

2021 Annual Report

Fairfield County
Juvenile & Probate Court
Judge Terre L. Vandervoort



FAIRFIELD
COUNTY • OHIO

JUVENILE & PROBATE COURT

Forward by Judge Terre L. Vandervoort

Fairfield County Juvenile Court's Guiding Principles remain as the primary focus for my team: to achieve balanced attention to the protection of the community, imposition of accountability, and the development of skills and competencies needed to improve family functioning. Our approach to achieving these guiding principles involves basic balanced and restorative justice principles and evidence-based practices and interventions that measure risk, intervention, quality, efficiency, and outcomes.

If Fairfield County Juvenile Court becomes an unplanned stop on a child's journey through adolescence to adulthood, we owe it to that child and the future of our community to make the detour worthwhile. Guided by the premise that each child is a unique individual, the interventions and services developed by the Court are evidence-based practices that vary in scope and intensity to match the risk level and needs of each juvenile offender.

In order to reduce the likelihood a youth will reoffend, research indicates that courts should focus resources on individuals most likely to offend. By aligning our programs with nationally recognized models, all levels of intervention

are tailored to the specific risk level of each youth. Fairfield County Juvenile Court uses research-based risk assessment tools to determine whether each juvenile offender poses a low, medium, or high risk of reoffending.

Research also indicates that most delinquents outgrow their offending behaviors because they acquire skills; obtain employment; establish close, caring personal relationships; and form attachments and bonds to pro-social groups and institutions.

Using a restorative justice approach, Fairfield County Juvenile Court has developed services to bolster competencies in five major skill areas: pro-social skills to address conflict resolution and anger management; moral-reasoning skills which focus on connecting thoughts and actions; academic skills; workforce development; and independent living skills.

From intake to case closure, Fairfield County Juvenile Court commits its resources, interventions and decisions to achieving these principles: protection of the community, offender accountability, and skill and competency development.



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Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

In 2021, Fairfield County Juvenile Court committed to become a “JDAI” court. The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is one of the nation’s most successful and widespread juvenile justice system reform initiatives.

The focus of JDAI is to reduce reliance on juvenile detention where youth have often been needlessly detained with long-term negative consequences for both public safety and youth development.

JDAI was created to significantly and safely reduce detention populations through appropriate screening, assessment, and placement into detention alternatives. While JDAI’s efforts are primarily focused on the detention phase, detention reform is a major catalyst for other changes in juvenile justice which include the following Core Strategies:

- Promoting collaboration between juvenile court officials, probation agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, schools, community organizations and advocates;

- Using data collection and analysis to guide decision-making;
- Utilizing objective admissions criteria and risk assessment instruments to reduce subjective decision-making regarding placement in secure detention facilities;
- Implementing alternatives to detention programs in lieu of locked detention;
- Instituting case processing reforms to expedite the flow of cases through the system;
- Reducing the number of youth detained for probation violations or failing to appear in court, and the number held in detention awaiting transfer to a residential facility;
- Combatting racial and ethnic disparities by examining data to identify policies and practices that may disadvantage youth based on race or ethnicity.

- Monitoring and improving conditions of confinement in detention facilities.

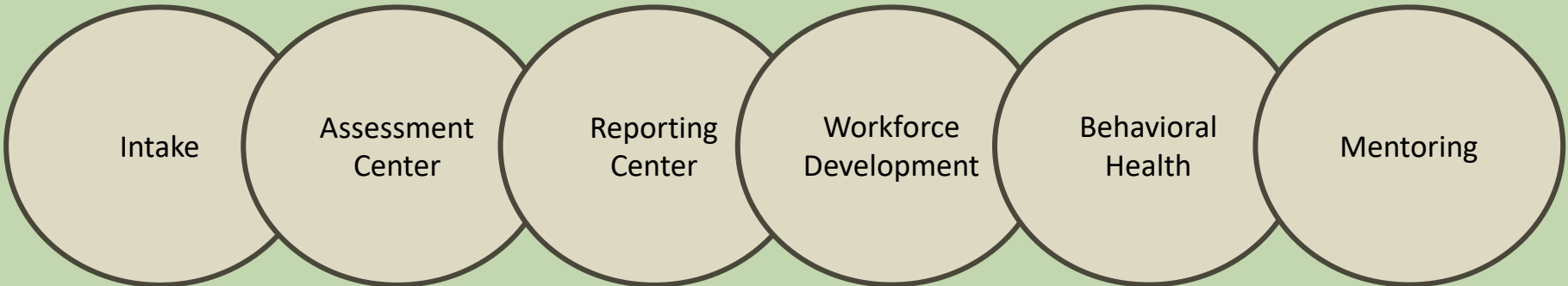
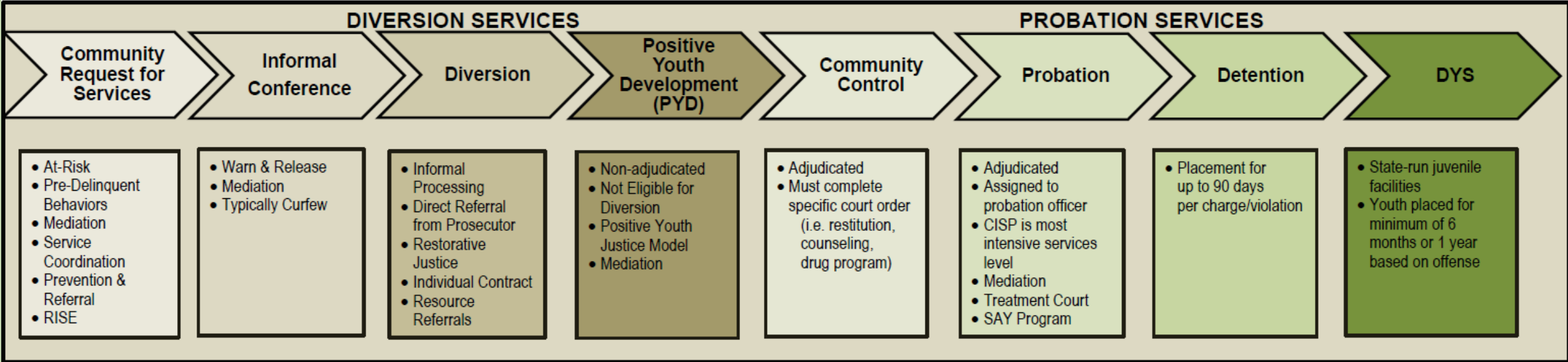
At Fairfield County Juvenile Court, this initiative included revised criteria for placement in secure detention, which has resulted in a dramatic reduction of youth being placed in detention for low-level, non-violent offenses.

