



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Mercer County Sheriff's Office

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CONTENTS

Sheriff's Message	3
Mission & Motto	3
Code of Ethics	3
Past Sheriffs	3
Administrative Staff	5
Supervisors	6
Employees	7
Budget Breakdown	10
Human Resources	11
2020-2021 Employee Awards Program	12
Central Dispatch	13
Civil Division	15
Enforcement Division	17
K-9 Program	21
Detention Facility	22
County Wide Food Drive	26
Mercer County Fair	27
Drone	28
History of the Ohio Sheriff	29
History of the Sheriff's Office & Jail	29



Sheriff's Message

Welcome!

We are thrilled to share with you the Mercer County Sheriff's Office 2021 Annual Report! Our dedicated staff works hard every day to ensure the safety and security of our residents and those traveling through Mercer County.

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

Mission & 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.

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.

Past Sheriffs

W.H. Hinkle	1825
John Murdock	1827
Isaac Applegate	1829
Joshua Warfield	1833
James Brown	1835
John Eliot.....	1836
Sabert Scott.....	1839
A.T. Stedman	1841
Joseph Carlin	1843
G.W. Timmonds	1846
S.E. Snider	1851
C.H. Hight	1856
Robert Wiley	1860
G.W. Timmonds	1862
Henry L. Johnson.....	1866
Thornton Spriggs.....	1870
Henry J. McKirnan	1874
John G. Blake.....	1878
James F. Timmonds.....	1884
George H. Houser.....	1888
George H. Heffner.....	1892
Lorenz Schunk	1896
Joseph Hinders.....	1900
A.B. Grothjan.....	1907
Shell Fisher	1911
William Humphrey	1915
George M. Betz	1919
Charles Creeden	1923
George M. Betz	1927
Ed L. Bernard.....	1931
Lawrence M. Davis	1935
Bruce Barber	1941
Dwight Raudenbush.....	1945
Bruce Barber	1953
W.C. Sunderhaus.....	1961
E. Joseph Gilmore.....	1977
Carl J. Eichar	1991
Paul O. Gray	1997
Jeff Grey	2001





Our staff has dedicated their time and efforts to ensure the safety of all Mercer County citizens, and for that, I am grateful.



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 the past Chairman of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORN) Committee and 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 five grandchildren.



v

Administrative Staff



Jeff Grey
Sheriff



Gery Thobe
Chief Deputy, Enforcement



Jodie Lange
Chief Deputy, Corrections



Martin Emerine
Captain, Corrections



Doug Timmerman
Captain, Enforcement



Lori Knapke
Captain, Civil Division



Kandi Baucher
Fiscal Manager



Monte Diegel
9-1-1 Administrator



Kory Hoffhines
IT Administrator



Ashley Carr
Executive Assistant



Nicole Grabow
Administrative Assistant, Civil Division



Theresa Berry
Administrative Assistant, Corrections



Cody Tebbe
IT Technician

Supervisors



Detective Sergeant Megan Baker
Enforcement



Sergeant Donald Bird
Civil Division



Supervisor Stephanie Bledsoe
Central Dispatch



Supervisor Kelci Dodds
Central Dispatch



Sergeant Robert Cupp
Corrections



Sergeant Darrell Etgen
Enforcement



Nurse Supervisor Megan Fokine, RN
Medical



Sergeant Rachel Heinl
Enforcement



Supervisor Connie Kaiser
Custodial



Sergeant Heather Leist
Corrections



Sergeant Nathan Post
Corrections



Supervisor Brianna Vest
Central Dispatch



Sergeant Jay Wehrkamp
Enforcement



Detective Sergeant John Westgerdes
Enforcement



Sergeant Jonathan Wolfe
Corrections

Employees



**Nurse Susan Backs, LPN
Medical**



**Deputy Jessica Balthis
Enforcement**



**Detective Carla Baucher
Enforcement**



**Deputy Kari Begley
Corrections**



**Deputy Maria Diana Contreras
Corrections**



**Deputy Patrick Cupp
Enforcement**



**Deputy Chad Etzler
Corrections**



**Deputy Kyle Fink
Enforcement**



**Deputy Patrick Forsthoefel
Enforcement/K9 Handler**



**Detective Chad Fortkamp
Enforcement**



**Deputy Madison Garland
Corrections**



**Deputy Scott Geis
Civil Division, D.A.R.E.**



**Kathy Giere
Custodial**



**Deputy Spencer Heint
Enforcement**



**Dispatcher Kaeleah Heyne
Central Dispatch**



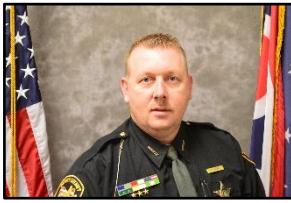
**Deputy Jacob Huber
Enforcement**



**Marilyn Kahlig
Custodial**



**Deputy Matt Kremer
Corrections**



Deputy Deric Kroft
Enforcement



Deputy Chase Kuhlman
Enforcement



Detective John Marbaugh
Enforcement



Deputy Alexa Marlow
Corrections



Deputy Lisa Meeker
Corrections



Deputy Sue Miller
Civil Division, D.A.R.E.



