



OHIO CRIMINAL SENTENCING COMMISSION MEETING

September 10, 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. Introduction of New Commission Member Judge Erik Niehaus
- IV. Approval of Minutes from May 14, 2026, Meeting **(Vote Needed)**
- V. Committee Reports
 - A. Adult Criminal Justice Committee Judge Stephen McIntosh
 - B. Juvenile Justice Committee Director Amy Ast
 - 1. State of Bindover in Ohio 2025 **(Vote Needed)**
 - 2. New Juvenile Justice Committee Chair **(Vote Needed)**
 - C. Data Committee Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
 - 1. Data Map—Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission **(Vote Needed)**
 - D. Personnel Committee Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
 - 1. Executive Session **(Vote Needed)**
 - 2. Candidates & Salaries for Legislative & Juvenile Counsel Positions **(Vote Needed)**
 - 3. Commission Staff Salaries **(Vote Needed)**
 - 4. Research Specialist Job Posting **(Vote Needed)**
- VI. Legislative Update Director Melissa A. Knopp, Esq.
- VII. Old Business
 - A. Report Out from Commissioners that attended the National Association of Sentencing Commissions Annual Conference in August
- VIII. New Business
- IX. Adjourn

2026 Commission Meeting Dates

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



Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Meeting

May 14, 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
Justin Stanek, Designee of Director, Department of Youth Services
Brooke Burns, Ohio Public Defender, Juvenile Department
Matthew Byrnes, Defense Attorney
Stephen Gray, Designee of Director, Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections
Eamon Costello, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Robert DeLamatre, Judge Juvenile Court
Julia Dorrian, Judge, 10th District Court of Appeals
Kyle Erdeljac, Lieutenant, Columbus Police Department, FOP
Gwen Howe-Gebbers, County Prosecutor, Juvenile
Robert Sellers, Lieutenant, Designee of Colonel, State Highway Patrol
Teri LaJeunesse, Victim Representative
Timothy Lanzendorfer, Ohio State Bar Association
Nathan Manning, Ohio Senate
Charles McConville, County Prosecutor
Elizabeth Miller, Ohio Public Defender
Jennifer Muench-McElfresh, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Kyle Rohrer, Judge Municipal Court
Janaya Trotter Bratton, Judge, Municipal Court
Helen Wallace, Judge, Juvenile Court

Members Absent

Timothy France, Judge, Municipal Court
John Hinton, Sheriff
Latyna Humphrey, House of Representatives
Catherine Ingram, Ohio Senate
Kristen Johnson, Judge, Probate and Juvenile Court
Stephen McIntosh, Judge, Common Pleas Court
Josh Williams, House of Representatives
Donnie Willis, County Commissioner

Staff Present

Melissa A. Knopp, Esq., Executive Director
Michael Crofford, M.Ed., LPC, Research Specialist
Will Davies, Esq., Criminal Justice Counsel
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 March 12, 2026

2. Chief Justice Kennedy asked if there were any corrections to the March 12, 2026, minutes. None were suggested. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Darren Shulman and seconded by Chief Justice Kennedy. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Adult Criminal Justice Committee

3. Senator Nathan Manning provided an update on the recent meetings and activity of the Adult Committee. He reviewed the changes made to the Adult Rights Restoration and Record Sealing Guide including changes regarding recent policy changes and minor edits. Senator Manning motioned to approve the publication and distribution of the Adult Rights Restoration and Record Sealing Guide and was seconded by Judge Eamon Costello. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Senator Manning discussed the Criminal Justice Overview document and the updates made to it. Senator Manning moved to approve the publication and distribution of the Criminal Justice Overview document and was seconded by Judge Costello. The motion passed unanimously.

Juvenile Justice Committee

5. Judge Robert DeLamatre reported on the work of the Juvenile Committee since March. He reviewed the changes that had been made to the Juvenile Justice Terminology Guide since the last full commission meeting and there was a brief discussion including a minor typographical edit that was requested. Judge DeLamatre moved to approve the Terminology Guide with the typographical modification. Judge Helen Wallace seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Judge DeLamatre introduced the Traditional Juvenile Delinquency Flowchart and there was a discussion about where diversion should appear on the chart. The discussion included that Juvenile Rule 9 refers to pre-initial appearance and that multiple points of diversion are possible after this point in the process. Further discussion was held on balancing the readability and simplicity of the chart with the possibility of adding additional steps to the process detailing each place where diversion might be possible. After a discussion, the Commission decided to send the document back to the committee for more changes.
7. Judge DeLamatre then introduced the Juvenile Transfer Flowchart. A discussion was had about whether the term transfer or bindover should be used. Currently, common practitioner use is bindover, however, the process is referred to as transfer within statute.

No motion was made to accept the chart. It will therefore be brought back to the committee for more changes.

Data Committee

8. Chief Justice Kennedy shared the date for the next Data Committee meeting on May 21st and the topics to be discussed including a presentation on dashboards from the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), the response to the Governor's Juvenile Justice Working Group report, and updates on the monitoring report. She then shared the upcoming committee meeting dates for the remainder of the year.

Personnel Committee

9. Chief Justice Kennedy reported that they had received a large number of resumes for the Legislative Counsel position but that none had fit the legislative liaison role. The committee decided to update the job posting to reflect the legislative liaison role and will repost the position until filled.
10. Chief Justice Kennedy reported that the committee had updated the staff position descriptions to remove old Supreme Court language based upon recommendations from the Attorney General's office and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). Chief Justice Kennedy made a motion to move forward with updating all of the staff position descriptions and was seconded by Gwen Howe-Gebbers. The motion passes unanimously.

Legislative Update

11. Director Knopp reported that the legislative update was distributed with the meeting materials and was current as of May 6th. She stated that until the Legislative Counsel position is filled, all legislative questions could be directed to her.

Old Business

12. Chief Justice Kennedy discussed the old business of the National Association of Sentencing Commission's (NASC) conference is August 12-14, 2026, in Albuquerque, New Mexico and that it was previously requested to send three staff and two Commissioners. There was a discussion about additional interest from Commissioners attending and that the budget had room for an additional attendee. Lieutenant Kyle Erdeljac moved to send three commission members and three staffers to the conference. Judge Julia Dorrian seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

13. Lt. Erdeljac raised the issue of R.C. 2935.23, described difficulties with the revised code on subpoenas regarding misdemeanors, and shared an interest in a legislative fix. There was a discussion on the prosecutor's association reviewing the issue and attempting to draft changes. A request was made for the Adult Criminal Justice Committee to review the topic as well.

