

# The Supreme Court of Ohio

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy

**CC:** Stephanie Hess, Interim Administrative Director  
Stephanie Nelson, Director of Court Services

**FROM:** Honorable Craig R. Baldwin, Committee Chairperson  
Fifth District Court of Appeals

Honorable Beth Cappelli, Committee Vice Chairperson  
Fairborn Municipal Court

Colleen Rosshirt, Manager, Case Management Section

**DATE:** January 5, 2023

**RE:** Advisory Committee on Case Management 2022 Annual Report

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In accordance with the Operating Guidelines for the Advisory Committee on Case Management, please accept this memo as the Advisory Committee's annual report of its work in 2022.

Created in 2011, the purpose of the Advisory Committee on Case Management (ACCM) is to provide ongoing advice to the Court and its staff regarding the promotion of statewide rules and uniform standards concerning case management and statistical reporting in Ohio courts; the development and delivery of case management services to Ohio courts, including training programs for judges and court personnel; and the consideration of any other issues the advisory committee deems necessary to assist the Court and its staff regarding case management in Ohio courts.

In 2022, the Advisory Committee focused its efforts on the following subject areas:

- (1) Access and Fairness Pilot Project;
- (2) Failure to Appear Pilot Project;
- (3) Criminal Backlog Solutions;
- (4) Local Court Caseflow Management;
- (5) Case Inquiry Process Proposal;
- (6) Case Management Education Subcommittee, including:
  - a. Opportunities from the Bench Educational Series; and
- (7) Self-Represented Litigant Bench Card

### Access and Fairness Pilot Project

In partnership with the National Center for State Courts, six pilot courts disseminated an electronic Court User Survey (CourTools Measure 1). The purposes of this project were to vet the new survey design, provide feedback to the National Center regarding the survey tool, and to provide feedback to local courts on the use of remote and in-person hearings. This information was presented during a national webinar which included panelists from the Ohio pilot sites.

### Failure to Appear Pilot Project

The Failure to Appear Pilot Project addresses the impact of text messaging reminders on failure to appear rates. Technology grant funding was instrumental in the recruitment of courts to participate. Five courts joined the pilot project: Athens County Municipal Court, Defiance Municipal Court, Marietta Municipal Court, Miami County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probate Divisions, and Warren County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probate Divisions. Courts began collecting their baseline data in August and September and the results will be used to compare with failure to appear rates after text messaging has been implemented. There will be an educational component for the program, a webinar titled *Behavioral Science and Text Messaging*. Ideas42, a non-profit that uses behavioral science to assess public policy, will serve as faculty for the webinar. Courts will begin using the text message reminders in early 2023, with results of the project available by the end of 2023.

### Criminal Backlog Solutions

The Criminal Backlog Solutions Project aimed to identify scalable and sustainable practices used by common pleas and municipal/county courts that timely dispose of criminal cases to improve outcomes for courts reporting backlogs of this case type. The Case Management Section completed a report in 2022 which assessed what makes courts successful in reducing their backlog. Interviews were conducted with successful courts and these findings are being used to develop a webinar which will take place on February 3 and 10, 2023.

### Local Court Caseflow Management

Case Management staff provided technical assistance to local trial and appellate court judges, magistrates, clerks, and staff by way of remote statistical reporting training, process mapping sessions to review system efficiency, court surveys, and full-scale case management reviews of court workflows. The Case Management Section resumed in-person process mapping sessions, visiting: Clark County Municipal Court, Franklin County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division, Lorain County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division, Scioto County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probate Divisions, and Stark County Common Pleas in 2022.

The most requested services in 2022 were the dissemination of CourTools Measure 1, Court User Survey and CourTools Measure 9, Employee Satisfaction Survey. Surveys were conducted in coordination with the following courts: Allen County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probation Divisions, Delaware County Court of Common Pleas General Division, Garfield Heights Municipal Court, Lebanon Municipal Court (probation department), Licking County

Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division, Montgomery County Juvenile Court, and Shelby County Court of Common Pleas Probate and Juvenile Divisions.

Training clerks and court staff on case management best practices, including statistical reporting requirement, was provided to the following courts during calendar year 2022: Geauga County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probation Divisions, Darke County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probation Divisions, Fayette County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probation Divisions, Lucas County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile Division, and Portage County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probation Divisions.

The Case Management Section provided additional services to local courts which included: 2<sup>nd</sup> District Appellate court (scheduling system review and recommendations), East Liverpool Municipal Court (technical assistance for closing the court), Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile Division (backlog reduction), Portage County Court of Common Pleas Juvenile and Probate Divisions (peer court workload), and Warren County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division (wayfinding and signage).

#### Case Inquiry Process Proposal

The Case Management Section receives correspondence from court users with concerns regarding time guidelines for cases. The Case Inquiry Process Proposal seeks to provide court users with a formal process using an online form to request further information on the timeliness of their cases. The proposal was discussed and approved by the Advisory Committee and posted for public comment. The process will be voted upon by the Justices in 2023.

#### Case Management Education Subcommittee

The Case Management Education Subcommittee focused on the Opportunities from the Bench education series. The first topic is person-centered justice regarding behavioral health and how it impacts caseflow. The on-demand course will be available through OhioCourtEdu in 2023. Additional topics are being discussed by the committee for development in 2023.

#### Self-Represented Litigant Bench Card

The Self-Represented Litigant Bench Card is titled “Ensuring the Right to Be Heard: Procedural Fairness for Self-Represented Litigants.” The bench card lists resources to provide to self-represented litigants and information on how courts can better assist court users by removing barriers to justice. The bench card was published and posted to the Supreme Court of Ohio’s website in October 2022.

The Advisory Committee has been working diligently on several projects. The members should be commended for their commitment and enthusiasm. Thank you for your support and the continued opportunity to improve the delivery of court services to the citizens of Ohio. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on the Advisory Committee’s work.