor DeWine did issue 67 line-item vetoes, the following provisions related to the Commission's statutory duties remained and are effective immediately.

R.C. 2917.211 Dissemination of image of another person – HB 96 creates the new offenses of Nonconsensual Dissemination of Fabricated Sexual Images and Nonconsensual Creation of Fabricated Sexual Images, both felonies of the fourth degree. Offenders with prior convictions under this section are subject to the felony of the third-degree penalty level.

R.C. 2921.13 Falsification – HB 96 adds statements “made to the department of children and youth in connection with the Ohio adoption grant program for the purpose of qualifying for or obtaining an adoption grant” to the list of false statements that, when made, constitute the offense of falsification.

R.C. 2921.36 Illegal conveyance – HB 96 adds a new provision specifying that the offense of illegal conveyance is a felony of the third degree if the offender is an officer or employee of the department of rehabilitation and correction or the department of youth services or a contractor or employee of a contractor providing services to either of those departments

R.C. 2151.356 Sealing of juvenile court records – HB 96 adds language requiring courts to find that the harm to the person in having the records pertaining to their case disclosed is not outweighed by the



potential benefits to the public in having access to those records prior to issuing an order sealing juvenile records.

Senate Bill 295 (Manning, Patton)

Regards the timeline for restoring competency in criminal cases

Status: Enacted

[Senate Bill 295](#) (SB 295) was signed by Governor Mike Dwine on February 20th, 2026, and went into immediate effect. SB 295 extends retroactively to all defendants who were found incompetent to stand trial prior to the effective date of this amendment and whose restoration to competency is ongoing or whose cases remain pending. The bill increases the timeline for competency restoration from one-year to three-years in cases of aggravated murder, murder, or where the possible sentence is life in prison.

The bill also specifies that the time permitted for treatment to restore competency is tolled during any period of time the defendant lacks capacity to consent to treatment or refuses treatment, including any time during which a petition for authorization for the involuntary administration of medication by a clinical officer is pending.

In addition, SB 295 requires the chief clinical officer of the hospital, facility, or jail, or the person to which the defendant is committed for treatment to (1) document the determination that the defendant lacks capacity to consent to treatment or refuses treatment, and (2) notify the court within 14 days of that determination.



136th General Assembly

The bills outlined below are listed in the order of their introduction and summarized as introduced. Bills that provide for new criminal offenses, change the penalty for existing criminal offenses, or impact sentencing are listed first, followed by an “Other Bills of Interest” section.

House Bills Awaiting Senate Action

House Bill 5 (Williams, Willis)

Enact the Repeat Offender Act

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Buckeye Firearms Association, Attorney General Dave Yost

Opponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Fraternal Order of Police Ohio, Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

House Bill 5 (HB 5) was introduced on January 23rd, 2025. HB 5 modifies the penalties for the R.C. 2923.13 offense of having weapons while under disability. Generally, the bill reduces the offense level from the felony of the third-degree level to the felony of the fourth-degree level; offenders who have prior convictions under this section remain subject to the felony of the third-degree penalty level. Violations of division (A)(2) of this section (offenders indicted for or previously convicted of a felony offense of violence) also remain subject to the felony of the third degree penalty level, with the addition of a presumption in favor of a prison term; division (A)(2) offenders who have prior convictions under this section are subject to the felony of the second degree penalty level.

HB 5 increases the mandatory prison terms for some firearm specifications and creates a new specification and mandatory 5-year prison term for offenders who discharge a firearm while committing an offense.

Additionally, HB 5 creates a new repeat offender classification requiring a mandatory 3-, 4-, or 5-year prison term for offenders classified as repeat offenders. The bill defines a “repeat offender” as an offender who is being sentenced for committing a violation of either having weapons under disability or a felony offense of violence and the present offense involved a firearm AND the offender has previously been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one or more having weapons under disability offense(s) or felony offense(s) of violence and the prior offense(s) involved a firearm.

House Bill 20 (Hall, Plummer)

Prohibit harassing or impeding an emergency service responder

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Ohio Attorney General, Ohio Professional Fire Fighters Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Ohio Fire Chief’s Association

Opponents: ACLU of Ohio

House Bill 20 (HB 20) was introduced on January 27th, 2025. HB 20 creates the new R.C. 2927.31 misdemeanor of the first-degree offense of harassing an emergency service responder. This new offense prohibits an offender from knowingly harassing an emergency service responder who is engaged in the

lawful performance of a legal duty when the offender has received a warning from the emergency service responder not to approach and the offender has approached or remained within 14 feet of the emergency service responder after having received the warning. The bill creates two definitions for “harass” under this new section. First, as engaging in a course of conduct that causes substantial emotion distress to, and interferes with, an emergency service responder performing a legal duty and the conduct is directed at an emergency service responder. Second, as interrupting, disrupting, hindering, impeding, or interfering with an emergency service responder’s ability to lawfully perform a legal duty.

House Bill 47 (Williams, Santucci)

Enact the Human Trafficking Prevention Act

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Right to Life, Collaborative to End Human Trafficking, Akron Children’s Hospital, Ohio Attorney General

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 47 (HB 47) was introduced on February 4th, 2025. The bill increases the special victim class for the R.C. 2905.01 offense of kidnapping to include all persons under the age of eighteen. HB 47 also increases the penalty for kidnapping offenses committed under circumstances where the victim was kidnapped for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity or involuntary servitude and specifies that such offenders shall be sentenced to an indefinite prison term consisting of a minimum term of 25 years and a maximum term of life imprisonment. Additionally, the bill increases the penalty for R.C. 2905.02 abduction offenses committed under circumstances where the victim was abducted and held in a condition of involuntary servitude or where the offender committed the offense with sexual motivation and increases the penalties for R.C. 2905.32 trafficking in persons offenses.

House Bill 88 (Abrams, Plummer)

Regards drug trafficking, human trafficking, fentanyl

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Fraternal Order of Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Task Force Commanders Association, Jack Quehl Foundation

Opponents: ACLU of Ohio, Office of the Ohio Public Defender

House Bill 88 (HB 88) was introduced on February 11th, 2025. HB 88 creates the new R.C. 2905.321 offense of participating in an organization or operation for trafficking in persons, a felony of the first degree. The bill also extensively modifies R.C. 2925.03 (Trafficking, aggravated trafficking in drugs). The bill increases the existing third-degree felony offense level for trafficking in cocaine to the second-degree felony offense level and increases the existing second-degree felony offense level for trafficking in cocaine to the first-degree felony offense level. The bill increases the existing fourth-degree felony offense level for trafficking in heroin to the second-degree felony offense level, increases the existing third-degree felony offense level for trafficking in heroin to the first-degree felony offense level, and increases the existing second-degree felony offense level for trafficking in heroin to the first-degree felony offense level. The bill increases the existing fifth-degree felony offense level trafficking in a fentanyl-related compound to the second-degree felony offense level, increases the existing fourth-degree felony offense level for trafficking in a fentanyl-related compound to the first-degree felony offense

level, increases the existing third-degree felony offense level for trafficking in a fentanyl-related compound to the first-degree felony offense level, and increases the existing second-degree felony offense level for trafficking in a fentanyl-related compound to the first-degree felony offense level. The bill creates the new offense of trafficking in methamphetamine. The bill creates a new specification applicable to indictments for R.C. 2903.04 (Involuntary manslaughter) when the victim's death was consistent with opioid overdose or when a fentanyl-related compound was present in the victim's body in lethal amounts, this new specification carries a mandatory 5-year prison term.

House Bill 132 (Craig, Miller, M.)

Enact Philip Wigal's Law

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters, County Engineers Association of Ohio, Buckeye State Sheriffs Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 132 (HB 132) was introduced on February 24th, 2025. HB 132 increases the financial penalties for R.C. 4511.213 failing to slow down or change lanes when approaching specified stationary vehicles offenses and increases the financial penalties for both R.C. 2903.06 vehicular homicide and R.C. 2903.08 vehicular assault offenses resulting from the commission of the offense of failing to slow down or change lanes when approaching specified stationary vehicles.

House Bill 168 (Williams, Brennan)

Regards motivation or purpose to commit criminal child enticement

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 168 (HB 168) was introduced on March 12, 2025. The bill modifies the exiting R.C. 2905.05 offense of criminal child enticement by requiring that the offender act with either sexual motivation or an unlawful purpose.