Another positive result has been increased use of diversion and utilization of Positive Youth Development theory and strategies for all cases, including probation.

As an alternative to detention placement, the Court secured funding from the Ohio Department of Youth Services to establish an Assessment and Intervention Center designed to process youth away from contact with the juvenile justice system and detainment and toward community services that more appropriately address youth and family needs that create a high risk for juvenile justice involvement.



Fairfield County Juvenile Court Array of Interventions



Fairfield County Juvenile Court Interventions

Community Protection

- Identify Risk
- Manage Risk
- Minimize Risk

Diversion Services

- Community Request for Services
- Informal Conferences
- Diversion Accountability
- Safe Harbor
- Positive Youth Development
- Mediation

Offender Accountability

- Accept Responsibility
- Victim Impact
- Restitution
- Community Service

Probation

- Community Control
- Supervision
- Case Management
- Graduated Sanctions
- Positive Incentives
- Cognitive Interventions
- Community Intensive Services Program

Skill Building

- Pro-Social Skills
- Moral Reasoning
- Academics
- Workforce Development
- Independent Living

Special Dockets

- Juvenile Treatment Court
- Excel (formerly Family Court)



Assessment Center

Fairfield County Juvenile Assessment Center serves as a single point of entry providing individualized processing, screening, and referral of at-risk youth and juvenile offenders. Referrals to the Center can come from the community or from law enforcement.

Assessment Center staff respond to immediate crises as well as ongoing needs of youth and their families, while increasing law enforcement availability to the community through provision of timely service. The Assessment Center partners with community-based agencies to provide coordinated best-practice and cost-effective responses, services and resources to youth and their families – including screenings, assessments, and referrals.

The Center has a dual goal:

1. Prevent the progression of behaviors that put the youth at risk of juvenile justice involvement.
2. Prevent the use of secure detention for youth who can be safely served while maintaining family stability.

The Center has two different tracks: one for youth transported by law enforcement agencies and one for community-based referrals. The Community Track strives to keep youth at home and out of the juvenile justice system by connecting families with supportive services to promote safe, healthy, and happy kids.

Young people receive early intervention screening and assessment to identify factors contributing to concerning behavior. These informal referrals are accepted from parents and other family members, as well as professionals—including law enforcement, school officials, and agency representatives.

The Law Enforcement Assessment Track process begins with an officer bringing a youth to the Center, where custody is exchanged. Once the complaint is completed, the Officer clears the case and returns to duty. Parents/guardians are contacted to come in as well.

There are several possible outcomes of this initial referral, based on the screenings and interview:

- Youth returns home with parent/caregiver; or
- Youth stays with relative/other adult for the night until morning; or
- Youth may be taken to detention by Court staff; or
- Emergency respite is an option that Fairfield County will explore.

The Assessment Center staff interact with the Fairfield County Prosecutor to determine if a case can be diverted, should be formally filed, or will be handled informally.

Funded by the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Assessment Center’s Community Track began providing services July 1, 2019. The Law Enforcement Track began formal operations on January 20, 2020. However, the Assessment Center was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective March 23, 2020, youth were no longer brought into the physical facility; a transition to remote (phone and virtual) interaction with youth and law enforcement began. In-person services resumed in spring 2021.



<u>ASSESSMENT CENTER DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019
Assessment Center Community Track	40 Youth Referred Service provided/attempted for all.	48 Youth Referred Service provided/attempted for all.	36 Youth Referred Service provided/attempted for all.
Assessment Center Law Enforcement Track	19 Youth Referred Service provided/attempted for all.	22 Youth Referred Service provided/attempted for all.	Scheduled to open January 2020.

Informal Conferences

When a youth is referred to the Juvenile Court as the result of a citation issued by law enforcement, usually for a curfew violation or other minor misdemeanor (such as tobacco possession), a court officer meets with the youth and parent(s). Through a brief interview, recommendations can be made for preventive or other services, and the youth is admonished and released. Informal conferences do not become part of a juvenile's record.

<u>INFORMAL CONFERENCES DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Informal Conferences Caseload	69	86	58	98	85	188	168



Diversion Accountability Program

Developed in 2015, the Diversion Accountability Program (DAP) is offered as an alternative to formal case processing and/or probation. Extensive research conducted during the past 25 years shows that juvenile offenders deemed at low risk for reoffending benefit most from minimal court intervention. Conversely, research indicates that providing intensive monitoring and treatment to low-risk youth can have a detrimental impact on them. DAP accepts referrals directly from the County Prosecutor or from the Judge/Magistrate when a youth:

1. Is alleged to have committed an offense that can range from a status offense to a misdemeanor, * and
2. Admits to the offense, and
3. Is deemed at low or moderate risk of reoffending as determined through administration of the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) questionnaire.

In a traditional diversion case, the delinquency or unruly matter proceeds through informal processing as opposed to adjudication. In a case referred from the Judge or Magistrate, the matter has already been filed formally. The youth then enters an admission or is found delinquent; the disposition order is completion of DAP.

Diverting these particular cases from formal prosecution or probation and further involvement with the Court enables the young person to acknowledge responsibility for their actions and, through a contract agreement signed by the parent(s) and youth, accept and complete appropriate consequences.

Diversion also provides the youth and family the opportunity to access needed resources, with the goal of preventing further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Following the referral of a case for DAP, a comprehensive interview with the juvenile and parent(s) is scheduled and facilitated by a Diversion Specialist. During the assessment interview, the Specialist gathers information regarding school behavior and academic challenges, peer relations, and family dynamics.

In addition, specific screening is administered for mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as prior or current exposure to trauma. If concerns are identified that may indicate a need for intervention, the Specialist refers the youth and family to appropriate resources; these recommendations are included in the DAP contract.

Other terms of the DAP contact may include the completion of an apology letter, an essay relative to the offense, payment of restitution directly to the victim, community service, referral to the Mentor program, or referral to other programs offered through the Court or within the community.

