



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

MERCER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Message from Sheriff Jeff Grey _____	3
Meet Your Sheriff _____	4
Mission Statement & Motto _____	4
Code of Ethics _____	4
2023 Employee Awards Program _____	5
Structure of the Sheriff's Office _____	6
Administrative Employees _____	7
Technology _____	9
I.T. Administrator Kory Hoffhines _____	9
I.T. Technician Danny Saunders, Jr. _____	9
Central Dispatch _____	10
9-1-1 Administrator Rachel Williams _____	11
9-1-1 Administrator Monte Diegel _____	11
Types Of Calls _____	11
Dispatcher In-Service Training _____	13
Civil Division _____	14
Captain Lori Knapke _____	15
WebChecks _____	15
Carry Conceal Permits _____	15
Transports _____	16
Child Support Enforcement Contract _____	16
Detention Facility _____	17
Chief Deputy Jodie Lange _____	20
Captain Martin Emerine _____	20
Inmate Population Statistics _____	20
Detention Facility Income _____	21
Commissary _____	21
Medical Reimbursement _____	22
Inmate Work Release Program _____	22
Inmates House for other Agencies _____	23
Warrants _____	23
Treatment Programs in the Jail _____	24
Enforcement _____	25
Chief Deputy Doug Timmerman _____	27
Captain Megan Baker _____	27
Patrol _____	28
Investigations _____	28
Traffic Enforcement _____	2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Crash Investigations _____	2
Active Shooter Training _____	4
K-9 Program _____	6
Programs, Organizations, & Volunteers _____	7
D.A.R.E. program _____	7
Junior Deputy Program _____	9
BSSA Communication Vehicle "Comm 9 – 5400" _____	9
Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative _____	10
Chaplain Program _____	10
National Faith & Blue Event _____	11
2023 Mercer County Fair _____	12
Staff Photos from 2023 _____	13
History of the Ohio Sheriff _____	14
History of the Sheriff's Office & Jail _____	15
Conclusion _____	17
Integrity _____	17
Service _____	17
Professionalism _____	17
Responsibility _____	17
Contact Information _____	18

MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF JEFF GREY

Message from Sheriff Jeff Grey

Welcome!

We are thrilled to share with you the Mercer County Sheriff's Office 2023 Annual Report! Our dedicated staff works hard every day to ensure the safety and security of Mercer County residents and those traveling through.

We would like to thank our citizens for their continued support over the years. Law Enforcement is a partnership between the law enforcement agency and the citizens we serve.

It is truly an honor and privilege to be able to provide services to you!

Sincerely,

Jeff Grey
Sheriff



MEET YOUR SHERIFF

Meet Your Sheriff

Sheriff Jeff Grey was elected Mercer County Sheriff in November 2000, taking office January 1, 2001. He has been in law enforcement in Mercer and Auglaize Counties since 1980.

Sheriff Grey is a 1977 graduate of Celina Senior High School and received an Associate of Arts Degree in Business Administration from Northwestern College, Lima, OH. He is a graduate of the School of Police Staff and Command, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, the FBI Executive Leadership School, Buffalo, NY, and the National Sheriffs' Institute, Longmont, Colorado.

Sheriff Grey is a past (2012) President of the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association. He is also a member of the Concealed Carry, Community Corrections, DARE/SRO, and Legislative Committees. Sheriff Grey trained newly elected sheriffs in 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 on the SORN Laws and how they affect the office of Sheriff.

Sheriff Grey lives in Washington Township with his wife Kay. They have two adult sons, and six grandchildren.

MISSION STATEMENT & MOTTO

The mission for every member of the Mercer County Sheriff's Office is to consistently seek and find ways to affirmatively promote, preserve, and deliver a feeling of security, safety, and quality services to the citizens and visitors of Mercer County.

This mission is a commitment to quality performance by all employees. Each employee of the Mercer County Sheriff's Office is committed to providing these services in a caring, courteous, and common sense manner.

"Caring, Courteous, Common Sense Law Enforcement"

CODE OF ETHICS

Every newly hired employee shall review the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics shall be signed by the employee in the presence of the Sheriff, thereby acknowledging the employee's affirmation and dedication to protect constitutional rights and freedoms, perform all duties in a professional and competent manner, be truthful and honest in all dealings with others, and serve the public in a courteous, empathetic and humane manner. The original signed Code of Ethics shall be given to the employee and a copy retained in the employee's personnel file.

2023 EMPLOYEE AWARDS PROGRAM

2023 Employee Awards Program

Awards are given for the following: Employee of the Year, Corrections Officer of the Year, Deputy Sheriff of the Year, Dispatcher of the Year, Citation, Certificate of Merit, Award of Valor, Life Saving Award, Commendation Award, Safe Driving Award, Seat Belt Award, Civilian Award, and Certificate of Appreciation. Employees are awarded pins that are worn on their uniforms. The awards are presented at the annual employee breakfast meeting. The Awards program is a great way to showcase employee achievements.

In 2023, these employees were given the following awards for their accomplishments (awards banquet held on March 23, 2024):

Employee of the Year:	Sergeant Nathan Post
Deputy Sheriff of the Year:.....	Deputy Noah Nieport
Corrections Deputy of the Year:	Deputy Austin Prenger
Dispatcher of the Year:.....	Dispatcher Liz Johnson
Civilian Employee of the Year	Fiscal Manager Kandi Baucher
Commendation:	<u>Dispatcher Supervisors:</u> Stephanie Bledsoe,
.....	Brieanna Park, & Alexis Metz;
.....	<u>Dispatchers:</u> Liz Johnson, Rebecca Fitzgerald,
.....	& Dale Fullenkamp
Life Saving Award:.....	Sergeant Rachel Heint & Deputy Donald Sites, Jr.
Certificate of Merit	Sergeant Heather Leist, Deputy Spencer Heint,
.....	Deputy Hannah Oakley, & Deputy Josh Sizemore
Safe Driving Awards:	25 Years – Cpt. Lori Knapke
.....	25 Years – Detective John Marbaugh
.....	20 Years – Deputy Deric Kroft
.....	20 Years – Deputy Kyle Strohl

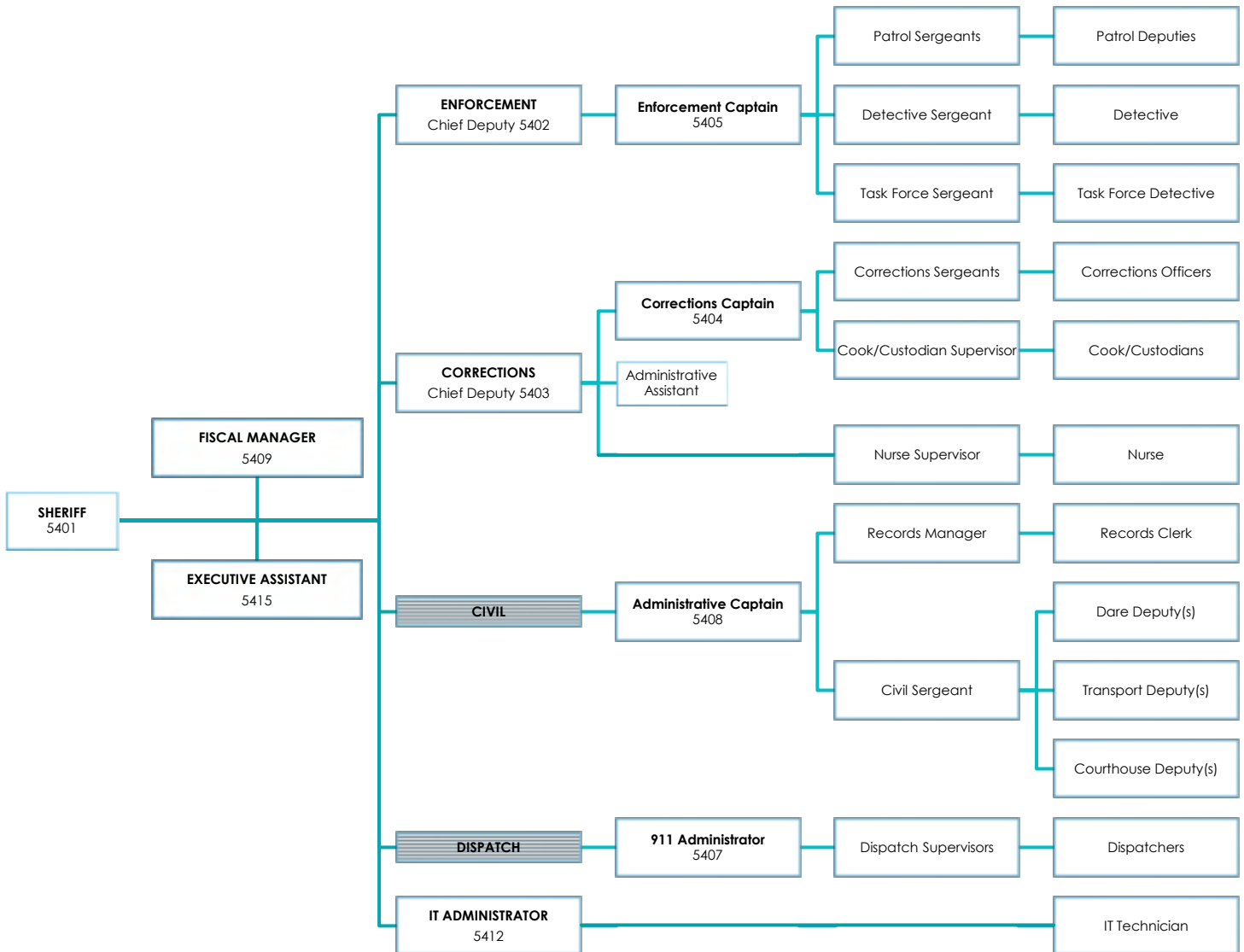
The Sheriff also awards service stars at the annual meeting. Stars are awarded to employees who have served in Law Enforcement for at least 5 years. Stars are awarded for every 5-year increments of service.