House Bill 210 (Roemer, Plummer)

Regards the sale of used catalytic converters

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio Automobile Dealers Association, National Insurance Crime Bureau, Ohio Wholesale Marketers Association

Opponents: Recycled Materials Association

House Bill 210 (HB 210) was introduced on March 31, 2025. Under the bill, offenders who commit R.C. 2913.02 theft offenses are subject to the felony of the fifth-degree penalty level if the property stolen is a catalytic converter. Additionally, if such offenders have previously been convicted of a violation of R.C. 2911. or 2913., theft of a catalytic converter is a felony of the fourth degree. The bill also creates the new R.C. 2913.51 offense of receiving a stolen catalytic converter, also a felony of the fifth degree. Offenders



who are convicted of receiving a stolen catalytic converter are also subject to the felony of the fourth-degree penalty level if they have previously been convicted of a violation of R.C. 2911. or 2913.

House Bill 296 (Miller, M.)

Delay offender financial sanctions until 180 days after release

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Justice & Policy Center, ACLU of Ohio, Ohio Poverty Law Center, Alliance for Safety & Justice, Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Ohio Community Corrections Association,

Opponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

House Bill 296 (HB 296) was introduced on May 20th, 2025. HB 296 modifies existing law and prohibits courts from requiring offenders to pay outstanding court-assessed fines, fees, financial sanctions, or costs during either the 180 days following the offender’s release from a sentence of imprisonment of one year or more or during the 180 days following the offender’s completion of a period of transitional control. The bill states that the 180-day delay does not apply to restitution.



Senate Bills Awaiting House Action

Senate Bill 16 (Wilson)

Establish road rules around distressed stationary vehicles

Status: Passed Senate; In House Transportation Committee

Proponents: Ohio Trucking Association, AAA

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 16 (SB 16) was introduced on January 22nd, 2025. SB 16 modifies existing R.C. 4511.213 approaching stationary public safety vehicle displaying emergency light. The bill adds “vehicle in distress” to the list of vehicles that drivers of motor vehicles must proceed with due caution around or changes lanes when passing. SB 16 defines “vehicle in distress” as any disabled vehicle that is indicating its disability pursuant to R.C. 4513.28, as any vehicle near which a fuse, flare, or other emergency sign is displayed, and as any vehicle that is displaying flashing emergency or hazard lights.

Senate Bill 55 (Manning)

Regards operating under the influence of marihuana, OVI evidence

Status: Passed Senate; In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Bar Association, Americans for Prosperity – Ohio, ACLU of Ohio, Ohio Association of Criminal Lawyers

Opponents: DUID Victim Voices

Senate Bill 55 (SB 55) was introduced on January 28th, 2025. SB 55 makes numerous revised code changes relating to marijuana concentrations for Operating Vehicle Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs (OVI) offenses. The bill removes from the OVI law the sections involving per se violations relating to prohibited measurements of marijuana metabolites and adds an evidentiary standard that may be used by the trier of fact to infer that the operator of a vehicle is under the influence of marijuana.

Senate Bill 179 (Johnson)

Verify veteran status of imprisoned individuals

Status: Passed Senate; In House Veterans and Military Development Committee

Proponents: Ohio State Bar Association, Ohio Justice & Policy Center

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 179 (SB 179) was introduced on April 23, 2025. SB 179 creates a process by which the department of rehabilitation and correction, county and municipal jails, community-based correctional facilities, courts of common pleas, municipal and county courts, departments of probation, and pre-trial diversion programs must verify the veteran status of each individual served by the institution or entity. If an individual is verified as a veteran, those institutions or entities must note the individual’s status as a veteran on all appropriate records and assist the individual in contacting the available local veteran-related services.

Recently Introduced House Bills

House Bill 622 (Williams, Robb Blasdel)
Enact the Mental Health and Community Wellness Act
Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 622 (HB 622) was introduced on December 8th, 2025. HB 622 amends existing laws related to competency to stand trial, requiring prosecutors to file for civil confinement of defendants found incompetent to stand trial who are charged with felonies or violent misdemeanors. It introduces a new definition for "person with a mental illness subject to court order" with detailed criteria for mental health intervention.

The legislation also creates a mental health and substance abuse community-based correctional facility pilot program, which will be located in Lucas County near the Toledo Correctional Institution. The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction will be responsible for identifying treatment locations within community-based correctional facilities, acquiring medications, and hiring specialized staff to support mental health and substance abuse treatment. Additionally, the bill appropriates \$26 million for the construction of the facility and requires the Medicaid Director to seek a federal demonstration waiver to provide mental health and substance use disorder treatment services to program participants.

House Bill 631 (Ghanbari, D. Miller)
Regards underage possession, consumption, purchase of marijuana
Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 631 (HB 631) was introduced on December 17th, 2025. HB 631 establishes a diversion program for individuals under 21 who are charged with marijuana possession. Under this program, when person under 21 is first charged with adult-use or homegrown marijuana, the court may offer a diversion program, if successfully completed, will result in the complaint being dismissed and the record sealed. A person is ineligible for this diversion if they have been previously diverted for a similar offense.

HB 631 also establishes first-time underage marijuana possession offense is a misdemeanor of the third degree. Offenders under 18 caught with marijuana in a motor vehicle, will be subject to additional penalties, including a driver's license suspension ranging from six months to one year, or restrictions on obtaining a driver's license depending on the offender's age.



House Bill 635 (Plummer, Young)
Enact the Child Protection Reform Act
Status: In House Children and Human Services Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 635 (HB 635) was introduced on December 23rd, 2025. Among other statutory changes, HB 635 amends R.C. 2919.22 to make endangering children a misdemeanor of the first degree.

House Bill 654 (Deeter, Manning)
Enact Amanda Dean’s Law
Status: In House Public Safety Committee
Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Ohio Domestic Violence Network
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 654 (HB 654) was introduced on January 27th, 2026. HB 635 increases the penalty for abuse of a corpse from a second-degree misdemeanor to a felony of the fifth degree and the penalty for gross abuse of a corpse generally from a felony of the fifth degree to a felony of the fourth degree. If in committing gross abuse of a corpse the offender dismembers, mutilates, or intentionally disfigures a human corpse, gross abuse of a corpse is a felony of the third degree. If the offender dismembers, mutilates, or intentionally disfigures a human corpse for the purpose of concealing a crime, obstructing justice, or impairing the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense, gross abuse of a corpse is a felony of the second degree.

House Bill 655 (Williams)
Create the offense of neglect of parental duties
Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 655 (HB 655) was introduced on January 27th, 2026. The bill introduces new categories of parental neglect, specifically addressing situations where a parent, guardian, or custodian knowingly fails to take reasonable steps to prevent further unruly or delinquent conduct by a child who has already been adjudicated as such, or recklessly fails to ensure the child avoids becoming a habitual truant or comply with court orders. The bill also clarifies existing provisions related to contributing to a child's unruliness or delinquency and adds requirements for offenders to complete parenting classes, with repeat offenses for neglect of parental duties potentially escalating to a felony.



House Bill 656 (Williams)

Create the offense of negligent assault of a peace officer

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 656 (HB 656) was introduced on January 27th, 2026. The bill makes it illegal for a person to negligently cause physical harm to a peace officer while possessing a controlled substance, controlled substance analog, or drug paraphernalia. Violating this provision is classified as a misdemeanor of the first degree, escalating to a felony of the fifth degree if the harm results in a substantial risk of exposure to an infectious disease. The bill also clarifies that "peace officer" is defined as per section 109.71 of the Revised Code.

House Bill 662 (Fischer, Newman)

Increase penalty for disturbing a lawful meeting in certain cases

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 662 (HB 662) was introduced on January 29th, 2026. This bill increases the penalty for disturbing a lawful meeting, procession, or gathering to a felony of the fifth degree from a misdemeanor of the fourth degree under specific circumstances. Such circumstances include intentionally disturbing or disrupting religious worship, whether in person at a tax-exempt place of worship or virtually through electronic means, or intentionally preventing, disrupting, or interfering with virtual religious gatherings. The bill also clarifies that "virtual meeting or gathering" refers to meetings or gatherings conducted via interactive video or teleconference.

House Bill 667 (Abrams)

Enact the Reagan Tokes and Patrick Heringer Act

Status: In House Public Safety Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 667 (HB 667) was introduced on January 29th, 2026. HB 667 proposes significant amendments to the Revised Code aimed at improving the monitoring and management of offenders released from prison. Key provisions include the requirement for certain warrants related to tier one offenses and individuals who break detention to be entered into the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) within 48 hours. The bill also mandates GPS monitoring for offenders released from prison, with specific restrictions such as inclusionary and exclusionary zones and potential curfews.