Youth who are accepted into the Diversion Accountability Program remain in it until all terms of the agreed-upon contract are fulfilled. Upon DAP completion, which averages 60 days, the youth is successfully terminated, and their record is sealed.

The time between successful termination and sealing of a Diversion case depends on the level of offense and whether or not the youth reoffends during a specified period of time. If a youth fails to complete the terms of the contract or commits a subsequent offense while on DAP, the case is terminated unsuccessfully and is returned to the Prosecutor for formal processing or is returned to the Court for further orders if already adjudicated.

* In some cases, felonies are addressed through Diversion.

<u>DIVERSON ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM (DAP) DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Youth Referred to Diversion	229	200	255	229	313	183	144
Successful Completion	94.9%	86.5%	90.0%	83.6%	91.4%	84.9%	85.6%
Unsuccessful Completion	3.8%	12.5%	9.2%	15.8%	8.3%	12.4%	13.4%
Neutral Outcome Due to Medical Reason	1.3%	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	2.7%	1.0%
Traditional Diversion Cases	95%	88%	81%	77%	70%	59%	56%
Non-traditional Diversion Cases	5%	12%	19%	23%	30%	41%	44%
Offense Level: Felony	0.0%	1.1%	0.8%	0.4%	1.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Offense Level: Misdemeanor	68.1%	60.6%	69.4%	78.8%	73.3%	70.4%	92.1%
Offense Level: Status (curfew, tobacco)	31.9%	38.3%	29.8%	20.8%	24.8%	29.6%	6.5%

* 2020 showed a reduction in Diversion cases, which was directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the impact of SB 57, which legalized hemp but not marijuana, limiting the ability to prosecute marijuana-related offenses.

Safe Harbor Diversion Services

Human trafficking of women and children is a reality for the Fairfield County community. Trafficking in a rural setting may look different than it does in larger urban communities, but its prevalence is increasing.

In 2019, University of Cincinnati identified 4,209 youth in Ohio at risk as victims of domestic minor sex trafficking. This staggering number affects every area of the state, including Fairfield County. In 2020, Fairfield County Juvenile Court saw an increase in the type of juvenile cases that exhibited red flags of human trafficking. In 2021, Fairfield County Juvenile Court identified five youth as high-risk for human trafficking and diverted their cases to Safe Harbor Diversion Services.

Ranging from the traditional out-of-state runaway arrested at an airport to young people living in hotels with no visible means of support or parent engagement, these cases were

the impetus to a new initiative led by the Court and joined by these Fairfield County community partners: Child Protective Services; Community Action Homeless Youth Program; Family, Adult and Children First Council; and Gracehaven in Columbus.

The name, Safe Harbor, was taken from Ohio legislation that provides for special handling of these troubling cases. Safe Harbor automatically diverts some charges, such as prostitution and soliciting. In rural Ohio, juveniles are not typically receiving those type of charges. However, charges of truancy, theft, and runaway/unruly youth are red flags that human trafficking may be happening. National and other Ohio best practice protocols have been used to develop the Court's Safe Harbor program.

Judge Vandervoort convened the Fairfield County Safe Harbor Initiative Advisory Board to begin development of

a comprehensive county-wide approach. Advisory Board members researched and attended relevant training. Fairfield County Foundation Women's Giving Circle provided funding for a community-wide training for Fairfield County child- and family-serving agencies.

Cases diverted through Safe Harbor receive behavioral health assessments and referrals, Child Protective Services involvement, skill-building, and empowerment/support for the youth as well as support in addressing the charges they did receive. The youth, once confirmed into Safe Harbor, is considered a victim or survivor of human trafficking.

The Court's Behavioral Health Unit developed a human trafficking screening protocol for all youth who interact with the Court, regardless of which pathway they come into the Court.



Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program is an intermediate Diversion intervention for youth who do not require the more intensive supervision of Probation but need more supervision than is provided in General Diversion. The PYD Program focuses on development and enhancement of skills and competencies that reduce at-risk behaviors and lead to stronger pro-social attachments and an increased sense of belonging.

The PYD Program track is available to misdemeanor level offenders, with the possibility for felony offenders to be

accepted by judicial discretion. General examples of offenses for which this program is best suited include truancy/school issues, offenses committed due to a mental health disorder, or drug-related charges.

Integration of youth into multiple social environments is a key component of the PYD framework. Each referred youth accepted into the program works with a PYD Specialist to increase involvement in school, civic improvement projects, church-related activities, and/or other community service activities. PYD focuses on the

development of new skills and opportunities that enable each youth to actively participate in such activities and to make a positive contribution to their community.

Unlike Probation, PYD minimizes the use of sanctions, focusing instead on identifying and addressing individual strengths and areas of need. By focusing efforts on enhancing and improving various life domains— such as work, education, relationships, community, health, and creativity - the PYD Program provides the support needed for youth to build on leadership strengths.

<u>POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (PYD) PROGRAM DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Youth Referred to PYD Program	39	50	51	77	14
Offense Level: Felony	6 (15.4%)	7 (14.0%)	3 (6.0%)	2 (8.0%)	3 (21.0%)
Offense Level: Misdemeanor	22 (56.4%)	25 (50.0%)	34 (67.0%)	54 (70.0%)	9 (65.0%)
Offense Level: Status	11 (28.2%)	18 (36.0%)	14 (27.0%)	17 (22.0%)	2 (14.0%)



Mediation

As one of the most recently added Diversionary programs, Mediation was offered for the first time as a service to youth who may otherwise incur a formal charge of disorderly conduct, misdemeanor assault, criminal mischief/damaging, menacing, or other misdemeanor offenses that do not pose a serious threat to the community or themselves. After researching best practices throughout the state and nation, the Mediation Program was developed to address these conflicts. A part-time certified Mediator was assigned to facilitate these cases.

Referrals to Mediation may come from the Fairfield County Prosecutor’s Office, the Fairfield County Juvenile Court Judge or Magistrate(s), Probation, or Diversion. Diversion staff may refer a youth on their caseload as an alternative

to “bumping” that individual to Probation, specifically in instances where a conflict exists (such as domestic violence, fighting, etc.). Probation Case Managers may refer a youth on their caseload when there is indication of a conflict in the youth’s life.