Deputy Noah Nieport
Corrections



Deputy Kristen Nixon
Enforcement



Deputy Hannah Oakley
Corrections



Deputy Lori Pease
Corrections



Deputy Jason Porter
Corrections



Deputy Austin Prenger
Corrections



Deputy Kevin Schnipke
Corrections



Dispatcher Stacy Schoen
Central Dispatch



Deputy Donald Sites, Jr
Enforcement



Deputy Joshua Sizemore
Enforcement



Marie Stahl
Custodial



Betty Steinbrunner
Custodial



Deputy Lisa Stewart
Corrections



Deputy Kyle Strohl
Civil Division, Courthouse Security



Deputy Jeremy Taylor
Corrections



Deputy Kent Taylor
Civil Division, Transports



Deputy Samantha Wehe
Enforcement



Pam Wilder
Custodial



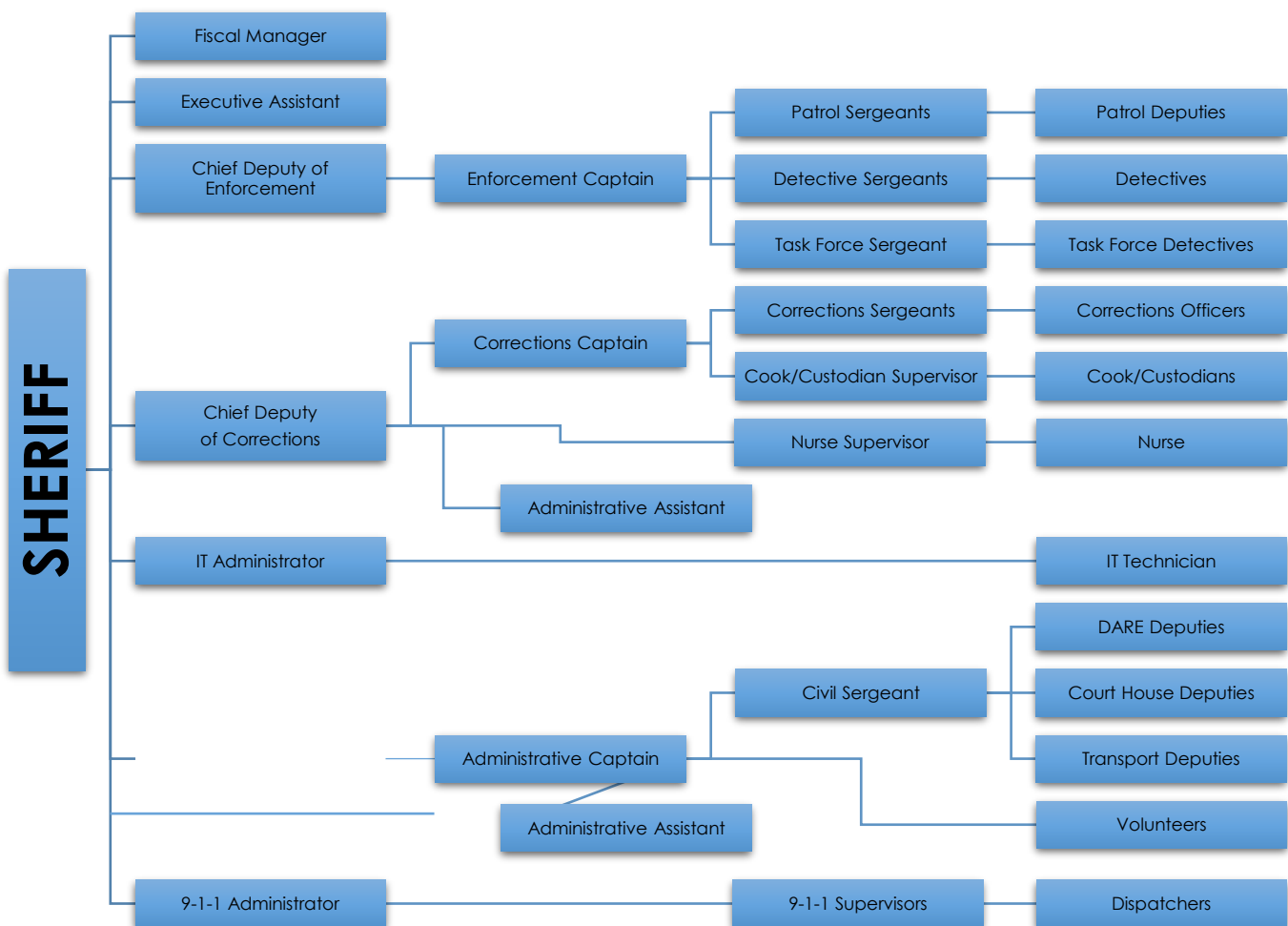
Deputy Logan Williams
Corrections



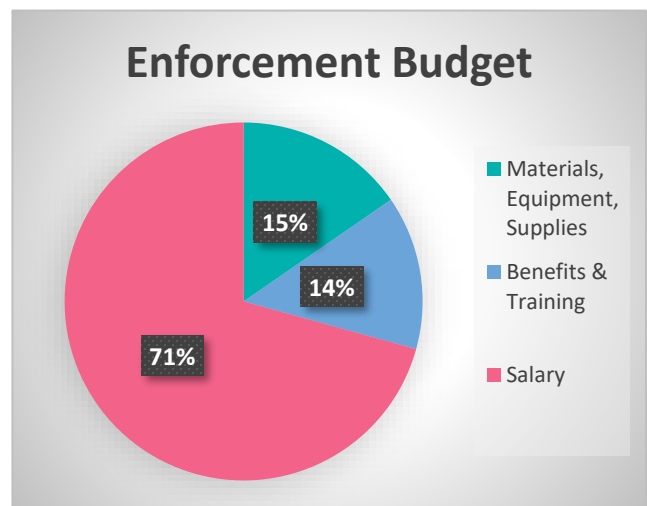
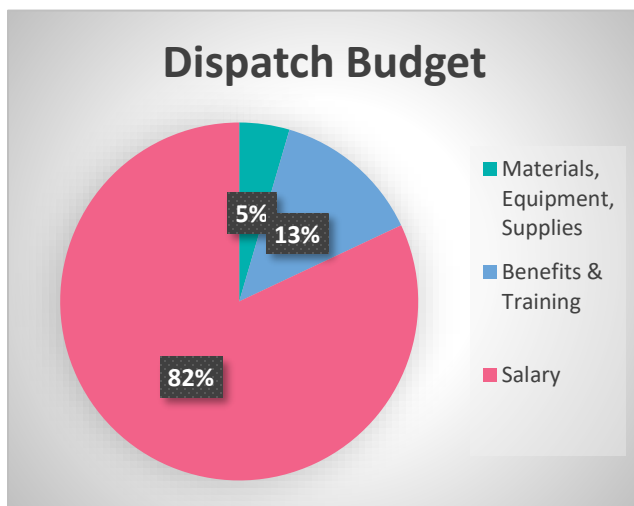
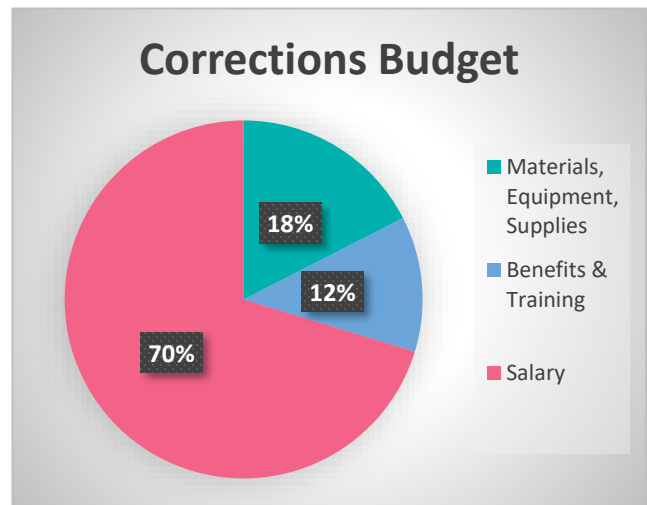
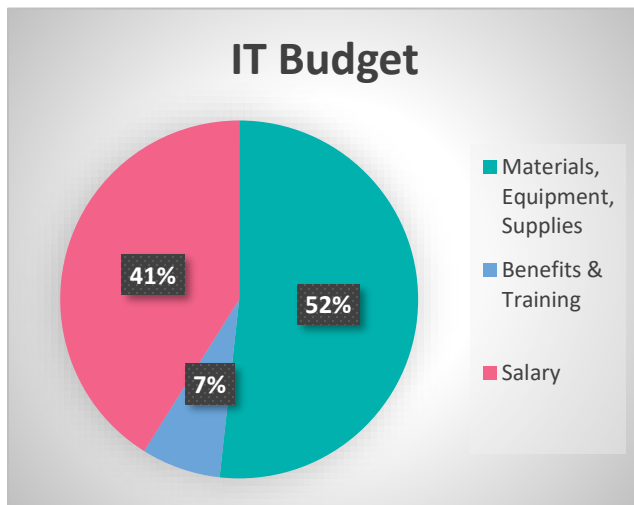
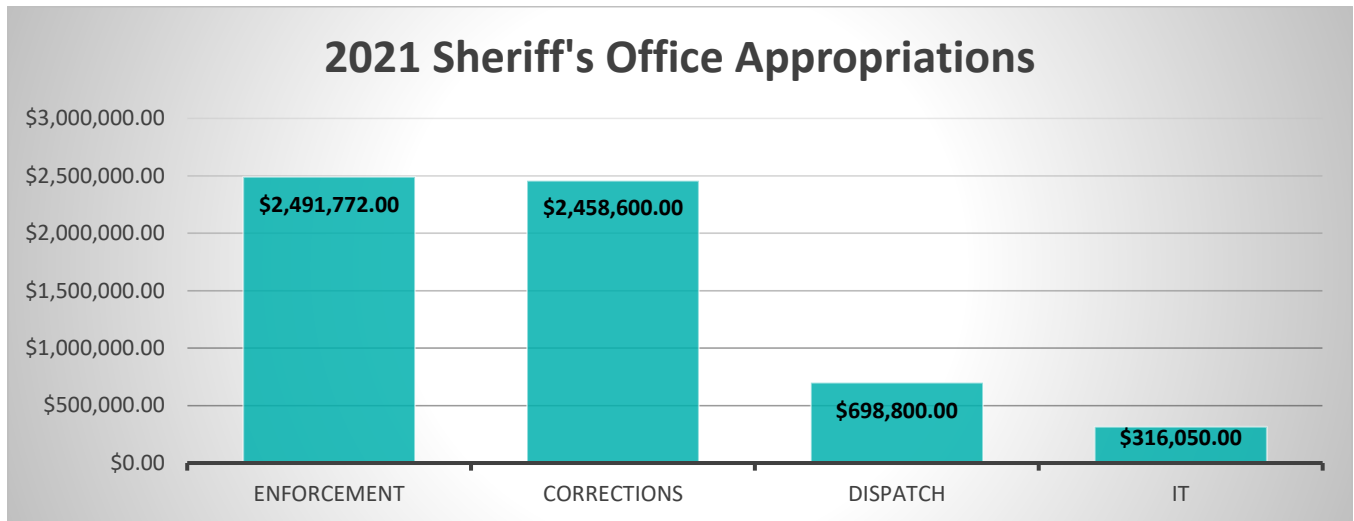
Dispatcher Rachel Williams
Central Dispatch