14. Chief Justice Kennedy asked for a volunteer for the Personnel Committee. Judge Janaya Trotter Bratton volunteered to join the committee and was welcomed.
15. Chief Justice Kennedy moved to accept the resignation of Criminal Justice Counsel Emily Haynes and was seconded by Darren Shulman. The motion passed unanimously. She then thanked Ms. Haynes for her time with the Commission.

Adjourn

16. Chief Justice Kennedy motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Judge Trotter Bratton. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

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Agency and Available Data: Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (OCSC)

What is collected	Collection Method	Public Dashboard or Reports?
- The Commission, by statute, is not primarily a data collection agency. Under R.C. §181.25, the Commission is only charged with: - Collecting and maintaining data that pertains to the cost to counties of the felony sentence appeal provisions set forth in section 2953.08 of the Revised Code, of the postconviction relief proceeding provisions set forth in division (A)(2) of section 2953.21 of the Revised Code, and of appeals from judgments entered in such postconviction relief proceedings. - Primarily, the Commission utilizes administrative and programmatic data collected by other state agencies and local government entities to fulfill its statutory duties. Products produced from data collected by other agencies include: - Biennial Monitoring Reports - O.R.C. 181.27 Report on the impacts of House Bill 1 (133rd GA) - Ad-Hoc Reports as requested by the Ohio General Assembly or Juvenile and Adult Criminal Justice Committees - Along with statutory reports, the Commission also produces: - Sentencing Guides - Case Flowcharts - Reference Guides - Legislative Updates	- Costs of felony sentence appeals and post-conviction relief proceedings are collected directly from county prosecutors' offices on an annual basis. This data is supplemented by defense costs provided by the Office of the Ohio Public Defender. - For other statutory reporting requirements, the Commission uses publicly available data or select data established by memoranda of understanding with other state agencies or local government entities. All data of this kind is collected and maintained by the agency responsible and provided to the Commission for use in reporting.	All reports, guides, and other products are available on the Commission's website: https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/criminal-br-sentencing/sentencing/

Agency and Available Data: Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (OCSC)

The Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission was established by the 118th General Assembly with the enactment of Senate Bill 258 in 1990. Under R.C. §181.23 through R.C. §181.25 the Commission is charged with recommending and assisting the general assembly with developing, evaluating, implementing, and reviewing existing sentencing guidelines, processes, and procedures to create a sentencing structure and policy for Ohio that is designed to achieve fairness in sentencing and to enhance public safety by attaining certainty in sentencing, deterrence, and a reasonable use of correctional facilities, programs, and services. The Commission is not primarily a data collecting agency, and it relies on data provided by other state agencies and local government agencies for analysis.

Chaired by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Commission is a multi-disciplinary body that brings together experts from and provides resources to all three branches of government. The Commission reviews proposed legislation, conducts research on sentencing structures in Ohio, and drafts biennial reports analyzing the impact of sentencing policies on communities, correctional facilities, and the justice system. The Commission is committed to advancing a just and fiscally responsible criminal justice system that meets the needs of Ohioans.



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: 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.

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.

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

State of Bindover in Ohio

Response to the Governor's Juvenile Justice Working Group

An Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Report

2026

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Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission

Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy, Chair
Melissa A. Knopp, Esq., Executive Director

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
Brooke M. Burns, Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Youth Defense Department
Matthew Byrnes, Defense Attorney, Cincinnati
Interim Director Ed Banks, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
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, Greene County
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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Todd Ives (Co-Author), MPA, Research Specialist

Acknowledgements

This report is the culmination of the hard work and dedication of the staff of the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission. The Commission would also like to extend its gratitude to the following organizations and individuals for their assistance in providing information or otherwise contributing acutely to this report:

- The members of the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission's Juvenile Justice Committee
- Dr. Jordan Argus, Chief Executive, Best Practices Institute, Department of Youth Services
- Charlyn Bohland, Supervising Attorney, Youth Defense Department, Ohio Public Defender's Office
- Brooke Burns, Managing Counsel, Youth Defense Department, Ohio Public Defender's Office
- Emily Haynes, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel, Department of Education and Workforce
- Deonna Bickley and Haili Kendall, Legal Externs, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission

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Introduction

On November 13th, 2023, Governor DeWine announced the formation of the Juvenile Justice Working Group (JJWG) to examine the state and operations of the juvenile justice system in Ohio. In September of 2024, JJWG published a report with their findings and recommendations. The report made 26 recommendations covering juvenile justice related topics including recommendation 10, which states:

“JJWG recommends the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Ohio Sentencing Commission (JJC-OSC) evaluate Ohio’s statutes on bindover, specifically to evaluate and determine the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio’s current mandatory bindover provisions. Further, the JJWG recommends and requests that DYS assist, advise and consult on any and all matters relevant to the JJC-OCC analysis, as the JJC-OCC deems appropriate.”¹

As a part of this recommendation, the JJWG additionally clarified,

“... that other practical considerations need to be factored into this analysis. Simply eliminating mandatory bindovers and making them discretionary could have significant negative consequences to the juvenile justice system. Such a change, without analysis of the system as a whole, including consideration of the impact of the other DYS population recommendations, could be untenable.”²

On April 17th, 2024, the Juvenile Justice Committee met and began officially discussing the recommendation from the JJWG. Committee members discussed what information was available at their respective agencies and staff began the process of meeting with individuals and agencies to see what additional information could be gathered. An initial look at the number of youths transferred in Ohio, according to data available from the Department of Youth Services (DYS,) showed that in the past 10 years (FY2015-FY2024) the number of combined mandatory and discretionary bindovers ranged from a low of 159 (FY2015) to a high of 209 (FY2019).³ This established a baseline number of youth impacted each year as staff began exploring other metrics and outcome measures that could be analyzed. Figure 1 shows the total amount of youth transferred to adult court each fiscal year from 2015 through 2024. Figure 2 shows the percentages of transfers that were mandatory, discretionary, or could not be determined as mandatory or discretionary for each fiscal year from 2016 through 2023. The date ranges represent what data was available at the time of the creation of this report and may be updated by DYS as new data becomes available.

¹ Juvenile Justice Working Group, *Ohio Juvenile Justice Working Group Report*, (September 2024) available at [Juvenile Justice Working Group Report FINAL.pdf](#)

² Id.

