



Sandusky County
**Juvenile and
Probate Court**

Calendar Year 2023

ANNUAL REPORT

Judge Brad Smith

Sandusky County Commissioners

Noted

A handwritten signature in blue ink is written over three horizontal red lines. The signature is cursive and appears to be 'B. Smith'.

Sandusky County Juvenile Court Annual Report

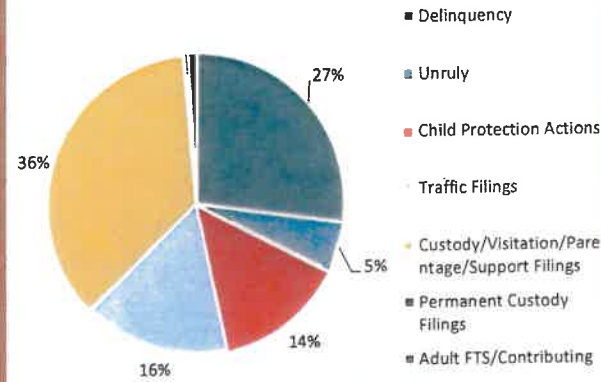
Calendar year 2023



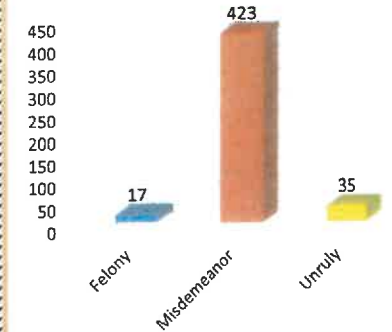
-Judge Brad Smith-

During calendar year 2023 the Juvenile Court saw a total of 1,446 cases filed. Custody/Visitation/Parentage/Support filings were the case types with the highest volume having 519 cases filed. There were 392 Delinquency offenses filed, as well 232 Traffic offenses filed and 205 Child Protection Actions filed.