In 2023, the following Service Stars were awarded:

30 Year Service Stars	Chief Deputy Jodie Lange & Chief Deputy Doug Timmerman
25 Year Service Stars	Captain Lori Knapke & Detective John Marbaugh
20 Year Service Stars	Deputy Deric Kroft & Deputy Kyle Strohl
10 Year Service Stars	Fiscal Manager Kandi Baucher
5 Year Service Stars	Nurse Megan Fokine & Deputy Kevin Schnipke

STRUCTURE OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Structure of the Sheriff's Office



ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

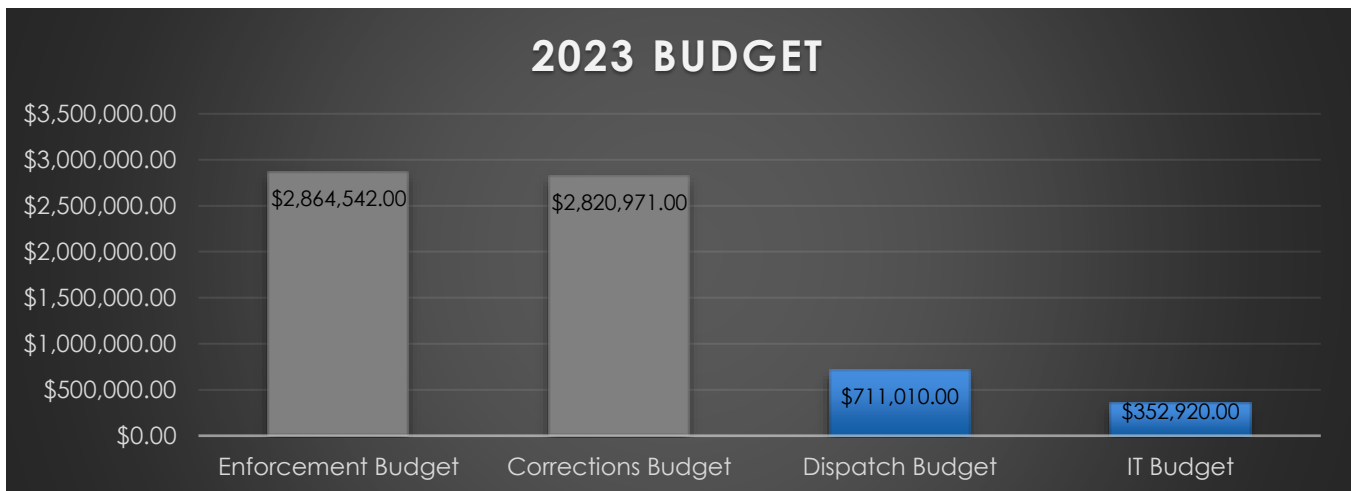
Administrative Employees



Kandi Baucher is the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Fiscal Manager. She oversees all the annual budgets, manages accounts payable/receivable, processes payroll, and is in charge of purchasing. Kandi has been with the sheriff's office since 2020. She was previously a dispatcher from 2008 to 2015. In 2023, the Sheriff's Office appropriation were just over 6.7 million dollars. The chart below shows each division broken out.



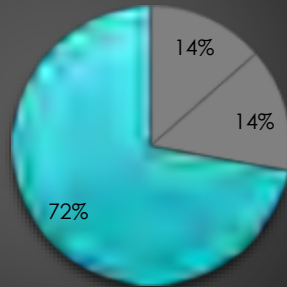
Ashley Carr is Sheriff Grey's Executive Assistant. Ashley is responsible for managing the Sheriff's schedule as well as the Sheriff funds, updating employee records, maintaining traffic grant information, and website/Facebook/Sheriff's App. Other responsibilities include updating yearly statistical data for the enforcement division and creating and maintaining yearly reports. Ashley has been with the Sheriff's Office since 2016, where she began her career as a 9-1-1 Dispatcher. She was promoted to Executive Assistant in July of 2017.



ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

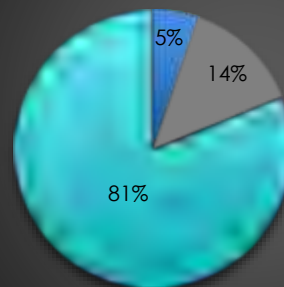
Enforcement Budget

- Materials, Equipment, Supplies
- Benefits & Training
- Salary



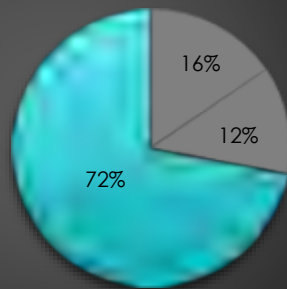
Dispatch Budget

- Materials, Equipment, Supplies
- Benefits & Training
- Salary



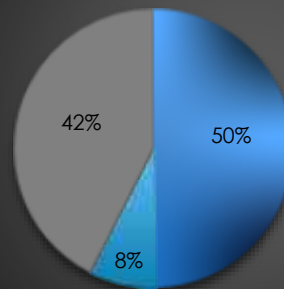
Jail Budget

- Materials, Equipment, Supplies
- Benefits & Training
- Salary



IT Budget

- Materials, Equipment, Supplies
- Benefits & Training
- Salary



Technology



I.T. Administrator Kory Hoffhines



I.T. Technician Danny Saunders, Jr.

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office IT department transcends all three divisions at the Sheriff's Office maintaining all the computer systems, camera systems, email network, internet, jail door controls, 9-1-1 system, record management system, and all electronic storage. In addition to maintaining the Sheriff's Office systems, the IT employees also assist with cyber type crimes.

I.T. ADMINISTRATOR KORY HOFFHINES

Kory Hoffhines is the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Network Administrator. Kory has been with the Sheriff's Office since 2006. Kory maintains the entire Sheriff's Office computer network.

I.T. TECHNICIAN DANNY SAUNDERS, JR.

Danny Saunders, Jr. is an I.T. Technician for the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. He assists Kory in maintaining the Sheriff's Office computer network.

CENTRAL DISPATCH

Central Dispatch

Retired on June 30, 2023



9-1-1 Administrator Monte Diegel



9-1-1 Administrator Rachel Williams



Dispatch Supervisor Stephanie Stammen



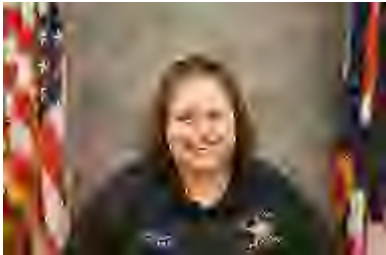
Dispatch Supervisor Brianna Park



Dispatch Supervisor Alexis Metz



Dispatcher Elizabeth Johnson



Dispatcher Rebecca Fitzgerald



Dispatcher Dale Fullenkamp

CENTRAL DISPATCH

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office operates the Mercer County 9-1-1 Central Dispatch. Dispatchers are dedicated and trained to handle life-threatening emergencies as well as all non-emergency calls that are received in the dispatch center.

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office 9-1-1 Central Dispatch, dispatches for the Sheriff's Office, as well five (5) Police agencies, four (4) Life Squads and ten (10) Fire Stations located in Mercer County. All 9-1-1 calls throughout Mercer County, which include land lines and cell phones, ring into the Mercer County Sheriff's Office including Celina and other Municipalities. Central Dispatch also has the ability to set off tornado warning systems, Informer system for inclement weather, and the NIXLE alert system.

Dispatchers have the additional responsibility of the Ohio LEADS (Law Enforcement Automated Data System) to provide immediate response to an officer request for driver's license or vehicle registration information and checking to make sure that a person is not wanted by any other Agency. Dispatchers are responsible for entering stolen items, warrants, protection orders, missing persons, and conceal carry permits into LEADS/NCIC every day.

9-1-1 ADMINISTRATOR RACHEL WILLIAMS

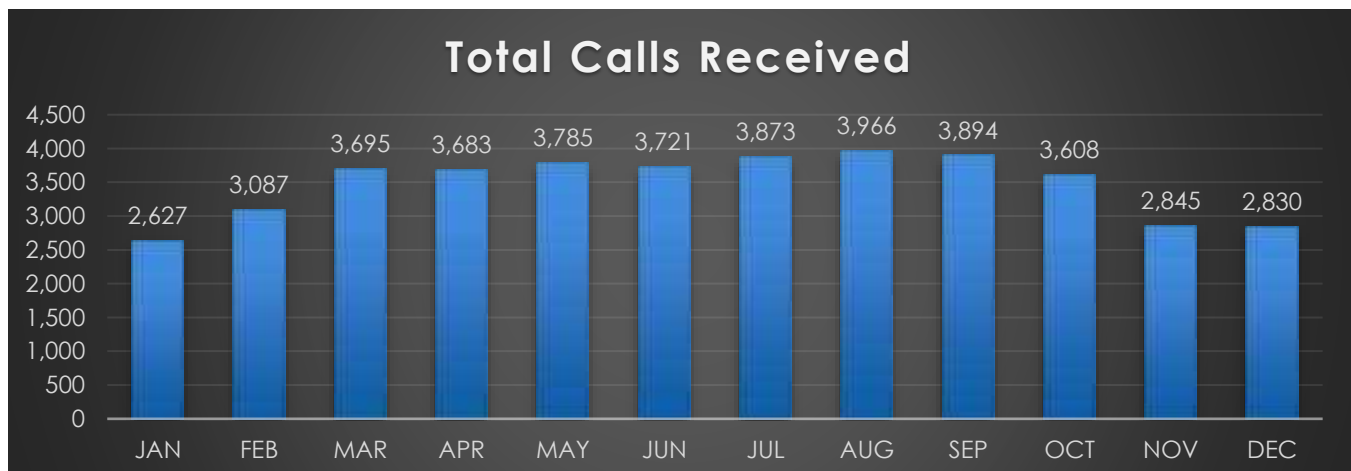
The Communications Division is under the direction of the newly appointed 9-1-1 Administrator Rachel Williams. She was promoted in December of 2022, when Monte Diegel announced his retirement. Administrator Williams has been at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office since 2016, where she began her career as a 9-1-1 Dispatcher. She also serves as an EMT with Coldwater EMS.

9-1-1 ADMINISTRATOR MONTE DIEGEL

Monte Diegel retired from our office in June of 2023 after serving 28 years as our 9-1-1 Administrator. Administrator Diegel has 34 plus years of experience in communications.

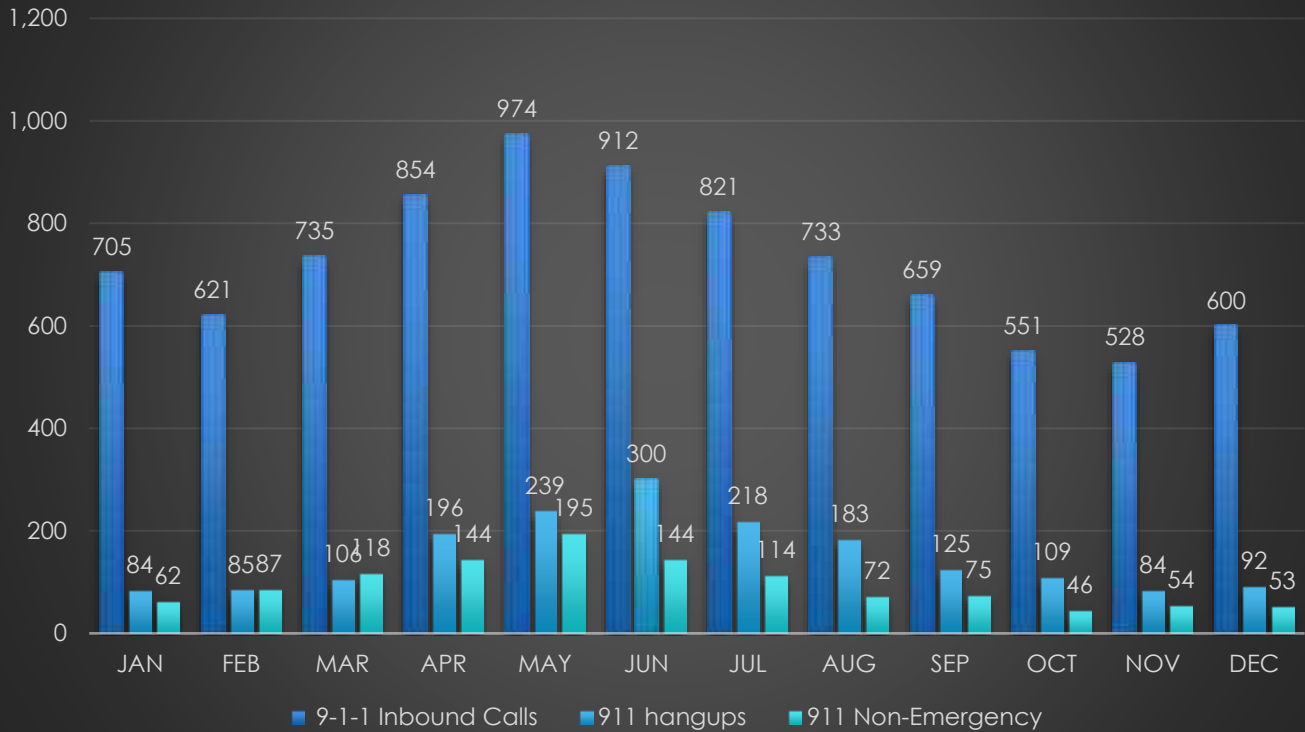
TYPES OF CALLS

In 2023, our Dispatch Center received 41,614 incoming calls into the Sheriff's Office. That is an average of 3,468 calls per month.