³ For a more detailed breakdown of DYS data on bindover numbers see: [Youth Transferred to Adult Court | DataOhio](#)

Figure 1. Total Youth Transferred to Adult Court, FY2015-FY2024⁴

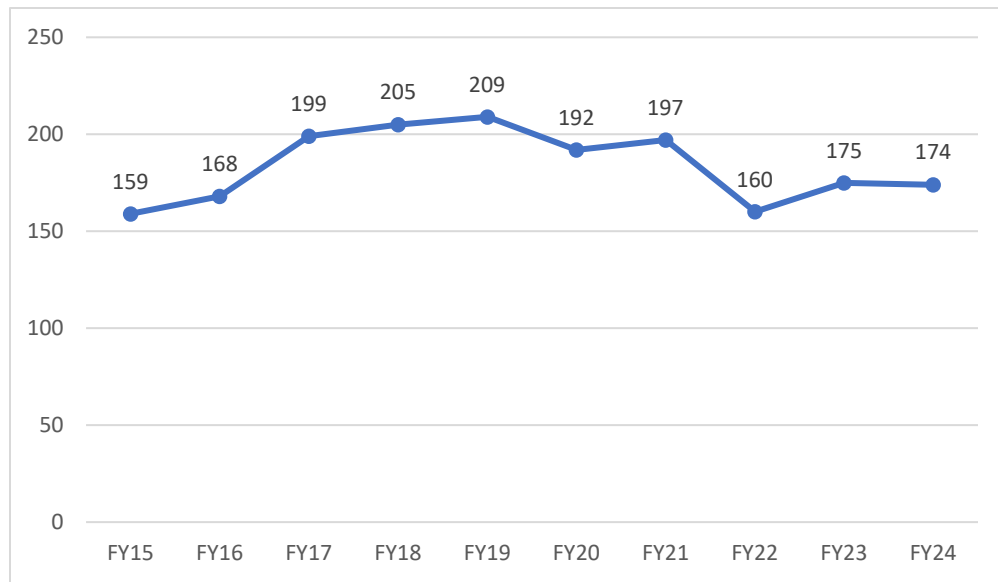
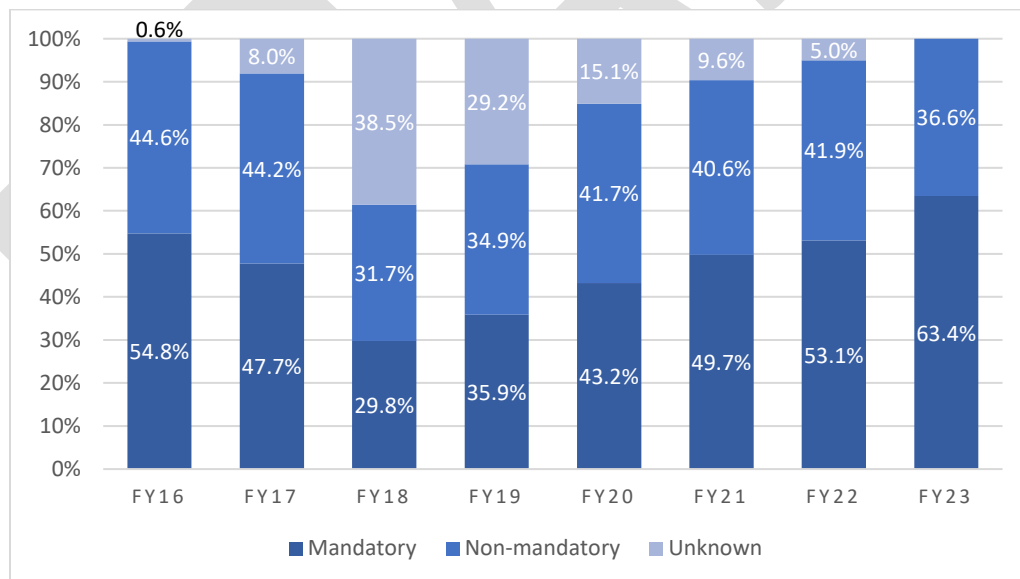


Figure 2. Percentage of Mandatory, Discretionary, and Unknown Youth Transfers to Adult Court, FY2016-FY2023⁵



To evaluate bindover in Ohio, commission staff met with agencies and individuals within the realms of criminal justice and related youth services. The intention was to gather exploratory information as to what data might be available on youth who were bound over to adult court, all youth eligible for

⁴ For a more detailed breakdown of DYS data on bindover numbers see: [Youth Transferred to Adult Court | DataOhio](#)

⁵ Id.

bindover, detailed information on mandatory versus discretionary bindover, and any other data related to the bindover process. Staff also conducted a literature review to contextualize previous research on the topic in Ohio as well as national perspectives on juvenile transfer. After meeting with appropriate agencies, completing reviews of available literature, and evaluating the data that was, and was not, available, the Commission was not able to find conclusive supporting evidence to recommend changes to the bindover process, specifically the elimination of mandatory bindover, at this time. However, this report contains recommendations for future study and what would be necessary in order to make a more conclusive recommendation. This report, in response to the charge from the JJWG, is organized as follows:

1. An overview of national trends in juvenile bindover policy
2. An overview of the history of bindover in Ohio
3. A description of the state of existing bindover data in Ohio and the process for evaluating what data is available
4. A summary of results for collecting bindover data
5. Conclusions to the charge from the JJWG
6. Recommendations for future study of bindover in Ohio

National Trends in Bindover

In the late 1980s and 1990s, there was a wave of legislation in nearly every state that modified youth transfer practices.⁶ These laws, which excluded more youth from juvenile court jurisdiction and implemented mandatory, automatic waiver to criminal court, were the result of a “substantial misperception regarding the increases in juvenile crime.”⁷ These changes made it easier for youth to be transferred to adult court by lowering the thresholds for transfer, expanding eligibility, shifting discretion and decision-making authority away from judges and giving it to prosecutors, and generally adopting more broad categorical mechanisms and mandatory transfer laws. “By 2001, the entire spike in juvenile violent crime arrest rates had been erased and experts had begun to evaluate the consequences of the new ‘tough on crime’ policies.”⁸ Research in adolescent development and brain science demonstrated that adolescents have the capacity to change and most youth grow out of delinquent behavior.⁹ Thirty states amended transfer-related laws between 2004 and 2019, with the majority narrowing the provisions for transfer rather than expanding them.¹⁰ This has led to a reduction in the number of youth tried as adults in criminal court.¹¹

⁶ Youth and the Juvenile Justice System: 2022 National Report, 98 (Dec. 6, 2022), <https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2022-national-report.pdf>.