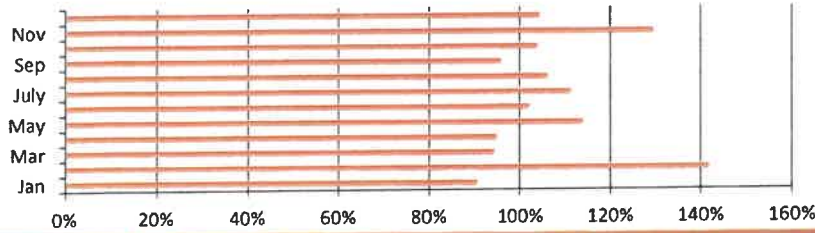
Percentage of Cases Filed in 2023



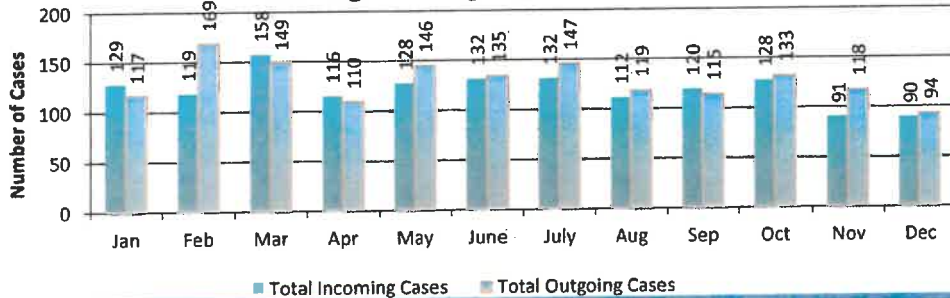
2023 Adjudications by Offense Level



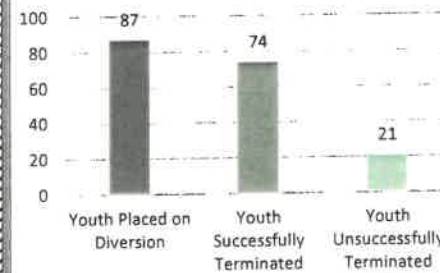
Clearance Rates by Month 2023



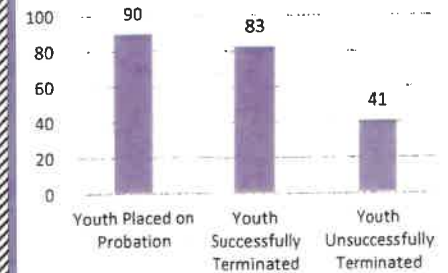
Incoming and Outgoing Cases 2023



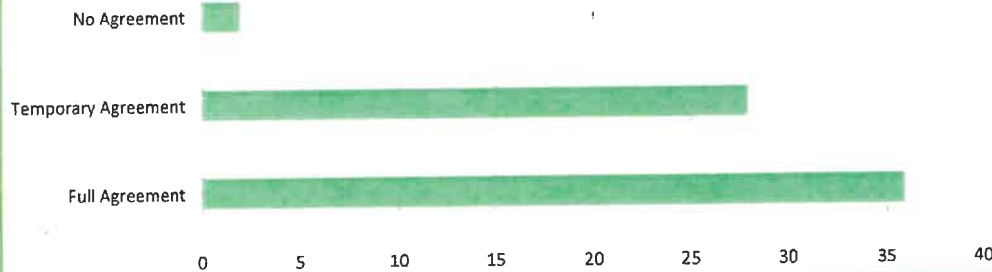
Youth Placed on Diversion



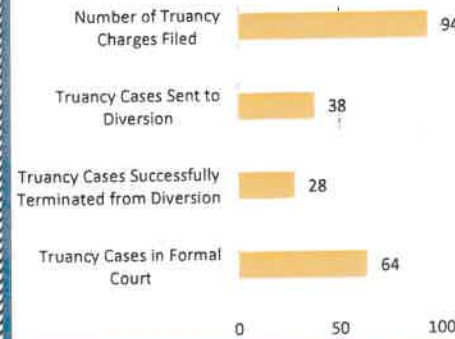
Youth Placed on Probation



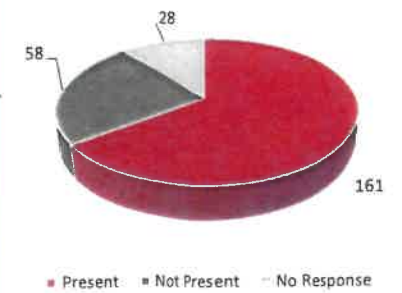
2023 Custody Mediation Cases



Truancy Cases Filed



In 2023 the Probation Department Completed 247 Curfew Checks on 115 Youth



Produced Annually by Sandusky County Juvenile & Probate Court Judge Brad Smith

Judge Brad Smith 5/30/2024
Judge Brad Smith

Sandusky County Juvenile Court Annual Report

CLEARANCE RATES:

The clearance rates are the number of outgoing cases as a percentage of the number of incoming cases. The purpose of clearance rates is to measure whether the Court is keeping up with its incoming caseload. If cases are not disposed of in a timely manner, a backlog of cases awaiting disposition will grow. This measure is a single number that can be compared within the Court for any and all juvenile cases. Courts should aspire to clear (dispose of) at least as many cases as have been filed/reopened/reactivated by having a clearance rate of 100% or higher. The clearance rate is calculated by the sum of the incoming cases (new filings/reopened/ reactivated cases) divided by the sum of outgoing cases (closed cases).

INCOMING CASES:

The incoming cases are the total number of cases opened or reactivated in a given month. Reactivated cases are those that were closed and then reopened upon a new filing (for example: a shared parenting agreement was issued and the parties want to modify the agreement a year later, the case would be reactivated). This statistic is compiled and maintained pursuant to the Rules of Superintendence of the Supreme Court.

OUTGOING CASES:

The outgoing cases are the total number of cases closed for Supreme Court reporting purposes in a given month. Cases can close for the following reasons: Trial by Judge or Magistrate; Admission to Judge or Magistrate; Dismissal by Party, Judge or Prosecutor; Unavailability of Party for Trial; Certification or Waiver Granted (delinquency cases only); Transfer to Another Judge or Court; and Other Terminations (for example: referrals to mediation). This statistic is compiled and maintained pursuant to the Rules of Superintendence of the Supreme Court.

