



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## Fairfield County Clerk of Courts

BRANDEN C. MEYER  
*CLERK OF COURTS*



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# THE CLERK'S OFFICE

The function of the Clerk of the Common Pleas Court is to satisfy more than 250 state statutes and court rules. Among the responsibilities of the office are to: Provide public access to the records of the Common Pleas Court and the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals; be the first stop in initiating any court action in civil, criminal or domestic relations court matters; collect and disburse court-ordered fees, fines, victim restitution in an expedient manner; receive, distribute and preserve official court documents; and be responsible for issuing and maintaining all motor vehicle and watercraft titles in Fairfield County. The Clerk of Courts office is made up of the following three departments: Administrative and Fiscal, Legal and Title.

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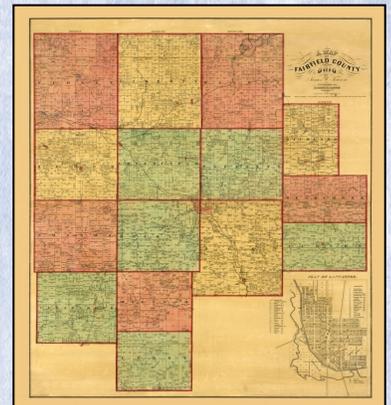
## MISSION

The Fairfield County Clerk of Courts Office is honored with the responsibility of serving the public by maintaining the records for the Common Pleas Court, the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals and issuing/preserving all motor vehicle and watercraft titles in Fairfield County. Through our continuous quality improvement efforts, our team is dedicated to providing efficient, courteous and professional customer service.

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## VISION

The vision of the Clerk is to anticipate, meet and exceed the expectations of our customers. We vow to remain compliant with the law, promise to hold our fiduciary responsibility to the highest possible standard and pledge to honor the trust bestowed upon this office with the utmost integrity, pride and respect.



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# A HISTORICAL LOOK AT THE CLERK'S OFFICE

In Ohio, the Clerk of the Common Pleas Court, which was established by State Constitution in 1802, serves the citizens, the legal community, and the Common Pleas Court. The office was created by the state's founders to be responsive to the public, mindful of the taxpayers, and independent of the court itself.

In 1851, under the State Constitution, the position became an elected position for a three-year term and was extended to a four-year term in 1936. William Henry Harrison, ninth President of the United States was the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts when he was elected President in 1840. The first Fairfield County Clerk of Common Pleas Court was Hugh Boyle who was appointed in 1803. The Clerk serves as the official record keeper of the court and acts as a safeguard and processor of all monies collected.

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## THE PRESENT

Today, Clerk of Courts Branden Meyer and his staff serves one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The office is committed to quality customer service, technological improvements for more efficient service and being fiscally responsible. The office has four locations to serve the public throughout the county; the legal offices are located in the Hall of Justice in downtown Lancaster, the Fairfield County Records Center also located in downtown Lancaster and two title offices, one in Lancaster and one in Pickerington.



# FROM THE CLERK...

Dear Fairfield County Citizens and The Public We Serve:

I am extremely proud to present you with the 2022 Annual Report of the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts Office.

In this report you will read about the various departments within the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts Office and the productive ways we are assisting the public we serve. Through the many statistical charts and analysis, you will notice examples of how we are increasing productivity, listening to our customers, advancing technological efforts and finding creative solutions for meeting the needs of the public. And finally, you will find strong examples of how our dedicated employees continuously strive to improve the quality of our services.

With all the achievements highlighted in this report, we constantly recognize that there is always work to be done to ensure that:

- All the records for the Common Pleas Court and the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals are properly maintained and prudently secured;
- All motor vehicle and watercraft titles in Fairfield County are issued in the most efficient, lawful manner and preserved according to current provisions of the Ohio Revised Code;
- All financial functions and statutory fiduciary duties of the office are performed in the most transparent, ethical, and respectable manner; and
- All legal matters, including but not limited to civil, criminal, and domestic relations issues, are discreetly processed in order to form a foundation of trust, security and alliance with the customers we serve.

Because the employees of the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts office live in the same community as the people they serve, you will find a sense of tremendous pride and enormous commitment in every aspect of their work.

I trust that, through this year's report, you will find that we take a serious approach to our commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and vision for the future.

Sincerely,

*Branden C. Meyer*

Fairfield County Clerk of Courts

# 2022 STATISTICS

## Administrative & Fiscal Department

The Clerk of Courts' Administrative and Fiscal Department provides integral support to both the Legal and Title Departments by overseeing all budgetary matters and performing the statutory fiduciary duties of the office by allocating funds, disbursing payments, and issuing bond, restitution, garnishment and refund checks. The office performs all financial functions and administrative related duties, including the processing of bills and payroll.