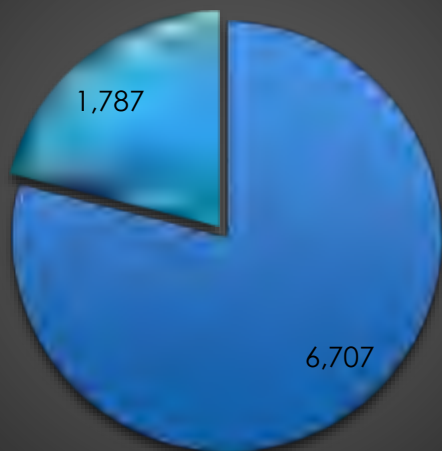


CENTRAL DISPATCH

Types of Calls Received

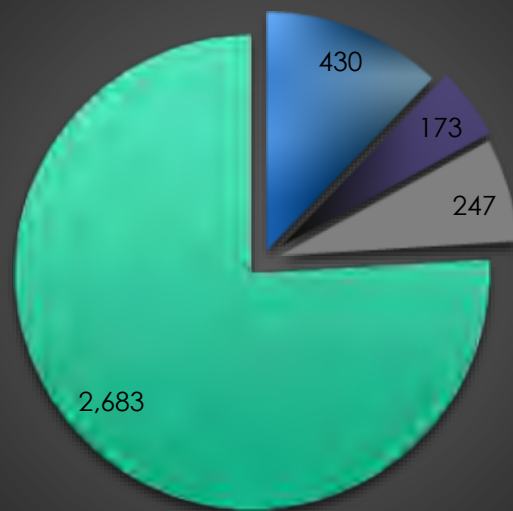


How Calls are Received



■ Total 9-1-1 Wireless Calls ■ Total 9-1-1 Landline Calls

Fire & EMS Calls



■ Alarm Drops ■ Fire Alarms ■ Fire Calls ■ Squad Calls

CENTRAL DISPATCH

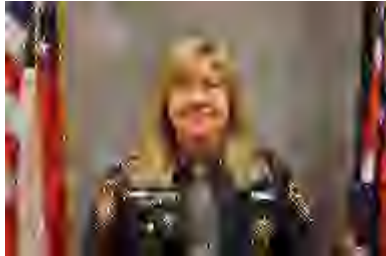
DISPATCHER IN-SERVICE TRAINING

In 2023, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office co-hosted the annual dispatcher in-service training with the Celina Police Department. This training is provided for free to other agencies. In 2023, over 40 agencies from the state of Ohio and Indiana attended the training, with a total of 117 participants. The In-Service has been held for over 15 years. The second day of this year's training was dedicated to CIT, and had 17 participants.

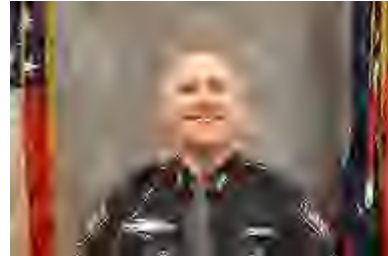


CIVIL DIVISION

Civil Division



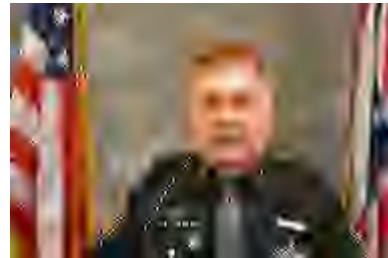
Captain Lori Knapke



Sergeant Donald Bird



Deputy Kyle Strohl



Deputy Kent Taylor



Deputy Scott Geis



Records Manager Nicole Grabow

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office Civil Division is responsible to perform Sheriff's Sales, serve civil processes and court related paperwork from Mercer County and other jurisdictions. In addition, the Civil Division is responsible for Sex Offender and Arson Offender registration, and notification as well as all matters pertaining to the application for Carry Concealed Weapons Permits, commonly referred as CCW. Public record requests and civilian background checks are also the responsibility of the Civil Division.

The Civil Division is instrumental with record retention for the Sheriff's Office, which includes criminal reports, crash reports, and all other records. The Civil Division also coordinates the Web Check program.

In 2023, the Civil Division handled a minimum of 113 periodic registrations of Sex Offenders who currently reside in Mercer County. Currently, Mercer County has 63 registered Sex Offenders. Civil and Patrol Deputies also did a total of 289 sex offender address verifications throughout 2023 to ensure offenders were living where they are registered.

CIVIL DIVISION

CAPTAIN LORI KNAPKE

The Civil Division is under the command of Captain Lori Knapke. Cpt. Knapke has over 25 years of experience and has spent her entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. Cpt. Knapke has held the ranks of Dispatcher, Deputy Sheriff, Administrative Sergeant, Administrative Lieutenant and now Captain.

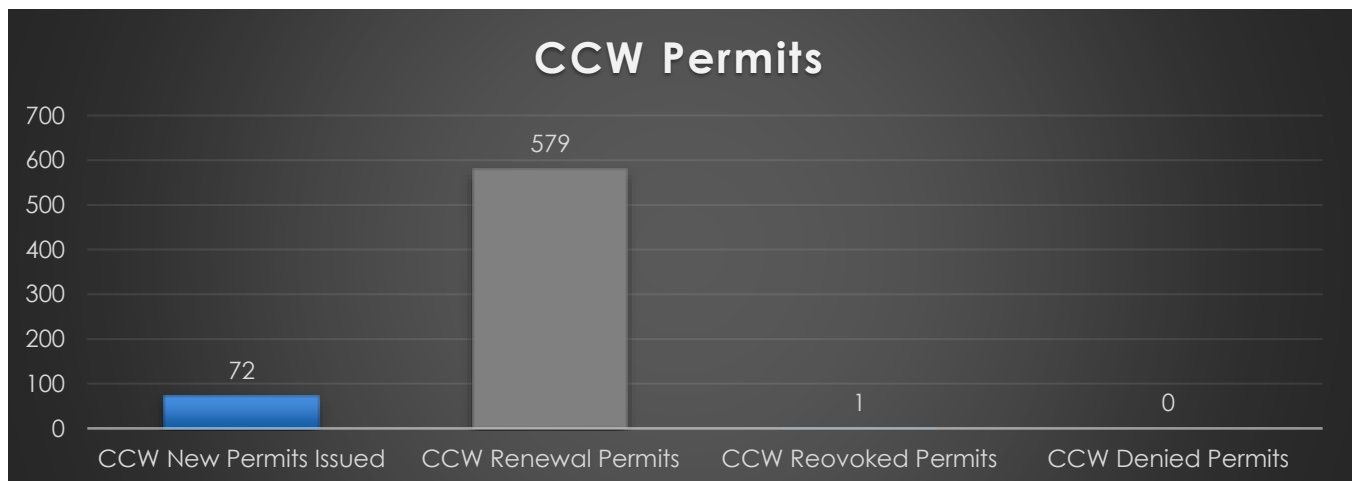
In addition to the Civil division, Cpt. Knapke is responsible for inmate transports, Court House security, the DARE program, crime prevention, Child Support Contract, and the Sheriff's Office volunteer program.

WEBCHECKS

The Sheriff's Office uses inVise ID, which electronically captures and submits fingerprints for background checks. Federal and State laws mandate fingerprinting and background checks for various occupations with an emphasis on those who work with the elderly or children. Only authorized Agencies can submit fingerprints, and conduct searches against State and FBI criminal records. The Sheriff's Office also provides traditional "ink-rolled" fingerprint processing. Total webcheck submissions for 2023 was 1,925.

CARRY CONCEAL PERMITS

In 2023, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Civil Division issued 72 new CCW permits, and renewed 579. During 2023, the Sheriff's Office also revoked 1 permit, denied 0 permits, and suspended 8.

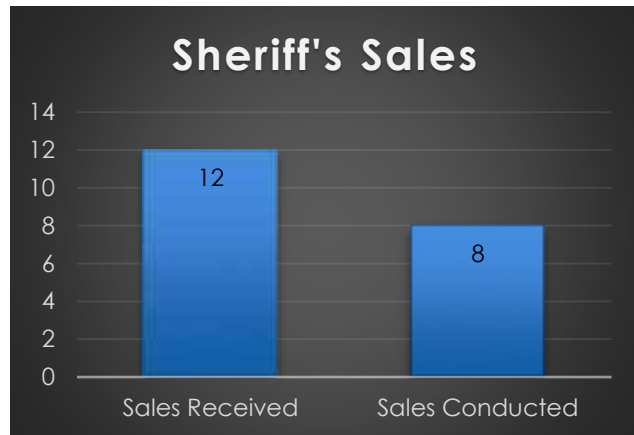
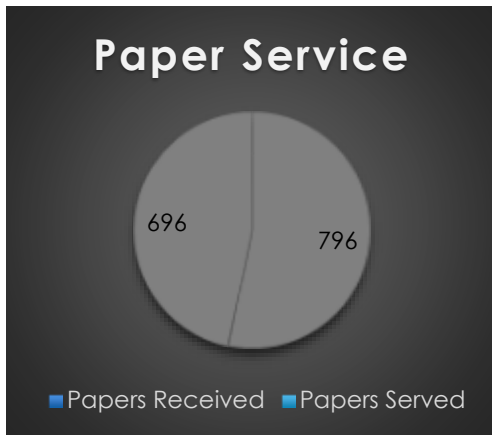


CIVIL DIVISION

TRANSPORTS

Transport Deputies are responsible for transferring inmates to and from Court, which includes all three courts in Mercer County (Municipal, Common Pleas, and Juvenile), as well as transferring inmates to doctor's appointments and taking them to State institutions (Prisons). In 2023, deputies made 391 transports and traveled 41,868 miles. Deputies also traveled out of state on 18 trips to Indiana (9), Florida (3), Tennessee (1), Nevada, Michigan, North Carolina (2), and Kansas.

TRANSPORT Yearly Totals	
# of Transports	391
Transports Mileage	41,868 Miles



CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT

In 2023, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office continued to contract (IV-D contract) with the Mercer County Child Support Enforcement Agency. The purpose of the contract is to provide services to the Agency, which allows the Sheriff's Office to be reimbursed for those services through a grant. The services would include: Child Support investigations, extradition of felony cases, and security for administrative hearings on a needed basis.