⁷ Id. at 80.

⁸ Id.

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ Id. at 100.

¹¹ Id.

Nationally, the mechanisms are judicial waiver (discretionary, presumptive or mandatory), prosecutorial discretion, statutory exclusions, and blended sentencing being the primary categories.¹² As of 2019, 46 other states utilized discretionary judicial waivers while only 12 utilized mandatory judicial waivers.¹³

28 states utilized reverse waivers, and 15 states utilized juvenile blended sentences.¹⁴ The details within these categories may look slightly different from state to state.

In Ohio, the current mechanisms utilized include discretionary and mandatory bindover,¹⁵ reverse bindover¹⁶ and serious youthful offender (SYO).^{17,18} These are referred to nationally as judicial transfer or waiver, reverse transfer or waiver, and juvenile blended sentencing respectively. Appendix A illustrates the typical process of transfer utilized in Ohio.

History of Bindover in Ohio

Bindover has a relatively brief history in Ohio. In 1986, the General Assembly enacted the first mandatory bindover statute in Ohio, the precursor of the mandatory bindover statute currently codified in R.C. Chapter 2152.¹⁹ In response to perceptions of rising juvenile crime, in 1995, the General Assembly reduced the minimum age for transfer to the adult court from fifteen to fourteen, mandated transfer under specific circumstances, and increased the minimum terms of commitment to DYS for specific offenses.²⁰ In 1996, the General Assembly, through H. B. 591, tasked the Commission with the first comprehensive review of Ohio's juvenile justice system. In 1998, the General Assembly, through HB 484, extended the deadline for the Commission to submit a comprehensive plan to October 1, 1999. The comprehensive plan titled *A Proposed Plan for Juvenile Sentencing*²¹ was submitted to the General Assembly by January 5, 2000.²² With respect to bindovers, the Plan would reduce the number of mandatory bindovers to the adult court but introduced three new ideas to Ohio law: blended ("Serious Youthful Offenders") sentences; extended jurisdiction; and presumed bindover.²³ In 1999, the 123rd General Assembly passed S.B. 179, incorporating most of *A Plan for Juvenile Sentencing*. S.B. 179 moved bindovers to a new chapter of the revised code, Chapter 2152. The Commission created the *S.B. 179*

¹² Id. at 96.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

¹⁵ R.C. 2152.10, 2152.12

¹⁶ R.C. 2152.121.

¹⁷ R.C. 2152.11. For additional materials explaining bindover and SYO see [Juvenile Disposition Benchcard](#) and [Youth in Adult Court](#).

¹⁹ Sub.H.B. No. 499, 141 Ohio Laws, Part II, 4633 (effective Mar. 11, 1987).

²⁰ Yeomans Salvador, *Ohio Juvenile Law*, §1.7, 22, (2022), citing 1995 H.B. 1, eff. January 1, 1996.

²¹ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, *A Proposed Plan for Juvenile Sentencing* (Fall, 1999), https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/sentencingRecs/juvenile_sentencing.pdf (accessed July 16, 2025).

²² S:\Staff Folders\Angela Kay Garvey\Scan Project\Diroll Biweekly and Periodic Reports\1999 Letters from David Diroll to Chief Justice Moyer. The juvenile report was sent to the printers by December 20, 1999. On Jan 5, 2000 David Diroll confirmed that the General Assembly had received the report.

²³ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, *A Proposed Plan for Juvenile Sentencing*, 14-17 (Fall, 1999), https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/sentencingRecs/juvenile_sentencing.pdf (accessed July 16, 2025).

*Outline*²⁴ to educate practitioners on the new R.C. 2152 and the various changes to the juvenile justice system. The Commission, through its staff, also conducted training, and spoke at conferences about the changes to the juvenile system. *S.B. 179 Quick Reference Guide*²⁵ was also created to condense the changes into a 2-page document.

In 2007, the Commission studied issues related to bindover,²⁶ but no bill was introduced. In 2010, the Commission learned of new national research around the lack of deterrence that the possibility of bindover made to the juvenile offender.²⁷ No bill was introduced. In 2015, the Commission approved of mandatory and discretionary bindover as a Commission priority. No bill was introduced.

In 2016, the Commission reviewed R.C. 2152.10 and 2152.12 to identify ways to improve the current system of bindover to adult court.²⁸ The proposed statutory changes approved by the Commission²⁹ would eliminate the mandatory bindover of juveniles to adult court for crimes, making all bindover decisions discretionary with the trial court, and combine the factors considered by a judge in determining whether or not to bindover a juvenile to adult court to ensure that decisions are made based upon the offender's conduct and condition and not a simple weighing of factors. This was introduced in S.B. 64 of the 132nd General Assembly and referred to the Judiciary Committee. Similarly, H.B. 394 of the 132nd General Assembly was introduced and referred to the House Criminal Justice Committee. There was no further activity with either bill.

In 2021, Representatives Brian Lampton and Brian Stewart introduced House Bill 500.³⁰ The bill was designed to end mandatory bindover in honor of Matthew Aalim, the defendant in the Supreme Court case.³¹ Aalim was killed after leaving prison from a gang he joined while in prison out of fear for his own life.³² However, the bill never advanced out of committee.³³ In 2024, the Juvenile Committee gave extensive oral feedback to Commissioner Representative Josh Williams regarding his bill on bindover,

²⁴ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission *S.B. 179 Outline* (June 2001), https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/summaries/SB179_OutlineManual_Outline.pdf, https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/sentencingRecs/juvenile_sentencing.pdf (accessed July 16, 2025).

²⁵ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, *S.B. 179 Quick Reference Guide* (June, 2001), https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/resources/summaries/SB179_Quick_Reference_Guide.pdf.

²⁶ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Minutes, 8, (February 15, 2007), <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/minutes/2007/021507.pdf>.

²⁷ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Minutes, 6-8, (July 15, 2010), <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/minutes/2010/071510.pdf>.

²⁸ *Summary of Bindover Proposal, 2016*.

²⁹ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Minutes, 2, (September 22, 2016), <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/minutes/2016/092216.pdf>.

³⁰ House Bill 500 Cosponsor Testimony, H.R. Bill 500, 134th General Assembly

³¹ *Id.*; State v. Aalim, 150 Ohio St.3d 489 (2017).

