



# FRANKLIN COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**The Honorable Maryellen O'Shaughnessy**  
Franklin County Clerk of Courts



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# MISSION STATEMENT

*To maintain the integrity and accessibility  
of court documents and motor vehicle titles.*

# VISION

*To be the premier county Clerk's Office in the State of Ohio by providing  
TIMELY, ACCURATE and COURTEOUS service.*

*This will be achieved by continuing to:*

- *enhance customer service*
- *invest in our employees' growth and well-being*
- *use the latest technological advances*



# Message from the Clerk



Franklin County Residents,

I am Maryellen O'Shaughnessy, your elected Franklin County Clerk of the Common Pleas and 10th District Appeals courts. We present to you our 2019 Annual Report. I hope that you will find this report to be a valuable and informative tool.

As we learn and grow with new technologies to better serve you, we never shy away from our ultimate goal of providing timely, accurate, and courteous service in the management of court documents and the issuance of auto titles.

Thank you for taking the time to read this recap of our work in 2018. We always aim to provide exceptional service.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 614-525-3600 or email [FranklinCountyClerk@FranklinCountyOhio.gov](mailto:FranklinCountyClerk@FranklinCountyOhio.gov)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maryellen O'Shaughnessy".

# About the Office

Since Ohio became a state in 1803, judicial systems required each county to have a clerk of courts who was tasked to preserve records for future generations. In the interest of justice, it was and is still today, important for clerk offices to remain independent from the judges they serve.

In the Franklin County Clerk of Courts Office approximately 200 full-time Deputy Clerks serve in five divisions: Auto Title, Legal, Fiscal Services, Information Technology and Administration. Four of those divisions are located in seven different offices in the Franklin County Courthouse complex. The fifth, Auto Title, is in four conveniently located branch offices throughout Franklin County. Each division and its offices are important to the Franklin County Clerk of Courts' two major functions: management of court documents and issuance of auto titles.

Our **Legal Division** Deputy Clerks are responsible for receiving, receipting, managing, and retaining all legal documents filed through the Court of Common Pleas and the 10th District Court of Appeals. Our Deputy Clerks execute their responsibilities in strict accordance with the record retention requirements established by Ohio law.

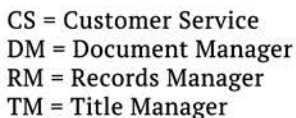
In 2018, the Clerk's Legal Division filed 103,842 new cases in the Court of Common Pleas and 10th District Court of Appeals, down from 118,041 in 2017. Since the full implementation of e-Filing in 2012, our processing times have fallen from an average of three days to one, with most filings processed in less than four business hours.

Our **Auto Title Division** consists of four branch locations. Deputy Clerks manage titling and proof of vehicle ownership, with strict adherence to Ohio laws and rules. In 2018, our Auto Title Division processed 556,921 auto titles, up from 551,142 in 2017, with an average wait time of only 12 minutes.

Since 2009, our busy Auto Title offices generated more than \$7 million in funds that have been given to the County General Fund to help the Franklin County Commissioners continue to provide essential services to our residents.



# Deputy Clerks





# Auto Title Division

The Clerk of Courts Auto Title Division is comprised of four branch locations. The Auto Title Division processes titles for motor vehicles, watercraft, motorcycles, manufactured homes and campers. Whether you are buying or selling a motor vehicle, our Auto Title Division is there to grant the proof of ownership required by state law.

The Clerk's Auto Title Division has implemented a variety of initiatives, from Ohio's first motor vehicle titling mobile application to our state-of-the-art auto title facilities. These initiatives are geared to further professionalize our Office and enhance the level of service we provide to the Franklin County community and beyond.

## **Honored by the Ohio State Highway Patrol**

In February of 2018, the Auto Title Division was recognized for its role in exposing a sophisticated criminal operation involving stolen vehicles and illegal drugs. The work by our Deputy Clerks resulted in the confiscation of 45 kilos of heroin, fentanyl, and other illicit drugs and the recovery of eight vehicles valued at \$350,000.