Deputy Douglas Wuebker
Enforcement

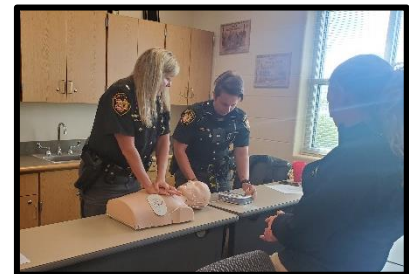


Budget Breakdown



Human Resources

Employee Activity	2020	2021
	Totals	Totals
New Hires	5	11
Resignations	6	9
Laid Off	0	0
Retirements	0	2
Disability Retirements	0	0
Involuntary Disability Removal	0	0
Removals	0	0
Deaths	0	0
Promotions, Demotions, Changes	1	4



2020-2021 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 2021, these employees were given the following awards for their accomplishments:

- Employee of the Year: Sergeant Darrell Etgen
- Deputy Sheriff of the Year: Deputy Douglas Wuebker
- Corrections Deputy of the Year: Deputy Kari Begley
- Dispatcher of the Year: Dispatch Supervisor Brianna Vest
- Civilian of the Year: Marilyn Kahlig
- Commendation: Nurse Sue Backs, Deputy Lisa Meeker, & Deputy Jason Porter
- Certificate of Appreciation: Detective Chad Fortkamp, Detective Carla Baucher, & Marie Stahl

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 2021, the following Service Stars were awarded:

- 30 Year Service Stars:..... 911 Administrator Monte Diegel & Deputy Kent Taylor
- 15 Year Service Stars:..... IT Administrator Kory Hoffhines & Sergeant Heather Leist
- 10 Year Service Stars:..... Sergeant Donald Bird, Sergeant Jonathan Wolfe, & Deputy Lisa Meeker
- 5 Year Service Stars:..... Executive Assistant Ashley Carr, Deputy Kyle Fink, Deputy Spencer Heinl, Deputy Jason Porter, Sergeant Rachel Williams

In 2021, the following Safe Driving Awards were given to:

- 20 Years Safe Driving: Detective Chad Fortkamp
- 10 Years Safe Driving: Sergeant Donald Bird
- 5 Years Safe Driving: Deputy Kari Begley, Deputy Kyle Fink, & Sergeant Rachel Heinl



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.