The legislation also modifies the Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison (T-CAP) program to allow for more structured oversight of offenders. It introduces a new definition for "targeted violent offender" and clarifies the conditions under which post-release control violations can lead to additional prison terms. The bill also repeals several existing sections of the Revised Code related to offender management, streamlining the legal framework to align with the new regulations.



House Bill 679 (Williams)

Increase the penalties for engaging in prostitution

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 679 (HB 679) was introduced on February 4th, 2026. The bill increases penalties for engaging in prostitution and to enhance the legal framework surrounding sex offenders and child-victim offenders. It defines "sexual activity for hire" and prohibits the reckless inducement of individuals, particularly those with developmental disabilities, to engage in such activities. The bill establishes that a first-time violation of engaging in prostitution is a first-degree misdemeanor, with subsequent violations escalating to felonies. Offenders may also be classified as tier I sex offenders, subject to registration requirements, and must attend education or treatment programs. Additionally, a minimum fine of \$1,000 is mandated for first-degree misdemeanors, with proceeds directed to support services for human trafficking survivors.

HB 679 also introduces new definitions and classifications for sex offenders and child-victim offenders, detailing the criteria for tier I, tier II, and tier III classifications based on prior convictions. It specifies that a child-victim offender committing a child-victim oriented offense after previous sexually oriented offenses will be classified accordingly. The bill also repeals existing sections 2907.231 and 2950.01 to consolidate and clarify the legal language, ensuring consistency in the application of the law and enhancing the management and monitoring of offenders who pose a higher risk.

House Bill 690 (Young, White)

Establish penalties for failing to obey a school crossing guard

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 690 (HB 690) was introduced on February 10th, 2026. HB 690 defines a school crossing guard and their official duties, and makes it a first-degree misdemeanor for any person to knowingly fail to obey a lawful order from a crossing guard or to harass, threaten, intimidate, or interfere with one while they are performing their duties.

House Bill 705 (Williams)

Enact the Alford Plea Fairness Act

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 705 (HB 705) was introduced on February 17th, 2026. HB 705 prohibits sentencing courts from requiring an offender to admit guilt as a condition of community control if they entered an Alford plea, where a defendant pleads guilty but maintains their innocence, asserting that they believe the prosecution has enough evidence to convict them.



House Bill 714 (Sigrist, Odioso)

Alter law governing vehicular assault, yielding to pedestrians

Status: In House Public Safety Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 714](#) (HB 714) was introduced on February 24th, 2026. HB 714 expands the circumstances under which a person can be charged with vehicular assault to include causing serious physical harm through negligent acts or speeding in a construction zone, and by clarifying drivers must stop and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, including those in lanes adjacent to their own or into which they are turning.

The bill also increases penalties for failing to yield to pedestrians, making it a misdemeanor of the fourth degree for the first offense, a misdemeanor of the third degree for a second offense within a year, and a misdemeanor of the second degree for a third or subsequent offense within a year.

House Bill 727 (Odioso, Plummer)

Modify grant formula for felony delinquent corrections facilities

Status: In House Finance Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 727](#) (HB 727) was introduced March 3rd, 2026. The bill revises the grant formula for counties from the Department of Youth Services for operating community corrections facilities for felony delinquents. The new formula will base a county's allocation on its proportion of "felony delinquency proceedings" brought in the preceding year compared to the state total. The bill also alters the payment schedule for these grants, requiring payments to be made in three installments to allow for adjustments to the appropriated funds.

HB 727 establishes new requirements for grant applications, including a plan to reduce the number of felony delinquents committed to the department and ensure equal access for minority delinquents to programs funded by the grants.

House Bill 728 (Odioso, Plummer)

Eliminate informal hearings in certain juvenile delinquency cases

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 728](#) (HB 728) was introduced March 3rd, 2026. HB 728 amends sections R.C. 2151.35 and R.C. 2152.11 to eliminate informal hearings and dismissals in the best interest of the child in certain juvenile delinquency cases.



Recently Introduced Senate Bills

Senate Bill 357 (Gavarone)

Expand violent offender database; revise database availability

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 357 (SB 357) was introduced on February 10th, 2026. SB 357 redefines "violent offender" to encompass individuals convicted of specific violent crimes after March 20, 2019, as well as those convicted of a second-degree felony under section 2903.18. The bill also introduces "qualifying out-of-state violent offenders" and mandates that information from the database be publicly accessible online and through the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS).

The bill sets an enrollment process for violent offenders, requiring them to register personally with their county sheriff within ten days of sentencing or release. It establishes a rebuttable presumption for a ten-year enrollment period, during which offenders must provide detailed personal information and update any changes annually. Additionally, it includes provisions for a publicly available online portal for certain information, while safeguarding sensitive data, and enhances law enforcement's monitoring capabilities by allowing the automated data system to flag registered offenders.

Senate Bill 370 (Romanchuk)

Enhance penalties for offenses against a person with a disability

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 370 (SB 370) was introduced on February 26th, 2026. SB 370 enhances penalties for crimes such as assault, aggravated assault, felonious assault, menacing, extortion, and domestic violence when the victim is a person with a disability and the offender is aware or should be aware of the victims condition.

Senate Bill 413 (Schaffer)

Regards transporting a firearm in a motor vehicle

Status: In Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 413 (SB 413) was introduced on April 1, 2026. SB 413 refines rules regarding the suspension and revocation of concealed handgun licenses in relation to certain offenses and clarifies exceptions for individuals transporting firearms under specific circumstances, such as on private property or for lawful purposes. Key changes include updating definitions for "unloaded" firearms to align with existing statutes and adjusting regulations for transporting firearms in vessels to mirror those for motor vehicles.



Senate Bill 432 (Manning)

Modify the offense of abuse of a corpse

Status: Introduced

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[Senate Bill 432](#) (SB 432) was introduced on April 27, 2026. SB 432 modifies the offense of abuse of a corpse by redefining what constitutes abuse and increasing the penalties. Previously, abuse of a corpse was defined as treating a human corpse in a way that would outrage reasonable family or community sensibilities. The bill changes this to "purposely" abusing a corpse, which now includes actions like disinterring, removing, or carrying away a corpse, as well as engaging in sexual activity with or involving a corpse, or dismembering, mutilating, cutting, or striking a corpse.

The penalties for abuse of a corpse are increased from a misdemeanor of the second degree to a felony of the fifth degree, and gross abuse of a corpse is now a felony of the third degree, up from a felony of the fifth degree. The definition of "abuse a corpse" is also expanded to include treatment not recognized by generally accepted community standards or by professionals in a manner not accepted by their peers, as defined by professional rules.



Pending House Bills

House Bill 36 (Stewart, Plummer)

Add nitrogen hypoxia as a method of execution

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Attorney General's Office, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 36 (HB 36) was introduced on February 3rd, 2025. Among other related revised code changes, the bill adds nitrogen hypoxia as a method of execution for persons upon whom a death sentence was imposed.

House Bill 72 (Schmidt, Mathews)

Prohibit public funding for lethal injection drugs; death penalty

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 72 (HB 72) was introduced on February 10th, 2025. Among other statutory changes, HB 72 abolishes the death penalty in Ohio and states that no funds of the state or any political subdivision thereof shall be expended for the purpose of executing a death sentence through the use of lethal injection drugs.

House Bill 79 (Roemer, Miller)

Increase penalty for assault if the victim is a sports official

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio High School Athletic Association

Opponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

House Bill 79 (HB 79) was introduced on February 10th, 2025. The bill adds sports officials to the list of special victim classes for assault offenses. To qualify as a special victim, the sports official must be engaged in their official duties at the time of the offense, or the offense must be committed in retaliation for an action taken by the sports official when they were engaged in their official duties. Under the bill, assaults of this type are misdemeanors of the first degree and require courts to impose mandatory fines of \$1,500 and 40 hours of community service, in addition to other penalties allowed by law. When the offender has previously been convicted of assault with a qualifying sports official as the victim, the offense is a felony of the fifth degree. The bill also creates statutory definitions for "sports official" and "sports event".



House Bill 82 (Click, Johnson)

Regards traffic offenses in construction zones

Status: In House Public Safety Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 82 (HB 82) was introduced on February 11th, 2025. HB 82 creates new R.C. 4511.993 which requires additional penalties for certain traffic offenses if the offense is committed in a construction zone. Under the bill, for violations of these delineated offenses that occur in a construction zone, offenders are required to complete a driver safety course within 30 days of the conviction. For offenders who, within the previous five years, have been penalized once under this new section, the bill requires a 90-day driver's license suspension. Offenders with two or more violations in a construction zone within the previous five years are subject to a 1-year driver's license suspension.