CHILD SUPPORT Yearly Totals	
Child Support Enforcement Total Miles	3,416 Miles
Child Support Enforcement Mile Fees	\$1,886.63
Child Support Enforcement Hours Worked	323.25 Hours

DETENTION FACILITY

Detention Facility



Chief Deputy Jodie Lange



Captain Martin Emerine



Sergeant Jonathan Wolfe



Sergeant Nathan Post



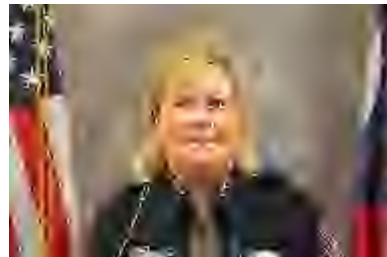
Sergeant Rob Cupp



Sergeant Heather Leist



Administrative Assistant Theresa Dellinger

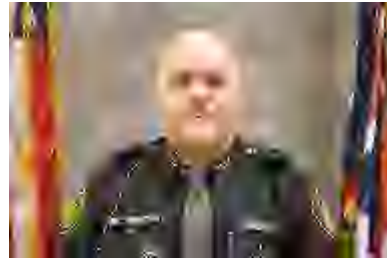


Deputy Lori Pease

DETENTION FACILITY



Deputy Lisa Meeker



Deputy Jason Porter



Deputy Kevin Schnipke



Deputy Austin Prenger



Deputy Matt Kremer



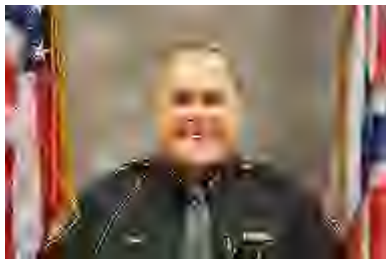
Deputy Hannah Oakley



Deputy Alexa Marlow



Deputy Chad Etzler

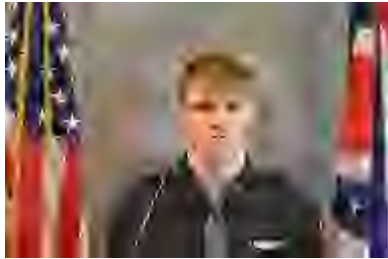


Deputy Joshua Sizemore



Deputy Valeri Buschor

DETENTION FACILITY



Deputy William Fox



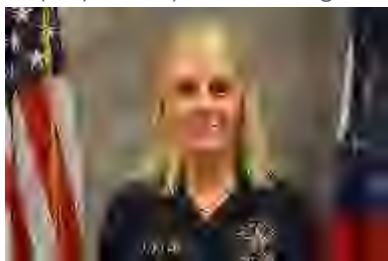
Deputy Zachary Vogel



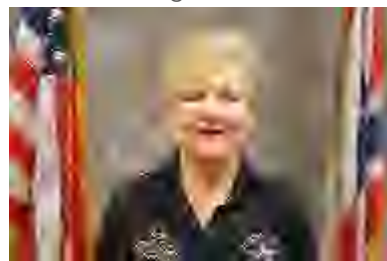
Deputy Cassidy Decker-Krogman



Nurse Megan Fokine, RN



Nurse Sue Backs, LPN



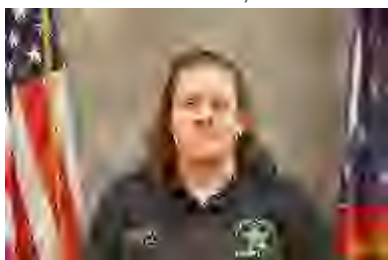
Cook/Custodian Supervisor Connie Kaiser



Custodian Kathy Giere



Custodian Betty Steinbrunner



Custodian Abigail Fent



Custodian Marie Stahl (Intermittent)

DETENTION FACILITY

The Adult Detention Facility has 4 Sergeants who oversee all shifts. The Detention Facility must have a minimum of 3 state certified correction's officers working per shift. This includes both female and male corrections officers. The staff of the Mercer County Detention Facility are responsible for the security and safety of the inmates who are housed within the facility. The inmates are monitored 24 hours a day. In addition to correction's officers, the Detention Facility also has a full-service kitchen, one Registered Nurse, and an LPN nurse and a Medical Doctor.

CHIEF DEPUTY JODIE LANGE

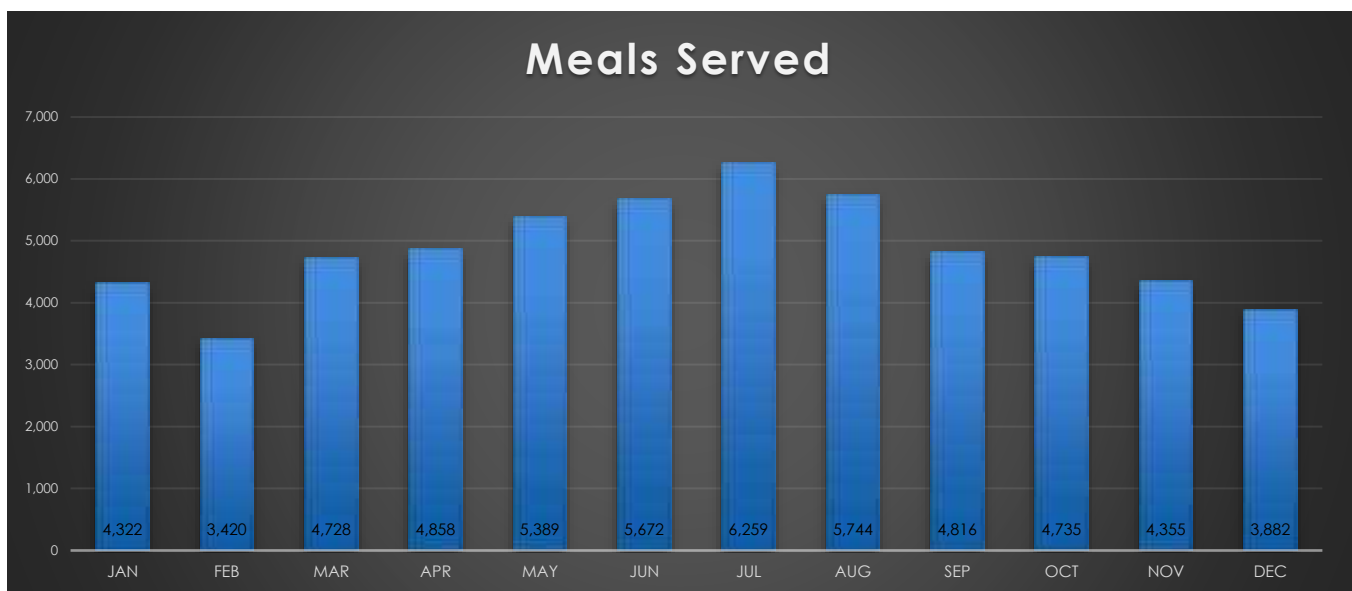
The Detention Facility is under the command of Chief Deputy Jodie Lange. Chief Lange has over 30 years of experience and she has spent her entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. Chief Lange has held the ranks of Corrections Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and now Chief Deputy. Chief Lange reviews programs for inmates. She is responsible for the overall operations in the detention facility.

CAPTAIN MARTIN EMERINE

Captain Martin Emerine oversees all the day to day operations in the corrections division. Captain Emerine has 32 years of law enforcement experience and has spent his entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. Captain Emerine has held the ranks of Deputy, Lieutenant, Captain of Enforcement, and now Captain of Corrections.

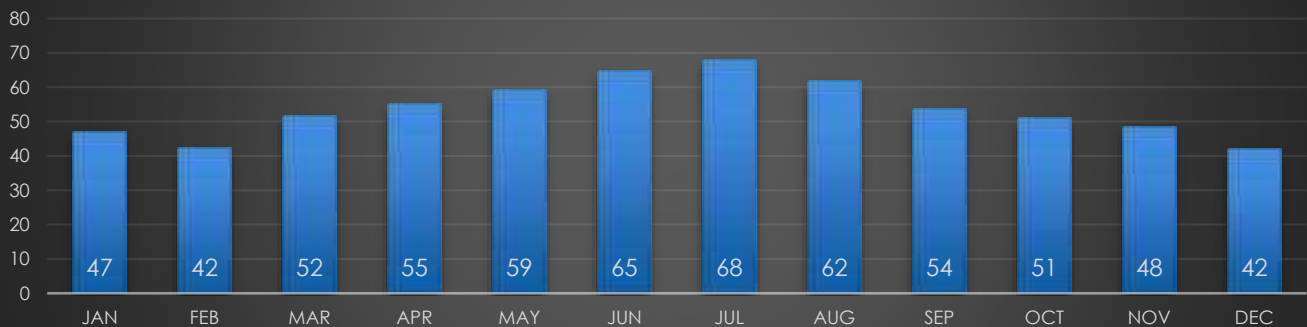
INMATE POPULATION STATISTICS

In 2023, the Mercer County Adult Detention Facility booked in 1637 inmates. Of those inmates; 1245 were male and 392 were female. The Detention Facility served 58,180 meals in 2023. Daily inmate totals vary. The following chart shows daily inmate trends and meals served by month.



DETENTION FACILITY

Average Daily Inmate Count



DETENTION FACILITY INCOME

The Detention Facility does generate revenue. This revenue is generated by the inmates through various sources and programs. The following charts show where the revenue comes from and a description of the program. Revenue is received from housing inmates for other agencies, commissary, medical reimbursement, inmate work release. These programs save money for the tax payers of Mercer County. Total revenue generated for 2023 was \$182,400.44.

COMMISSARY

Commissary are items that have been approved for inmates to purchase. Items include coffee, personal hygiene, socks and underwear, snacks, paper, envelopes, and various other items. The profits generated by commissary purchases can only be used to benefit inmates. Commissary funds inmate programs such as the garden and landscaping. Commissary is also used to purchase equipment, work clothes, work boots, and work tools used for the inmate garden. A total of \$38,966.52 was collected through commissary in 2023.

