



Fairfield Municipal Court

JOYCE A. CAMPBELL
Judge

675 Nilles Road • Fairfield, Ohio 45014-2931 • 513-867-6002 • Fax 513-867-6001

January 29, 2024

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to R.C. §1901.14(A)(4) the Annual Report is submitted for the year 2023. The Court hears all traffic, misdemeanor criminal and civil disputes (wherein the amount in controversy does not exceed \$15,000) which are alleged to have occurred within the limits of the City of Fairfield. The Court also handles initial appearances and preliminary hearings for felony cases.

The Court saw a slight decrease in criminal and traffic case filings and a noticeable increase in civil case filings. Deeply concerning is the more than 50% increase in Domestic Violence filings for the second year in a row. This is not a trend for which we should be proud.

Once again, the Court was honored to receive \$70,000 in grant money from the Ohio and Butler County Departments of Mental Health and Addictions Services to use for payroll assistance.

The Court continues to serve the community through two Ohio Supreme Court certified specialized dockets. These dockets focus on specific types of offenders or offenses and use techniques designed to hold offenders accountable while also addressing underlying causes of their behavior. The Treatment Alternative Court ("TAC") program is our mental health docket which commenced on January 1, 2001, and the S.T.A.R. (Sobriety, Treatment, Accountability and Recovery) program is our misdemeanor repeat OVI offender docket which commenced on October 1, 2008. Both dockets have been continuously certified since April 11, 2014 (the first year certification became available). During 2023, the TAC program serviced 25 participants diagnosed with mental illness and 17 people participated in the S.T.A.R. programs.

I thank the staff, Clerks, Probation Officers and Deputy Bailiffs for their amazing dedication, patience and work during this time. Grateful appreciation is also extended to all City of Fairfield employees for their assistance and contributions to the successful operation of the Court. We strive to continually improve our justice system and welcome input from the community.

Sincerely yours,

Judge Joyce A. Campbell

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Fairfield Municipal Court

Felony Charges

Felony charges are extremely serious offenses in which the Defendant can be sentenced to a state prison. Examples include: Murder, Kidnapping, Rape, Domestic Violence, Burglary, Robbery, Breaking and Entering, Trafficking, Fleeing and Eluding, certain Sex Offenses, certain Drug Possessions, Fraud, Theft, Receiving Stolen Property and Operating a Motor Vehicle under the Influence.

Felony cases arise by either direct indictment from the Grand Jury or the filing of a Complaint in Municipal Court. Judge Campbell presides over the felony Complaints only by setting bond and holding a Preliminary Hearing. The latter is an evidentiary hearing to determine whether there is enough evidence to require a trial. If the Judge makes this finding, or if the accused waives the Preliminary Hearing, the case is transferred to the Common Pleas Court for a hearing before the Grand Jury. If the Judge determines that the Prosecutor has not established enough facts to support the Complaint, then the felony Complaint is dismissed.

In 2023, Fairfield Municipal Court processed 215 complaints for felony offenses. This number is down 8.11% from 2022 wherein 234 complaints were processed.

Felony Charges:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Murder	2	1	1	0
Assault	5	6	8	2
Robbery	4	1	3	1
Burglary/Vandalism	6	14	14	11
Theft	44	33	27	28
Forgery/Fraud	7	19	9	13
Domestic Violence	13	16	21	17
Weapon Offenses	12	31	32	20
Drug Offenses	59	95	108	104
OVI	3	15	0	1
Other felony offenses	11	13	11	18
TOTAL	166	244	234	215

Misdemeanor Charges

Misdemeanor offenses are categorized into five classes: first degree, second degree, third degree, fourth degree, and minor misdemeanors. First-degree misdemeanors are considered the most serious class, while minor misdemeanors are the least serious. Each degree of misdemeanor offense has a maximum penalty associated with it that can range up to 180 days in the county jail and/or up to \$1,000 fine. A minor misdemeanor has a maximum penalty of \$150 plus Court Costs. Misdemeanor charges can be criminal or traffic offenses.

Examples of misdemeanor offenses include: Domestic Violence, Violation of Protective Order, Theft, Drug Possession, Resisting Arrest, Menacing, Disorderly Conduct, Trespassing, Operating a Motor Vehicle Under the Influence (OVI), Operating a Motor Vehicle without a valid Driver's License and Traffic Control violations.

In 2023, Fairfield Municipal Court processed 7286 complaints for misdemeanor offenses. This number is down 1.6% from 2022 wherein 7406 complaints were processed.