House Bill 84 (Demetriou, Williams)

Enact the Innocence Act

Status: In House Technology and Innovation Committee

Proponents: Catholic Conference of Ohio, Collaborative to End Human Trafficking, Ohio Attorney General, Center for Christian Virtue

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 84 (HB 84) was introduced on February 11th, 2025. The bill creates four new offenses: failure to verify age of person accessing materials that are obscene or harmful to juveniles, use of false identifying information to access materials that are obscene or harmful to juveniles, nonconsensual dissemination of fabricated sexual images, and nonconsensual creation of fabricated sexual images.

House Bill 110 (Thomas, Williams)

Increase the penalty for repeat voyeurism

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 110 (HB 110) was introduced on February 18th, 2025. HB 110 modifies the R.C. 2907.08 voyeurism penalty structure and states that offenders who have previously been convicted of or pleaded guilty to two or more violations of this section are subject to the felony of the third-degree penalty level on subsequent offenses.



House Bill 111 (Miller, K., Creech)
Impose additional fine for high-speed drivers
Status: In House Public Safety Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 111 (HB 111) was introduced on February 18th, 2025. For speeding offenses exceeding 30 miles per hour over the statutory or posted speed limit, HB 111 requires courts to impose a fine that is \$200 more than the usual amount imposed for that violation. Under the bill, indigent offenders are excluded from being subject to this new additional \$200 fine.

House Bill 177 (Williams, Tims)
Allow motion for new trial, other relief based on new evidence
Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 177 (HB 177) was introduced on March 17, 2025. HB 177 creates pathways for potential post-conviction relief for offenders who produce newly discovered evidence that, were it to be considered at a new trial, would establish a strong probability of a different result at trial. For motions filed seeking post-conviction relief of this type, the bill creates a pre-hearing judicial review process by which courts determine whether the motion is patently frivolous. If a court makes the pre-hearing finding that a motion of this type is patently frivolous, the court shall dismiss the motion.

House Bill 203 (Hall, Williams)
Enact Aspen Runnel’s Law
Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Private Citizen Testimony Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 203 (HB 203) was introduced on March 26, 2025. HB 203 increases the penalties for both vehicular manslaughter and vehicular assault offenses committed within active school zones when the victim is in the active school zone at the time of the offense. For vehicular manslaughter offenses, the penalty level is increased to the felony of the fourth-degree level. For vehicular assault offenses, the penalty level is increased to the felony of the fifth-degree level. HB 203 also enhances the penalty for any traffic offense that is committed while in an active school zone by, generally, doubling the usual fine amount for those offenses.



House Bill 208 (Lorenz)
Enact the Courtroom Employee Protection Act

Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 208 (HB 208) was introduced on March 31, 2025. HB 208 increases the R.C. 2903.13 assault penalty for offenses committed against a victim who is a judge, magistrate, prosecutor, or court official or employee. Under the bill, assault offenses committed against these victims are felonies of the fourth degree and the court may impose a fine of up to \$7,500.

House Bill 211 (Humphrey, Williams)
Require consideration of caretaker status in criminal cases

Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Alliance for Safety & Justice
Opponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

House Bill 211 (HB 211) was introduced on March 31, 2025. HB 211 requires a presentence investigation report to include information about the offender's status as the primary caretaker of a child when the offender files a motion that includes evidence of their status as the primary caretaker of a child. Under the bill, if that information is contained in a presentence investigation report, courts shall consider the offender's status as the primary caretaker of a child before imposing sentence. Additionally, if a hearing is held pursuant to a motion for Intervention in Lieu of Conviction (ILC), HB 211 allows offenders the opportunity to file a motion with the court that includes evidence that the offender is the primary caretaker of a child and, if the court determines that evidence is accurate, the court shall consider that fact in determining the offender's eligibility for ILC.

House Bill 236 (Williams)
Regards crimes committed while masked or disguised

Status: In House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 236 (HB 236) was introduced on April 15, 2025. The bill modifies the R.C. 2917.02 offense of aggravated riot by creating a felony of the fifth-degree offense when the offender participates in an aggravated riot and is wearing a mask or disguise. Additionally, offenders who participate in an aggravated riot with purpose to commit or facilitate an offense of violence while wearing a mask or disguise are subject to the felony of the third-degree penalty level. HB 211 creates the new R.C. 2917.10 offense of masked harassment, a misdemeanor of the first degree. This new offense prohibits a person from purposely harassing, intimidating, abusing, or threatening another person while wearing a mask or other device that hides or conceals the person's face or identity for the purpose of placing another person or group in reasonable fear of physical harm or mental distress. Additionally, the bill creates a new specification of wearing a mask or disguise and requires an additional one-year prison term for offenders convicted of a felony offense and that new specification.



House Bill 249 (King, Williams)

Enact the Indecent Exposure Modernization Act

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Center for Christian Virtue, Mission America, Ohio Value Voters

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 249 (HB 249) was introduced on April 29, 2025. HB 249 modifies R.C. 2907.09 public indecency by prohibiting persons from recklessly exposing their private area unless the person is a woman who is breastfeeding and the private area that is exposed is the woman’s breast. Additionally, the bill creates the new offense of unlawful adult cabaret performance. This new offense prohibits a person, with knowledge of its character or content, from recklessly engaging in an adult cabaret performance in a location other than an adult cabaret. The bill includes a statutory definition for an adult cabaret performance:

"Adult cabaret performance" means a performance in a location other than an adult cabaret where minors may be present, that is harmful to juveniles or obscene, regardless of whether or not the performance is for consideration, and that features any of the following: (i) Topless dancers; (ii) Go-go dancers; (iii) Exotic dancers; (iv) Strippers; (v) Performers or entertainers who exhibit a gender identity that is different from the performer's or entertainer's biological sex using clothing, makeup, prosthetic or imitation genitals or breasts, or other physical markers; (vi) Other similar performers or entertainers who provide entertainment that appeals to a prurient interest.

House Bill 252 (Click, Bird)

Modify offenses of burglary, breaking and entering, and trespass

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Office of the Ohio Public Defender

House Bill 252 (HB 252) was introduced on April 30th, 2025. HB 252 removes the “by force, stealth, or deception” element language from the following offenses: R.C. 2911.11 Aggravated Burglary, R.C. 2911.12 Burglary and Trespass in a Habitation When a Person is Present, and R.C. 2911.13 Breaking and Entering



House Bill 282 (Williams)

Add immigration status as required factor for sentencing, bail

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 282](#) (HB 282) was introduced on May 20th, 2025. HB 282 adds the following factor to R.C. 2929.12(B) that courts must consider as indicating that the offender’s conduct is more serious than conduct normally constituting the offense: “the offender’s immigration status, and whether the offender is unlawfully present in the United States or has a current or previous federal immigration detainer.”

Additionally, HB 282 requires courts to consider “the offender’s immigration status, and whether the offender is unlawfully present in the United States or has a current or previous federal immigration detainer” when determining the length of the community control sanction or combination of community control sanctions imposed pursuant to R.C. 2929.15

As it relates to misdemeanor sentencing, the bill also modifies R.C. 2929.22 and R.C. 2929.25 and requires courts to consider “the offender’s immigration status, and whether the offender is unlawfully present in the United States or has a current or previous federal immigration detainer” when imposing a period of incarceration or community control sanctions or combination of community control sanctions.

House Bill 305 (Deeter, Williams)

Enact Logan’s Law

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 305](#) (HB 305) was introduced on May 27th, 2025. HB 305 creates the new R.C. 2925.03 offense of Trafficking in Pressed Pill Fentanyl. The penalty range for this new offense ranges from the felony of the third-degree level to the felony of the first-degree level.

House Bill 343 (Lorenz)

Regards delinquent adjudications for felony theft or vandalism

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 343](#) (HB 343) was introduced on June 10th, 2025. HB 343 requires a mandatory period of secure confinement at a department of youth services facility for certain juvenile offenders who are adjudicated delinquent for committing acts that are felony violations of either R.C. 2913.02 Theft or R.C. 2909.05 Vandalism. Juvenile offenders subject to this mandatory period of secure confinement at a department of youth services facility must be at least 14 years of age and have two or more prior adjudications for felony theft or vandalism offenses. The bill specifies the mandatory minimum period of confinement based on the felony offense level of the adjudication.