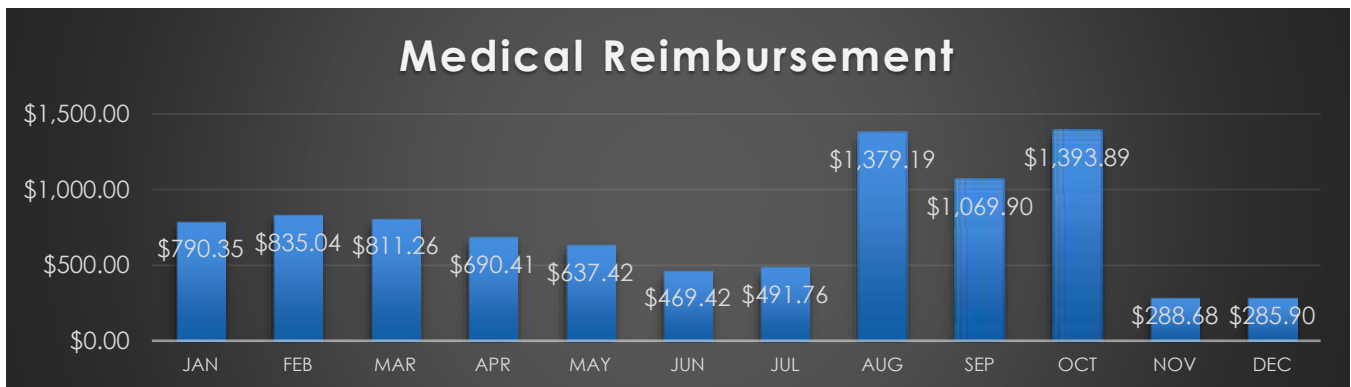
Commissary



DETENTION FACILITY

MEDICAL REIMBURSEMENT

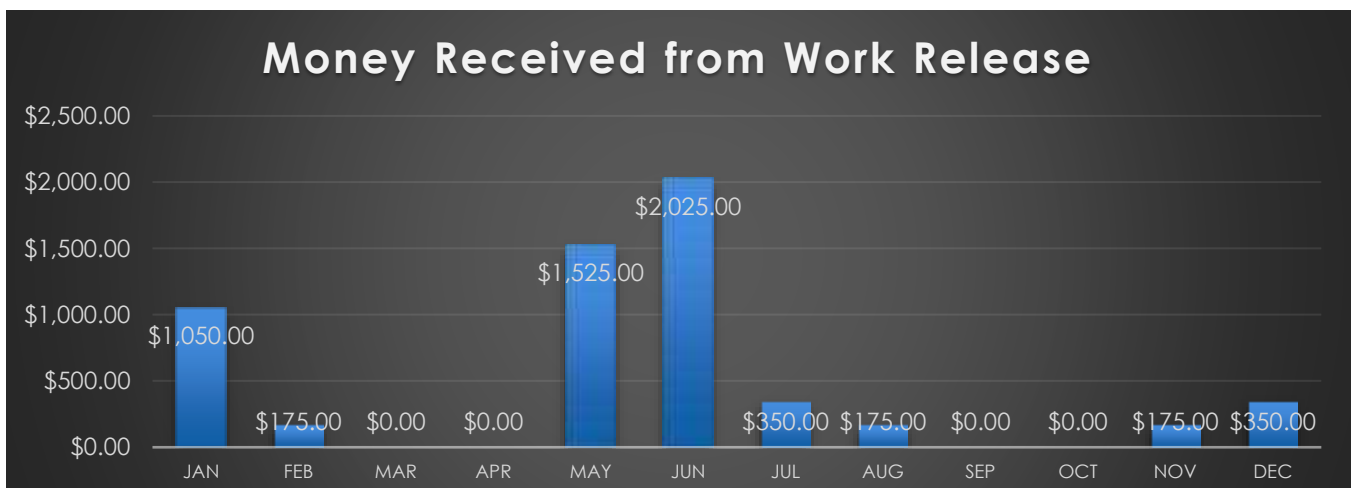
Medical Reimbursement funds are collected from inmates that require medical treatment while incarcerated at the Detention Facility. Inmates are billed for medical costs incurred while housed at the Detention Facility. When money is deposited on an inmates' account, a portion of the money is used to pay their outstanding medical expenses. In 2023, a total of \$9,143.22 was collected through the medical reimbursement program.



INMATE WORK RELEASE PROGRAM

Work Release is a program by which inmates can be allowed to be released from the county jail during the time he or she is scheduled to work. Participants in the work release program must have a job and hours that can be verified. Inmates are released during those work hours. Program participants are required to sign and follow the work release guidelines, and also must follow all the jail rules & regulations to participate in this program.

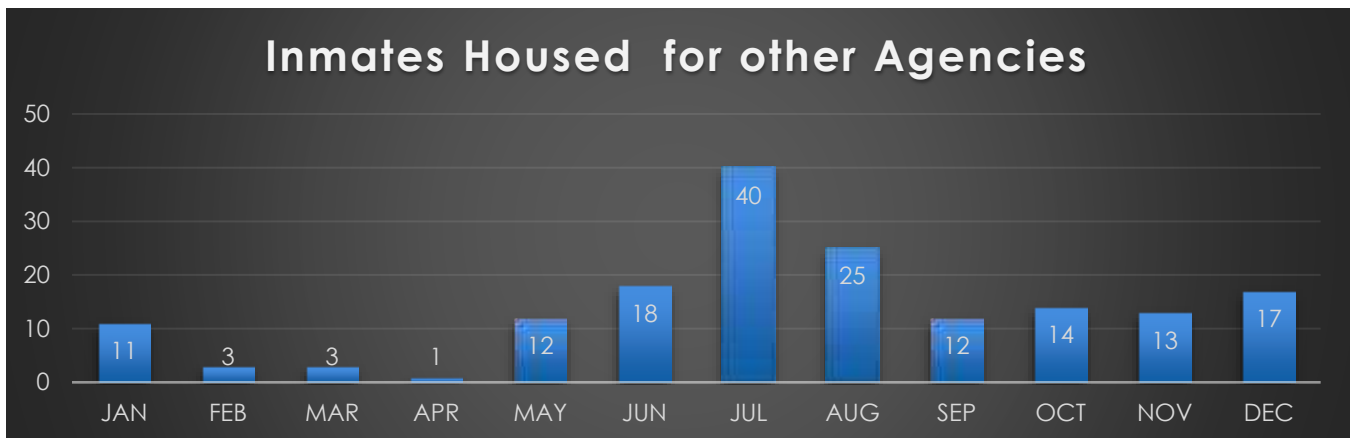
Inmates pay to be in the work release program, and payment guidelines have been set up according to wages earned. Mercer County Sheriff's Office staff periodically visit the workplace to ensure the inmate is working. Program violators are terminated from the program and the courts are notified. In 2023, a total of \$5,825.00 was collected through the inmate work release program.



DETENTION FACILITY

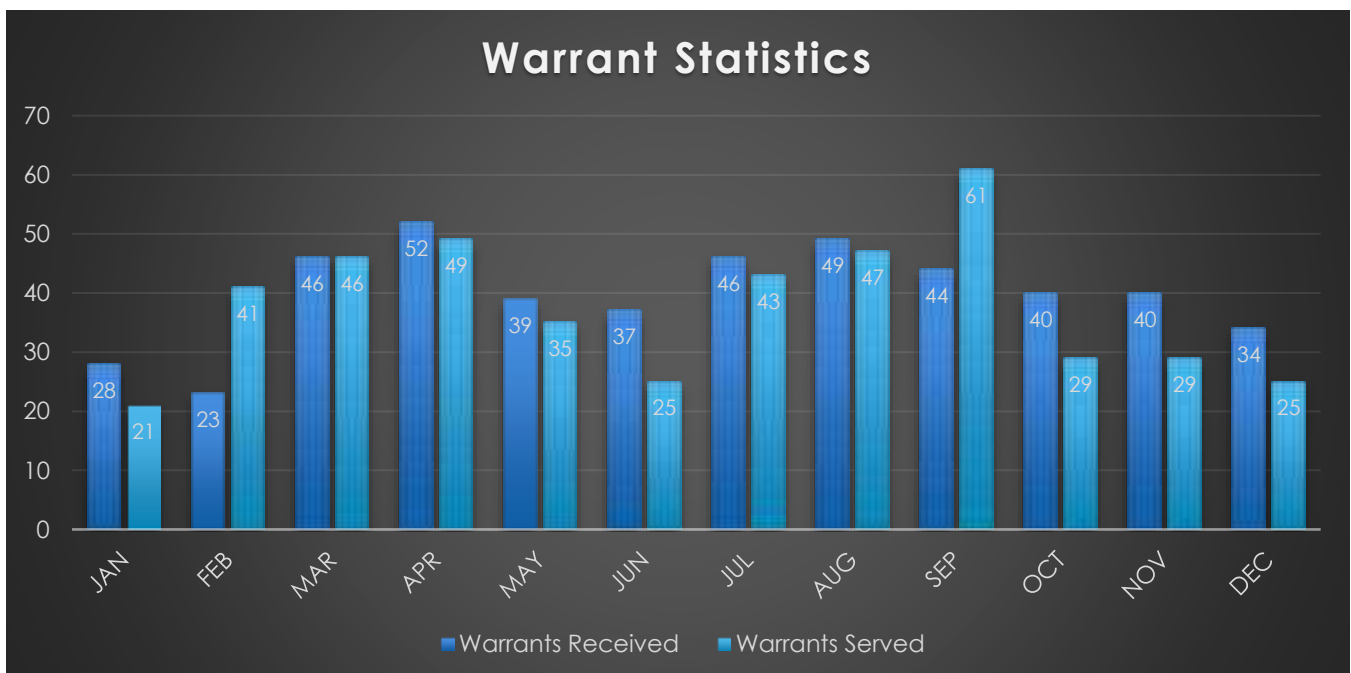
INMATES HOUSE FOR OTHER AGENCIES

In 2023, a total of 169 inmates were held in the Mercer County Detention Facility for other Agencies. Many Agencies are experiencing overcrowding issues. The money generated by housing inmates for other Agencies goes into the County's General fund. By agreement between the Sheriff and the County Commissioners, the money is portioned out and a percentage of it is returned the Sheriff's Office. A total of \$127,750 was collected for housing inmates for other Agencies in 2023.



WARRANTS

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office received 473 warrants, and served 451 warrants in 2023. The Sheriff's Office currently has 324 active warrants.



DETENTION FACILITY

TREATMENT PROGRAMS IN THE JAIL

The Detention Facility also offers the following treatment programs:

Both male and female AA classes.

AAO- Against All Odds is held on Tuesday morning. This is for both male and female inmates. This is facilitated by the Sheriff's Office Chaplains Pastor Randy and Tricia Christian. Their desire is to share with the inmates that God's love is greater than any sin or evil we commit. Time in jail can change lives for the better or for the worse and they hope to tip the scales in a positive direction for the inmates.

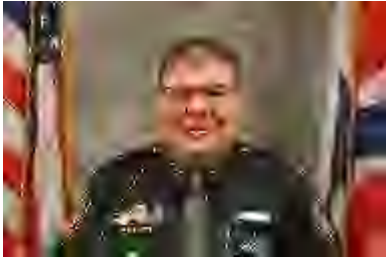
Brianna's Hope - A Better Life: Brianna's hope is a participant driven, faith-based, and compassion filled addiction support and recovery group. Their mission is to provide hope through Christ to individuals and communities battling addiction using support, encouragement, and collaboration.

Church Services- We have Church services for both male and female inmates on Sunday afternoon.

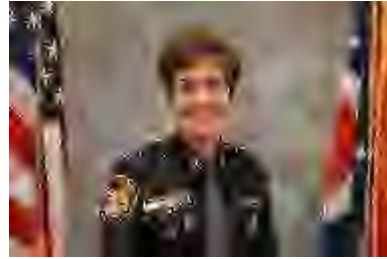
Job and Family Services- Job and Family Services meets with interested inmates for re-entry services. They assist with writing resumes, job seeking, and mock interviews.