³² *Id.*

³³ The Ohio Legislature, *House Bill 500, Summary*, <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/134/hb500> (accessed February 6, 2025)

H.B.314.³⁴ Additional feedback and discussion was given throughout 2025 for later drafts of Commissioner Representative Josh Williams' bindover draft, but no bill was introduced.

The Supreme Court has also addressed mandatory and discretionary bindover. The Court has held that Ohio's mandatory bindover scheme does not violate equal protection or due process,³⁵ but the state must provide credible evidence of every element of an offense to support a finding that probable cause exists to believe that the juvenile committed the offense before ordering mandatory bindover.³⁶ Additionally, the Court has held that facts presented to a juvenile court in a discretionary bindover must persuade the court that the juvenile is not amenable to care or rehabilitation in the juvenile system.³⁷ The Court has held that a juvenile court is not permitted to exceed the limited scope of a bindover hearing and is not to assume the role of ultimate factfinder.³⁸ Finally, after a case is bound over to adult court, the Court has held that new charges may be added to an adult court indictment when the new charges are rooted in the acts that were the subject of the juvenile complaint, even if those acts were not specifically named in the individual acts bound over.³⁹

State of Existing Bindover Data in Ohio

The Juvenile Justice Working Group (JJWG) recommended the evaluation and determination of the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio's current mandatory bindover provisions, with consideration of the impact on the system as a whole. To this end, Commission staff met with relevant state agencies and determined that a readily available data set on juvenile bindover did not exist to sufficiently evaluate the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio's current mandatory bindover provisions. While the number of annual bindovers statewide is known, with varying degrees of detail on mandatory vs. discretionary bindover, there is scant data on the process measures of bindover, reverse bindovers, bindover outcomes, and notably data on youth who are not bound over and remain in juvenile court. Staff discovered that siloed information exists within each court, but this data is not standardized across jurisdictions or uniformly reported. In addition, while the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) is able to identify age at the commitment of an offense, there is no "checkbox" or indicator to easily flag all individuals who have been bound over from juvenile court. Further, not all boundover youth end up in ODRC, so this data would not capture the whole picture.

To supplement the readily available data on juvenile bindover, Commission staff met with staff at the Office of the Ohio Public Defender (OPD), who had been conducting research on juvenile bindover outcomes prior to the JJWG. In these meetings, OPD shared some of their initial observations based upon the data collection that had been done for bindover cases in FY2018. One initial observation was that the data reflected that more than half of the youth who were bound over that year may have been sentenced to less time in the adult system than they would have received if they had remained in the juvenile system. OPD staff constructed a data collection process and spreadsheet for manually collecting

³⁴ Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Minutes, 3, (February 15, 2024), <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/Boards/Sentencing/minutes/2024/021524.pdf>.

³⁵ *State v. Aalim*, 150 Ohio St.3d 489 (2017).

³⁶ *State v. Iacona*, 93 Ohio St.3d 83 (2001).

³⁷ *State v. Nicholas*, 171 Ohio St.3d 278 (2022).

³⁸ *State v. Martin*, 170, Ohio St. 3d 181 (2022).

³⁹ *State v. Burns*, 170 Ohio St. 3d 157 (2022).

select bindover data from each county's clerk of courts' website. Additional information was gathered from ODRC's offender search.⁴⁰ Completing the data collection for FY2018 took one staff member approximately 22 months.

The OPD shared their data collection process and spreadsheet so that Commission staff could begin gathering data on bindover. In August 2025, Commission staff directed two legal externs to begin collecting bindover data, through the process established by the OPD staff. Externs worked on gathering data for FY2019-FY2020 boundover youth on select outcome measurements. The externs collected data from August through November of 2025. While not impossible, the process of manually collecting data from each county's clerk of court's website is time-intensive and cumbersome. The ensuing section describes the results of this exploratory data collection process. The overall conclusions and recommendations described below make suggestions on how to improve and streamline this data collection process.

Availability and Completeness of Data from Exploratory Analysis of Boundover Youth

The purpose of this data collection process was exploratory in nature in an effort to establish a baseline of data that could be used to evaluate the impact of modifying Ohio's bindover laws. Most of the information collected came from each counties' clerk of courts websites, with supplementary information from ODRC's offender search.

As a part of the exploratory data analysis, Commission staff examined each of the desired data points to see how readily available the information was and how complete data collection for that category could be based upon availability. The following table illustrates a breakdown of each desired data point and categorizes each one by a percentage of completeness. In other words, completeness measures how many of these data points could be found for each youth that was transferred in each county. The following table illustrates this completeness of the data for youth transferred to adult court during FY2019 and FY2020.

⁴⁰ See <https://appgateway.drc.ohio.gov/OffenderSearch>

Table 1. Completion Percentage of Possible Data Points for Youth Transferred to Adult Court FY19-FY20

75-100% Completion	50-75% Completion	Under 50% Completion*
Race	Codefendants	Juvenile Court Case #
Gender	Jail Time Credit	# Juvenile Court Charges
Date of Offense		Juvenile Court Charges
Age		
Transfer Date		
Bond		
Common Pleas Case #		
# of Common Pleas Charges		
Common Pleas Charges		
Gun Specification		
Counsel Type		
Pretrial Litigation		
Trial		
Plea		
Outcome Information		
Number of Convictions		
Sentence		
Agreed Sentence		
Financial Sanctions		
Appeal		

*Franklin County had limited Juvenile Court Data available. Other proposed Juvenile Court information was not available such as Juvenile Court history, Probable Cause Hearing, Amenability Hearing, etc.

Conclusion

Recommendation from the JJWG

The initial charge from the JJWG directed the Juvenile Justice Committee to evaluate and determine the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio's current mandatory bindover provisions. In addition, the JJWG directly tasked the Commission's Juvenile Justice Committee to examine changes to bindover laws at a system-wide level, including unforeseen potential consequences. Evaluating the appropriateness of modifying Ohio's bindover laws holds critical policy implications for the legislature, criminal justice system, and the general public. The United States Government Accountability Office recommends evaluating the reliability of data used for publications, giving special consideration for when the data may be used to inform legislation, policy, or a program that could have substantial effect.⁴¹ Data used to inform statewide policy ought to be complete, timely, accurate, and comparable across jurisdictions and systems. To fulfill the charge of the JJWG, ideally the Commission would analyze multiple years of data with contextual information on how cases moved through the juvenile court.

⁴¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, Assessing Data Reliability, GAO-20-283G (Washington, D.C.) December 2019.