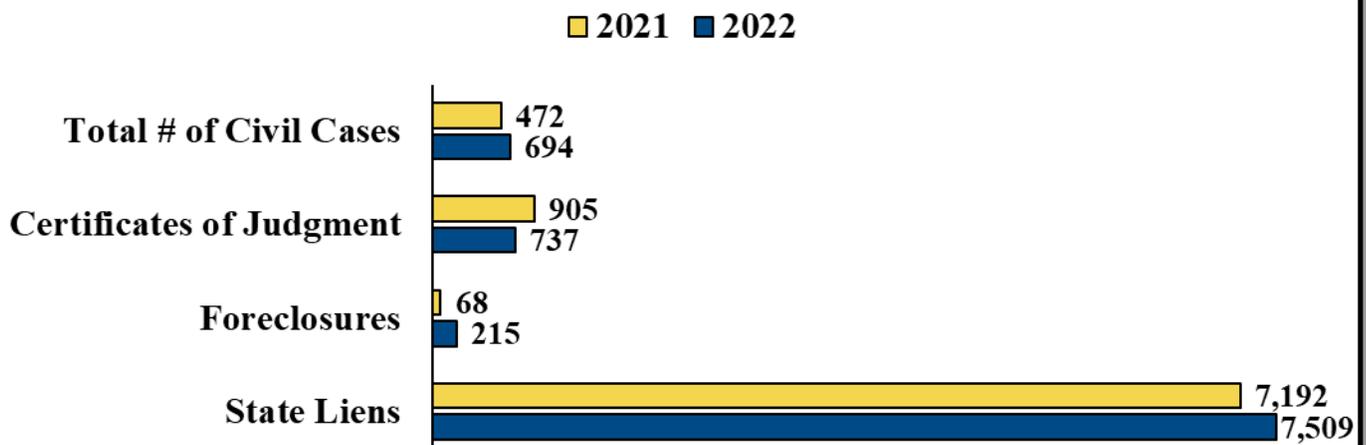
## Legal Department

The Clerk of Courts' Legal Department handles documents or filings for five separate areas: the Civil Division, the Criminal Division, the Domestic Relations Division, the Court of Appeals Division and the Records Division. The Court of Common Pleas serves as a trial court for all civil, criminal, and domestic relations cases that occur within Fairfield County.

## Civil Division

The Civil Division docketes all pleadings in foreclosures, money judgments, garnishments, and other miscellaneous civil actions. The Civil Division also issues and files summonses, subpoenas, writs, Certificates of Judgment, and all other related service in civil cases.

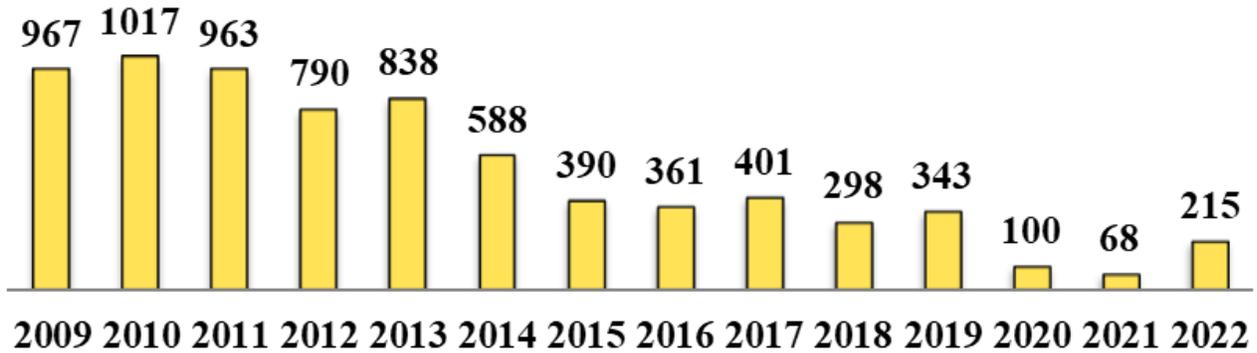
## Civil Division Statistics



# 2022 STATISTICS

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## 14-Year Foreclosure Chart

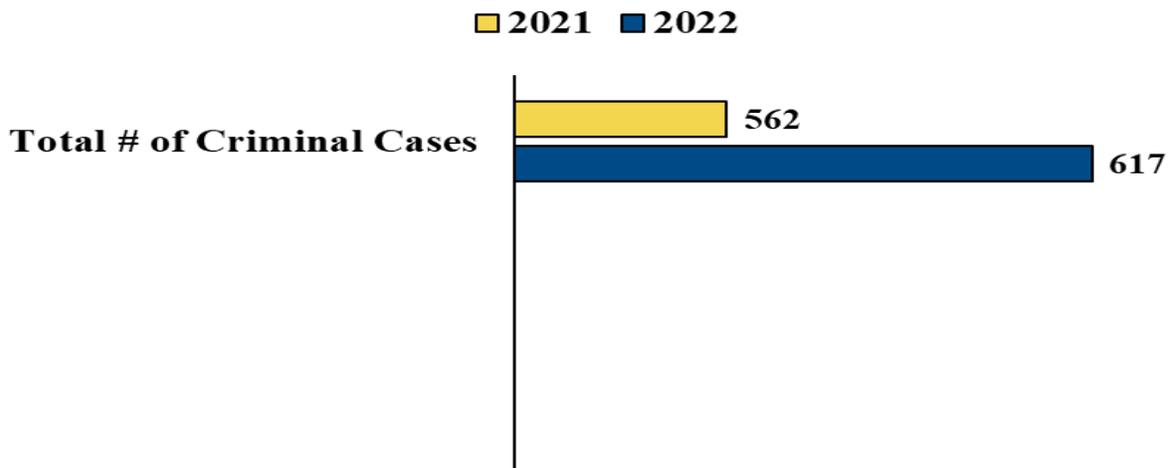


### Criminal Division

The Criminal Division files and docket all pleadings in felony criminal cases bound over to the grand jury and all grand jury indictments. The Criminal Division also issues summonses, subpoenas, warrants, capias and all other related service in criminal cases.