House Bill 345 (LaRe)

Increase the penalties for voyeurism

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 345 (HB 345) was introduced on June 10th, 2025. HB 345 increases the penalties for R.C. 2907.08 Voyeurism offenses. The existing misdemeanor of the second-degree offense level is increased to the felony of the fifth-degree level, the existing misdemeanor of the first-degree offense level is increased to the felony of the fifth-degree level, and the existing felony of the fifth-degree offense level is increased to the fourth-degree level. Additionally, the bill specifies that offenders who have prior convictions under this section are subject to the next highest offense level on subsequent convictions.

House Bill 372 (Abrams, Plummer)

Enact the Larry Henderson Act

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters, Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, National Police Association, Northern Ohio Fire Fighters, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Opponents: Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Office of the Ohio Public Defender

House Bill 372 (HB 372) was introduced on June 23rd, 2025. HB 372 modifies existing law and provides that the penalty for aggravated murder is death or life without the possibility of parole if the victim is a peace officer, prosecutor, first responder, or military member. In so doing, the bill modifies R.C. 2903.01 Aggravated Murder by substituting “peace officer” for the existing “law enforcement officer” special victim class and adding “prosecutor” as a special victim.

House Bill 393 (Click, Brewer)

Require certain facilities assist inmates in obtaining ID cards

Status: Passed House; Passed Senate

Proponents: Ohio Community Corrections Association, Americans for Prosperity – Ohio, Center for Employment Opportunities, Catholic Conference of Ohio

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 393 (HB 393) was introduced on July 9th, 2025. HB 393 requires community-based correctional facilities to provide inmates with assistance in obtaining state identification cards prior to their release.



House Bill 417 (Plummer, Young)
Regards animal abuse offenses and penalties
Status: In House Public Safety Committee
Proponents: Testimony not yet provided
Opponents: Testimony not yet provided

House Bill 417 (HB 417) was introduced on August 19, 2025. The bill creates new R.C. 955.55, which prohibits offenders convicted of any felony animal abuse offense from subsequently owning, possessing, having custody of, or residing in a residence with any dog. New R.C. 955.55 also prohibits offenders convicted of any misdemeanor animal abuse offense from owning, possessing, having custody of, or residing in a residence with any dog for a period of two years after their release from incarceration or, if the person is not incarcerated, from the date that the person was convicted or plead guilty. Offenders who violate either of these new prohibitions are guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

The bill also creates a new R.C. 959.131 section prohibiting persons from knowingly treating a companion animal corpse in a way that would outrage reasonable community sensibilities. This new offense is a misdemeanor of the first degree on a first offense and a felony of the fifth degree on a second or subsequent offense. Additionally, offenders convicted of this new offense are required to undergo psychological evaluations or counseling in addition to any other criminal penalty.

House Bill 425 (Hoops)
Prohibit trespass and unauthorized recording by drones
Status: In House Transportation Committee
Proponents: Testimony not yet provided
Opponents: Testimony not yet provided

House Bill 425 (HB 425) was introduced on August 28, 2025. The bill creates 6 new R.C. 4561.54 offenses related to the operation of unmanned aerial vehicle systems. Each new offense is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

New R.C. 4561.54:

(A) No person, without privilege to do so, shall knowingly operate an unmanned aerial vehicle system in the air space above the land or premises of another.

(B) No person, without privilege to do so, shall recklessly operate an unmanned aerial vehicle system in the air space above the land or premises of another when a notice against unauthorized access to such land or premises is given through one of the following:

- (1) Actual communication to the person;
- (2) A notice that is posted in a manner reasonably calculated to come to the attention of potential intruders;
- (3) By fencing or another form of enclosure manifestly designed to restrict access.



(C) No person, without privilege to do so, shall negligently continue to operate an unmanned aerial vehicle system in the air space above the land or premises of another after being given a direct notification to leave that air space by the owner or occupant of the property.

(D) No person, without privilege to do so, shall knowingly use an unmanned aerial vehicle system to videotape, film, photograph, broadcast, stream, capture audio, or otherwise record another person, in a place where that person has a reasonable expectation of privacy.

(E) No person, without privilege to do so, shall knowingly use an unmanned aerial vehicle system to videotape, film, photograph, broadcast, stream, capture audio, or otherwise record another person's private property, including any animals or objects on another person's private property.

(F) No person, without privilege to do so, shall knowingly use an unmanned aerial vehicle system to deploy any substance, material, projectile, or object.

House Bill 457 (Daniels, Williams)

Regards penalties for politically motivated criminal offenses

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony not yet provided

Opponents: Testimony not yet provided

House Bill 457 (HB 457) was introduced on September 17, 2025. The bill creates a new R.C. 2941.1428 specification applicable to felony offenses of violence that are politically motivated. The new specification provides for the imposition of varying degrees of mandatory prison terms pursuant to new R.C. 2929.14(B)(2). This new mandatory prison term shall be the maximum prison term allowed for the underlying offense and an additional mandatory prison term of ten years.

The bill also modifies R.C. 2903.01 Aggravated Murder by prohibiting persons from purposely causing the death of an elected official (new R.C. 2903.01(G)) or by purposely causing the death of another person if the offender's motivation for the killing is based on political affiliation, association, belief, or ideology, whether or not the offender was mistaken as to that motivation (new R.C. 2903.01(H)).

House Bill 459 (Gross, Williams)

Enact Katelyn's Law

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony not yet provided

Opponents: Testimony not yet provided

House Bill 459 (HB 459) was introduced on September 17, 2025. The bill creates the new R.C. 2941.1427 specification providing for a mandatory 5-year prison term or, if the offender is a juvenile, a mandatory commitment to the custody of the department of youth services for not less than one and not more than three years. This new specification applies to offenders that move or removed human remains to prevent the discovery of an unlawful act, the discovery of the death, the discovery of the cause of death, or the discovery of the human remains.



The bill also creates the new R.C. 29221.322 offense of Moving or Removing Human Remains, a felony of the third degree with a presumption of prison. This new offense prohibits any person, unless otherwise authorized by law, from purposely moving or removing human remains for any of the following purposes: 1) to prevent the discover of an unlawful act; 2) to prevent the discovery of the death; 3) to prevent the discovery of the cause of death; or 4) to prevent the discovery of the human remains.

House Bill 478 (Thomas, Synenberg)
Create jury tampering offense; revise court intimidation offenses

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Bar Association, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 478 (HB 478) was introduced on September 29th, 2025. HB 478 creates the new R.C. 2921.06 offense of jury tampering.

Jury Tampering is a misdemeanor of the first degree of the offender: knowingly attempts to influence, intimidate, or hinder a juror in the discharge of the juror's duties, including in the juror's consideration of the facts or evidence presented at trial for which the juror has been impaneled.

Jury Tampering is a felony of the third degree if the offender: knowingly and by force, by unlawful threat of harm to any person or property, or by unlawful threat to commit any offense or calumny against any person, attempts to influence, intimidate, or hinder a juror in the discharge of the juror's duties, including in the juror's consideration of the facts or evidence presented at the trial for which the juror has been impaneled.

House Bill 487 (Williams, Plummer)
Create a repeat drug offender specification

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 487 (HB 487) was introduced on October 1st, 2025. HB 487 creates the new R.C. 2941.1427 specification for repeat drug offenders. This new specification requires the sentencing court to impose a mandatory prison term of one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, or ten years.

The bill defines a repeat drug offender as a person about whom both of the following apply:

- (1) The person is being sentenced for committing a felony violation of section 2925.03 of the Revised Code.
- (2) The person previously was convicted of or pleaded guilty to two or more felony violations of section 2925.03 of the Revised Code.



House Bill 528 (Williams)

Require 7 year mandatory minimum prison term for forcible rape

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 528](#) (HB 528) was introduced on October 15th, 2025. HB 528 modifies existing R.C. 2907.02 by requiring the sentencing court to impose a mandatory minimum prison term of seven years for offenders convicted of a violation of R.C. 2907.02(A)(2) - engaging in sexual conduct with another when the offender purposely compels the other person to submit by force or threat of force.

House Bill 556 (Mathews, Williams)

Revise community control sanctions for felonies and misdemeanors

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 556](#) (HB 556) was introduced on October 28th, 2025. HB 556 modifies existing R.C. 2929.15 and provides that, with limited exceptions, the duration of all community control sanctions imposed on an offender shall not exceed five years for any felony of the first or second degree and three years for any felony of the third, fourth, or fifth degree. In situations where felony of the third, fourth, or fifth degree offenders have violated the terms of their community control, the maximum term they may be subject to community control sanctions can be extended beyond the general maximum term of three years if delineated circumstances are present. The bill further modifies existing R.C. 2929.15 by modifying the penalties a sentencing court may impose when an offender violates one or more community control sanctions under R.C. 2929.15(B)(1).