Availability of Data for Analysis

Currently what is known about bindover at a statewide level is displayed in the introduction of this report – the number of mandatory and discretionary bindovers per year, with some contextual data including county, age, sex, race, and felony degree. The available statewide data does not include information on the bindover process, youth who remain in juvenile court, reverse bindovers, and outcome measures. This degree of information is insufficient to determine the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio’s mandatory bindover provisions, as directed by the JJWG. Commission staff attempted to supplement this information with an exploratory data collection process building on the process designed by the Ohio Public Defender.

The piecemeal approach of collecting data from clerk of court websites was slow and required review and cross-referencing of multiple court systems to ensure accuracy. Further, the exploration of data revealed that the juvenile court records on bindover could not be exhaustively collected online. The lack of comprehensive, publicly available data at the juvenile court level for bindover, including for youth who were not ultimately bound over to the adult system, poses additional challenges to data collection. As such, collecting multiple fiscal years’ worth of data would take significantly more time than what the Commission had in order to provide a timely response to the JJWG.⁴² The below recommendations encourage future study with the possibility of increasing the scope and timeframes of data collection.

Recommendations for Future Study

Although the current data systems do not support an evidence-based recommendation on eliminating mandatory bindover, the topic of bindover should continue to be studied to inform future policy decisions. This section outlines one potential avenue for future research on juvenile bindover, noting that the scope of study and data collection represent an aspirational, ideal state. When considering future data collection initiatives, policymakers should consider what is feasible, cost-effective, and presents the least amount of burden to local practitioners. If additional data becomes available in the future the Juvenile Justice Committee will examine the topic of juvenile bindover/transfer.

Because Ohio is a home rule state, the practical implementation of bindover processes differs across jurisdictions which would lend itself to both qualitative and quantitative study as described below. Therefore, the Commission recommends this approach be used in future examination of any youth bindover to gain a comprehensive understanding in Ohio. With this recommendation comes a proposed list of data points that would aid in an impact study of Ohio’s bindover laws.

Qualitative Study⁴³

The policy implications for eliminating or otherwise modifying mandatory bindover in Ohio are primarily a factor of prosecutorial and judicial discretion. As such, evaluating the impact of a greater degree of discretion in bindover cases requires an understanding of prosecutorial and judicial decision-making

⁴² Despite the challenges of data collection, staff at the OPD will continue this critical initiative starting in the summer of 2026 and beyond.

⁴³ For one example of a qualitative analysis on juvenile bindover, see: *A Study of Juvenile Transfers in Connecticut 1997 to 2002*. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/opm/cjppd-main/cjppd/cijiyd/jjydpublishations/transferstudyfinalreportpdf.pdf?rev=f0d6a067e65d4d8e9932e0d59f256c79>

across the state. As a home-rule state, Ohio often has a degree of variability in judicial processes across its 88 counties. For any impact evaluation of policy change, the development of a logic model is a standard preliminary step. The implementation of juvenile bindover may differ significantly from county to county. Therefore, we recommend a qualitative analysis of bindover proceedings in Ohio's counties to better understand judicial practitioners' perceptions of bindover and how it is implemented. This should lead to the development of a primary logic model for juvenile bindover, with sub-models outlining how the bindover process can differ across geographies.

The perception of criminal justice practitioners on bindover should also be established through qualitative study. In discretionary transfer cases, Judges may consider and weigh amenability factors differently across jurisdictions. The elimination of mandatory bindover would necessarily increase judicial discretion in bindover hearings. Accordingly, it would be useful for future impact analyses to better understand how judicial practitioners consider amenability factors. Qualitative analysis on juvenile bindover would lend itself to answering these sorts of questions.

Quantitative Study

Analysis of statutory changes to bindover laws can take many forms, including cost-benefit analysis, person-centered outcome analysis, and system-level analysis of impacts on Ohio's criminal justice agencies. As such, the data standards recommended below are necessarily broad and comprehensive to allow for a multitude of analyses. These data points are aspirational in nature, and all may not be feasible to collect at a statewide level in Ohio. Policymakers should evaluate the current data architecture in the state when considering the implementation of future data collection mechanisms. For a comprehensive, timely, and accurate evaluation of Ohio's bindover laws, these data points should be consistently collected in a uniform manner. All points in the bindover process should be time and date-stamped to understand the length of time a case takes to move throughout the system. Currently, these types of data exist, if at all, in a siloed nature within Ohio's adult and juvenile courts. To properly understand outcomes of bound over youth, efforts should include linking cases from the juvenile to the adult system.⁴⁴ The following table groups suggested data points for collection and study by category.

⁴⁴ These data points are supported by previous studies on juvenile bindover. See Cheesman FL 2nd, Waters NL, Hurst H 4th. Who gets a second chance? An investigation of Ohio's blended juvenile sentence. J Health Hum Serv Adm. 2010 Winter;33(3):406-50. PMID: 21329194.

Table 2. Recommended Data Points for Collection

Data Point	Description	Collection Point
Demographics		
Gender	For consistency, recommend collecting the same category options as ODYS' current practices.	Juvenile Court
Race/Ethnicity	For consistency, recommend collecting the same category options as ODYS's current practices.	Juvenile Court
Date of Birth	Collecting date of birth allows ages to be generated at each point in the bindover process.	Juvenile Court
School Enrollment Status	Whether a juvenile is enrolled in school or not. In previous studies, some counties were able to collect and record school status as part of the bindover proceedings.	Juvenile Court
ZIP Code	Residential zip code of the defendant on the date of the complaint/offense.	Juvenile Court
Prior Criminal History		
Prior DYS Referral/Placement		ODYS/Juvenile Court
Prior Adjudication in Juvenile Court at Time of Ruling	Highest felony and/or highest misdemeanor	Juvenile Court
Prior Finding of Abuse/Neglect/Dependency	Earliest finding	Juvenile Court
Prior Status Offense	Most recent finding	Juvenile Court
Prior Adult Conviction	Highest felony and/or highest misdemeanor	Common Pleas, Municipal, County Court
Offense Related Variables		
Offense Type/Level	Offense by O.R.C. code from initial charge to final disposition for all charges included. This metric also captures total number of charges. This also reflects charging in adult court.	Juvenile Court/Common Pleas Court
Gun Specification	Gun specification included in charge	Juvenile Court

Table 2. Recommended Data Points for Collection (Continued)