Research has also demonstrated that youth who engage in physical conflict benefit from learning alternative ways to resolve issues with peers. It offers both (or additional) parties an opportunity to identify their conflict, own their own part in the conflict, and work toward an understanding of the other person’s point of view.

Mediation offers an identified victim a chance to ask questions that only the offender can answer—such as the how and why of the offense. Mediation is also an opportunity for the victim to express frustrations and concerns. The goal of the agreement reached through

the Mediation process is to restore in some manner all that was lost by the victim.

Mediation also gives the offender an opportunity to take responsibility for their actions by facing the victim and working together to create an agreement that is acceptable to all parties. The Mediation Agreement allows the offender to be personally accountable for the loss, injury, or damage done against the victim.

Once the youth complete the Mediation process and, if they experience no further conflicts for a period of at least 30 days, the matter is closed successfully, and no formal charges are filed.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, Mediation was facilitated via Zoom for the duration of 2021.

<u>MEDIATION DATA</u>	2021
Mediation Caseload	23



Community Control

Community Control, a general term for allowing the Judge or Magistrate to issue all other orders for disposition upon adjudication of a juvenile offender, involves less restrictive monitoring than Probation or the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program. Youth placed on Community Control are given orders for specific consequences—such as payment of restitution, enrollment in a drug education program, fulfillment of community work service hours, or other orders that are monitored by Court staff through successful completion. For adjudicated youth who do not require the intensity of monitoring or treatment provided through probation or PYD, Community Control is an intervention imposed when a specific Court order must be completed.

<u>COMMUNITY CONTROL DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Community Control Caseload	12	17	17	19	23	14	17



Probation

Probation is treated as the final step of community supervision and is reserved for adjudicated juvenile offenders who are at higher risk of reoffending. The primary focus of Probation is the safety and security of the youth and the community. Ongoing monitoring of Court orders is accomplished through regular and frequent contact with the juvenile, family, and collateral sources (e.g. school, employer, counselor, etc.) by a Probation Case Manager.

Sanctions for violating Court orders vary, depending upon the severity of the violation. Graduated sanctions may

include but are not limited to restriction of driving privileges, house arrest, electronic monitor, no-contact order, community service hours, frequent drug screens, placement at the Reporting Center for up to 25 days, placement in the Community Intensive Services Program (CISP), or Detention.

The Community Intensive Services Program (CISP) is the most intensive level of probation. It is designed to provide an increased level of monitoring for youth who commit more serious offenses, or for chronic offenders. The structured phases of CISP include daily reporting,

a GPS monitor, house arrest, mental health counseling, referral to community programs, surveillance, and supervised community service, among other intensive requirements. CISP is ordered for youth who have been on probation and failed or who have not met the conditions of probation and have committed subsequent offenses.

While the number of youth who are served through formal Probation has decreased following the introduction of diversionary programming, the needs of the youth and families served are far more complex, and the case management is more time-consuming.

<u>PROBATION DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Probation Caseload/Youth Served	42	74	139	205	265	351	536



Detention

Research on the impact of detention on adolescent development and mental health indicates that its use increases the likelihood of recidivism and negatively affects future employment and educational opportunities. At Fairfield County Juvenile Court, detention is considered only after other graduated sanctions have been attempted. While placement in secure detention may be ordered for up to 90 days per charge or violation, it is used primarily as a short-term sanction when the youth is a danger to themselves or the community, or when the youth is at risk of absconding.

<u>DETENTION DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Total Number of Bed Days	1,098	887	2,093	2,767	2,074	2,061	2,961	4,486	6,132	4,835	5,110	5,869	6,767	6,745	6,026	5,957	4,837
Average Number of Juvenile in Detention Per Day	3.00	2.42	5.73	7.58	5.68	5.63	8.11	12.29	16.80	13.21	14.00	16.08	18.54	18.48	16.51	16.32	13.35



Fairfield County Juvenile Court Programs and Services

Intake and Assessment

Behavioral Health

Truancy

Rise Program

Mentor Program

Community Service

Reporting Center

Workforce Development

Subsidized Youth Employment Program



Intake and Assessment

Immediately following the formal filing of a charge by the Prosecutor, Fairfield County Juvenile Court begins the process of determining the risk level and needs of every juvenile offender.

Once the youth and parent(s) are served notice of the charge and date of initial court appearance, an Intake and Assessment (I and A) Specialist makes a phone call to the parent to begin compiling a Pre-Arrestment report (PAR) for the Judge or Magistrate. The PAR contains basic information regarding family background, education, mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and pro-social activities.

Based on information from this initial phone interview, the I and A Specialist is also able to include recommendations for temporary orders. The PAR is distributed to the judicial staff, prosecutor, and, if appointed, attorney and guardian ad litem (GAL).

Following the youth being found delinquent or upon the signing of a waiver by the youth's attorney, the Specialist schedules a meeting/interview with the youth and parent(s). The purpose of this meeting/in-depth interview is to screen for the youth's risk of reoffending, and to identify mental health/substance abuse issues, exposure to trauma, or academic concerns.

Multiple evidence-based tools are utilized:

- The Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) comprehensive questionnaire is administered to determine if a youth is at low, moderate or high risk of reoffending;
- The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2) is completed by the youth to determine the presence of serious mental health and/or substance abuse issues; and the

- Child Trauma Screen is administered to determine prior or current exposure to trauma.

In addition to facilitating the comprehensive interview and screenings, the I & A Specialist contacts collateral sources (for which releases of information have been signed by the parent), including schools, counselors, doctors, Child Protective Services, etc., to gather more information.

All information, including results of the interview, screenings, and collateral source feedback, is compiled into a pre-disposition report (PDR), which also includes recommendations for monitoring and intervention. The PDR is distributed to judicial staff, prosecutors, attorney, GAL, and other necessary Court staff (Behavioral Health team, pending Probation Case Manager, pending Diversion Specialist, or Positive Youth Development Case Manager)

<u>INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Cases Referred to Intake and Assessment	81	115	162	260	291	194	188
Average Length of Time in Intake and Assessment before Transfer to Court Program or Case Closure	58 days	71 days	61 days	66 days	61 days	62 days	58 days



Behavioral Health

Licensed social work/mental health professionals within Fairfield County Juvenile Court’s Behavioral Health (BH) team provide mental health and substance abuse assessments for juveniles referred from Probation, Diversion, Intake & Assessment, PYD or by the Judge/Magistrates. If through their interview with the youth and parent(s) it is determined that further counseling or treatment is needed, the team will make a referral for the youth to the most appropriate community resource or provide short-term in-house counseling. In addition, the BH team is available for immediate lethality screening and referral when a juvenile is at risk for suicide or is a threat to others. The BH team also provides case consultation services to all Court staff.