ENFORCEMENT

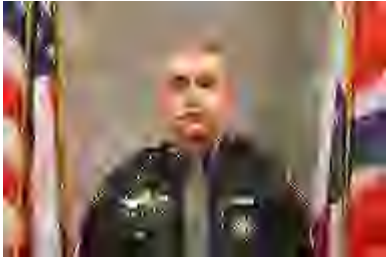
Enforcement



Chief Deputy Doug Timmerman



Captain Megan Baker



Sergeant Darrell Egin



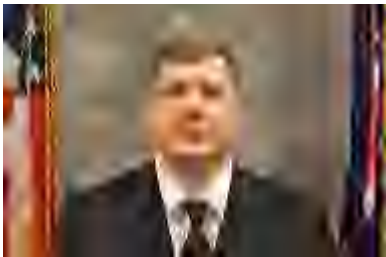
Sergeant Jay Wehrkamp



Sergeant Rachel Heini



Detective Sergeant Chad Fortkamp

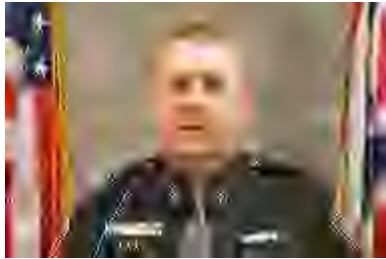


Detective Sergeant John Westgerdes



Detective John Marbaugh

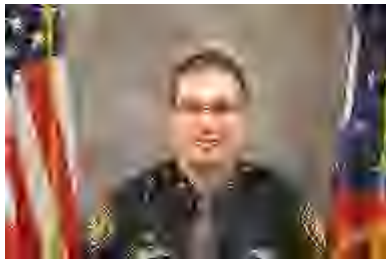
ENFORCEMENT



Deputy Deric Kroft



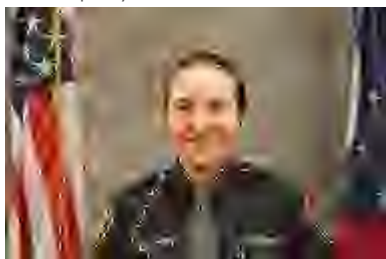
Detective Douglas Wuebker



Deputy Patrick Forsthoefel



Deputy Kyle Fink



Deputy Kristen Nixon



Deputy Donald Sites, Jr.



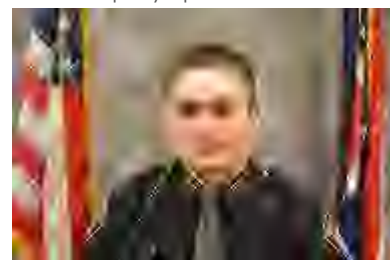
Deputy Jacob Huber



Deputy Spencer Heintz



Deputy Patrick Cupp

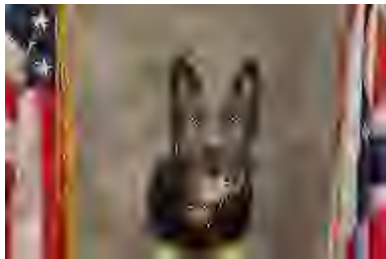


Deputy Noah Nieport

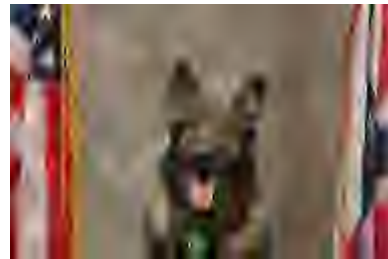
ENFORCEMENT



Deputy Justin Barna



K9 Ossie



K9 Hex

The Sheriff's Office has five supervisors in Enforcement and they include; three Patrol Sergeants, and two Detective Sergeants.

The Grand Lake Drug Task Force is under the command of the Mercer County Sheriff and the Auglaize County Sheriff. The Task Force also includes Police Departments from Celina, Coldwater, Ft. Recovery, St. Henry, Wapakoneta, St. Marys, Cridersville, New Bremen, Minster, and Waynesfield.

CHIEF DEPUTY DOUG TIMMERMAN

The Enforcement Division is under the command of Chief Deputy Doug Timmerman. Chief Deputy Timmerman has 29 years of law enforcement experience and has spent his entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. He has held the ranks of dispatcher, Patrol Deputy, Detective, Detective Sergeant, Captain of both the Jail & Enforcement, and now as Chief Deputy. The Chief Deputy is the highest, non-elected law enforcement position in Mercer County and is second in command of the Sheriff's Office.

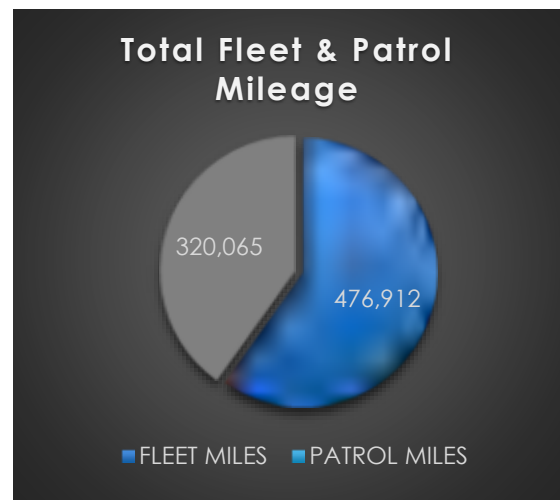
CAPTAIN MEGAN BAKER

Captain Megan Baker oversees all the day to day operations in the enforcement division. Captain Baker has worked for the Sheriff's Office for 19 years, and has held the ranks of Patrol Deputy, Detective, Detective Sergeant, and Captain of the Enforcement.

ENFORCEMENT

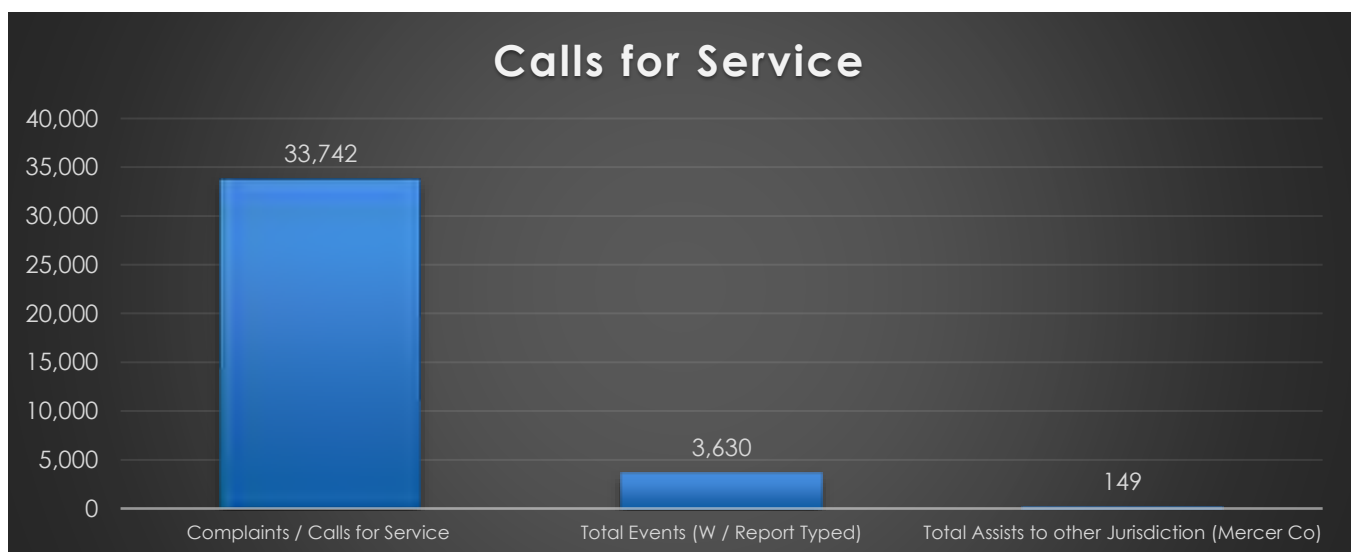
PATROL

The Patrol division of the Sheriff's Office patrols 472 square miles, which include 14 Townships, one City, and all Villages in Mercer County. In 2023, deputies patrolled 320,065 miles, handled 429 traffic crashes, and completed a total of 3,630 reports. The Sheriff is the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in Mercer County, and his Deputies have jurisdiction throughout all of Mercer County including Municipalities. Patrol Deputies conduct criminal investigations, issue citations, warnings, and make arrests. Patrol Deputies serve warrants and civil papers, and give safety talks and presentations throughout the year.



INVESTIGATIONS

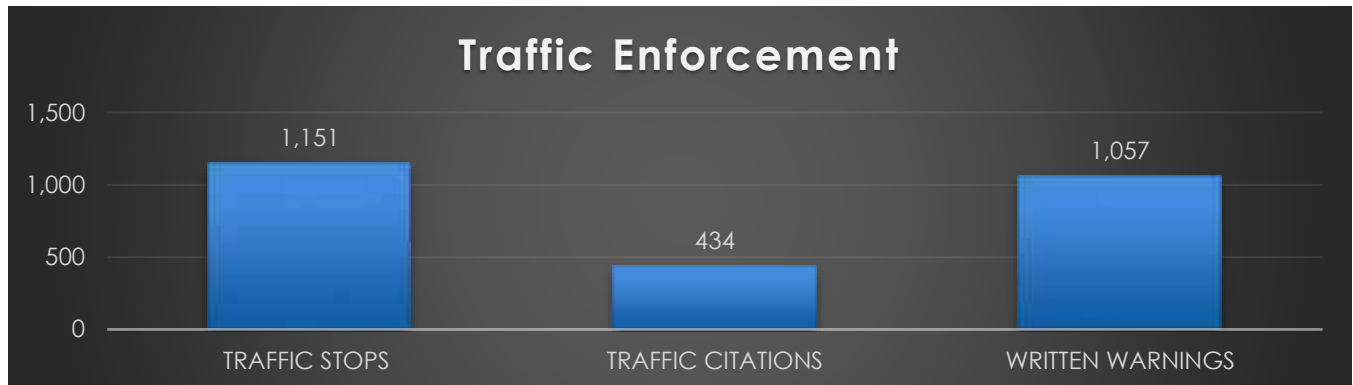
In 2023, the Enforcement Division investigated numerous crimes. Investigations would include death scenes, sexual assaults, burglaries, computer crimes, cyber-crimes, financial crimes, assault cases and also assisted with traffic fatality investigations. The Mercer County Sheriff's Office had over 33,742 calls for service.



ENFORCEMENT

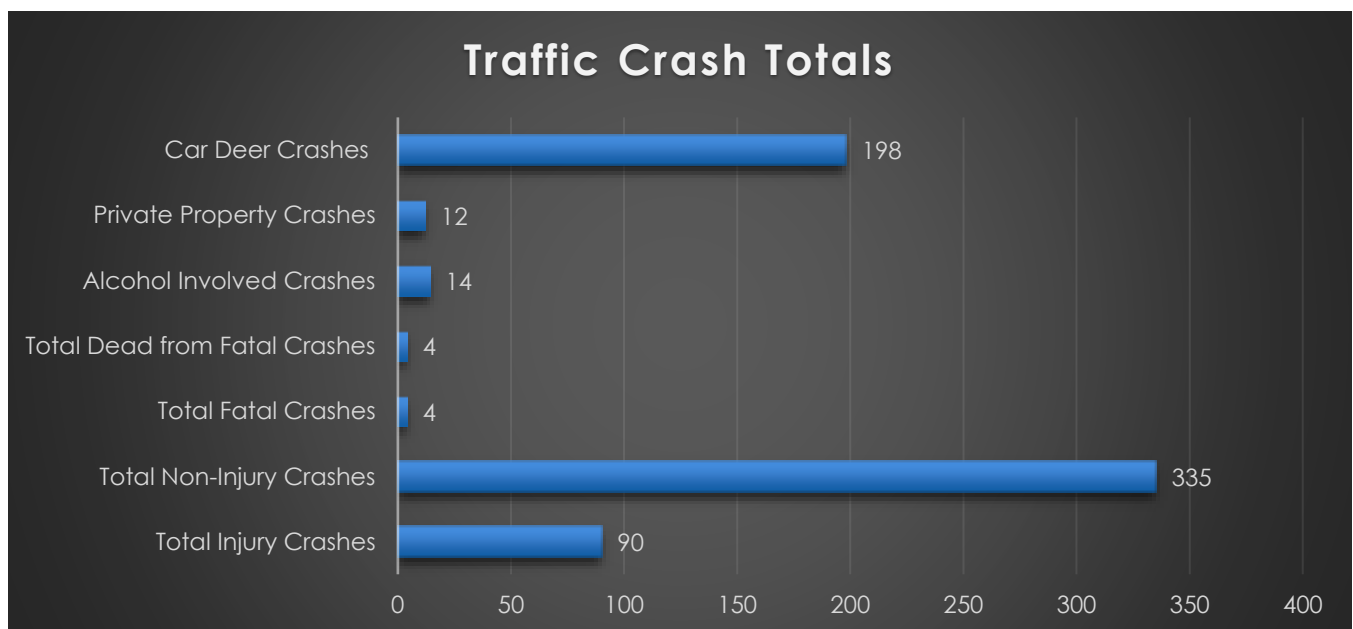
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