### Criminal Division Statistics



# 2022 STATISTICS

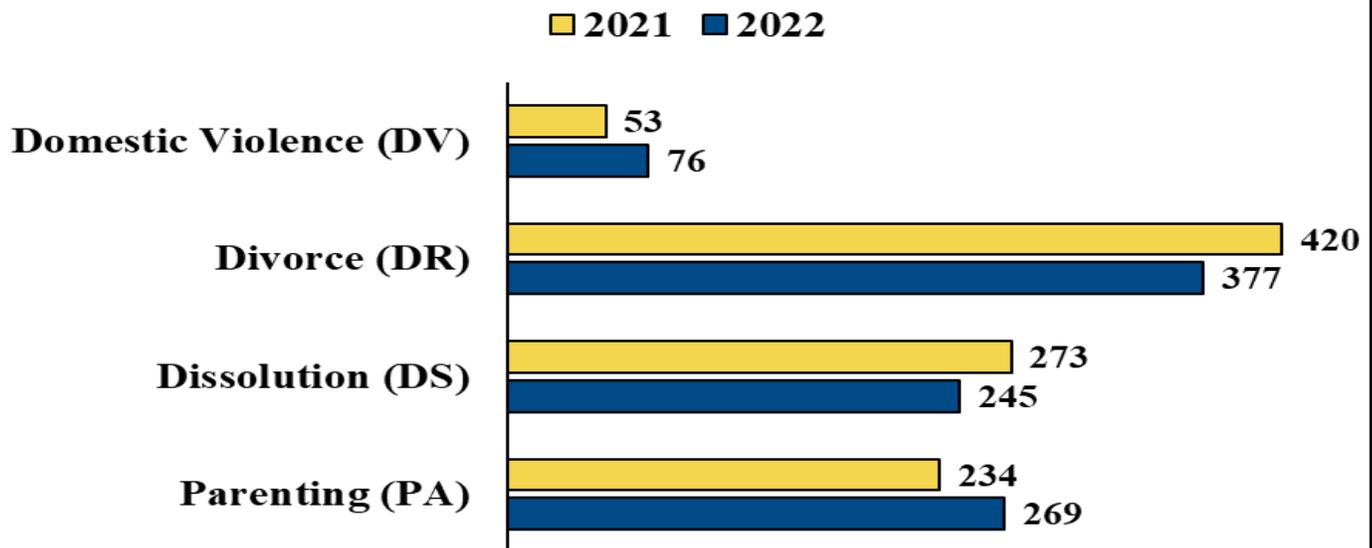
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## Domestic Relations Division

The Domestic Relations Division files and docket all pleadings in divorce, dissolution, parenting, and other miscellaneous domestic actions. The Domestic Relations Division also issues and files summonses, subpoenas, capiases, and all other related service in domestic cases.



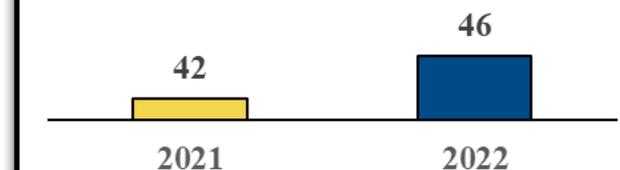
## Domestic Relations Division Statistics



## Court of Appeals Division

The Court of Appeals Division receives all filings and manages all paperwork relating to cases which have been appealed to the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals. This includes any appeals from the Common Pleas Court, Juvenile/Probate Court, and the Municipal Court in Fairfield County. As indicated in the chart below, there were 42 Court of Appeals cases filed in 2021 and 46 Court of Appeals cases filed in 2022.

## Court of Appeals Cases



# 2022 STATISTICS

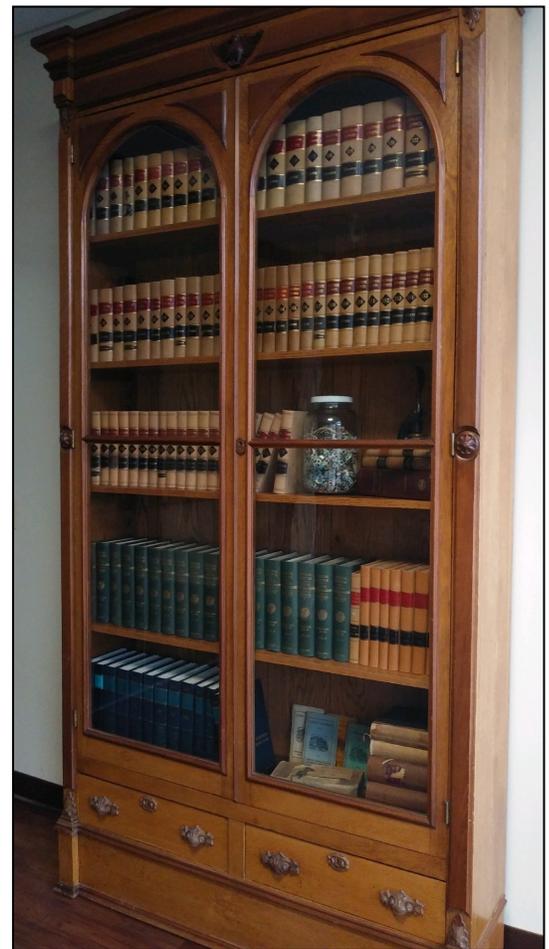
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### Records Division

The Records Division of the Clerk's office is responsible for protecting, preserving, and disseminating official records in accordance with the records retention schedule according to state archival standards and state and federal law. The Records Division also provides public access to records for the Common Pleas Court manages public records requests and maintains over 22 million pages of documents for both the Legal and Title Departments. Records staff work in both the Hall of Justice and also at the Fairfield County Records Center.