House Bill 571 (Williams, Bird)

Eliminate certain juvenile court transfer proceeding

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 571](#) (HB 571) was introduced on November 11th, 2025. HB 571 removes the option for the juvenile court to transfer a proceeding against a juvenile to the county where the juvenile resides.



House Bill 586 (Bird, Lear)

Prohibit mailing out unsolicited absentee ballot request forms

Status: In House General Government Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 586](#) (HB 586) was introduced on November 12th, 2025. Among other statutory changes, HB 586 prohibits any person from mailing unsolicited absentee ballot request forms to other people. Violators are guilty of a first degree misdemeanor for the first offense and a felony of the fifth degree on each subsequent offense.

House Bill 615 (Williams)

Enact the Retail Theft Prevention Act

Status: In House Small Business Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 615](#) (HB 615) was introduced on November 25th, 2025. HB 615 amends R.C. 2913.02 and R.C. 2929.14 to create new penalties for organized retail theft. If an individual commits group retail theft with one to three other individuals, it will be classified as a felony of the fifth degree. If four or more individuals are involved, it becomes a felony of the third degree with a presumption of prison time.

Pending Senate Bills

Senate Bill 5 (Brenner, Huffman)

Expedite unauthorized occupant removal; prohibit fraudulent deeds

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 5 (SB 5) was introduced on January 22nd, 2025. The bill modifies the R.C. 2909.07 offense of criminal mischief by prohibiting persons from unlawfully detaining, occupying, or trespassing upon a residential dwelling and causing at least one thousand dollars in damage to the dwelling; under the bill, offenders who cause such damage are subject to the felony of the second-degree penalty level. SB 5 also creates the new R.C. 2913.53 offense of title fraud. The new offense of title fraud is a misdemeanor of the first degree if the offender knowingly presents to another person a false document purporting to be a valid lease agreement, deed, or other instrument conveying real property. The new offense is a felony of the first degree if the offender knowingly lists or advertises residential real property that the purported seller has to legal title or authority to sell or knowingly rents or leases residential real property that the purported owner has no lawful ownership in to another person.

Senate Bill 64 (Cutrona)

Increase penalties for companion animal cruelty offenses

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 64 (SB 64) was introduced on February 4th, 2025. The bill increases the penalty level for cruelty to companion animal offenses. Generally, existing misdemeanor offenses increase one penalty level (misdemeanor of the second-degree offenses increase to misdemeanor of the first-degree offenses, misdemeanor of the first-degree offenses increase to fifth degree felony offenses). Additionally, existing fifth degree felony offenses increase to third degree felony offenses. For violations of existing R.C. 959.131, SB 64 also requires courts to impose a mandatory prison or jail term that is the maximum term allowed for the degree of the offense.

Senate Bill 97 (Craig, Wilson)

Double fines for failing to yield to a funeral procession

Status: In Senate Transportation Committee

Proponents: Ohio Funeral Directors Association

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97) was introduced on February 10th, 2025. For violations of existing R.C. 4511.451, SB 97 requires courts to impose a fine of two times the usual amount imposed for failing to yield the right of way to a funeral procession.



Senate Bill 98 (Craig, Weinstein)

Prohibit firearm possession – certain domestic violence offenses

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 98 (SB 98) was introduced on February 10th, 2025. SB 98 adds persons charged with or convicted of misdemeanor of the first-degree domestic violence to the list of disabilities under R.C. 2923.13 having weapons while under disability offenses.

Senate Bill 124 (Craig, Patton)

Increase assault penalty if victim is a transit system operator

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 124 (SB 124) was introduced on February 25th, 2025. SB 124 adds operators of an Ohio transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car or a contracted employee providing those services to the list of special victims under R.C. 2903.13 assault. Under the bill, assaults against this special victim class are felonies of the fifth degree for first offenses and felonies of the fourth degree if the offender has committed any prior assault or homicide offense against the new special victim class. The bill also increases the penalty level for evading the payment of the known fares of a public transportation system under existing R.C. 2917.41 from the misdemeanor of the fourth-degree penalty level to the misdemeanor of the second-degree penalty level.

Senate Bill 185 (Blessing)

Revise dog law, including dangerous and vicious dogs

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 185 (SB 185) was introduced on April 29, 2025. SB 185 modifies many aspects of existing dog registration laws and existing laws regarding dangerous or vicious dogs. The bill creates new requirements for owners, keepers, or harborers of vicious or dangerous dogs. Additionally, the bill regulates owners, keepers, or harborers who fail to present a valid dangerous dog registration, fail to obtain a dangerous dog registration, fail to affix a tag identifying the dog as a dangerous or vicious dog, or fail to ensure that the dangerous or vicious dog wears a collar and tag at all times. Owners, keepers, or harborers that fail to comply with any of the delineated requirements are subject to penalties ranging from simple fines to misdemeanor of the third-degree penalties. The bill also creates a new minor misdemeanor prohibition against recklessly owning, keeping, or harboring a dog that is wearing a fictitious, altered, or invalid registration tag.



Senate Bill 188 (Patton)

Regards failure to comply with an order of law enforcement

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: United States Marshals Service, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Fraternal Order of Police

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 188 (SB 188) was introduced on April 29th, 2025. SB 188 modifies the existing R.C. 2921.331 Failure to Comply section by prohibiting persons from taking “a position in a physical location that prevents immediate access by any law enforcement officer and refuse or resist orders to exit the location, or comply with other lawful order or direction, when that person knows or reasonably should know that the law enforcement officer is attempting to apprehend the person in connection to an alleged felony offense or misdemeanor offense of violence.” This new offense is, generally, a felony of the third degree. If, in taking “a position in a physical location” as described, the offender creates a risk of serious physical harm to any person, indicates to the law enforcement officer that they have a weapon, or prevents a third party from safely leaving the physical location, the offense is a felony of the second degree.

Senate Bill 242 (Johnson)

Regards the sale of used catalytic converters

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Automobile Dealers Association, Ohio Insurance Institute, Recycled Materials Association, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, National Insurance Crime Bureau, American Property Casualty Insurance Association

Opponents: Testimony not yet provided

Senate Bill 242 (SB 242) was introduced on July 30, 2025. The bill creates the R.C. 2913.02 new offense of Theft of a Catalytic Converter, a felony of the fifth degree. For offenders with previous convictions for violations of Chapter 2911. or Chapter 2913., Theft of a Catalytic Converter is a felony of the fourth degree. The bill also creates the R.C. 2913.51 new offense of Receiving a Stolen Catalytic Converter, also a felony of the fifth degree. Again, for offenders with prior convictions for violations of Chapter 2911. or Chapter 2913., Receiving a Stolen Catalytic Converter is a felony of the fourth degree.



Senate Bill 270 (Manning, Hicks-Hudson)

Regards commitment of delinquent children to Youth Services

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 270 (SB 270) was introduced on September 23rd, 2025. SB 270 makes several changes to Ohio's juvenile justice statutes.

Among other changes, SB 270:

- Increases the minimum age for commitments of delinquent youth to the custody of the Department of Youth Services. Current law allows delinquent youth as young as 10 to be committed to DYS, SB 270 raises the minimum age to 14.
- Prohibits the commitment to DYS of youth who are first time felony of the fourth- or fifth-degree offenders when the fourth- or fifth-degree felony is not an offense of violence.
- Gives juvenile court judges discretion in committing delinquent youth to DYS for youth adjudicated of gun specifications.