Traffic Enforcement is done routinely by Deputies. There are occasions where Deputies are assigned specifically to enforce traffic violations for problem areas. Deputies also conduct traffic enforcement through a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



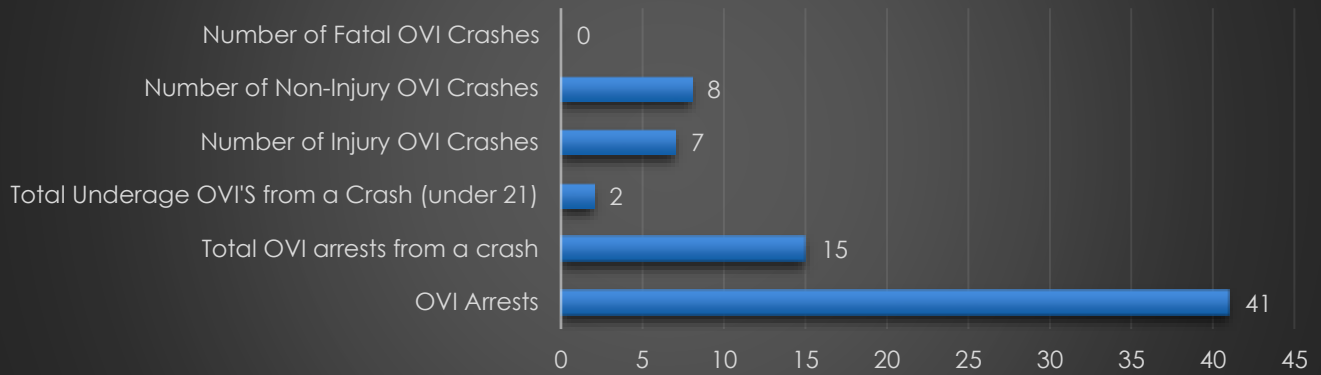
CRASH INVESTIGATIONS

The Sheriff's Office handles crashes reported through the 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. All Deputies are trained in crash investigation. There are three Deputies who have been trained in crash reconstruction. Captain Emerine, Detective Carla Baucher, and Detective Chad Fortkamp make up the traffic reconstruction team. These Deputies respond to fatal crashes and use state of the art equipment to reconstruct crashes. In 2023, deputies handled 4 fatal traffic crashes resulting in 4 deaths on Mercer County roadways.

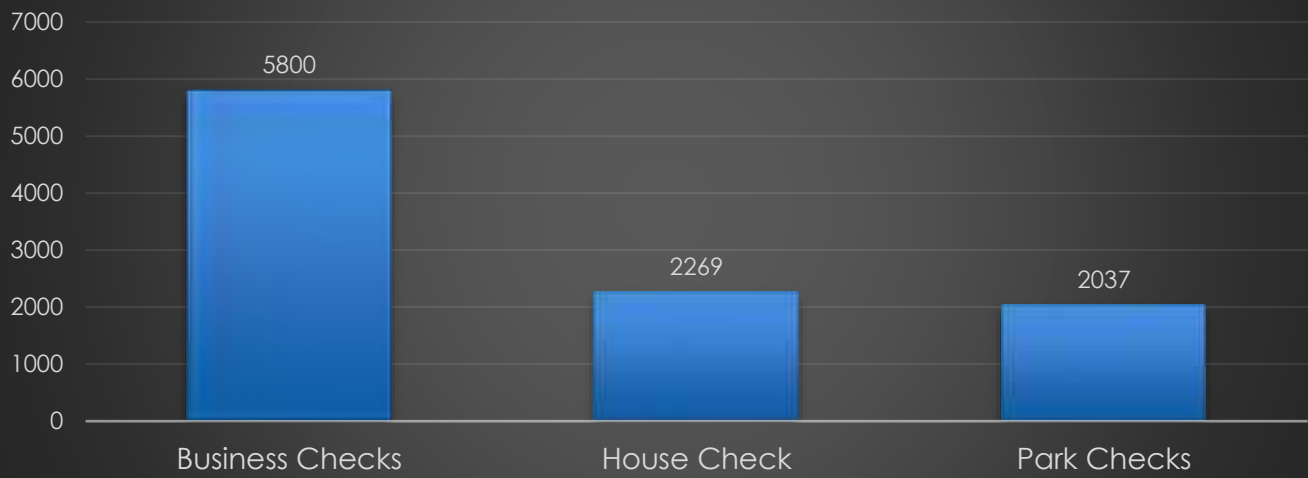


ENFORCEMENT

OVI Statistics



Checks



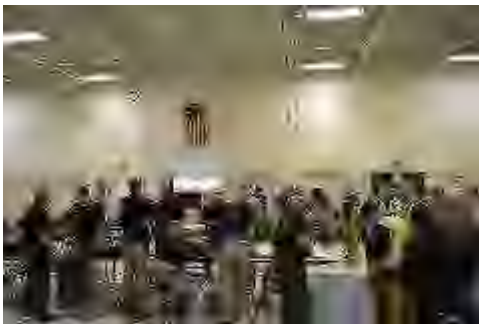
ENFORCEMENT

ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING

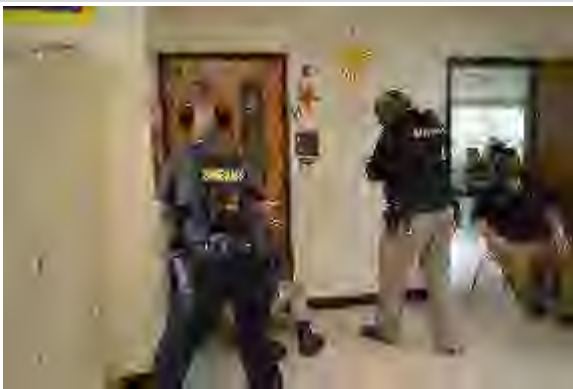
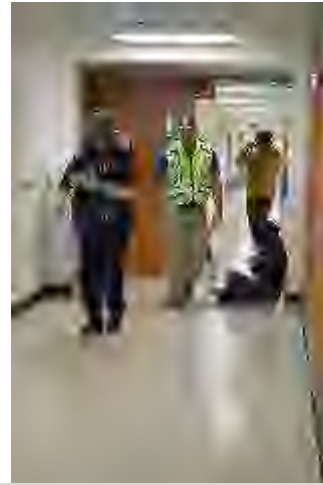
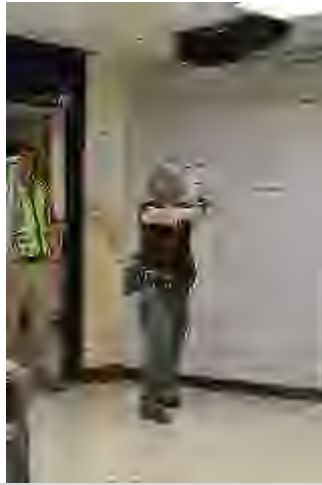
The Mercer County Sheriff's Office hosted its 9th Active Shooter Training at Marion Local High School on July 12 & 13, 2023. The training was presented by the Mercer County Sheriff's Office.

The training consisted (8) hour training sessions conducted on two separate days. There was a classroom portion of the training followed up with hands on exercises and training scenarios. The focus of the training was "Solo Entry" response with link ups with other officers as they arrived. The use of "Air Soft" guns added to the depth and realism of the training.

The training was provided free of charge to all of the agencies in Mercer County. The Sheriff's Office supplied drinks as well as lunch for the staff and participants. The class was attended by 53 law enforcement officers throughout the county. This training is proving to be invaluable and very important.



ENFORCEMENT



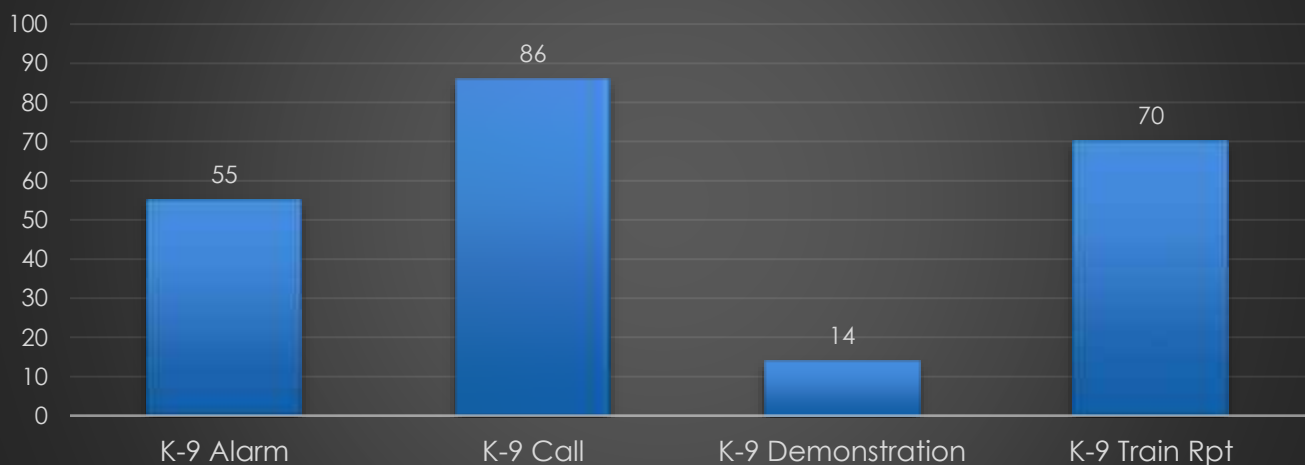
ENFORCEMENT

K-9 PROGRAM

Our K-9 Program consists of Deputy Patrick Forsthoefel & his partner Deputy Ossi and Deputy Spencer Heintz & his partner Deputy Hex. The Mercer County Sheriff's Office uses trained and controlled canines in support of law enforcement operations where the dog's superior sense of smell, hearing, and physical capabilities, can efficiently and effectively aid in the accomplishment of tactical objectives.