### Fairfield County Records Center

In 2019, the move of the Clerk of Courts records which consisted of 3,456 boxes and 3,736 journals to the new Records Center was completed. Clerk of Courts staff re-boxed all files and assisted the other county departments on their individual moves to the new facility that included 6,658 boxes and 8,710 journals. The 16,320 square foot facility houses the records for nearly all county departments. In addition to records storage, the building houses offices for county departments and a training room that is used for trainings and meetings.



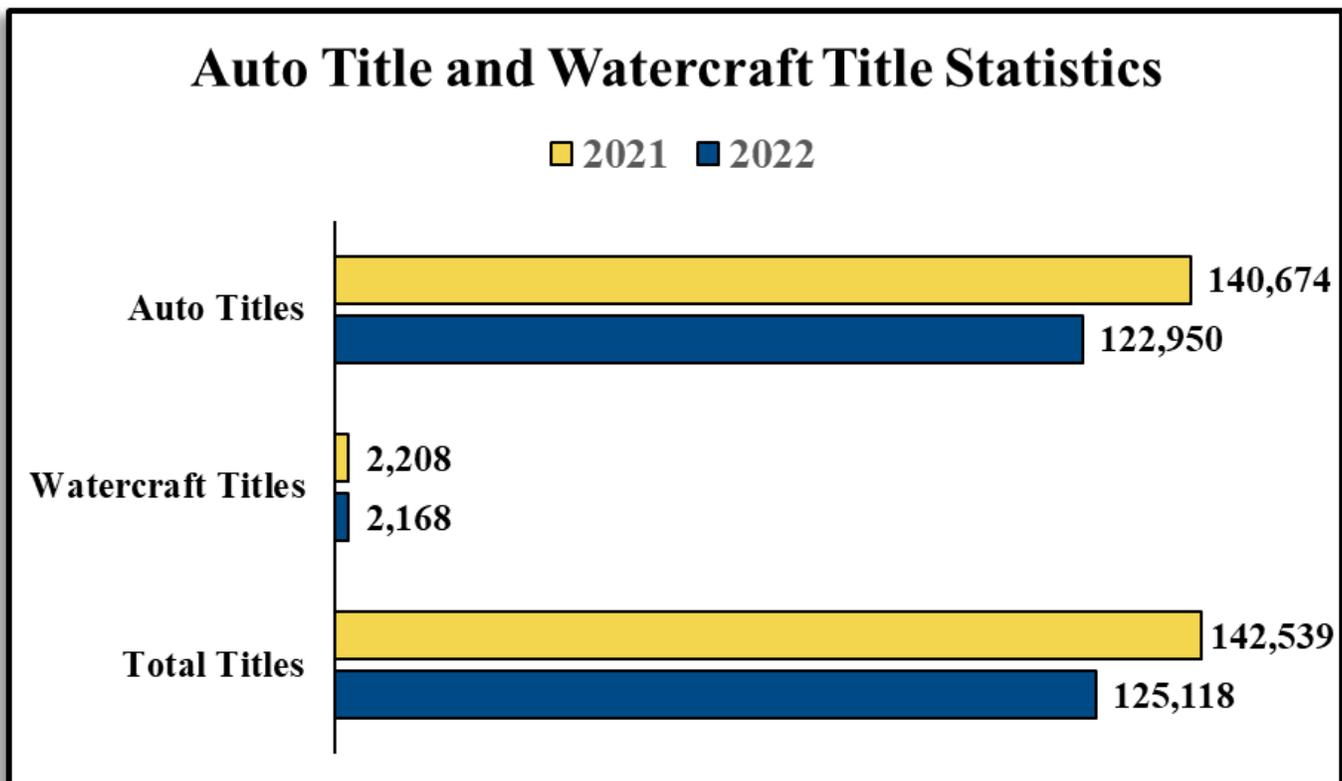
# 2022 STATISTICS

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## Title Department

The Title Department is responsible for issuing and maintaining all motor vehicle and watercraft titles in Fairfield County. This includes handling trailers, campers, motor homes, boats, and boat motors, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), off-highway motorcycles, wave runners, and jet skis. The Title Department also issues duplicate titles when the original has been lost or stolen, titles for new Ohio residents, and mobile home titles as well.

The Title Department processed 122,950 auto titles in 2022 compared to 140,674 in 2021 and processed 2,168 watercraft titles in 2022 compared to 2,208 in 2021. There were 125,118 total titles processed in 2022, compared to 142,539 in 2021, a decrease of 17,421 titles.