Senate Bill 291 (Manning, Reynolds)

Revise community control sanctions for felonies and misdemeanors

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Pathways to Public Safety, Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition, Crime Survivors Speak, Prison Fellowship, Americans for Prosperity, Unify.US, Ohio CAN, Alliance for Safety and Justice

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 291 (SB 291) was introduced on October 14th, 2025. SB 291 modifies existing R.C. 2929.15 and provides that, with limited exceptions, the duration of all community control sanctions imposed on an offender shall not exceed five years for any felony of the first or second degree and three years for any felony of the third, fourth, or fifth degree. In situations where felony of the third, fourth, or fifth degree offenders have violated the terms of their community control, the maximum term they may be subject to community control sanctions can be extended by one year, not to exceed five years, if delineated circumstances are present

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Senator Kent Smith (Euclid)

* Designates Commission member

Sunday, August 10	
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Welcome Happy Hour for NASC Members & Guests <i>Catch up with fellow conference attendees downtown at Great Dane Pub and Brewing Company</i>
Monday, August 11	
7:00 a.m.	Registration Begins
7:00 a.m.	Breakfast on the Terrace (served until 9:00 a.m.)
9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Welcome and Keynote Speaker ➤ Chief Judge Carl Ashley, Milwaukee County Courts – Wisconsin
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One</i>
	<p>B1a/ The Practical Application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) for Sentencing Commissions</p> <p><i>This panel will explore how AI and ML technologies are reshaping the operations of sentencing commissions, courts, and criminal justice agencies. Speakers will examine practical applications of AI/ML that enhance staff capacity and support data-driven decision-making within the framework of existing state and federal regulations. The session will highlight how these tools are being used to securely process data for developing sentencing guidelines and conducting research. Panelists will also discuss the implications of AI/ML on staffing needs and illustrate how these technologies can assist with completing guideline forms and accurately scoring out-of-state convictions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elie (Eli) Alhajjar, Senior Scientist, RAND Corporation ➤ Ryan Cotter, Deputy Director, US Sentencing Commission ➤ Catherine Chen, Data Scientist, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission ➤ Jody Fridley, Deputy Director, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission ➤ Jonathan Wroblewski, Lecturer, Harvard Law School and Stanford Law School
	<p>B1b/ Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2 (JRI2) and Pennsylvania Corrections - How Pennsylvania has successfully attacked the drug epidemic and prison overcrowding in the past 5 years</p> <p><i>Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2 (JRI2) is a continuation of an earlier legislative package that aims at continuing to provide the necessary treatment and tools to assist the criminogenic population in Pennsylvania. This package also aims at addressing the overcrowding issues that occur in many prisons. This presentation will provide an overview of the primary program tracks contained in this legislation. These tracks include the State Drug Treatment Program, The Boot Camp Program and Short Sentence Parole. It will include the goal of this legislation and each program track. Each program track will be discussed in detail, to include sentencing guidelines, program layout and statistics on cost savings and recidivism. The JRI2 legislation has reduced the prison population by roughly 20% and increased the participation in several proven program tracks.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ James Stover, Coordinator Central Office, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections ➤ Jessica Kasaback, Program Administer, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

Monday, August 11 (continued)	
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One (continued)</i>
	<p>B1c/ Do Michigan’s Sentencing Guidelines Meet the Legislature’s Goals? <i>Michigan researchers recently completed an exhaustive empirical analysis of more than 38,000 sentences imposed for the four most common life-maximum offenses in 13 Michigan counties over the course of nearly 30 years. Their report describes the long history of Michigan’s sentencing guidelines (SGLs) and analyzes whether they have achieved the goals of increased proportionality and decreased disparity in sentences. The session will provide background on Michigan’s SGLs and discuss prior research and the new report’s findings: that defendants with similar backgrounds and offenses received significantly different sentences depending on the county in which they were convicted; how sentences for serious offenses have increased over time; and how guidelines that were meant to constrain judicial discretion were deliberately designed to preserve it.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Anne Mahar, Department Specialist, Michigan Department of Corrections ➤ Carl Reynolds, Criminal Justice Policy Consultant ➤ Barbara Levine, Former Executive Director, Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending (CAPPS)
11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch on the Terrace
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	<p>Kern Award Presentation and Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meredith Farrar-Owens, Director, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<p>Panel: Sentencing on Ice <i>Structured sentencing was developed in response to criticisms that indeterminate sentencing systems were biased by factors that were not legally relevant, sentences that were too lenient for serious offenses, and too much discretionary power allocated to single actors (judges) or groups of individuals (e.g., parole boards). In response, guidelines and structured tools have been created to aid criminal justice decision makers with bail, sentencing, parole, and supervision. This presentation will shed light on old and familiar topics by exploring a new (icy) landscape by reviewing player suspensions imposed in professional hockey (NHL); a ‘sentencing’ process lacking formalized ‘guidelines’ and often criticized for being capricious. Panelists will discuss the process whereby they developed a structured decision-making tool for suspensions, based on historical NHL suspensions. By reviewing the current suspension process and the development of the tool, panelists will highlight the purposes and promises of structured sentencing – with a focus on improvements in consistency, proportionality, and fairness. In addition, they will highlight the differences in prescriptive vs. descriptive guideline development and the role of the current offense, prior offending, enhancements, and extra-legal factors on sentencing decision making.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Matthew Kleiman, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing ➤ Jordan Zvonkovich, Statistician, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Break

Monday, August 11 (continued)	
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One</i>
	<p>B2a/ Technology for Data-Driven Sentencing: Bridging the Gap Between Courts and Corrections</p> <p><i>The Missouri Sentencing Advisory Commission, the Missouri Department of Corrections, and technology nonprofit Recidiviz are partnering to develop a software tool that brings data-driven insights into sentencing decisions. Designed to align courtroom practices with real-world outcomes, this tool leverages historical data to promote consistency, fairness, and a deeper understanding of each defendant's risks and needs. Join us to learn more about our approach and explore early learnings from the pilot project.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nora Grossman, Product Manager, Recidiviz ➤ Alyssa Muck, Senior State Engagement Manager, Recidiviz ➤ Stephanie White-Thorn, Director, Special Projects for the Supreme Court of Missouri and Executive Director, Missouri Sentencing Advisory Commission ➤ Judge W. Brent Powell, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Missouri
	<p>B2b/ Aging Dynamics in Sentencing: Characteristics of Older and Younger Cohorts</p> <p><i>In this session, the panel will look closely at older and younger cohorts of incarcerated persons through a data, research, and academic lens. Illinois data showed shifts in the relative makeup by age group for arrests, convictions, and prison usage which invited more analysis to understand the characteristics of these age cohorts. This analysis and discussion will also lead the panel and participants to analyze and compare characteristics across the system with their data and how they compare to broader trends with age.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Renagh O'Leary, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin Law School ➤ Mark Powers, Research Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council ➤ Moderator: John Specker, Government Affairs and Communications Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council
	<p>B2c/ Swimming with Big Fish: The Utah Sentencing Commission Navigates the JRI Wave and Post-JRI Currents</p> <p><i>In 2015, Utah enacted a series of justice policy changes aimed at addressing prison population growth and improving system outcomes. Over the following decade, these initiatives—commonly referred to as the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI)—have yielded a range of outcomes and sparked ongoing public and political debate. This panel will feature long-time leaders of the Utah Sentencing Commission, who will offer diverse perspectives on the state's justice policy landscape and discuss how the Commission has worked to fulfill its consensus-driven role in the face of evolving priorities and increasing scrutiny of the justice system.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dan Strong, Director, Utah Sentencing Commission ➤ Ryan Robinson, Vice Chair, Utah Sentencing Commission, Policy Director, Utah Statewide Association of Prosecutors, and Chief Prosecutor, West Valley City ➤ Rich Mauro, Executive Director, Salt Lake County Legal Defenders ➤ Pam Vickrey, Chair, Utah Sentencing Commission and Executive Director, Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys
3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Break
3:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	<p>All States Update: Part I of II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Moderator: Michelle Hall, Executive Director, North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	<p>Conference Reception on the Terrace ~ With sincere thanks to our sponsor ~</p> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">  </div>
6:30 p.m.	Dinner on your own