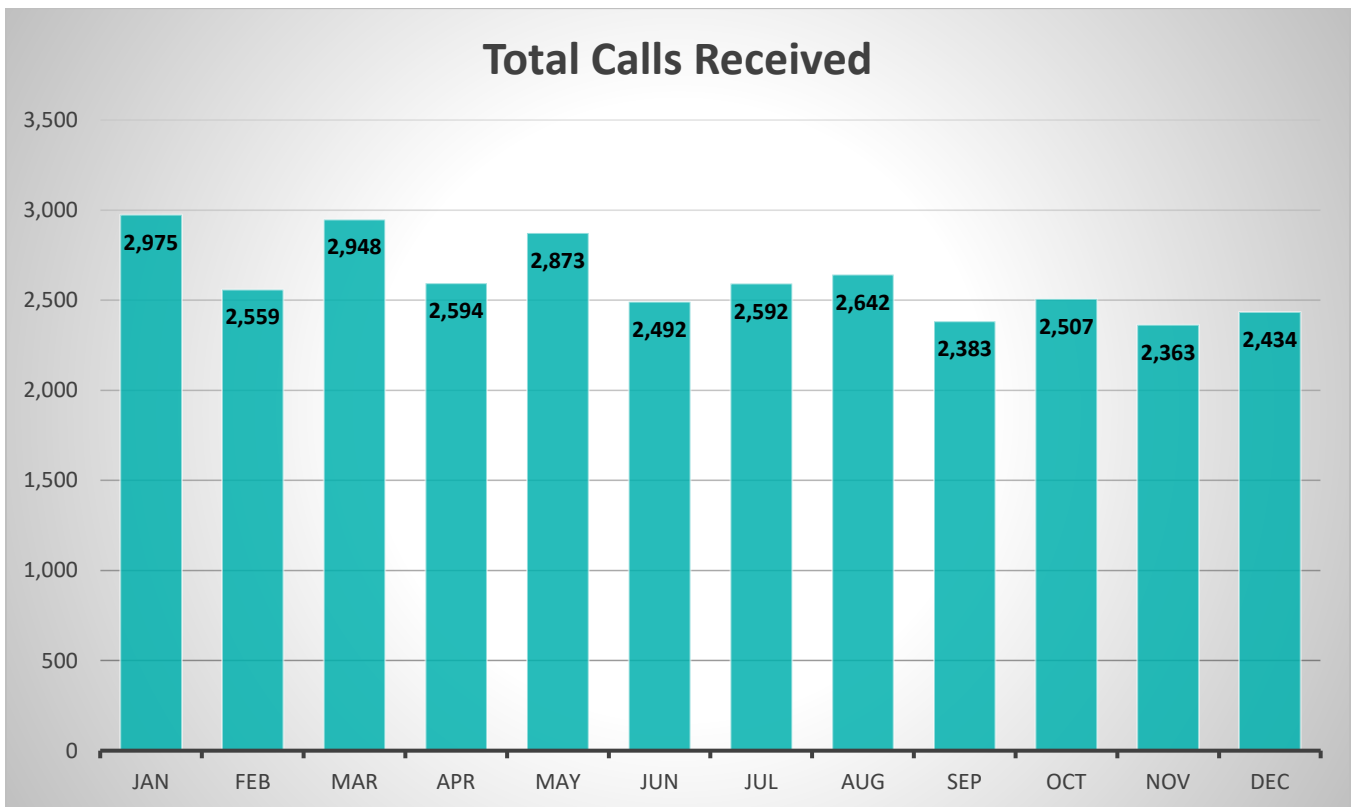
Dispatchers have the additional responsibility of the Ohio LEADS (Law Enforcement Automated Data System) to provide immediate response to an officer request for driver's license or vehicle registration information and checking to make sure that a person is not wanted by any other Agency. Dispatchers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

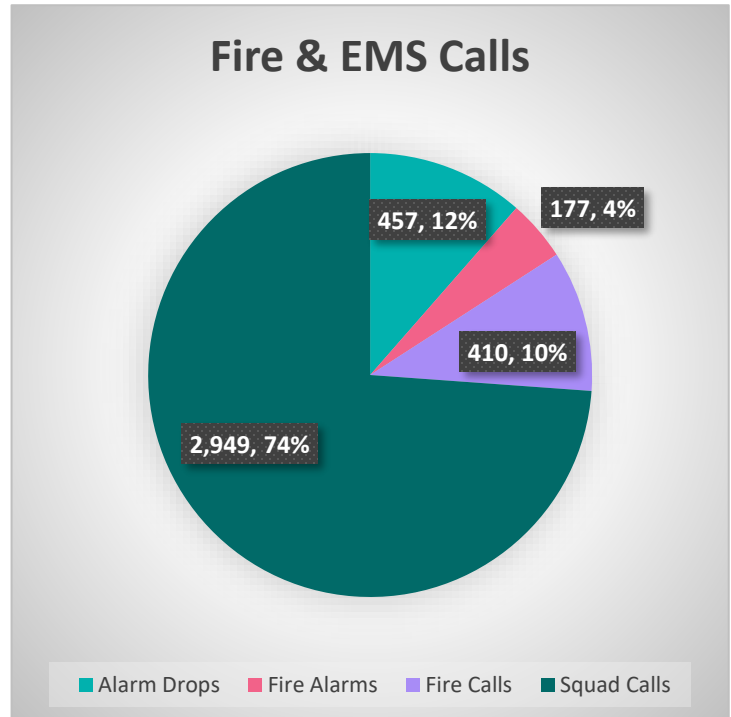
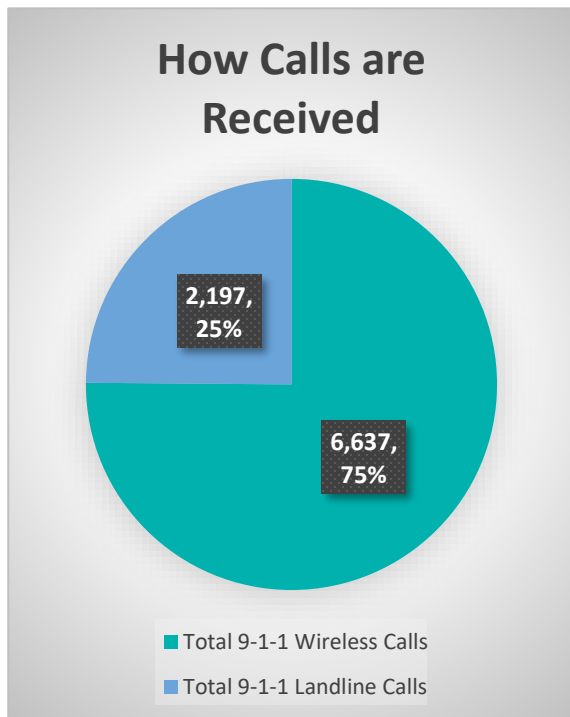
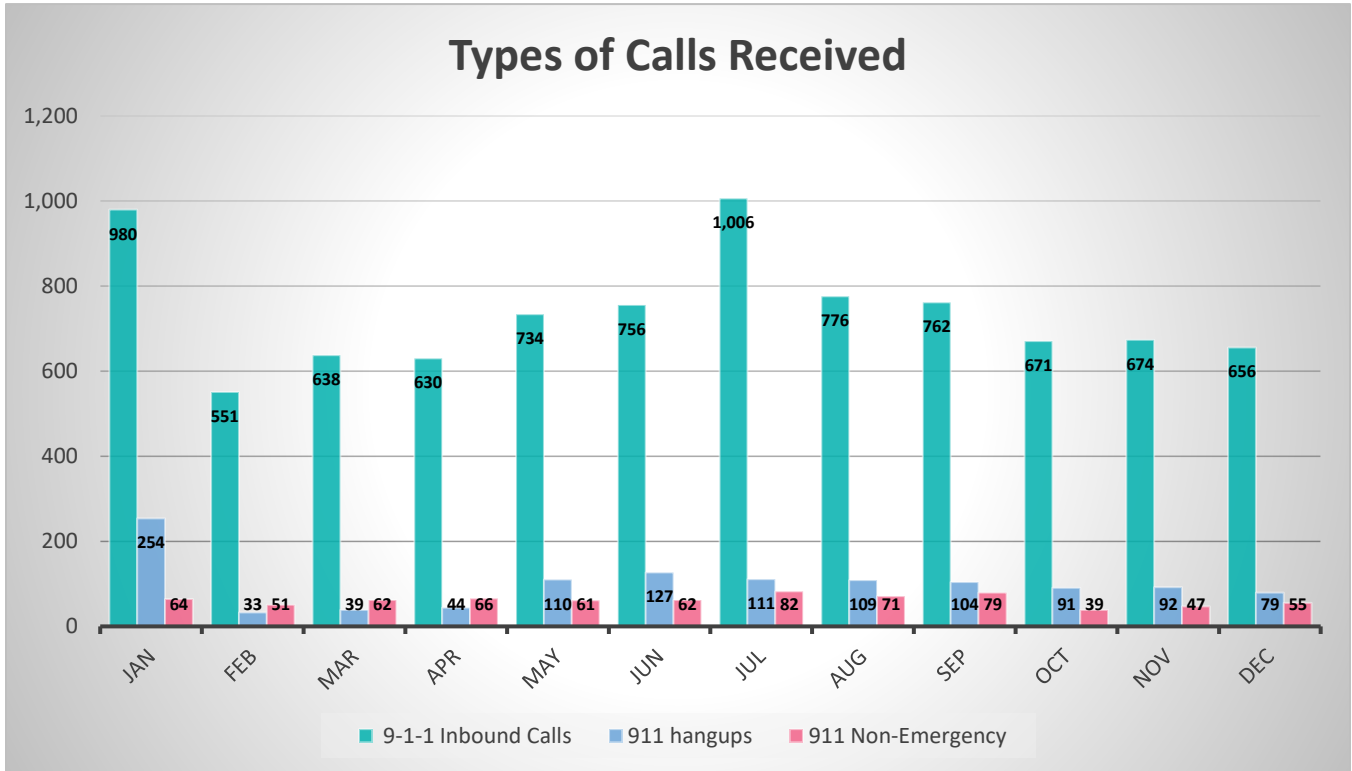
9-1-1 Administrator Monte Diegel