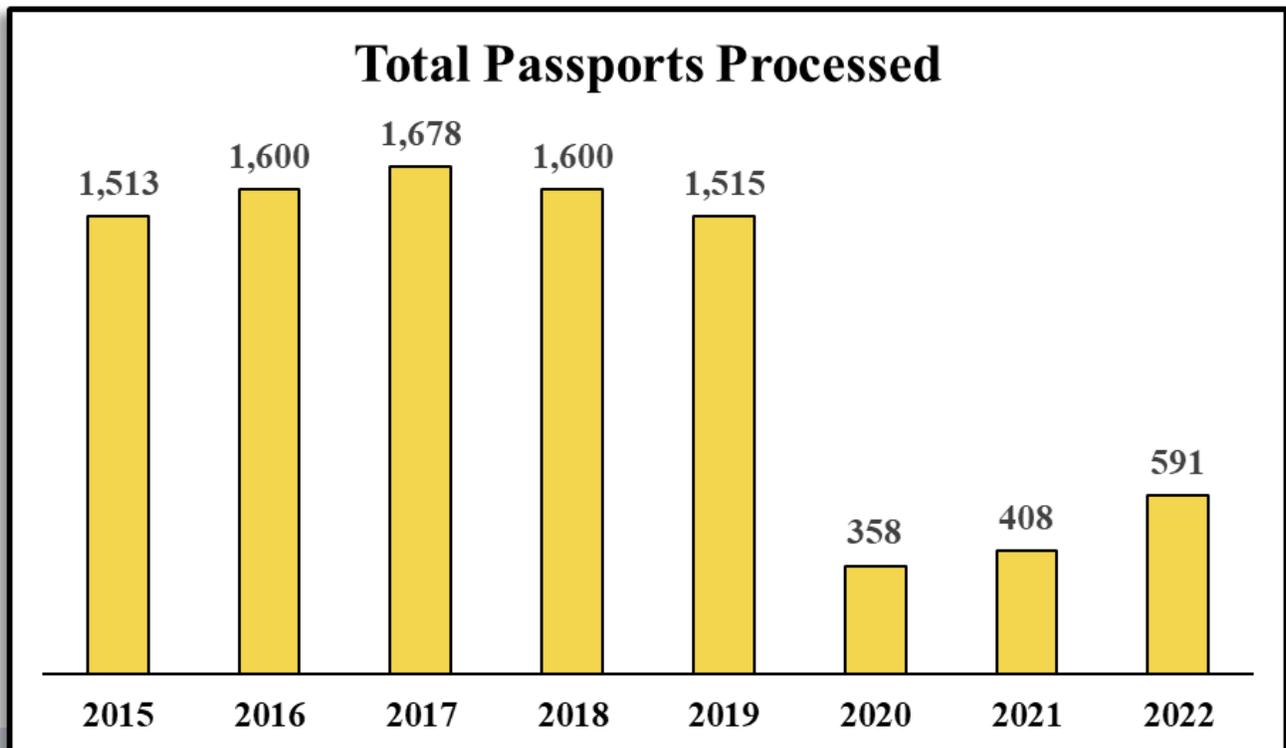
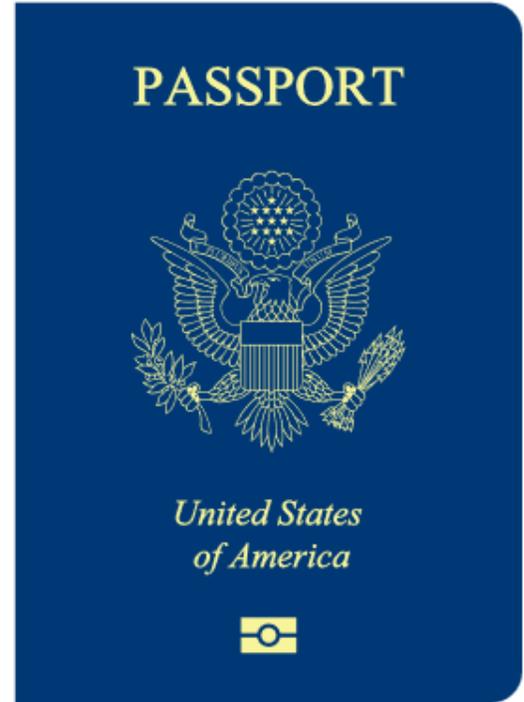


# 2022 STATISTICS

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## Passports

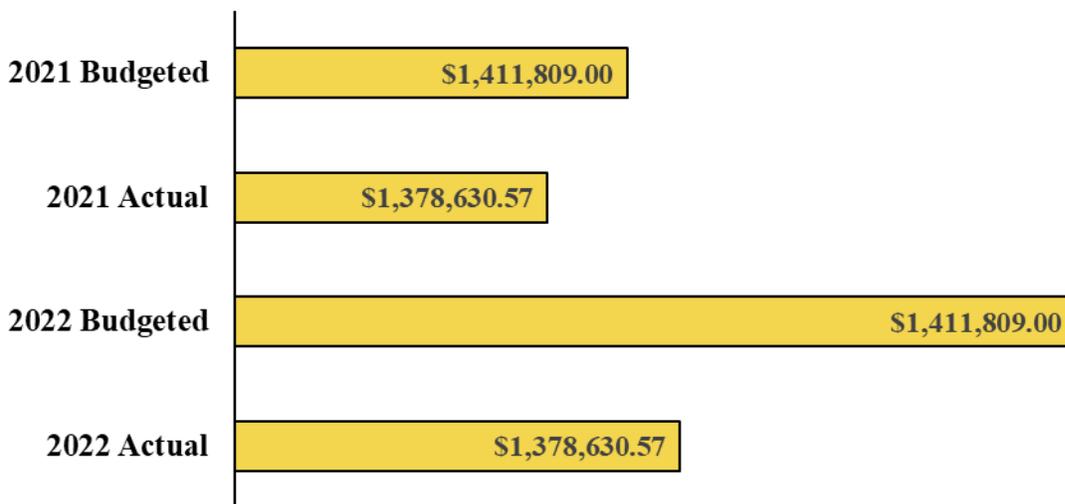
The Fairfield County Clerk of Courts has been designated as an authorized passport acceptance facility by the U.S. Department of State. Passport processing was temporarily suspended by the U.S. Department of State due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 591 passports were processed within the title offices in 2022, compared to 408 passports in 2021. The Pickerington title office received a 100% passport inspection grade from the U.S. State Department (the Lancaster title office received a 100% grade in 2018).