## **Division-wide Fraud Prevention Training**

As part of the Clerk's goal of professionalizing the Office, the Auto Title Division received training from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles Investigations Unit to help our staff identify and confiscate fraudulent documents specific to motor vehicles.

## **Services for Auto Dealers**

With over 800 auto dealerships in Franklin County, we enhanced and modernized the services we provide to better serve auto dealers. We provide an online dealer portal, complimentary courier service and limited new vehicle registration and license plate transfers. Each Auto Title branch includes a dedicated Dealer Services Center. Additionally, we offer quality control initiatives, complimentary auto title forms, title manuals and other printed materials for all auto dealers who title with Franklin County.





# Auto Title Branches

## **Auto Title North (ATN)**

980 Morse Road  
Columbus, OH 43229

## **Auto Title East (ATE)**

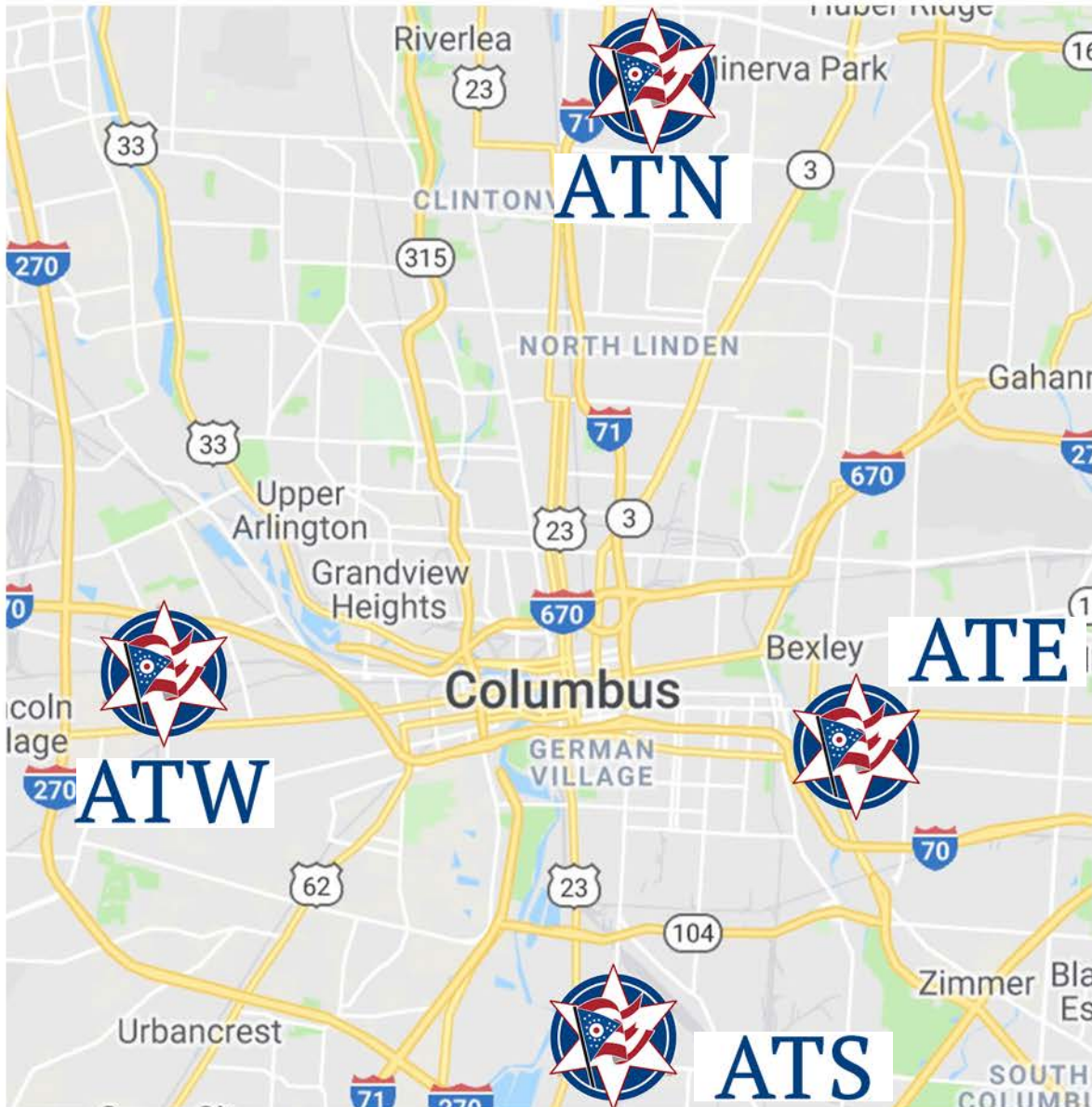
1583 Alum Creek Drive  
Columbus, OH 43209