<u>BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Lethality Assessments	3	3	6	36	10	27	31
Mental Health Assessments/Consults	42	67	94	116	99	57	104
Youth in Ongoing Treatment	13	23	44	36	10	27	31
Total Youth Served (Unduplicated)	63	77	129	156	140	158	201



Truancy

Due to the implementation of HB 410 truancy legislation in April 2017, the responsibility for early intervention for school truancy was assigned to the schools. The Court continues to partner with each school district to support individual youth truancy intervention plans. Youth who subsequently receive truancy charges are served through the Court’s Diversion programs when at all possible. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on school attendance and therefore truancy, the Court partnered with schools to provide support for families.

<u>TRUANCY DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Truancy Cases	69	47	56	65	71	89	55
Truancy Cases Diverted	69	47	56	30	50	51	9
Successful Diversion of Truancy Cases	85.9 %	71.2%	72.5%	67.0%	88.0%	80.4%	88.0%
Unsuccessful Diversion of Truancy Cases	8.8%	25.4%	25.0%	30.0%	12.0%	19.6%	12.0%
Diverted Truancy Cases Closed with Neutral Status	5.3%	3.4%	2.5%	3.0%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Rise Program

The Rise Program (formerly Early Warning System) is a collaboration for resources and expertise between Lancaster City Schools, Fairfield County ADAMH Board, Ohio Guidestone, and Juvenile Court. The purpose of Rise is to identify youth who are at risk for entrance into the juvenile justice system and provide timely targeted services at an earlier stage. Collaborative efforts focus on trauma-informed practices, restorative justice practices, and early referrals from all Lancaster City Schools. The RISE Program addresses three main areas of need:

- 1. Mental Health in schools
- 2. Earlier intervention with youth.
- 3. Programming/services for family

<u>RISE PROGRAM DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019
Elementary School	5	7	22
Junior High School	9	15	6
High School	6	3	6
TOTAL	20	25	31



Mentor Program

The goal of the Fairfield County Juvenile Court’s Mentor Program is to provide adjudicated, at-risk youth opportunities to work one-on-one with a screened and trained adult mentor whose support and camaraderie will contribute to the development of positive skills in all areas. Studies show that more than 76% of at-risk young adults with a mentor aspire to enroll in and graduate from college, versus 56% of at-risk young adults who had no mentor. Three types of mentoring are available through the Court’s Mentor Program: one-on-one, through which a pre-screened and trained adult is paired with a Court-involved youth; group mentoring, which involves a weekly meeting with a mentor group facilitator who coordinates and leads a variety of pro-social activities; and team mentoring, involving two or more mentors assigned to one or more youth. An example of team mentoring is a husband and wife mentoring one or more youth.

<u>MENTOR PROGRAM DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Mentor Program Caseload	27	36	40	50	20



Community Service

Community Service provides Court-appointed youth the opportunity to participate in community service work. (The program was formerly known as Youth Accountability Program.) Youth are referred to Community Service by the Judge/Magistrates, Probation, Diversion, PYD, or Intake & Assessment. Each youth can work off assigned hours under the supervision of the Mentoring/Community Services Specialist at several work sites throughout Fairfield County. Sites have included Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Lancaster and Pickerington, food pantries, Maywood Mission, Foundation Dinners, local churches, highway cleanup sites, and many more. Through working with the Specialist and other approved volunteers, youth assigned to Community Service are provided the opportunity to regain community trust, pay restitution, and fulfill obligations while developing new skills and building quality relationships with adult mentors.

<u>COMMUNITY SERVICE DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Number of Youth Performing Community Service	83	128	142	137	130	123	174
Hours Youth Completed in Community Service	1,558	1,797	1,859	1,785	1,927	2,292	3,654



Reporting Center

Located at Connexion West in Lancaster, the Fairfield County Reporting Center was established in September 2016 for the purpose of reducing the number of youth placed in secure detention. Partially funded through the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Reporting Center accepts youth ages 12 through 18 who are referred by Intake and Assessment, Probation, or by the Judge/Magistrates. Eligible youth may be ordered pre-adjudication, by the Court at adjudication, or as a

condition of probation. The Reporting Center provides intensive supervision, as well as supportive services that address identified needs of juveniles who are referred. Programming is based on cognitive behavioral change and structure. Youth who are eligible include those who are not a danger to themselves or others or to the property of others. In addition, a youth who is a flight risk is not eligible for placement in the Reporting Center. Youth placed in the Center can participate in programming at the Reporting

Center for up to 25 days. At times, this track is used when youth on probation need temporary supervision when parent(s) are unable to provide it. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Court was unable to bring youth into the Reporting Center. Center Staff developed a virtual program which enabled the Court to continue providing support to individual youth and families through a creative use of technology and increased staff engagement.

REPORTING CENTER DATA	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Number of Youth Ordered in Lieu of Detention	41	49	106	66	82	29
Number of Hours Served in Lieu of Detention	2,217	2,046	4,846	6,250	5,839	454



Workforce Development Program

In keeping with the principles of restorative justice, the goals of the Workforce Development (WFD) Program are to prepare Court-involved youth for the workforce and to increase their ability to obtain and retain employment.

WFD uses this five-step approach to achieve the goals: assessment, job readiness assistance, individual job search, job placement, and job retention. The WFD Coordinator meets with the juvenile and parent(s) to conduct a comprehensive assessment to determine the level of

assistance needed and identify barriers and challenges. Each youth attends Job Readiness workshops that provide training in interviewing, time management, work habits/conduct, attendance, communication, conflict management, positive relationships with supervisors/ coworkers/good hygiene, and appropriate work attire.

The Coordinator meets with the youth to help create resumes, explain job postings and the value of networking, and complete online job applications.

