

# The Supreme Court of Ohio

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy

**CC:** Bob Horner, Administrative Director  
Stephanie Nelson, Director Court Services Division

**FROM:** Judge Theresa Dellick, Chairperson of the Commission on Specialized Dockets  
Anthony Ingram, Manager of Specialized Dockets Section

**DATE:** January 9, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Commission on Specialized Dockets 2023 Annual Report

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In accordance with Rule of Superintendence 36.11, please accept this annual report detailing the activities and accomplishments of the Specialized Dockets (Commission) for 2023.

The Commission on Specialized Dockets was created on November 13, 2012, with the adoption of Rule of Superintendence 36.02. The purpose and duties of the Commission are defined in Sup. R. 36.03(A):

The Commission on Specialized Dockets shall advise the Supreme Court and its staff on all of the following: (1) the promotion of statewide rules and uniform standards concerning specialized dockets in Ohio courts; (2) the development and delivery of specialized docket services to Ohio courts, including training programs for judges and court personnel; (3) the consideration of any other issues the Commission deems necessary to assist the Supreme Court and its staff regarding specialized dockets in Ohio courts.

The Commission is comprised of twenty-two members. Appointments were made based on specific roles defined in Sup. R. 36.04(A). The Commission met for the first time on April 10, 2013. During 2023, Judge Theresa Dellick of the Mahoning County Juvenile Court continued to serve as the chair of the Commission and Judge Ian English of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas served as the vice-chair.

In 2023, the Commission met virtually four times on February 2nd, June 6th, October 11th, and December 15<sup>th</sup>, and once in-person on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Commission activities included:

- recommending the certification of specialized dockets;
- planning and executing the Fall Annual Specialized Dockets Conference;
- working on Commission subcommittees; and

- developing and disseminating guidance to local dockets pertaining to emerging issues.

### *Certification Recommendations*

As of December 31, 2023, the Commission approved 100 specialized dockets for final certification during 2023. Re-certifications accounted for 90 of the dockets, and 10 of the dockets were new programs. The ten new certified dockets are as follows:

- Clark County Municipal Drug Court (Judge Daniel Carey)
- Columbiana County Common Pleas Drug Court (Judge Megan Bickerton)
- Conneaut Municipal SAMI Court (Judge Nicholas Iarocci)
- Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Human Trafficking Court (Judge Joan Synenberg)
- Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Drug Court (Judge William McGinty)
- Hamilton County Common Pleas Drug Court (Judge Nicole Sanders)
- Ottawa County Common Pleas Veterans Treatment Court (Judge Bruce Winters)
- Portage County Common Pleas Juvenile Drug Court (Judge Patricia Smith)
- Sylvania Municipal Domestic Violence Court (Judge Michael Bonfiglio)
- Trumbull County Common Pleas Drug Court (Judge Cynthia Rice).

Currently, there are 260 operational specialized dockets in Ohio that have achieved either initial or final certification.

### *2023 Fall Annual Specialized Docket Conference*

The 2023 Annual Specialized Dockets Conference was held in person for the first time since 2019. On October 16, 2023, the Annual Specialized Dockets Conference was held at the Ohio Union on the Ohio State University Campus. Approximately 550 specialized docket professionals and stakeholders attended from across Ohio. Conference participants were offered 17 educational breakout sessions along with three plenary/general sessions. This one-day conference offered a total of 6.25 credit hours approved for CLE and CEU's for social workers, with 4.0 hours approved for COB hours for probation officers. The 6.25 credit hours for CLE meets the educational requirement for judges presiding over specialized dockets.

### *Commission Subcommittees*

The Commission added a clinical subcommittee and data subcommittee focusing on clinical issues and partnerships among specialized docket stakeholders and how to provide feedback to local courts using the monthly data submissions to the Specialized Docket Section.

### *Emerging Issues*

The Commission continued to explore specific guidance areas for Ohio's specialized dockets during 2023. The Commission focused on language concerning the use of concurrent supervision within specialized docket settings. The Commission will continue to work with OHMAS and explore whether guidance is needed regarding the appropriate use of Certified Peer Support within specialized dockets.

Thank you for your support and the continued opportunity to promote the advancement and provision of specialized docket services to Ohio courts. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on the work of the Commission.