Tuesday, August 12	
7:00 a.m.	Breakfast on the Terrace (served until 9:00 a.m.)
9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	<p>Annual Membership Meeting/Plenary Session <i>Annual membership meeting will include Executive Committee member elections, financial report, and other NASC business. This meeting is for <u>all</u> conference attendees. Plenary session directly following.</i></p> <p>Everything You Need to Know to Host a NASC Conference <i>If you have never hosted a NASC conference, have you ever wondered “What does it really take to host a conference?” Even if you haven’t wondered, this session will break down what it takes to host a conference step by step, and how a host state is supported by the Executive Committee during the process. Previous hosts will also share their experiences of hosting. NASC needs the help of the membership to plan and host future conferences and this session will help prepare each host state in fulfilling that commitment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Victoria Gonzalez, Executive Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council ➤ Michelle Hall, Executive Director, North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission ➤ Ken Sanchagrin, Interim Executive Director, Oregon Public Defense Commission
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One</i>
	<p>B3a/ PA: Recent PA Guidelines and Policy Considerations/Qualitative Analysis of 8th Ed. Guidelines <i>This panel provides a comprehensive examination of the policy development, implementation, and process evaluation of Pennsylvania’s 8th Edition Sentencing Guidelines. A key focus will be on determining “what worked” to achieve this significant policy overhaul, and how the revisions align with current research on “best practices.” Featuring insights from both research and practice, this session is ideal for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars interested in the process and implementation of sentencing reforms and evidence-informed criminal justice policy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clare Strange, Assistant Research Professor, Drexel University ➤ Robert J. Sisock, Statistician, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing ➤ Ryan Meyers, Senior Deputy Director, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
	<p>B3b/ Drivers of Rising Presumptive Incarceration in Minnesota: Criminal History, Offense Severity, and Grid Dynamics <i>Over the past two decades, the presumptive prison rate in Minnesota has risen by approximately 10 percentage points, increasing the number of cases recommended for prison. This presentation examines the primary drivers of this trend across Minnesota’s felony sentencing grids. Findings indicate that the rise is largely driven by the standard and drug sentencing grids, with different underlying factors: an increasing criminal history score in the standard grid and rising offense severity in the drug grid. Minnesota’s approach to criminal history scoring will be examined and contrasted with other states to explore what role it has played in the rising presumptive incarceration rate. The presentation will also explore policy implications, including the growing reliance on mitigated departures to counterbalance increasing presumptive incarceration rates, and potential avenues for reform, such as revising the criminal history score, re-ranking offense severity, and reconsidering mandatory minimums.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Julia Laskorunsky, Research Director, Robina Institute of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice at the University of Minnesota Law School ➤ Kevin R. Reitz, Professor, University of Minnesota Law ➤ Matthew Hlina, Intermediate Research Analyst, Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission

Tuesday, August 12 (continued)	
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One (continued)</i>
	<p>B3c/ How to Run and Manage a Sentencing Commission: A Support Group for Directors, Researchers, and Other Staff</p> <p><i>This session is a professional development opportunity to share challenges, provide empathy, and explore solutions and best practices for running a sentencing commission. The discussion will explore the unique experiences that come with being housed in the judicial, executive, or legislative branch. Other topics will also include: navigating your budget through the state government and legislative process, recruiting staff, supporting and managing staff, political challenges, and developing effective relationships with EVERY sector of the criminal justice system. Hopefully NASC can provide this session at every conference so that members know there will be a structured opportunity to connect, share challenges, and offer solutions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Victoria Gonzalez, Executive Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council
11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch on the Terrace
11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	<p>NASC Executive Committee Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NASC Executive Committee Members
12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<p>Adjusting Race and Ethnicity in Criminal Justice Data</p> <p><i>Until recently, Hispanic or Latino was not an option for race, only for ethnicity. Those who would have chosen Hispanic or Latino to identify their race were left to choose “White”, “Other,” or something else entirely. For this and other societal reasons, certain race information has not been captured accurately. There is a methodology used in other professional fields where the race has been adjusted using surnames and census data to better identify race and ethnicity of Hispanic and Latino individuals. This panel explores the challenges in collecting race and ethnicity data in the criminal justice system, and two states share how they used the emerging methodology to adjust race and ethnicity data to better track Hispanic and Latino people in the criminal justice system. In the effort to measure disparities in sentencing and the criminal justice in general, this could improve data to better measure those disparities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Michael Weirnerman, Oregon Criminal Justice Commission ➤ Mark Powers, Research Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council ➤ Moderator: Victoria Gonzalez, Executive Director, Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One</i>
	<p>B4a/ What I Have Feared Most: 20 Years After Blakely v. Washington</p> <p><i>In Blakely v. Washington (2004), the Supreme Court held that any fact increasing a defendant’s sentence beyond the prescribed statutory maximum must be submitted to a jury and proven beyond a reasonable doubt. The decision certainly disrupted some sentencing schemes, but did it wreak the havoc that Justice O’Connor predicted in her dissent? This session marks the 20-year anniversary of Blakely by examining how that wave of reform crested and settled. We’ll survey which states abandoned presumptive sentencing in response and which adapted, with a focus on Structured Sentencing in North Carolina. With a blend of doctrinal analysis, empirical data, and a touch of hindsight, we’ll reflect on how what Blakely changed—and what it didn’t.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Jamie Markham, Professor, School of Government at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Tuesday, August 12 (continued)	
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<p><i>Breakout Sessions – Choose One (continued)</i></p> <p>B4b/ Welcome to the Neighborhood: Getting to Know Our New and New-ish Sentencing Commission</p> <p><i>In this session a moderated discussion will be led with representatives from new and new-ish sentencing commissions and session participants. “New” means being a commission just established or established in the last 5-10 years. As we reflect on our conference theme of “The Future of Sentencing Commissions” let’s hear first-hand from commissions being born in a new era of criminal justice reform, data collection, and policy development. What does their creation mean for the possibility of establishing more sentencing commissions in other states? What can well established sentencing commissions learn from “the new kids on the block”? What can new commissions learn from their seasoned peers? Let’s learn from the old and the new as we make plans for the Future of Sentencing Commissions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ John Cooper, Executive Director, Safe & Just Michigan ➤ Jorja Powers, Executive Director, Nevada Department of Sentencing Policy ➤ Panelist/Moderator: Cecelia Klingele, Professor of Law, University of Wisconsin Law School
	<p>B4c/ Veterans in the Criminal Justice System: Patterns in Pennsylvania and the Veterans Cascade of Care</p> <p><i>Over the past decade, there has been increased recognition that Veterans in the United States have greater exposure to risk factors, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and substance use, that can contribute to criminal behavior. In response, there has been a flurry of initiatives to better support Veterans in the criminal justice system, including a rapid growth in Veterans Treatment Courts. However, relatively little is known about patterns of criminal justice involvement among Veterans and the challenges associated with supporting Veterans in the criminal justice system. In 2024, the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing received a mandate from the Pennsylvania Senate (Senate Resolution 196) to conduct a comprehensive study of Veterans involved in the criminal justice system in Pennsylvania. In this breakout session, staff from the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing will provide a detailed overview of veterans involved in the criminal justice system in PA including a demographic profile of offenders, the types of offenses they commit, their prior criminal history, and rates of recidivism. In addition, presenters will introduce the Veterans Cascade of Care as a framework to better understand the challenges of providing an optimum continuum of care for Veterans involved in the criminal justice system who have behavioral health challenges. The presentation will conclude with practical recommendations for improving responses to Veterans involved in the criminal justice system.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Noah Painter-Davis, Deputy Director of Research and Technology, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing ➤ Brett Miller, Manager of the Research and Data Analysis Unit, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing ➤ Jordan Zvonkovich, Statistician, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Break
3:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	<p>All States Update: Part II of II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Moderator: Michelle Hall, Executive Director, North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission
4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Adjourn
5:00 p.m.	Conference Farewell Reception on the Terrace
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	<p>Post Conference Activity: Explore Downtown Madison</p> <p>Visit four popular locations, prizes to be awarded!</p>



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NASC 2026 CONFERENCE

Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town

Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 12-14, 2026

Hosted by the New Mexico Sentencing Commission



2026 Conference Theme: Level Up

In 2025, NASC acknowledged the changing landscape in sentencing and the criminal justice system. In 2026, NASC proposes to meet the challenges of these changes head-on by inviting states to level up their sentencing commissions or equivalent agencies.

Leveling up could be any of the following: (1) Establishing or reviving a sentencing commission or equivalent agency; (2) Improving data analysis and deliverables, including communication between criminal justice data stakeholders; (3) Expanding the provision of non-partisan policy analysis; or (4) Enhancing the relationship between policymakers and stakeholders, especially as it relates to the inclusion of input from those with lived experience. Generally, the priorities of a commission or equivalent agency are to provide: (1) skillful data collection, analysis; and (2) a recognized forum for stakeholders to debate and develop criminal justice policy.

Please join your colleagues at the 2026 conference for the opportunity to reflect on these priorities, identify opportunities, and make plans to level

up our sentencing commissions.



NASC membership is open to anyone who works for or serves on a sentencing policy agency, as well as anyone else in the public, academic, or private sectors who is interested in sentencing--so feel free to share this information with anyone you think might be interested.

Call For Proposals!

The Executive Committee cordially invites you to submit a proposal for a session during the 2026 NASC conference.

PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY MARCH 27, 2026
to thenascsecretary@gmail.com

2026 Proposal Form

Conference sessions are generally scheduled for 75 minutes. Topics for plenary and break-out sessions are solicited. Please use the attached form to submit a short paragraph describing the session. The Executive Committee will follow up with you to assist with development of your topic as needed.

If registration waivers and/or other financial assistance are prerequisites for any speaker's attendance, please indicate that potential need when submitting your form.

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