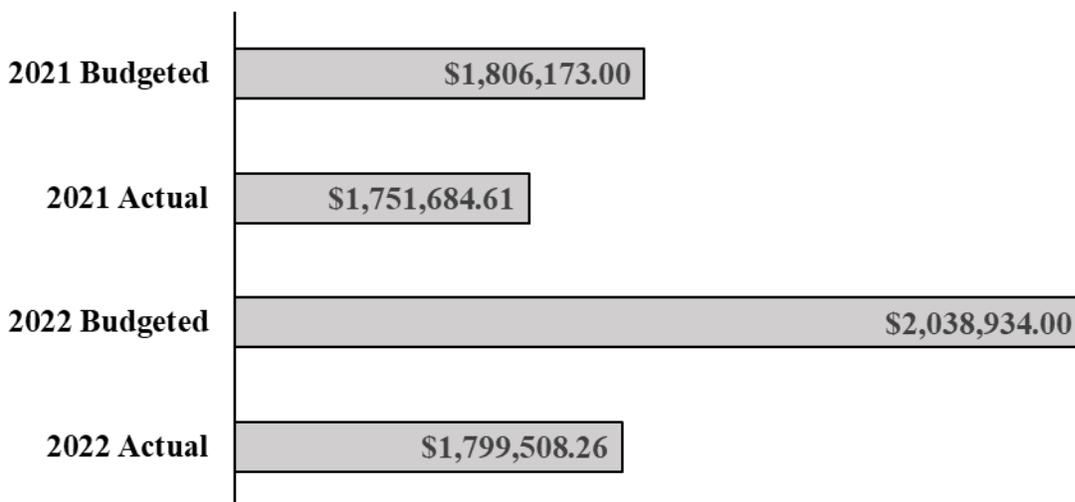
# 2022 BUDGET ANALYSIS



## Clerk of Courts- Legal (General Fund)



## Clerk of Courts- Title (Certificate of Title Fund)

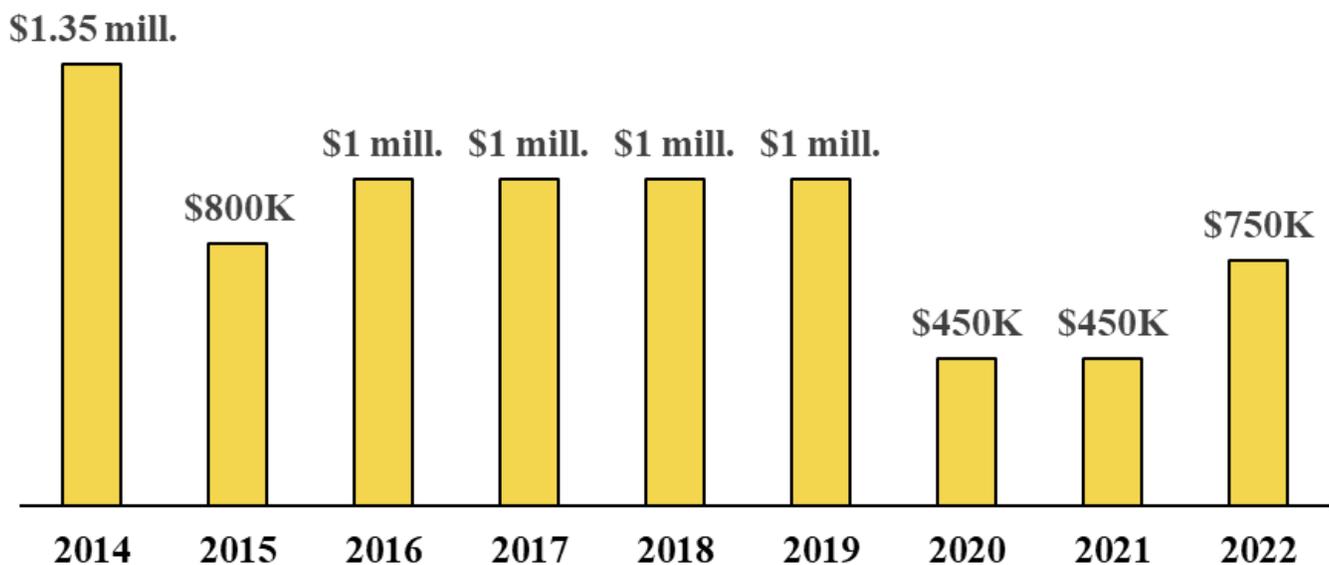


# CERTIFICATE OF TITLE FUND



The Clerk of Courts office takes seriously its responsibility to be faithful and committed custodians of public funds. The legal operation is funded by a General Fund appropriation and the title operation is funded by the Certificate of Title Administration (CTA) Fund. The CTA Fund (See O.R.C. 4505) is generated from title fees and not included in the General Fund budget.