The Communications Division is under the direction of 9-1-1 Administrator Monte Diegel. Administrator Diegel has been at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office for 27 years, and has 30 plus years of experience in communications.

Types of Calls

In 2021, the Dispatch Center received 31,362 incoming calls into the Sheriff's Office. That is an average of 2,614 calls per month.





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 2021, the Civil Division handled 135 Periodic Registrations of Sex Offenders who currently reside in Mercer County. Currently, Mercer County has 55 active registered Sex Offenders. Civil and Patrol Deputies also did a total of 365 sex offender verification attempts throughout 2021 to ensure offenders were living where they are registered. If an offender is homeless, they are required to contact our dispatch center to inform our staff of their location.

The Civil Division is under the command of Captain Lori Knapke. Cpt. Knapke has over 23 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.

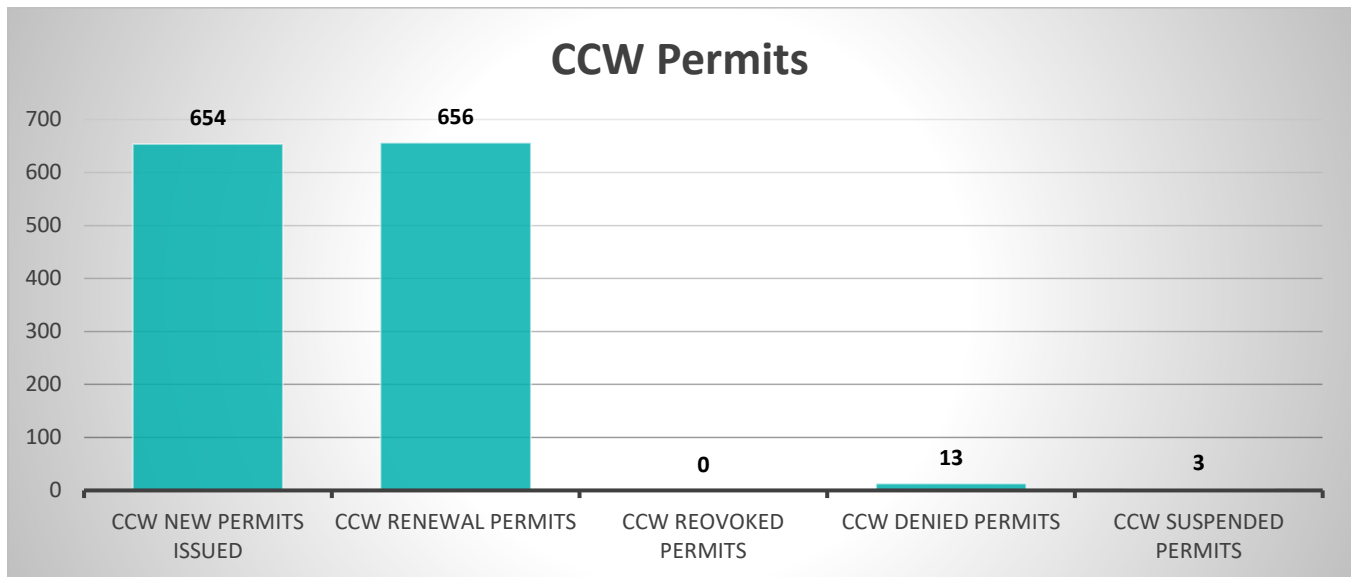
In addition to the Civil division, Cpt. Knapke is responsible for inmate transports, Court House security, the DARE program, crime prevention, Child Support Contract, and the Sheriff's Office volunteer program.

WebChecks

The Sheriff's Office uses National WebCheck®, 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. The National WebCheck © program was developed for BCI&I and is a secure web-based program. 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 National WebCheck© submission for 2021 was 2,384.

Carry Conceal Permits

In 2021, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Civil Division issued 654 new CCW permits, and renewed 656. The Sheriff's Office also denied 13 permits, suspended 3, and did not revoke any.



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 2021, deputies made 301 transports and traveled 28,479 miles. Deputies also traveled out of state on 4 trips to Georgia, Kentucky (2), and Michigan.

