



# COMMON PLEAS COURT

## GENERAL DIVISION

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

### **PRESS RELEASE** **DECEMBER 27, 2016**

The Drug Recovery Court of the Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas has earned final certification from the Ohio Supreme Court's Commission on Specialized Dockets.

In order to receive the certification, the Court underwent a rigorous review process, including a lengthy application, the submission of several program-specific materials, and a site visit from representatives from the Ohio Supreme Court. The certification requirements included establishing eligibility requirements, evaluating effectiveness of the specialized docket, and assembling a treatment team for implementing daily operations of the specialized docket. The team includes licensed treatment providers and court personnel, and is headed by the specialized docket judge.

Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor congratulated Judge Richard E. Berens and the Fairfield County Common Pleas Court for receiving final certification.

"Specialized dockets divert offenders toward criminal justice initiatives that employ tools and tailored services to treat and rehabilitate the offender so they can become productive members of society," said Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor. "Studies have shown this approach works by reducing recidivism while saving tax dollars."

Specialized dockets such as the Drug Recovery Court are courts that are dedicated to specific types of offenses or offenders and use a combination of different techniques for holding offenders accountable while also addressing the underlying causes of their behavior. Specifically, the goal of the Fairfield County Common Pleas Court Drug Recovery Court is two-fold: to combat the recidivism of probationers whose primary cause of criminal activity is based upon drug addiction while also creating a cost-savings to Fairfield County through a decrease in jail days served by probationers and a decreased cost to the community through reduction in criminal activity. These goals are achieved through frequent contact with and direction from the Community Control Department, counseling service, and the Court. Participants are held accountable for their behavior via periodic drug/alcohol testing, counseling reports, and in-court hearings, as well as the use of graduated sanctions and rehabilitative services.

"The mission of the Fairfield County Common Pleas Drug Recovery Court is to provide intense, specialized, and individualized supervision and treatment to participants with the aim of encouraging them to confront their addictions and problematic behavior and become productive members of society," explained Judge Berens. "This in turn will reduce the likelihood of recidivism and protect the community as a whole."

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