Data Point	Description	Collection Point
Adjudication		
Detention	Status of juvenile detained prior to adjudication. Length of detention pre-adjudication.	Juvenile Court
Plea Agreement	Status of plea agreement offered and accepted.	Juvenile Court
Motion Type	Motion for mandatory or discretionary bindover or SYO (original and final).	Juvenile Court
Co-Defendants	Presence of Co-Defendants in case	Juvenile Court
Probable Cause Hearing	Probable cause hearing held or waived.	Juvenile Court
Amenability Hearing	Amenability hearing held.	Juvenile Court
Outcomes		
Final Disposition	Final disposition for youth transferred to adult court. This captures final conviction offense type and level.	Common Pleas Court
Sentence Length/Type	Sentence type and length at final disposition.	Common Pleas Court
Time Served	Measure of actual time served post-sentencing. This captures variances caused by jail time credit and earned credit.	ODRC or local probation authority
Recidivism Metrics	Recidivism is one common way to evaluate public safety outcomes for policy change. For consistency, recommend measuring recidivism as defined by the institution responsible for the target population measured.	ODRC/ODYS
Operational Costs	Modifying bindover laws may fiscally impact courts, ODRC, ODYS, and detention centers. Recommend measuring case processing times and population changes in respective institutions to understand marginal costs.	Juvenile Court, Common Pleas Court, ODYS, ODRC



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

September 2026

Including bills introduced up to August 24, 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 Erik Niehaus, Butler 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
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

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Todd Ives, MPA, Research Specialist



Legislative Update

September 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: Nov. 10th, Nov. 18th, Dec. 2nd

Senate: Sept. 16th, Sept. 23rd, Oct. 7th, Nov. 10th, Nov. 18th, Dec. 2nd

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136th General Assembly

Enacted House and Senate Bills

House Bill 20 (Hall, Plummer)

Prohibit harassing or impeding an emergency service responder

Status: Enacted

House Bill 20 (HB 20) was signed by Governor Mike Dwyne on July 7, 2026, effective on October 5, 2026. 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 29 (Humphrey, John)

Regards inmates’ access to feminine hygiene products and showers

Status: Enacted

House Bill 29 (HB 29) was signed by Governor Mike Dwyne 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 issued 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.

House Bill 210 (Roemer, Plummer)
Regards the sale of used catalytic converters
Status: Enacted

House Bill 210 (HB 210) was signed by Governor DeWine on July 7, 2026, and will be in effect on August 25, 2026. 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 393 (Click, Brewer)
Require certain facilities assist inmates in obtaining ID cards
Status: Enacted

House Bill 393 (HB 393) was signed on May 27, 2026, and will go into effect on August 26, 2026. HB 393 requires community-based correctional facilities to provide inmates with assistance in obtaining state identification cards prior to their release.



Senate Bill 179 (Johnson)
Verify veteran status of imprisoned individuals
Status: Enacted

[Senate Bill 179](#) (SB 179) was signed on June 24, 2026, and will go into effect on September 22, 2026. 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.

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 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, Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 168](#) (HB 168) was introduced on March 12, 2025. The bill modifies the existing 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 203 (Hall, Williams)

Enact Aspen Runnel's Law

Status: Passed House; In Senate 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 252 (Click, Bird)

Modify offenses of burglary, breaking and entering, and trespass

Status: Passed House; In Senate 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 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.

House Bill 345 (LaRe)

Increase the penalties for voyeurism

Status: Passed House; In Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorney’s Association

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: Passed House; In Senate 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 478 (Thomas, Synenberg)

Create jury tampering offense; revise court intimidation offenses

Status: Passed House; Referred to Senate Judiciary

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 528 (Williams)

Require 7-year mandatory minimum prison term for forcible rape

Status: Passed House; Referred to Senate Judiciary

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 667 (Abrams)

Enact the Reagan Tokes and Patrick Heringer Act

Status: Passed House; Introduced to Senate

Proponents: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: Alliance for Safety and Justice, Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association, The Buckeye Institute

[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.

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 393 (Manning, Timken)

Regards sexually oriented offenses involving juveniles, animals

Status: Passed Senate; In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Internet Crimes Against Children, Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Opponents: Office of the Ohio Public Defender, Ohioans for Rational Sex Offense Laws

Senate Bill 393 (SB 393) was introduced on May 20, 2026. The bill criminalizes artificial child sexual abuse material (CSAM), provides mandatory penalties for CSAM that depicts offenses of violence or children under that age of 13, creates a 5-year sentencing specification for possession of 100 or more CSAM images, creates a “close in age” exception for unlawful sexual conduct with a minor who is 16 or 17 years of age and for gross sexual imposition with a minor who is 16 or 17 years of age and increases the penalties for these offenses under other circumstances, addresses first time “sexting” between juveniles who are between 14 and 17 years of age, and makes sexual conduct with an animal a felony offense.

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: Reported Out of House Public Safety Committee

Proponents: Ohio Laborers' District Council, Ohio Contractors Association, AAA, American Traffic Safety Services Association

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: Referred to House Judiciary 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 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: TransOhio, ACLU of Ohio, Equality Ohio, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Ohio, Ohio Public Defender

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 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 417 (Plummer, Young)

Regards animal abuse offenses and penalties

Status: Reported out of 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: Passed by House

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 487 (Williams, Plummer)

Create a repeat drug offender specification

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Opponents: ACLU of Ohio, Ohio Public Defender

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 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: Ohio Chamber of Commerce

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.

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: Reported out of 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 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 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: Kettering Police Department

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.

House Bill 786 (Klopfenstein, Williams)

To prohibit use of an artificially generated depiction of a minor for obscene purposes

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 786 (HB 786) was introduced on March 24th, 2026. The bill introduces new legal language that defines "artificially generated depiction" as a visual representation created or edited by artificial intelligence or other computer-generated means that a reasonable person would believe depicts an actual identifiable person. It expands the scope of existing laws against obscenity to include these artificial depictions alongside minors and impaired persons, thereby increasing the legal protections against the exploitation of both real and digitally created images.

The bill also outlines various prohibited actions related to the creation, distribution, and possession of obscene materials involving minors or artificially generated depictions of minors. Violations of these provisions are classified into different degrees of felonies, depending on the nature of the offense and whether it involves a minor or an impaired person. It also clarifies that mistake of age is not a defense in prosecutions under these sections, reinforcing the seriousness of the offenses related to the exploitation of minors and the use of artificial depictions in obscene materials.

House Bill 794 (Williams)

Felony offense sentencing changes

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 794](#) (HB 794) was introduced on March 25th, 2026. The bill would require every sentence of imprisonment for a felony offense be for an indefinite period consisting of a minimum and maximum term. It would also change the maximum term that applies to those offenses.

