



COMMON PLEAS COURT

GENERAL DIVISION

Richard E. Berens, Administrative Judge
David A. Trimmer, Judge

FAIRFIELD COUNTY INVESTS IN COLLABORATIVE REENTRY INITIATIVES PRESS RELEASE 8/9/2021

The Fairfield County Common Pleas Court, in collaboration with the Fairfield County Commissioners, Fairfield County Sheriff's Office, and various local treatment agencies have launched several reentry-centered initiatives to assist persons released from incarceration to reintegrate into society safely and successfully.

"Persons released from jail, prison, or residential treatment programs often remain under Court supervision," explained Judge Richard Berens. "Initiatives such as these empower those returning to the community to take responsibility for themselves and their future, leading to fewer repeat offenders."

A few examples of Fairfield County's recent Reentry Initiatives include:

- In June 2021, the Court hired a Reentry Coordinator, Nicholas Pease, to facilitate in-reach and out-reach reentry programming. Reentry Coordinator Pease manages program efforts among local treatment agencies, law enforcement, other counties, and the courts. He also serves as an advocate for jail and prison inmates, coordinating assessments, residential treatment placements, and "reentry plans" to increase compliance with pretrial, probation, and parole supervision.
- In June 2021, the Court, Commissioners, and Sheriff's Office agreed to participate in the Targeting Community Alternatives to Prison ("TCAP") grant offered by the State of Ohio. The initiative will result in approximately \$360,000 of grant funding in 2021 and 2022. This grant will be used to fund pretrial and probation officer positions as well as offset the costs of program initiatives, drug testing, and electronic monitoring.
- In July 2021, STAR Community Justice Center resumed providing cognitive behavioral classes in the Fairfield County Jail. Classes are offered to all inmates as optional programming while incarcerated. Topics include relapse prevention, criminogenics, and drug and alcohol education. These classes are supported by the Court and Sheriff's Office, but are funded fully by the TCAP grant mentioned above.

Court of Common Pleas of Fairfield County, Ohio • Hall of Justice • 224 East Main Street • Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Judge Richard E. Berens (740) 652-7422 • Judge David A. Trimmer (740) 652-7423 • www.fairfieldcountyoio.gov



COMMON PLEAS COURT

GENERAL DIVISION

Richard E. Berens, Administrative Judge
David A. Trimmer, Judge

- On July 15, 2021, the Court hosted its first “Reentry Roundtable,” which was attended by a cross-section of over 20 law enforcement agencies, treatment-centered organizations, and community partners. The purpose of the roundtable was to engage in candid discussion and problem-solving efforts regarding housing, treatment, and community safety. The next Reentry Roundtable is scheduled for January 2022.
- In July 2021, Fairfield County was chosen to participate in a collaborative community of practice led by the National Council of State Governments’ Justice Center. The focus of the program is to improve criminal case processing for those with behavioral health needs in the criminal justice system. Representatives from the Court, Sheriff’s Office, Prosecutor’s Office, defense bar, and treatment community are actively engaged in the program.
- Similarly, Fairfield County’s Reentry Coordinator Nicholas Pease was chosen to be a team lead in the City of Lancaster’s community of practice focusing on increasing housing opportunities for those with behavioral health needs in the system. The community of practice team consists of Reentry Coordinator Pease as well as representatives from the City of Lancaster, New Horizons, Link A Staff, and The Numbered.

“The overarching aim of our reentry programs is to get people the treatment, support, and stability they need to get back on their feet,” added Court Administrator Jillian Boone. “In so doing, we are not only helping that person, we are also protecting the community by reducing the likelihood of recidivism and the costly cycle of incarceration.”

For more information about Fairfield County Reentry efforts or to participate in the January 2022 Reentry Roundtable, feel free to contact Reentry Coordinator Nicholas Pease at Nicholas.pease@fairfieldcountyohio.gov or Court Administrator Jillian Boone at jillian.boone@fairfieldcountyohio.gov.