The Coordinator also assists the youth with completing employment paperwork, reviewing employer expectations, determining work schedules, arranging transportation, balancing school and work, and communicating with supervisors. Workplace issues and problems are identified early and addressed as they occur to avoid resignation or firing. Support services are identified and accessed to help each young person maintain employment. School attendance and grades are reviewed on a regular basis.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM DATA	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Youth Referred to Workforce Development	24	27	45	48	52
Obtained Unsubsidized Employment	7	14	30	38	26
Retained Unsubsidized Employment for At Least 4 Months	4	8	16	20	10
Average Hourly Wage Earned	\$9.70	\$9.17	\$8.96	\$8.38	\$8.30
Completed Work Readiness Training	0*	4*	18	20	19

* Due to COVID-19, Work Readiness was suspended from February 2020 through October 2021.



Subsidized Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

The Subsidized Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides subsidized wages to at-risk youth while giving employers incentives to provide participants with 120 hours of quality on-the-job training. Youth can be placed with public, private, or non-profit employers. SYEP participants are youth ages 15 to 18 who have multiple barriers that have limited their employability.

The goal of SYEP is to help youth develop the necessary skills and work ethic to transition into unsubsidized employment at the conclusion of the program. Participants attend Job Readiness workshops to prepare for their placement. Fairfield County Juvenile Court has partnered with TeenWorks, Inc. since the program's inception in 2018 to operate the SYEP program. TeenWorks provides administrative oversight. Funding

comes from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, Columbus Foundation, Fairfield County Foundation, and United Way of Fairfield County. The Workforce Development Coordinator maintains consistent contact with employers and youth to monitor and evaluate progress and address any issues, as needed. She ensures participants are equipped to be successful on the job, and she provides support services.

SUBSIDIZED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM DATA	Program Resource	Short-term Outcome	Enrollment		Achieved Goal	
			2021	2020	2021	2020
2021 and 2020	Work Readiness Training*	Received a Certificate of Completion	3	2	3 (100%)	2 (100%)
	Work Readiness Training*	Increased Score/Skill Level	0	2	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
	On-the-Job Training	Completed 120 Hours	0	2	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
	On-the-Job Training	Conducted Pre- and Post-Program Evaluations	3	2	3 (100%)	1 (50%)
	Workforce Development Services	Obtained Unsubsidized Employment	1	2	1 (100%)	1 (50%)
	Workforce Development Services	Retained Unsubsidized Employment for At Least 4 Months	1	2	1 (100%)	1 (50%)

* Due to COVID-19, Work Readiness was suspended from February 2020 through October 2021.

Fairfield County Juvenile Court Specialized Dockets

Juvenile Treatment Court

Excel (Formerly Family Court)



Juvenile Treatment Court

Juvenile Treatment Court is designed to serve the needs of non-violent court-involved youth who have a diagnosed substance use disorder (SUD) or a dual diagnosis of a mental health disorder and substance use disorder.

Treatment Court serves adjudicated juvenile offenders who are referred by Probation, parent/guardian, or the youth's attorney/GAL. The mission of Juvenile Treatment Court is to reduce juvenile delinquency and substance abuse through therapeutic best practice interventions and close judicial supervision. Through an intensively

monitored phase program, Juvenile Treatment Court provides opportunities and resources for participants to become alcohol- and drug-free, achieve success in school, and complete probation. Additionally, participants who are struggling with mental health issues are linked with appropriate treatment resources and expected to follow all therapeutic recommendations.

In addition to providing intensive monitoring, the Juvenile Treatment Court team links participants with Court and/or community programs that focus on skill-building and

competency-development. Referrals to appropriate resources are also made when needs are identified in the areas of education, employment, medical care, training, housing, and transportation.

Juvenile Treatment Court did not accept referrals in 2021 and did not have any active cases remaining from 2020. The program officially closed in June 2021. Prior to ending Treatment Court, alternate means of best serving this population of youth were being researched and discussed with community partners.



Excel

Provided through a specialized docket of Fairfield County Juvenile Court, Excel is a court-supervised treatment program designed to improve outcomes for families who are experiencing a substance use disorder and involved with the child protection system. Participants include parents who are at least 18 years old.

The goals of Excel (formerly known as Family Court) are:

1. Enhance available services;
2. Increase parental participation and their success in recovery; and

3. Reduce the number of days of out-of-home placement of children.

Through the use of tools for rapid substance and trauma screening, parents are offered early access to services and supports.

Excel is an incentive-and strength-based program. Focus is on goal-setting and achievement, with participants earning incentives for their accomplishments. Incentives have included self-care items, cleaning supplies, housewares, gift cards, and family-focused games and movies.

Referrals to Excel are made by Child Protective Services (CPS). Upon acceptance into Excel, participants are expected to actively participate in treatment, refrain from using and/or possessing any mood-altering substance, submit to random drug screens, attend all required counseling sessions, appear for regularly scheduled status hearings, and comply with all rules of the treatment plan and program. Successful completion of Excel becomes part of the CPS case plan for reunification.

<u>EXCEL DATA</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total Number of Participants	34	35	31	13	16	15	10
Number of Participants Terminated	8	11	9	7	3	6	2
Number of Program Graduates	8	8	4	2	7	1	6



Fairfield County Juvenile Court Funding and Statistics

Juvenile Court Funding

New Cases Statistics

Comparisons of Charges and/or Filings Statistics

Violent Crimes Statistics

Offenses Against an Individual 65 Years of Age or Older

Sexual Offenses

Traffic

Juvenile Court Funding

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Provides For</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fairfield County General Fund	Court Operations and Employees	2,562,253.00	2,567,972.00	2,355,338.00	2,083,396.00	1,975,569.00	1,856,247.00	1,797,010.00
Department of Youth Services 510	Employees—Counselors, Psychological Evaluations and Trainings	922,843.67	842,991.08	974,868.72	714,265.97	901,004.65	779,472.73	770,616.26
Juvenile Court Recovery Fund	Employees	135.00	821.86	225.54	30,768.39	32,452.58	178,417.56	24,139.59
Computer/Computer Research	Maintenance, Upgrades to Software and Equipment, Website	8,634.00	17,225.36	13,974.00	14,208.12	57,568.72	15,908.64	20,479.60
Drug Court Fund Grant ODMHAS	Drug Court Operations	110,000.00	60,000.00	63,811.00	30,011.82	37,500.00	108,900.00	65,164.85
Multi-System Pooled Fund	Mental Health Counselors	0.00	65,000.00	130,000.00	131,001.68	130,016.81	130,000.00	130,000.00
Title IV-E Fund	MSY Placement Shared Pool and Workforce Development	1,545.87	909.80	311,871.73	209,743.20	368,397.77	305,564.37	821,714.51
<u>Total Juvenile Revenue</u>		3,605,411.54	\$3,554,098.24	\$3,850,088.99	\$3,213,395.18	\$3,502,509.53	\$3,374,759.55	\$3,629,574.82