House Bill 796 (Williams)

Ensure inmates, prisoners housed according to biological sex

Status: In the House Public Safety Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 796](#) (HB 796) was introduced on March 25th, 2026. HB 796 amends sections 751.08, 5120.10, and 5120.16 of the Revised Code to ensure that jail inmates, city infirmary inmates, and prisoners under control of the department of rehabilitation and correction are housed in accordance with their biological sex.

House Bill 826 (Williams)

To create the offense of obstructing federal immigration enforcement

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 826](#) (HB 826) was introduced on April 15th, 2026. This bill makes it illegal for any public official to purposely prevent, obstruct, or delay federal immigration enforcement activities. Violations of this new section would be classified as a felony of the fifth degree.



House Bill 846 (Plummer, Thomas)
Domestic Violence Offender Registry
Status: In the House Public Safety Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 846](#) (HB 846) was introduced on May 6th, 2026. If a court determines that someone who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of RC 2919.25 (Domestic Violence) is a repeat domestic violence offender, the court shall order the offender to register with BCI within 7 days. BCI is to keep a registry which it is to make public on its website. BCI is to periodically remove names from the registry; timing of removal is based on both the number of repeat offenses and the amount of time lapsed since the last offense.

House Bill 879 (Glassburn)
Prohibit unlawful removal of item used as a memorial for the dead
Status: In the House Public Safety Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 879](#) (HB 879) was introduced on May 12th, 2026. The bill adds to the prohibited actions under RC 2909.95 (Vandalism) purposely removing any item or adornment from any tomb, monument, gravestone, or other similar structure that is used as a memorial for the dead.

House Bill 923 (Williams)
To enact the Adult Parole Authority Enhancement Act
Status: In the House Judiciary Committee
Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided
Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 923](#) (HB 923) was introduced on May 19th, 2026. The Adult Parole Authority Enhancement Act proposes significant amendments to the Revised Code, particularly introducing a new section, 2903.217, which empowers the adult parole authority to file for post-conviction no contact orders on behalf of victims without requiring their consent when the offender is under post-release control. The bill outlines the necessary court procedures for such motions, ensuring that the orders include specific terms to protect the victim's safety. Additionally, it amends existing laws related to community control sanctions, including the establishment of a work-release program and clarifying the conditions and penalties for violations, such as extending sanctions or imposing prison terms.

Moreover, the bill specifies that penalties cannot be imposed for violations related to minor drug possession offenses and allows for crediting time served in prison against community control sanctions. It also introduces random drug testing for offenders, with the requirement that they cover the costs, and provides guidelines for community residential sanctions. The legislation enhances the authority of parole



officers and outlines new conditions for individuals under parole or post-release control, such as employment and educational requirements. The bill repeals existing sections that previously governed these matters, indicating a comprehensive restructuring of the legal framework surrounding parole and community control.

House Bill 926 (Williams)

Enact the Felony Accountability for Frequent Offenders Act

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 926 (HB 926) was introduced on May 19th, 2026. The bill establishes the terms “habitual felony offender” and “violent career criminal,” and would impose mandatory prison terms for repeat offenders, specifically for offenders convicted of certain felonies, including those involving firearms and drugs. The legislation will also create a weapons-specific criminal enhancement for repeat offenders who continue to violate their weapon restriction.

House Bill 927 (Williams)

To expand the offenses of importuning and obstructing justice

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 927 (HB 927) was introduced on May 19th, 2026. HB 927 amends section 2907.07 to make knowingly soliciting a person an offender believes to be under the age of 18, regardless of their actual age, a fourth degree felony.

House Bill 935 (Williams)

Court determination of mental illnesses

Status: In the House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

House Bill 935 (HB 935) was introduced on May 19th, 2026. HB 927 authorizes a criminal court to determine whether a defendant is a mentally ill person subject to a court order or a person with an intellectual disability subject to institutionalization if the criminal court is determining whether the defendant is competent to stand trial.



House Bill 992 (Robb Blasdel)

Prevent cruelty to certain horses

Status: As Introduced

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[House Bill 992](#) (HB 992) was introduced August 12th, 2026. The bill prohibits knowingly torturing, tormenting, needlessly mutilating or maiming, cruelly beating, poisoning, needlessly killing or committing an act of cruelty against an equine; prohibits knowingly causing serious physical harm to an equine; and prohibits a person who confines or is the custodian of an equine from negligently committing similar acts or failing to provide care for the equine. Penalties range from an M2 to an F3, depending on prior convictions and type of harm caused.

The bill authorizes the court to order an equine owner or custodian to provide necessary care to the equine, if that equine has not been impounded; the court can also authorize someone to visit the equine to assess care and to determine whether the equine should be impounded.

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

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 26, 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 418 (Reynolds)

Enact the Grow Acts

Status: In House Judiciary Committee

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

[Senate Bill 418](#) (SB 418) was introduced on May 20, 2026. SB 418 creates a state-initiated record sealing mechanism that requires BCI to identify records that are eligible for sealing and provide a list to the appropriate prosecutor and court. The court must seal the records unless the prosecutor objects for one of several limited reasons.

Senate Bill 422 (Schaffer, Brenner)

Prohibit certain offenders from school or child care premises

Status: Passed by Senate

Proponents: Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Thomas B. Fordham Institute

Opponents: Ohio Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

[Senate Bill 422](#) (SB 422) was introduced on June 10, 2026. The bill prohibits Tier II and Tier III sex offenders from being present on the premises of a school or child care center. Some exceptions include dropping off or picking up their kids at the start or end of the day, for medical appointments or school

events, like attending parent-teacher conferences. The bill includes further stipulations for these individuals related to voting if the polling location is within a school or child care facility.

Senate Bill 432 (Manning)

Modify the offense of abuse of a corpse

Status: In Senate Judiciary Committee

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.

Senate Bill 466 (Blessing)

Increase sentence reduction credit a prisoner may receive

Status: Introduced

Proponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Opponents: Testimony Not Yet Provided

Senate Bill 466 (SB 466) was introduced on July 21, 2026. The bill requires 180 days of credit or a 15% reduction of a person's stated prison term (whichever is less) for each career technical vocational school program or college certification program completed by an inmate. The aggregate number of days credited cannot exceed 25% (up from 15% in current law) of the total number of days in a stated prison term.

House Judiciary Committee

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House Public Safety Committee

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Senate Judiciary Committee

Roster – 136th General Assembly

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