Child Support Enforcement Contract

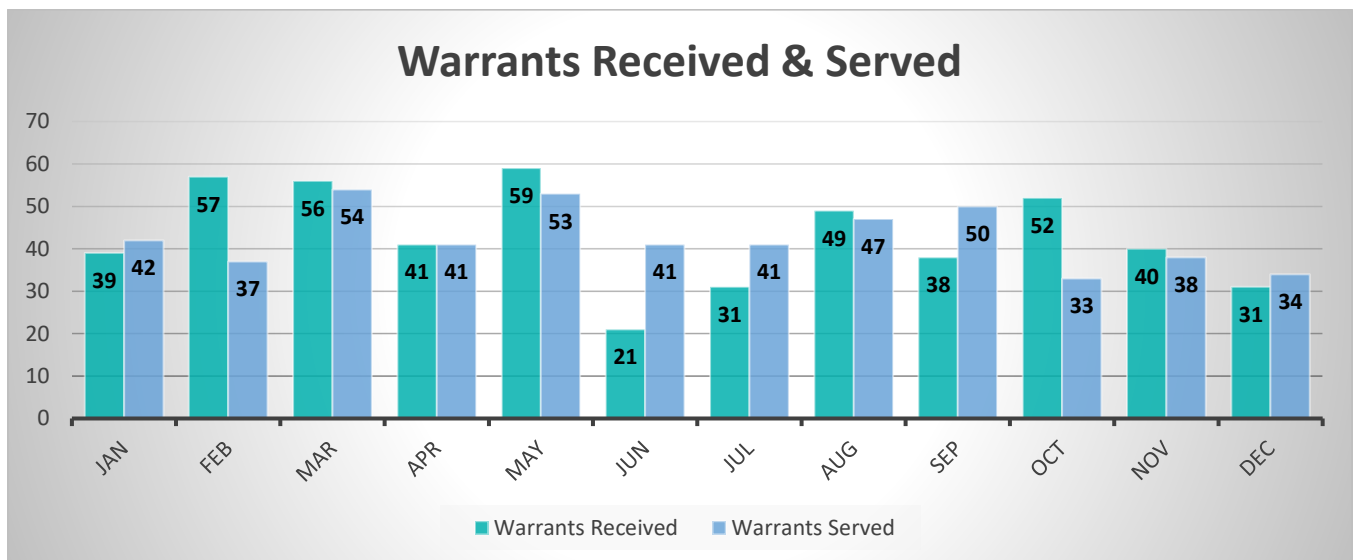
In 2021, the Mercer County Sheriff's Office continued to contract (IV-D contract) with the Mercer County Child Support Enforcement Agency. The purpose of the contract is to provide services to the Agency, which allows the Sheriff's Office to be reimbursed for those services through a grant. The services would include: child support investigations, extradition of felony cases, and security for administrative hearings on a needed basis.

TRANSPORT Yearly Totals	
# of Transports	301
Transports Mileage	28,479Miles

CHILD SUPPORT Yearly Totals	
Child Support Enforcement Total Miles	2,154 Miles
Child Support Enforcement Mile Fees	\$1,053.69
Child Support Enforcement Hours Worked	196 Hours

Warrants

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office received 520 warrants, and served 510 warrants in 2021. The Sheriff's Office currently has 300 active warrants.



Dare Program

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office DARE deputies include Deputy Sue Miller, Deputy Donald Bird and Deputy Scott Geis. Sue has been the DARE deputy for over 20+ years and has worked for our office for 29 years. Deputy Bird joined Deputy Sue in August of 2017 and Deputy Geis this year. Bird has been a deputy with our office for 10 years and Geis for 4 years. Deputy Sue Miller retired at the end of 2021.

D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. It is a drug abuse prevention education program designed to equip elementary & middle school children with knowledge about drug abuse, 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.

Enforcement Division

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 Gery Thobe

The Enforcement Division is under the command of Chief Deputy Gery Thobe. Chief Deputy Thobe has 37 years of law enforcement experience. He has held the rank of Deputy, Sergeant, and now Chief Deputy at the Sheriff's Office. He served 10 years as Coldwater Ohio Police Chief. The Chief Deputy is the highest, non-elected law enforcement position in Mercer County and is second in command of the Sheriff's Office.

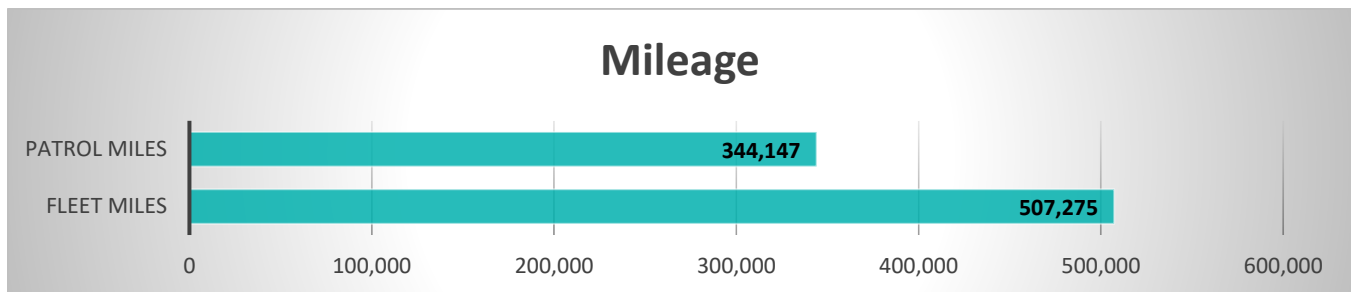
Captain Doug Timmerman

Captain Doug Timmerman oversees all the day to day operations in the enforcement division. Captain Timmerman has 27 years of law enforcement experience and has spent his entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. Captain Timmerman has held the ranks of dispatcher, Patrol Deputy, Detective, Detective Sergeant, and Captain of the Jail & Enforcement.

Patrol

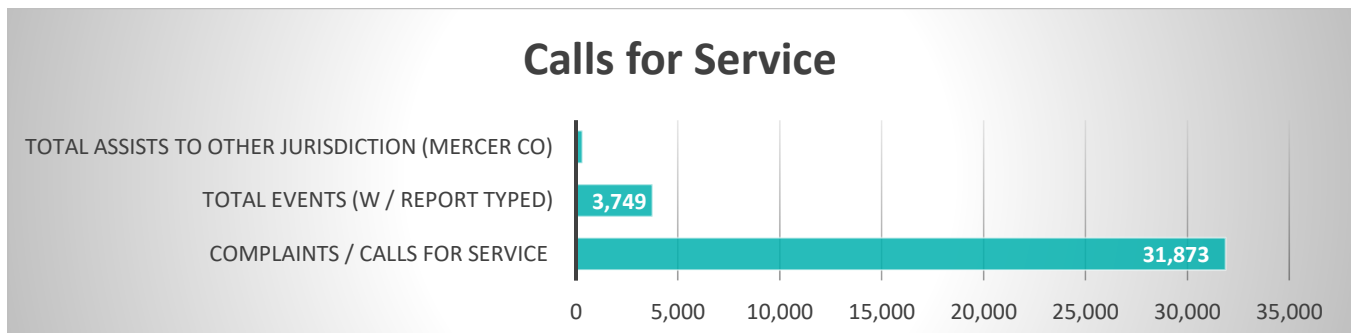
The Patrol division of the Sheriff's Office patrols 472 square miles, which include 14 Townships, one City, and all Villages in Mercer County. In 2021, deputies patrolled 344,147 miles. Deputies handled 321 traffic crashes, and completed a total of 3,749 reports.