Juvenile Court Statistics: New Cases

<u>New Cases</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Adult	80	57	110	125	137	165	75
Delinquency	156	221	270	424	515	402	409
Unruly	19	36	56	71	36	4	1
Traffic	415	451	573	593	751	746	728
Abuse, Neglect, Dependency	138	164	143	162	128	169	186
Grandparent Power of Attorney and Miscellaneous	26	31	39	35	59	50	67
Motion for Permanent Custody (including refiles)	21	24	37	23	29	25	23
Custody, Change of Custody, Visitation and Motions filed in A, N, D	184	180	131	130	137	167	121
Private Custody Transferred and Filed	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	38	19	33
<u>Total New Cases</u>	1,039	1,164	1,359	1,563	1,987	1,848	1,714

Juvenile Court Statistics: Comparison of Charges and/or Filings

<u>Comparison of Charges and/or Filings</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Felony Filings	41	48	41	66	55	51	71
Firearm or Other on School Property	118	47	67	277	168	77	78
Trespass	2	10	10	21	31	18	9
Criminal Mischief	1	9	6	8	13	7	128
Criminal Damaging/Vandalism	7	24	22	30	54	28	36
Theft–Petty or Grand, and Safecracking	16	64	42	75	66	60	74
Arson	2	0	0	1	5	2	1
Burglary, Robbery, Breaking and Entering	16	19	10	11	11	8	13
Disorderly Conduct	14	18	33	99	113	37	74
Drug & Alcohol	18	13	27	90	115	78	111
Tobacco	0	0	2	0	1	1	0
Truancy	69	47	51	21	70	115	49

Juvenile Court Statistics:

- Violent Crimes
- Against an Individual 65 Years of Age or Older or Permanently and Totally Disabled
- Sexual Offenses
- Traffic

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
 Assault–Aggravated or Attempted, Neglect, Felonious Assault	47	23	52	77	50	42	46
 Menacing/Aggravated by Stalking, Kidnapping, Abduction	12	18	26	54	27	23	14
 Domestic Violence	1	14	33	59	82	24	21
 Victim Older Than 65	3	2	13	16	3	1	0
 Rape, Sexual Battery	8	0	8	13	1	5	26
 Gross Sexual Imposition, Sexual Imposition	10	1	16	24	15	7	27
 Disseminating, Importuning, Public Indecency, Pandering	2	5	3	17	6	2	9
 Speed	188	203	262	245	336	347	328
 Assured Clear Distance Ahead	51	53	70	72	88	85	80
 Operating a Vehicle While Impaired	12	1	2	16	10	14	6
 Felony Traffic Offense	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
 Vehicular Homicide (not technically a traffic case)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
 Other	337	260	303	361	413	328	309

Fairfield County Probate Court

[Probate Court Updates](#)

[Guardianship Service Board Statistics](#)

[Probate Court Funding](#)

[Probate Court Statistics](#)



Probate Court Updates

2021 PROJECTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Probate Court continued to utilize enhanced technology for many of its regular functions as the Court continued to adapt to pandemic conditions in 2021. These adaptations allowed the Court to operate efficiently, while also providing an increased level of convenience for our customers. Examples of the Court's adaptations include:

- Most hearings were conducted virtually, saving attorneys and the general public the time and expense of appearing in person.
- The majority of marriage licenses processed during the year were approved after a virtual appointment with the couple.
- Probate Court continued to accept electronic filings during the entirety of 2021.

2021 was the busiest year in recent memory with respect to Probate Court filings. The Court opened 633 estates and 102 new guardianship cases.

Continued partnerships with local providers and changing dynamics within Fairfield County has led to an increased number of open guardianships in recent years. At the

end of 2021, Probate Court had approximately 612 open guardianships—an increase of more than 25 percent since the end of 2013. The Court continues to work with its community partners and the general public to ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are adequately supported and cared for. Probate Court continued to enhance its ability to effectively meet the increased guardianship demand with its ongoing support of the Fairfield County Guardianship Service Board (GSB).

During 2021, the GSB hired a fourth employee to meet increased demand and to better serve its customers. Throughout the year, the Court held various hearings at the request of the Board. For example, the Court held a hearing in which the Board was able to successfully transfer a case to a loving, appropriate family member guardian. Additionally, the Court regularly responded to other requests that allowed the GSB to sign leases and to make other appropriate decisions on behalf of its customers to increase the level of independent living for those served.

2022 GOALS

The Court will further enhance the use of technology to best serve the public. In 2022, the Court will begin the process of implementing a new case management system to provide increased flexibility and convenience for

attorneys and the general public. Additionally, the Court will continue to refine and enhance the recent practices of utilizing technology for efficient filings and court hearings. As needed, the Court will consult with local counsel and incorporate feedback into ongoing practices.

The Court will implement minor shifts in clerk assignments and duties to account for trends that have occurred in recent years and to allow the Court to continue to provide efficient response times to case filings and other requests. Clerks will continue to be cross-trained to minimize any disruption caused by staff absences.

Probate Court will continue to work closely with the Guardianship Service Board to ensure the Court is being responsive to its legal needs. While the GSB will continue to be responsible for its own processes and procedures, the Court will evaluate its own processes to maximize its ability to assist the Board. For example, the Court may modify and develop forms to create seamless processes for routine legal requests from the Board.