Canine Call-Outs

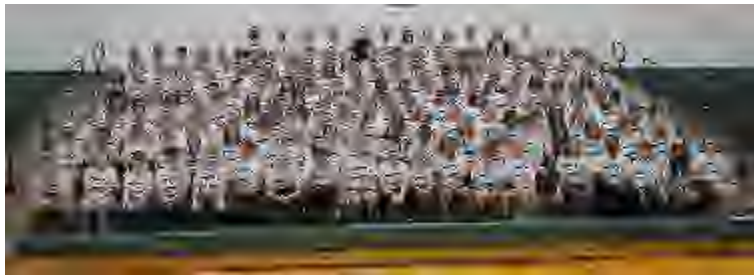


PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, & VOLUNTEERS

Programs, Organizations, & Volunteers

D.A.R.E. PROGRAM

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office DARE deputy is Deputy Scott Geis. Scott has been the DARE deputy for over 4 years. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, which is a drug abuse prevention education program that is designed to equip elementary & middle school children with knowledge about drug abuse. It also teaches the kids about the consequences of abuse, and skills for resisting peer pressure to experiment with drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Based on the premise that prevention is the only long-term answer to drug abuse, the program includes all 50 states.



Celina Dare Graduation – May 3, 2023



St. Henry Dare Graduation – February, 27, 2023



Coldwater Dare Graduation – May 11, 2023

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, & VOLUNTEERS

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, & VOLUNTEERS

JUNIOR DEPUTY PROGRAM

The Junior Deputy program, formerly called the Explorers Program has been in existence since the early 1970's, and was affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America. The program takes young men and women, ages ranging from 14 to 21. Only young people from Mercer County are accepted into the Sheriff's Office Junior Deputy Program. The program currently has 6 members. On average these Junior Deputies spend 75-100 hours per year in dispatch, 200-300 in patrol, as well as another 150-200 hours working various events: The Mercer County Fair, Celina Lake Festival, and many DARE activities.



BSSA COMMUNICATION VEHICLE "COMM 9 – 5400"

The Buckeye State Sheriff's Association (BSSA) in cooperation with Ohio Emergency Management Agency banded together to build eleven interoperable communications vehicles for the state of Ohio. The communications vehicles were completely funded through a grant from the U.S. Homeland Security. Each BSSA vehicle fully equipped is worth over \$400,000.00. The eleven BSSA communications trucks are strategically placed around the state of Ohio. Mercer County Sheriff's Office houses one of the vehicles and personnel from the Sheriff's Office are trained in its use and operations. Comm 9 is available upon request to all law enforcement, fire, EMS and EMA personnel in our seven-county response area which includes Auglaize, Darke, Logan, Mercer, Paulding, Shelby, and Van Wert Counties in Ohio. Comm 9 is also available to five Indiana counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Jay, and Randolph for use if the need should arise.

PROGRAMS, ORGANIZATIONS, & VOLUNTEERS



PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK INITIATIVE

Shortly after DEA's first Drug Take-Back Day, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010. This new law amended the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), allowing DEA to develop permanent, ongoing, and responsible methods for drug disposal. Prior to the passage of the Disposal Act, the CSA provided no legal means for transferring possession of controlled substance medications from users to other individuals for disposal.

In 2023, the Sheriff's Office participated in four (4) drug take back events, and continued the

collection box located in the lobby at the Sheriff's Office. Through these events and the collections box, just over 254.78 pounds of prescription drugs were taken in and eventually turned over to the DEA for destruction.



CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

The Sheriff's Office Chaplain Program consists of Pastor Randy Christian and his wife Tricia, Pastor Darwin Dunten and his wife Polly, and several priests and brothers from the Precious Blood Ministries from Saint Charles Seminary. Pastor Randy and Tricia volunteer their time to minister to inmates in the Detention Facility, while Pastor Dunten and other clergy minister to deputies, and their families. All of the pastors and priests are available 24 hours a day to assist with death notifications, and provide comfort to citizens and members of the Sheriff's Office during their time of need.

NATIONAL FAITH & BLUE EVENT

National Faith & Blue Event

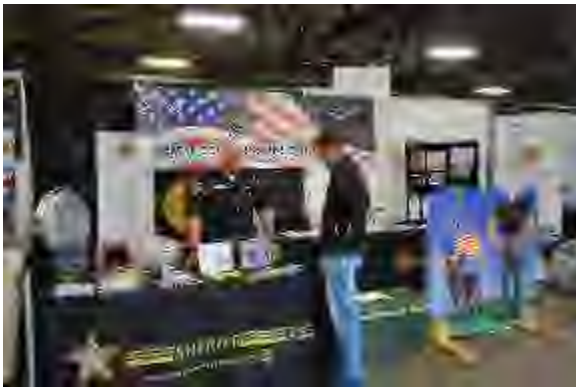
The National Faith & Blue Weekend fosters safer and stronger communities by engaging law enforcement officers and residents through the connections of faith-based organizations. This was the first year our office participated in the National Faith & Blue Event. The event was held on October 8, 2023.

Our speakers included, Chief Deputy Doug Timmerman, Fr. John Tonkin of the Immaculate Conception Church, Youth Pastor Matt Overman of Grand Lake United Methodist Church, and Pastor Jake Boroff of Mendon's First Church of God. These gentlemen did a wonderful job speaking to the group and offering blessings to our community and our local law enforcement. A few even brought their dogs to receive a special blessing.



2023 MERCER COUNTY FAIR

2023 Mercer County Fair



STAFF PHOTOS FROM 2023

Staff Photos from 2023



HISTORY OF THE OHIO SHERIFF

History of the Ohio Sheriff

The oldest position in law enforcement is the Office of Sheriff. The roots of this job go back over 1,000 years to medieval England. As that country was starting to create an early form of government, the land was divided into shires, which we call a county. Originally the people of the shire chose one of their own to be their guardian and protector called a gerefa, a term later changed to the title of reeve. The words shire and reeve in time combined to become Sheriff. This duty was eventually appointed by the king to someone of his choosing.

In America, William Stone was the first Sheriff to be appointed and sworn into office in 1634. The first colonies had been firmly established and functioning on their own. A shire form of government was set up to replace the military command that had been governing.

A 1651 Virginia proclamation required that each county choose a Sheriff. The commissioners of Northampton County asked the people to elect their Sheriff which had not been done since medieval England. William Waters was elected and although it was not realized at that time precedence was set in motion that would be repeated in the future. Today all Sheriff's in the nation, with the exception of 12, are elected and answer directly to the voters.

Before Ohio became a state, the position of Sheriff was appointed by the Governor. In 1788, Ebenezer Sproat was the first to be given that job in Washington County, which at that time covered all of eastern Ohio from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Ohio became a state in 1803 and William Skinner was the first man to be elected for a Sheriff's position which had a two-year term limit. That term limit was increased to four-years in 1936.

Ohio has 88 counties and the Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer for each of those counties. His jurisdiction includes all municipalities, villages and townships within his country. Ohio law requires the Sheriff to preserve the public peace, serve court paperwork, operate and manage the jail, provide extradition services and transport prisoners.

HISTORY OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE & JAIL

History of the Sheriff's Office & Jail

On December 29, 1825, the County Commissioners awarded Asa Hinkle a contract to build the first Mercer County Jail. In exchange, Mr. Hinkle received lots 31, 34, 37, 42, and 50, and also \$150 in cash, with the settlement taking place on June 6, 1830. In 1833, the Jail was repaired by covering the door inside with sheet iron using large headed wrought iron nails, set four inches apart.

On July 1, 1842, a contract for a new jail was awarded to Gustavus Darnold. The jail, to be finished September 28, 1842, at a cost of \$397, was partially paid in town lots. On March 4, 1849, the Commissioners ordered an addition to the Jail and debtor's room (a frame building) and awarded a \$630 contract to H.L. Johnson. Contracts for plastering and ironwork were awarded to Levi Lips and Hezekiah Trenary, respectively.

On January 11, 1860, Valeau & Jacobs of Cincinnati, Ohio, received a contract to build a Sheriff's residence on the northeast corner of the Public Square for \$5000. Plans called for a 38-foot 6-inch by 29-foot structure with a 22-foot 8-1/2 inch elevation to the top of the cornice. The structure was to be built of bricks with a stone foundation and covered with sheet iron.

In the spring of 1875, the Commissioners awarded a \$25,000 contract to E.W. Wilson, Van Wert, Ohio, to construct a new County Jail and Sheriff's Residence according to the plans and specifications of T.J. Toland & Son, Delphos, Ohio. On March 8, 1876, the Commissioners ordered the Jail heated with steam and awarded a \$935 contract to C. Buehler & Company, St. Marys, Ohio.

The old Jail was located at 125 W. Livingston St. in Celina. It was constructed in 1939 and cost approximately \$41,000 of which Mercer County paid \$23,000 with the balance paid with a federal grant from the Public Works Administration Program. Sheriff L.M. Davis moved into the Jail and Residence on August 4, 1939. On August 25, 1939, the old Jail on Courthouse Square was sold for \$51 to Shartzer Wrecking & Excavating, Dayton, Ohio. Henry Lechner, Daniel Moeller, and A.E. Morrow were County Commissioners at this time.

Two major renovations/additions occurred at the old Jail and Residence. In 1966, an enclosed entrance ramp was added to the rear of the Jail and an enclosed porch to the residence. The largest addition/renovation occurred in 1973 when Sheriff W.C.

HISTORY OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE & JAIL

Sunderhaus moved from the residence and the residence was converted to office space, holding cells, and a larger radio control room. A drive-through garage was attached to the west of the old Jail, adding security in transferring prisoners from cars. This addition/renovation totaled approximately \$162,000 and was funded with a federal grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration which covered 50% of the cost.

In April 1985, due to limited office space in the Jail, the County Commissioners purchased the Bair home, west of the old Jail's location. Known as the Jail Annex, this structure contained the Sheriff's Administrative, Enforcement, Civil, and Detective Divisions until January 2010.

In November of 2007, the voters of Mercer County passed a .5% sales tax to construct a new jail and sheriff's office at a cost of \$12,000,000. Construction for the facility, which is located at 4835 State Route 29, was completed in November of 2009. Architects for the project were Shremshock Architects of Westerville, with general contractors being Peterson Construction of Wapakoneta. Plumbing, Electrical and HVAC contractors were Ohio Plumbing of Coldwater, Sidney Electric and GM Mechanical of Covington, respectively.

On January 4, 2010 administration and dispatch moved into the new Mercer County Detention Facility, with prisoners and corrections staff following on February 28, 2010.



CONCLUSION

Conclusion

In conclusion, the employees of the Sheriff's Office are dedicated and work towards one unified goal, which is the safety and security of the citizens of Mercer County. Values of our motto are displayed every day. "Caring, Courteous, Common Sense Law Enforcement".

Many things were accomplished in 2023, and we look forward to serving our community in 2024.

INTEGRITY

We uphold our positions of trust through honesty, credibility, and by maintaining high ethical standards.

SERVICE

We regard our office as a public trust. We are constantly mindful of our primary obligation to serve the community with "Caring, Courteous, Common Sense Law Enforcement".

PROFESSIONALISM

We value professionalism by having commitment, perspective, and direction. Professionalism is achieved by creating an environment that encourages teamwork, and innovation.

RESPONSIBILITY

We ensure that our behavior earns the support and trust of the public by being responsible for our actions and willing to admit our mistakes.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Information

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www.mercercountysheriffohio.gov

Direct Phone Lines:

Civil Division:

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Fax: 419-586-2234

Detention Facility:

Phone: 419-586-5753
Fax: 419-586-9142

Patrol Division:

Phone: 419-586-7724
Fax: 419-586-2234

Central Dispatch:

Phone: 419-586-7724
Fax: 419-586-1979