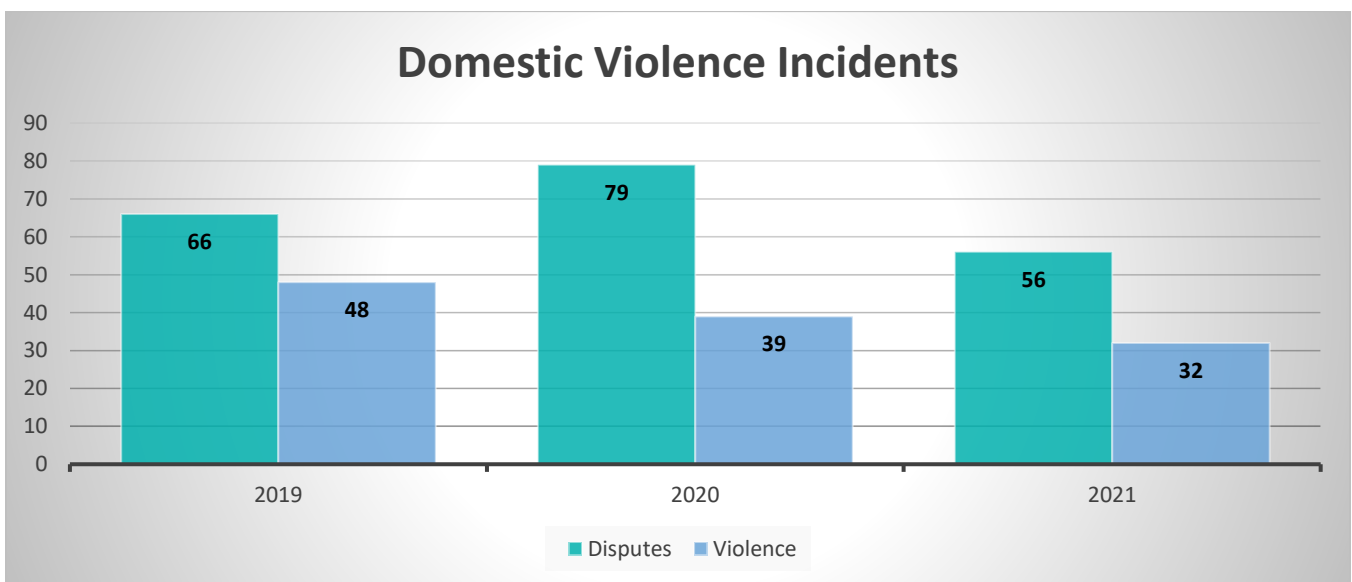
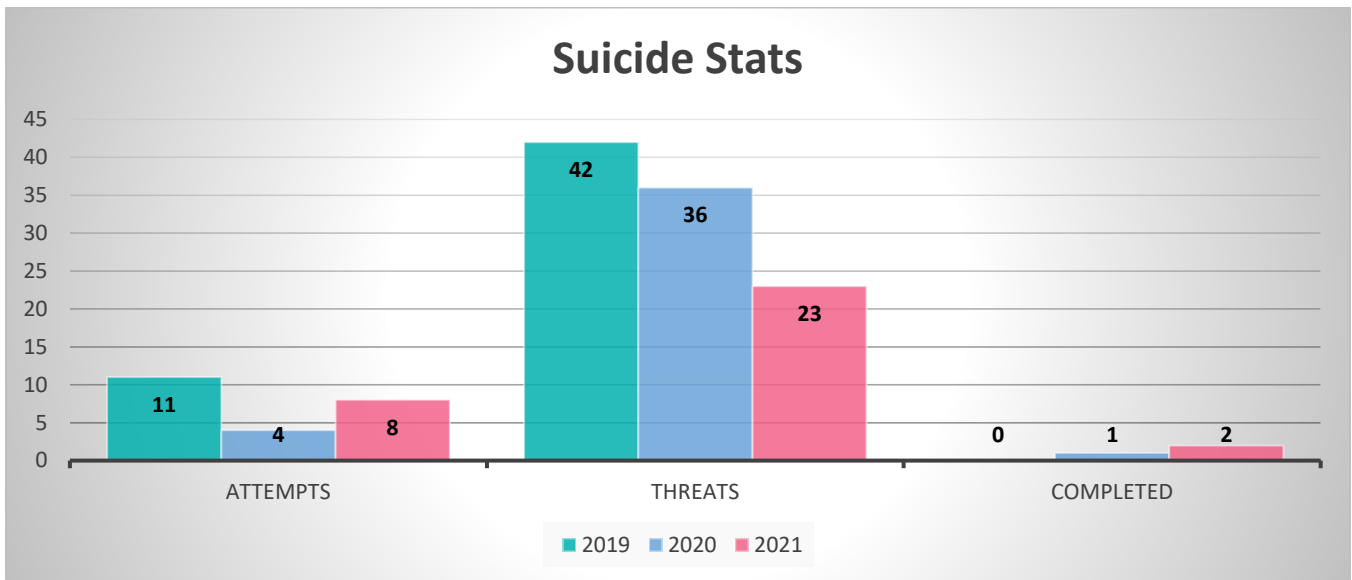
The Sheriff is the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in Mercer County, and his deputies have jurisdiction throughout all of Mercer County including municipalities. Patrol deputies conduct criminal investigations, issue citations, warnings, and make arrests. Patrol deputies serve warrants and civil papers, and give safety talks and presentations throughout the year.