Misdemeanor Criminal Charges:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Failure to Appear/Contempt	1,095	1,209	1,296	1182
Domestic Violence	96	28	163	243
Assault	35	47	38	55
Child Endangering	8	22	10	33
Menacing/Harassment	26	26	27	39
Criminal Trespass/Damaging	86	123	92	84
Theft	184	154	143	346
Falsification	26	39	37	58
Weapon Offenses	14	27	40	37
Drug Offenses	146	343	374	349
Alcohol Offenses	61	89	82	50
Disorderly Conduct	139	176	142	226
Resisting Arrest/Obstruction	34	71	46	104
Animal Abuse / Neglect	8	3	2	1
Other misdemeanor criminal offenses	54	161	18	22
TOTAL	2,012	2,518	2,510	2829

City Department Code Violations:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Zoning	18	19	9	26
Building	36	48	79	55
Fire Prevention	1	2	0	0
Tax	0	29	14	1
TOTAL	55	98	80	82

Misdemeanor Traffic Charges:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Operation under the influence (OVI)*	363	359	408	578
Suspended/Invalid Driver's License	605	1,202	1,195	1,141
Speed Limit	939	913	1,177	855
Seatbelt	33	89	42	64
License Plate Violations	151	455	588	383
Assured Cleared Distance	230	302	273	230
Failing to Stop After an Accident	48	55	39	96
Fleeing / Eluding police	9	3	13	21
Parking Violations	16	24	48	44
Other misdemeanor traffic violations	625	1,010	799	666
TOTAL	3,019	4,412	4,582	4,078

*Represents the number of individuals charged.

Probation

As an alternative to incarceration the Court can order a Defendant to a term of community control (probation). After the initial meeting with the Probation Officer, community control will be either reporting or non-reporting. The Probation Officers assist the Defendants with employment, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling and other needed services to aid the individual in becoming a law abiding, productive member of our community. If the Defendant is unable to pay his/her financial obligation, the Probation Officer will give the Defendant the opportunity to work off the fines and costs through Community Service. If the Defendant fails to report to probation and/or fails to comply with the terms of probation, a violation will be filed requiring the Defendant to appear in Court.

Probation:	2020	2021	2022	2023
New Cases Opened	976	1021	959	890
Probation Violations	746	989	876	854

Community Service Program

Offenders who are unable to pay assessed fines and/or costs are able to perform community work on Saturdays and receive credit of \$15 per hour against their debt. The program alleviates the need for the City of Fairfield to incur additional expense in clearing litter on the side of the roadways and other community enhancement projects.

Community Service:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Days Completed	56	78.5	92.5	67
x 8 hours per day	8	8	8	8
TOTAL HOURS	448	628	740	536

Civil Hearings

Fairfield Municipal Court hears many different types of civil actions with a monetary jurisdiction up to \$15,000. A case filed for the Small Claims docket can only be awarded up to \$6,000 in damages.

In 2023, the Court processed 1,625 civil complaints. This number is up 6.27% from 2022 wherein 1,529 complaints were processed.

Civil Complaints:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Personal Injury/Property Claim	3	6	12	5
Contracts/Notes/Credit Accounts	724	656	582	650
Forcible Entry and Detainer (Eviction)	353	446	832	842
Rent Escrow	7	4	7	3
Small Claim	64	117	85	106
Other civil actions	6	21	11	19
Trusteeship	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,157	1,250	1,529	1,625

Four-Year Comparison for Court Activity

Criminal/Traffic:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cases Filed	5,252	7,272	7,406	7,286
Jury Trials held	1	1	0	1
Bench Trials*	510	640	649	502
Motion to Suppress*	89	99	149	49
Other Criminal/Traffic Motions*	10	37	46	33
Motion to Seal the Record	68	66	38	64
Motion for Driving Privileges	85	95	93	73
Competency to Stand Trial*	7	13	25	3
Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity	0	3	1	1

Civil:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cases Filed	1,157	1,250	1,529	1,625
Jury Trials held	0	0	0	0
Bench Trials* <i>excluding Small Claims</i>	95	82	39	30
Motions*	92	83	161	248
Garnishments	265	424	485	482
Bank Attachments	30	35	42	89
Certificate for Judgment Lien	80	97	93	87
Judgement Debtor Exam	1	1	2	5

*Represents the number of filings

2023 RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS

RECEIPTS:

Courtbook Balance, January 1, 2023		\$289,138.28
+ Fines, Costs & Fees	\$2,145,667.94	
+ Holding Accounts:	0	
• Jury Demand	\$ 0.00	
• Grand Jury – Btlr Cnty Clerk	\$ 203.10	
• Restitution	\$ 62,222.91	
• On Deposit/Overage	\$ 3,049.00	
• Appearance Bonds	\$ 178,247.70	
• Rent Escrow	\$ 13,467.96	
• Garnishments	\$ 608,989.97	
• Civil Witness Fees	\$ 0.00	
• BMV License Forfeiture	\$ 0.00	
		<u>\$3,083,848.58</u>
		TOTAL <u>\$3,372,986.86</u>

DISBURSEMENTS:

- City of Fairfield*	\$2,058,519.41
- County of Butler**	\$ 42,949.12
- State of Ohio***	\$ 236,300.37
- Holding Accounts:	
• Jury Demand	\$ 0.00
• Grand Jury – Btlr Cnty Clerk	\$ 203.10
• Restitution	\$ 66,528.30
• On Deposit/Overage	\$ 2,374.00
• Appearance Bonds	\$ 216,127.70
• Rent Escrow	\$ 6,856.70
• Garnishments	\$ 677,017.94
• Civil Witness Fees	\$ 0.00
• BMV License Forfeiture	\$ 0.00
	<u>\$3,306,876.64</u>

Courtbook balance, December 31, 2023	<u>\$66,110.22</u>
	TOTAL <u>\$3,372,986.86</u>

* Breakdown on Page 6

** Breakdown on Page 7

*** Breakdown on Page 7

2023– CITY OF FAIRFIELD ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT DISBURSED
201	Patrol Fines	\$42,974.50
202	Traffic & Criminal Fines	\$867,418.16
203	Traffic & Criminal Court Costs	\$237,329.51
204	Civil & Small Claims Costs & Fees	\$202,166.75
205	Expungement Fees	\$2,260.00
206	Witness Fees – City Ordinance Violations	\$1,860.00
207	Juror Fees	\$0.00
208	Civil Legal Aid 1% Administration Fees	\$432.30
209	City DUI Arrest Agency Fees	\$4,857.00
210	City Indigent DUI Alcohol Treatment Fees	\$34,901.33
211	City DUI Jail Housing Fees	\$9,087.00
212	Special Projects Fund	\$58,519.08
213	Computer Equipment Fees	\$101,606.00
215	Wedding Ceremony Fees	\$0.00
216	Record Check/Copying Fees	\$2,103.35
217	Drug Fines – City Arrest	\$274.00
218	Probation Fees Fund	\$368,252.55
219	House Arrest Fees	\$5,241.00
220	Mediation Fees	\$56,595.00
221	IDIAMF	\$10,010.64
222	Scram Fee	\$22,388.00
223	Credit Card Processing Fee	\$74.18
224	Judgment Poundage Fee	\$14,773.14
225	Restitution Poundage Fee	\$2,938.42
225	10% Bond Fee	\$12,457.50
226	GPS Fee	\$0.00
TOTAL - CITY		\$2,058,519.41

2023 – BUTLER COUNTY ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT DISBURSED
301	Ohio State Patrol Fines (10%)	\$3,342.60
302	Traffic & Criminal Fines-ORC Viol.	\$16,118.12
304	Dog Warden Fines-ORC Violations	\$0.00
305	County DUI Jail Hsg.Fees-ORC Viol.	\$1,793.00
306	Expungement Fees – ORC Cases	\$60.00
307	Witness Fees – ORC Cases	\$42.00
308	County Indig.DUI Alco.Treatmt. Fees	\$579.00
309	County DUI Arrest Agency Fees	\$0.00
310	Liquor Violation Fees (50%)	\$0.00
312	Drug Fines – County Arrest	\$0.00
516	Indigent Application Fee	\$14,956.30
514	Law Library (OSP Fines)	\$6,058.10
TOTAL - COUNTY		\$42,949.12

2023 - STATE OF OHIO ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT DISBURSED
101	Ohio State Patrol Fines (45%)	\$13,638.00
102	Victims of Crime Fund	\$43,870.00
103	Public Defenders Fund	\$1,120.00
104	Seat Belt Fines	\$2,771.00
105	Drug Violation Fines (Bd of Pharm.)	\$350.00
106	Liquor Violation Fines (50%)	\$0.00
107	Dept. Of Natural Resources Fines	\$0.00
108	Expungement Fees	\$1,680.00
109	Civil Legal Aid Fees	\$42,887.70
110	Ohio State Patrol DUI Arrest Agy.Fees	\$665.00
111	Child Safety Restraint	\$1,470.00
112	Drug Fines – ODPS Arrest	\$0.00
113	Drug Fines – OSP Arrest	\$1,133.00
517	Drug Law Enforcement Fund	\$12,326.04
519	Indigent Defense Support Fund	\$113,990.99
520	Justice Program Services Fund	\$398.64
TOTAL - STATE		\$236,300.37

BOOK TO CASH RECONCILIATION

Courtbook Fund Balance, December 31, 2023		\$66,110.22
- Prior Years Adjusting Entries	<u>\$ 3,700.75</u>	<u>(\$3,700.75)</u>
		<u>\$62,409.47</u>
Cash Account Balance, December 31, 2023		\$242,817.49
+ Deposits in Transit	<u>\$ 3544.00</u>	
- Outstanding Checks	<u>(\$183,952.02)</u>	<u>(\$180,408.02)</u>
		<u>\$62,409.47</u>