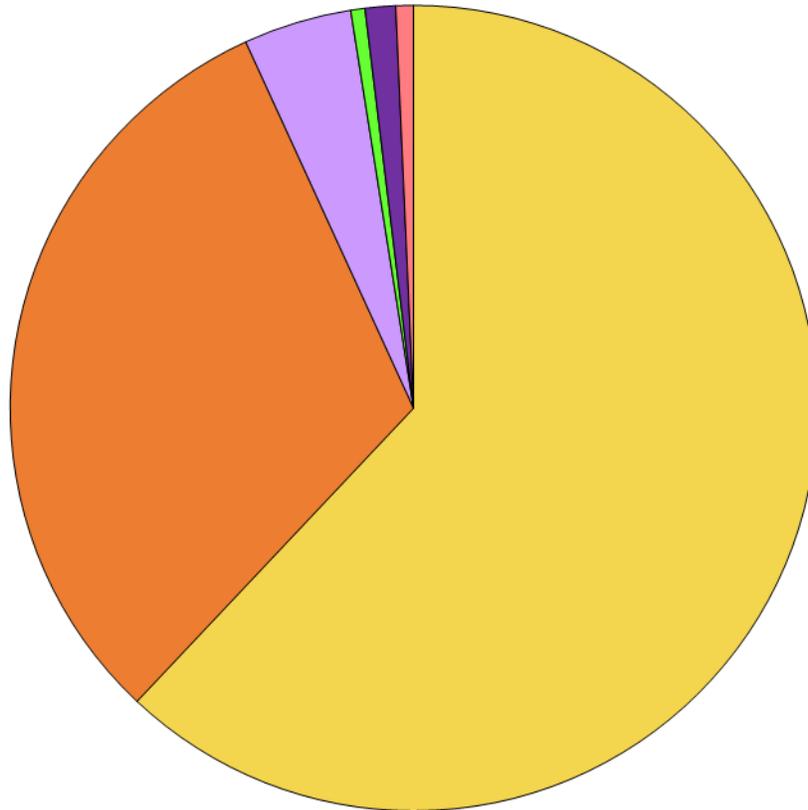
## Certificate of Title Transfers to the County General Fund



# 2022 EXPENSES:

## Legal Department (General Fund)

### Clerk of Courts- Legal (General Fund)



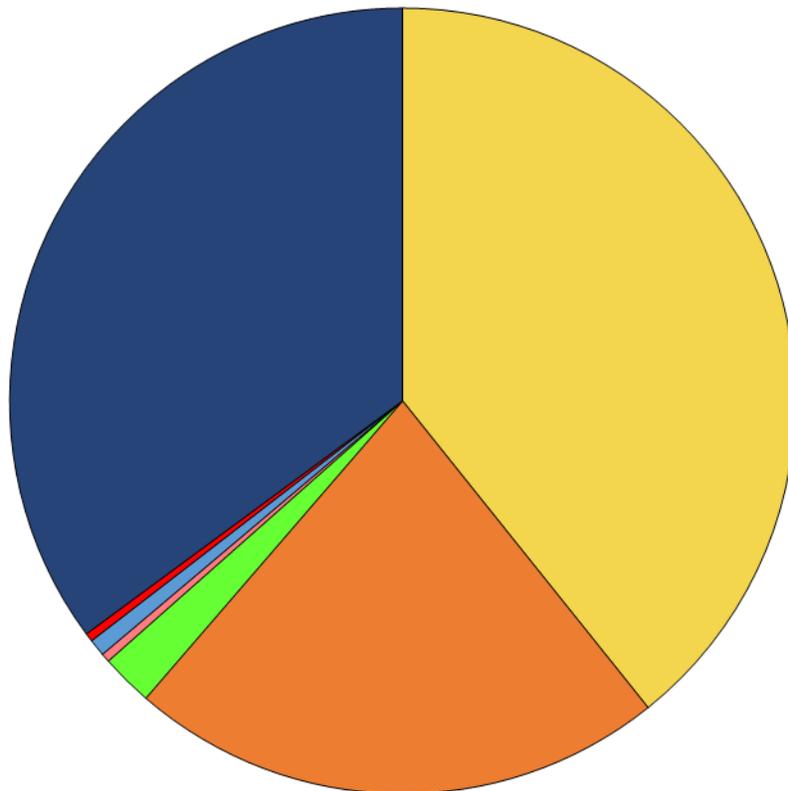
- Employee Salaries- \$888,465.88
- Employee Benefits- \$446,162.61
- Contract Services- \$62,108.18
- Training/Workshops/Travel/Fuel- \$8,174.64
- General Office- \$17,435.69
- Vacation/Sick Payout- \$10,115.91

(Line items totaling less than \$2,500 omitted from chart)

# 2022 EXPENSES:

## Title Department (Certificate of Title Fund)

### Clerk of Courts- Title (Certificate of Title Fund)



- Employee Salaries- \$838,581.79
- Employee Benefits- \$471,683.01
- Contract Services- \$45,776.12
- Training/Workshops/Travel/Fuel- \$7,691.28
- General Office/Furniture- \$15,102.49
- Equipment & Software- \$7,381.10
- Transfer to General Fund- \$750,000.00

(Line items totaling less than \$2,500 omitted from chart)

# MONIES COLLECTED: GENERAL FUND AND CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

## LEGAL: GENERAL FUND

Account Distribution	
Clerk Fees Collected	\$521,666.35
Computer Fund	\$148,950.51
Garnishment Deposit Received	\$579,701.30
Deposit Money Received	\$2,239,712.14
Bond Money Collected	\$284,926.00
Probation Fees Collected	\$186,366.58
Other Misc. Fees and Fines Collected	\$631,467.17
<b>Total Monies Collected and Distributed</b>	<b>\$4,592,790.05</b>