<u>GUARDIANSHIP SERVICE BOARD STATISTICS</u>	2021	2020
Total Cases	122 (65 male; 57 female)	102 (57 male; 45 female)
Number of Contact Hours per Client per Month	6.94	3.00
Age Range of Clients/Wards	20 to 87	19 to 96
Ages 60 or Older	50 (41%)	45 (44%)
Non-residential (Long-term Care Facility)	43 (35%)	44 (43%)
Residential (Living in the Community)	79 (65%)	58 (57%)
<u>QUALIFYING CONDITIONS (Wards may have more than one condition.)</u>		
Mental Illness	80 (78%)	100 (82%)
Cases with Allegations of Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation	54 (53%)	54 (44%)
Other Physical or Cognitive Impairment That Impacts Decision-Making	46 (44%)	35 (29%)
Developmental Disability	40 (39%)	34 (28%)
Dementia	35 (34%)	60 (49%)
Substance Abuse	29 (28%)	66 (54%)

Probate Court Funding

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Provides For</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fairfield County General Fund	Court Operations and Employees	750,460.92	710,529.00	712,495.00	673,937.10	645,558.00	653,257.00	549,784.00
Computer/Computer Research	Maintenance and Upgrades	23,508.00	36,178.18	21,197.74	20,772.26	20,228.00	42,826.62	33,326.00
Indigent Guardian Funds	Guardians/Attorney for Indigent Wards	18,120.00	13,072.00	14,988.00	14,290.00	13,620.00	13,650.00	17,299.00
Special Projects	Court Special Projects	43,467.66	34,180.50	45,947.79	43,763.00	46,457.50	50,278.08	33,269.26
<u>Total Probate Revenue</u>		\$835,556.58	\$793,959.68	\$794,628.53	\$752,762.36	\$725,653.50	\$760,011.70	\$633,678.26

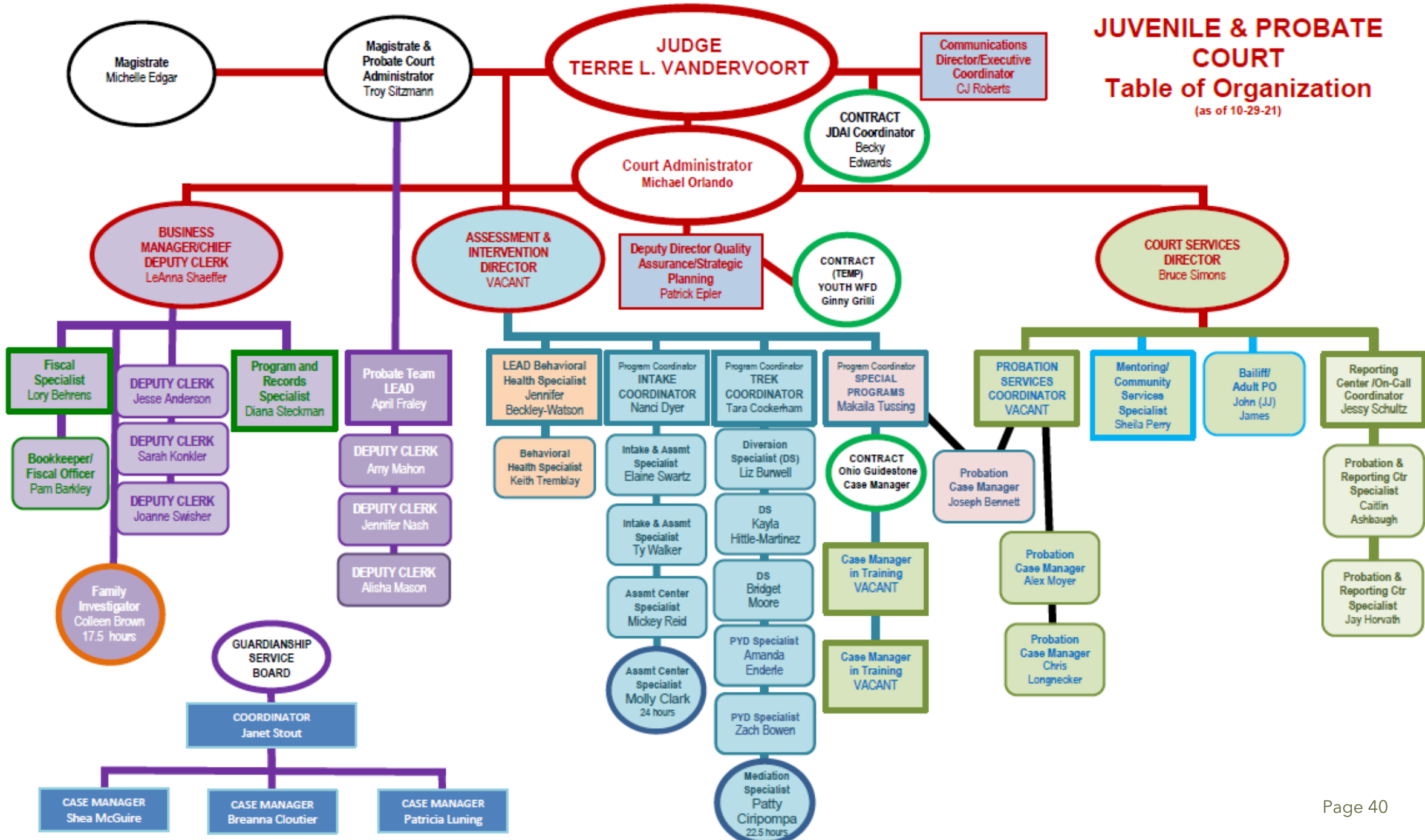
Probate Court Statistics

<u>New Probate Cases</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Adoptions & Placements	53	61	66	40	51	58	45
Civil Actions	15	21	14	8	19	51	49
Estates	633	500	562	549	511	522	589
Wrongful Death Actions	11	5	2	2	2	6	3
Guardianships (All Types)	103	89	120	106	55	57	73
Civil Commitments	39	31	63	60	38	35	34
Name Changes	129	71	67	72	82	65	81
Minors' Settlements	15	13	11	15	9	12	12
Birth Record Corrections	4	2	10	7	7	9	3
Trusts	13	4	3	1	7	5	8
Conservatorships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Total New Probate Cases</u>	1,015	797	918	860	781	820	897
<u>New Marriage Licenses Issued</u>	871	792	824	864	861	834	875

JUVENILE & PROBATE COURT

Table of Organization

(as of 10-29-21)



Fairfield County Probate Court 2021 Annual Report Distribution and Printing

Distribution

Emailed to:

1. Commissioner Steve Davis
2. Commissioner Dave Levacy
3. Commissioner Jeff Fix
4. Fairfield County Administrator Aundrea Cordle

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