## **Auto Title West (ATW)**

4153 West Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43228

## **Auto Title South (ATS)**

45 Great Southern Blvd.  
Columbus, OH 43207





# Legal Division

Our Legal Division consists of three offices: Appeals, Civil and Criminal, and Domestic Relations and Juvenile. The Division consists of approximately 100 Deputy Clerks, and is overseen by our Director of Operations. We manage the documents for each of these courts in Franklin County.

## Appeals

The 10th District Court of Appeals, located in the 22nd floor of the County Administration Building, handles cases appealed from the Court of Common Pleas, Municipal Court, or Court of Claims. We manage their documents in our offices on the 23rd floor.

## Civil and Criminal

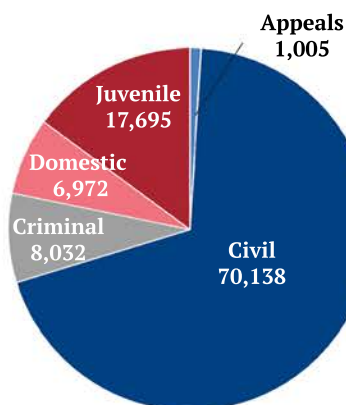
The civil and criminal branch of the Common Pleas Court, located in the new Courthouse at 345 South High Street, hears felony criminal cases and civil cases in which damages claimed or the amount in contention exceeds \$15,000. We manage civil and criminal documents in our offices on the 1st floor.

In addition, the Clerk's civil and criminal office is an authorized U.S. Department of State Passport Acceptance Agent. A Deputy Clerk reviews the completed application, takes the passport photo and forwards all documents and payments to the U.S. Department of State. In 2018, our *One-Stop-Passport-Shop* processed 1,445 applications and collected \$52,817.10 in revenue from fees and photo services. The Clerk's office is located at 345 South High Street, on the 1st floor.

## Juvenile and Domestic Relations

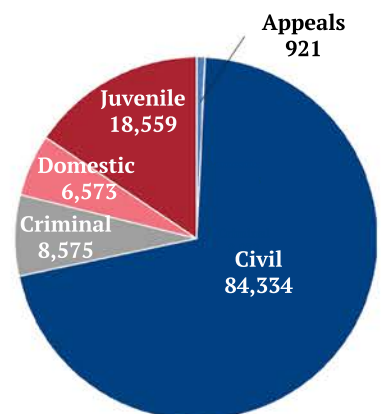
The Juvenile and Domestic Relations branch of the Common Pleas Court is located in the County Administration Building, 373 South High Street. The court handles family law cases including divorce, dissolution, legal separation, child custody, and child support, as well as juvenile traffic cases, delinquency, truancy, and abuse or neglect of dependency of a minor. The Clerk's Office is located on the fourth floor, with Juvenile Traffic located at 399 South Front Street.

2018



2018	Case Type	2017
1,005	Appeals	921
70,138	Civil	84,334
8,032	Criminal	8,575
6,972	Domestic	6,573
17,695	Juvenile	18,559
103,842	TOTAL	118,962

2017



# Fiscal Services Division & Information Technology Division

## **Fiscal Services Division**

The Fiscal Services Division collects and disburses court-related and public funds in strict accordance with Ohio law. Fiscal Services maintains our financial infrastructure and provides an independent, objective oversight of all monetary transactions. Primary duties include budget management, cash management, centralized accounting, auditing and financial policy oversight.