## TITLE: CERTIFICATE OF TITLE FUND

County Remittance Summary			
	Amount collected and remitted to County	Amount collected and remitted to State	Total amount collected and remitted
Total Vehicle Fees:	\$1,206,907.50	\$367,307.00	\$1,574,214.50
Total Vehicle Taxes:	\$783,397.03	\$78,457,905.14	\$79,241,302.17
<b>Total Vehicle Fees and Taxes:</b>	<b>\$1,990,304.53</b>	<b>\$78,825,905.14</b>	<b>\$80,815,516.67</b>
Total Watercraft Fees:	\$25,442.50	\$7,006.50	\$32,449.00
Total Watercraft Taxes:	\$16,675.64	\$1,634,377.72	\$1,651,053.36
<b>Total Watercraft Fees and Taxes:</b>	<b>\$42,118.14</b>	<b>\$1,641,384.22</b>	<b>\$1,683,502.36</b>
Grand Total Fees:	\$1,232,350.00	\$374,313.50	\$1,606,663.50
Grand Total Taxes:	\$800,072.67	\$80,092,282.86	\$80,892,355.53
<b>Grand Total Fees and Taxes:</b>	<b>\$2,032,422.67</b>	<b>\$80,466,596.36</b>	<b>\$82,499,019.03</b>

# MONIES COLLECTED: COMPUTER FUND

## LEGAL: COMPUTER FUND

Account Distribution	
Computer Fund	\$146,860.57

# MONIES COLLECTED

Monies Collected by Payment Type	
Total ACH Payments	\$44,128,609.24
Total ADA Payments	\$12,998.65
Total Cash Payments	\$1,326,790.95
Total Check Payments	\$40,080,766.35
Total Credit Card Payments	\$1,720,128.38
Total EFT Payments	\$22,815.00
<b>Total Monies Collected by Payment Type</b>	<b>\$87,292,108.57</b>



# FUN FACTS

1,971=  
most titles  
processed in  
one day  
(June 6, 2016).

22,007=  
most titles  
processed in  
one month  
(March 2016).

1780=  
the oldest document in  
our historical archives is  
a land document from  
Thomas Jefferson (July  
12, 1780).

223,586=  
Most titles  
processed in  
one year  
(2016).

1803=  
the year the first  
Fairfield County  
Clerk of Courts was  
appointed  
(Hugh Boyle).

2,786,750=  
website hits in  
2022.

[www.FairfieldCountyClerk.com](http://www.FairfieldCountyClerk.com)

\$7,800,0000=  
Total amount  
transferred (2014-2022)  
from the Certificate of  
Title Fund to the county  
General Fund.

43=  
the number of  
employees in the  
Clerk of Courts  
office.

# STAFF RECOGNITION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Fairfield County's Annual Employee Recognition Event: Katie Wilkerson (10 years), Helen Berens (10 years), Valli Delaney (15 years), Carie Fragoso (15 years), Traci Less (15 years), Cassie Strickler (15 years), Betsy Thompson (15 years), Wendy Tharp (10 years), Jessica Murphy (15 years), Chief Deputy Cathie Warner, Lisa Campbell (25 years), Clerk of Courts Branden Meyer.

## RETIREMENT NEWS:

Title Deputy Clerk Linda Evans retired after 33 years of service.

Title Deputy Clerk Mindy Rockefeller retired after 33 years of service.

*"A company's employees are its greatest asset and your people are your product."  
- Richard Branson*

# OFFICE LOCATIONS



Administrative & Fiscal Department  
Legal Department  
Hall of Justice  
224 E. Main Street  
Lancaster, OH 43130

Records Division  
Hall of Justice and  
Fairfield County Records Center  
138 W. Chestnut Street  
Lancaster, OH 43130



Title Department  
Lancaster Title Office  
982 Liberty Drive  
Lancaster, OH 43130

Title Department  
Pickerington Title Office  
485 Hill Road  
Pickerington, OH 43147

# STAFF DIRECTORY

## Clerk of Courts

Branden Meyer

## Chief Deputy

Cathie Warner

## Administrative/Fiscal Department

**740-652-7356**

Britney Lee, Manager

Ashley Arter, Fiscal Specialist

Jessica Murphy, Fiscal Specialist

Cassie Strickler, Exec. Asst./Special Projects

## Legal Department

Michelle Carper, Manager

### Civil/Criminal/Court of Appeals Divisions

**740-652-7360**

Jennifer Hanes (CR- Trimmer)

Blue Jones (CR/CV)

Dawna Jones (CR/CV)

Angel Miller (CV)

Erin Robinson (CV- Berens/CA)

Wendy Tharp (CR- Berens)

Betsy Thompson (CA/CR/CV)

Jan Webb (CV- Trimmer)

### Domestic Relations Division

**740-652-7357**

Ashley Bevard (DR/DS/DV)

Carie Fragoso (PA)

Traci Less (DR/DS/DV)

Regina Long (PA)

### Records Division

**740-652-7358**

Christy Barker

Helen Berens

Jessie Bowlen

Brandy Brooks

Amanda McCrady

Jeanie Wears

## Title Department

### Lancaster Title Office

**740-652-7540**

Kourtney Enyart, Supervisor

Tina Childers

Debbie Hall

Angela Kempton

Robin Mathias

Mindy Rockefeller

Steve Sessler

Sandy Warner

### Pickerington Title Office

**614-835-2610**

Kristi Arter, Supervisor

Angela Blackburn

Karen Butcher

Lisa Campbell

Robin Carter

Valli Delaney

Michelle Liedtke

Patience Martin

Katie Wilkerson

Amber Woodside

**General inquiries may be sent to**  
**ClerkofCourts@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov**