CUSTODY MEDIATION CASES:

Mediation is a process in which a trained Mediator assists with communication and negotiation between parties to help them potentially reach a voluntary agreement regarding their dispute, without the expense and delay of a trial. The Court staffs a certified court mediator, who serves as a neutral third party. The Court screens custody and visitation matters for referral to mediation. No agreement reached indicates the parties involved could not agree on the matters at hand, and the case is referred back to the Court for formal hearing. When a full agreement is reached, all parties involved settle their dispute and eliminate the risk of completely losing their case or getting a judgment that is less acceptable. A temporary agreement allows the parties to settle a part of their dispute and returns the case to the Court for a complete resolution.

PERCENTAGE OF CASES:

As stated, this data references offenses filed, not total cases filed. For example: if a child is charged with three misdemeanor offenses, they may have only one case number/filing but a total of three offenses for reporting purposes.

YOUTH PLACED ON DIVERSION:

The Diversion Program is designed for youth that have no prior Court involvement (a first time offender) and are before the Court for a misdemeanor or unruly offense. Youth can be referred to the Diversion Program by the Chief Probation Officer prior to a Court appearance or by the Judge/Magistrate after adjudication pursuant to Juvenile Rule 29(F). Youth placed on Diversion are subject to rules set by the Diversion Contract and can be required to participate in programming deemed appropriate by the Diversion Officer. While on Diversion the youth is subject to random drug screens, curfew checks, school visits, home visits and office visits. If the youth completes the requirements and no new charges are filed, the case against them is dismissed and sealed. If the youth fails to complete the terms of the Diversion contract within 6 months, the case is returned to Court for formal Court involvement.

TRUANCY CASES FILED:

Habitual Truant is defined as any compulsory school age child who is absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse; absent 42 or more hours in one month without a legitimate excuse; absent 72 or more hours in one year without a legitimate excuse. This also includes 'excessive absences' if the child is absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse; or absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse. The purpose of HB 410 was to decriminalize school truancy, require the schools to provide additional intervention to prevent filing charges and when filed the Court is required to use informal interventions like Diversion. Beginning in 2023, the Court partnered with Family Children First Council to establish the C.A.T.S. program (Chronic Absenteeism & Truancy Support) in an effort to reduce premature involvement of the formal court system, connect families with community services and supports, and maintain youth engagement in school and the community.

ADJUDICATIONS BY OFFENSE LEVEL:

Adjudication is defined as giving or pronouncing a judgment or decree. In Juvenile Court, delinquency offenses are classified as a misdemeanor or felony. Unruly offenses are those that are not considered a "crime" if committed by an adult (for example: curfew and school truancy).

YOUTH PLACED ON PROBATION:

Due to cases that carry over from year to year you will notice that the number of terminations do not total the number of youth placed on probation during the calendar year we are reporting on. Youth that are terminated unsuccessfully are done so for a number of reasons, some examples being that they reached the age of majority (18), they were placed at the Ohio Department of Youth Services, or the Court feels that they have reached the maximum benefit. While on Probation, youth are assigned to a Probation Officer who supervises their case. Probation ensures that the youth is complying with the rules set by the Court, completing the programming that is required and remaining law abiding. When the youth has completed the requirements of Probation, their Probation Officer files a motion with the Court asking for their Probation to be terminated.

CURFEW CHECKS:

While on Probation and/or Diversion all youth are subject to random, unannounced curfew checks. Probation Officers conduct curfew checks by geographical area as assigned by the Chief Probation Officer. The County is divided geographically East (Bellevue and Clyde), Central (Fremont), and West (Gibsonburg, Burgoon and Woodville). Probation Officers will conduct curfew checks in pairs. At the time of the curfew check, Probation is required to physically see the youth in question. If the youth is not present, a curfew check slip is left at the residence with instructions about what they are required to do when they get home and Probation will follow up with the family the next business day.