Fiscal Services audits the financial activity of each division and validates the timeliness, accuracy and integrity of receipts. The Fiscal Services Division provides the Clerk's Office and the general public comprehensive financial documentation and reports monthly.

The Franklin County Clerk of Courts budget in 2018 was \$17,070,804, up from \$16,923,052 in 2017.  
(Source: Office of Budget Management)

## **Information Technology Division**

The Information Technology Division provides support and innovative solutions to meet the technical needs of the Clerk's customers and the other four divisions. Every visit to our website, Auto Title transaction, and phone call is tracked and analyzed to increase efficiency. Information Technology aims to ensure the Clerk's systems are functioning for staff and public use while continuing to evolve as new potential cyber security vulnerabilities are identified.

In 2018 our website, Clerk.FranklinCountyOhio.gov, received more than 4 million views, up from 2.7 million in 2017. Lawyers, reporters, and constituents from all over the world are accessing the content we maintain. The Information Technology Division provides significant bandwidth and maintenance to provide an accurate and user-friendly website.





# Administration

Administration consists of communications, human resources and training, legal compliance and the Clerk's Chief of Staff. This Division provides guidance and support to all other divisions.

**Communications** represents the Office to the press, public and other agencies. They develop communication strategies to connect constituencies with the services we provide.

**Human Resources and Training** administers hiring, training, benefits, payroll, labor relations, performance evaluations and strategic planning. Human Resources also manages the Employee Activities Committee, wellness initiatives and charitable campaigns.

**Legal Compliance** ensures the Clerk, her Deputy Clerks and all communications are in legal accordance with Ohio law. They also provide procedural and ethical standards for the Office. Compliance also oversees the accessibility and fulfillment of public records requests.

As part of Clerk O'Shaughnessy's continual efforts to support her Deputy Clerks, in 2018, Administration facilitated an office-wide minimum pay rate increase to \$15/hour.

Administration works closely with Deputy Clerks to address their needs, and strives to create a safe and respectful work environment. The Clerk's administrative office is located in the County Administration Building, 373 South High Street on the 23rd floor.



In 2018, **Clerk Maryellen O'Shaughnessy**, in her 10th year as your Franklin County Clerk of Courts, remains committed to the people she serves and the service her Office provides. By continuing to enhance customer service, invest in the growth and well-being of our Deputy Clerks and by using the latest technological advances, she works to be the leader of the best County Clerk's office in the State of Ohio.

*"My office is dedicated to providing timely, accurate and courteous service to the people of Franklin County."*





# Stay Connected



/FranklinCountyClerkofCourts



@FCClerkofCourts



/FCClerkofCourts



/C/ClerkFranklinCounty

Download our  
Auto Title NOW app



Apple



Android



# Hours of Operation and Locations

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES & LEGAL DIVISIONS**

OPEN MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

### **Administration**

373 South High Street, 23rd Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.3600

### **General (Civil/Criminal)**

345 South High Street, 1st Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.3621

### **Appeals**

373 South High Street, 23rd Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.3624

### **Juvenile**

373 South High Street, 4th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.4411

### **Domestic Relations**

373 South High Street, 4th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.4410

### **Juvenile Traffic**

399 South Front Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.525.5279

## **AUTO TITLE DIVISIONS**

OPEN MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

### **Auto Title East**

1583 Alum Creek Drive  
Columbus, Ohio 43209  
SAT. 8 A.M. TO NOON

### **Auto Title South**

45 Great Southern Blvd.  
Columbus, Ohio 43207  
SAT. CLOSED

### **Auto Title North**

980 Morse Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43229  
SAT. 8 A.M. TO NOON

### **Auto Title West**

4153 West Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43228  
SAT. 8 A.M. TO NOON

### **Dedicated Auto Title Help Line**

614.525.3090  
SAT. 8 A.M. TO NOON