Investigations

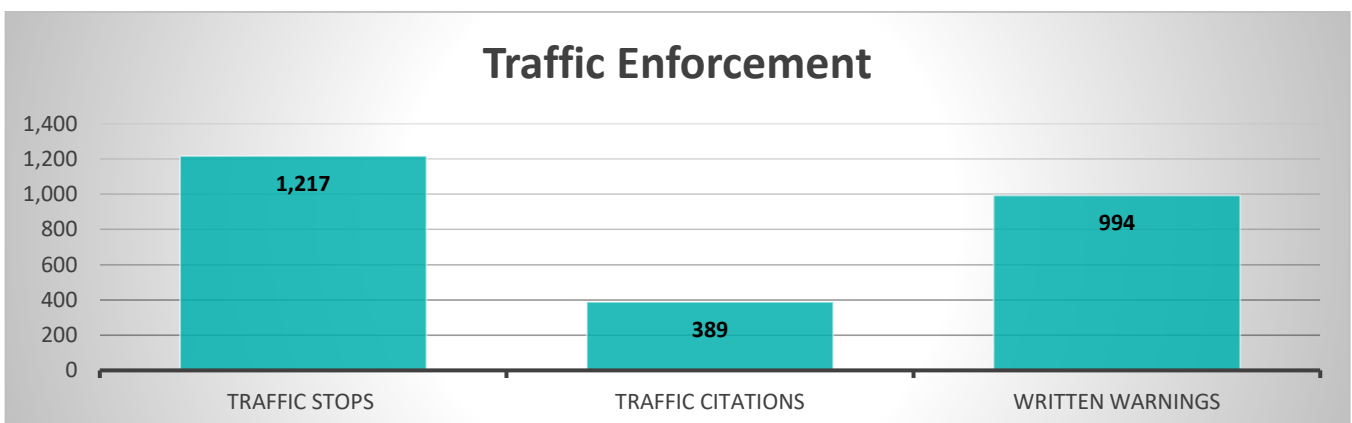
In 2021, the Enforcement Division investigated numerous crimes. Investigations would include death scenes, sexual assaults, burglaries, computer crimes, cyber-crimes, financial crimes, assault cases and also assisted with traffic fatality investigations. The Mercer County Sheriff's Office had 31,873 calls for service.





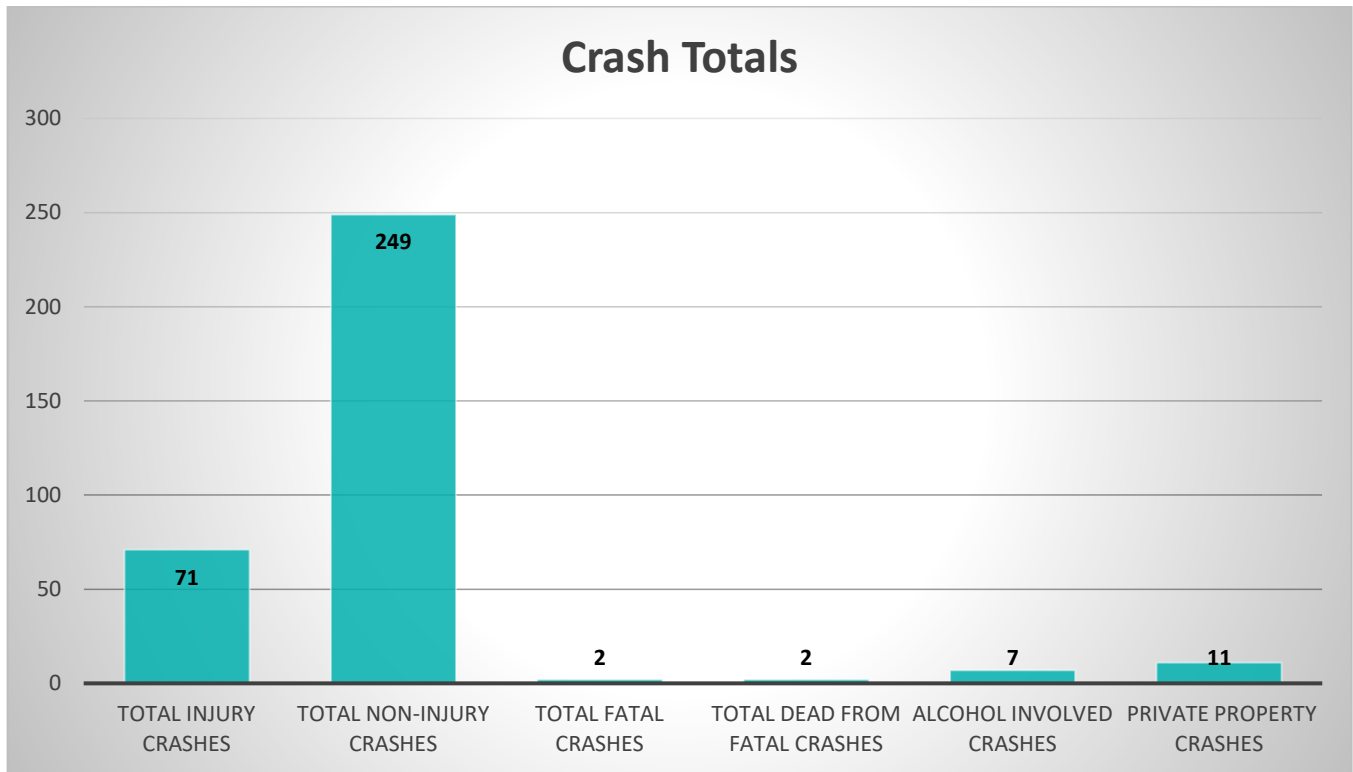
Traffic Enforcement

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 2021, deputies handled 2 fatal traffic crashes resulting in 2 deaths on Mercer County roadways.



Explorer Program

The Explorer program has been in existence since the early 1970's, and is 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 Explorer program. The Explorer program currently has 14 members. On average Explorers 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, Mercer County Rib Fest, and many DARE activities.

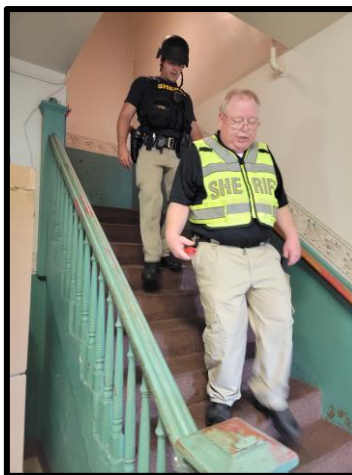


Active Shooter Training

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office hosted its 6th Active Shooter Training at the County Home on September 14th & 15th, 2021. The training was presented by Sergeant Jay Wehrkamp, Detective Chad Fortkamp, Detective Carla Baucher, and Captain Martin Emerine of the Mercer County Sheriff's Office.

The training consisted of (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 49 law enforcement officers throughout the county. This training is proving to be invaluable and very important.



K-9 Program

Our K-9 Program consists of Deputy Patrick Forsthoefel & his partner Deputy Ossi. Deputy Forsthoefel has been partnered with K-9 Ossi since 2017. 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.



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

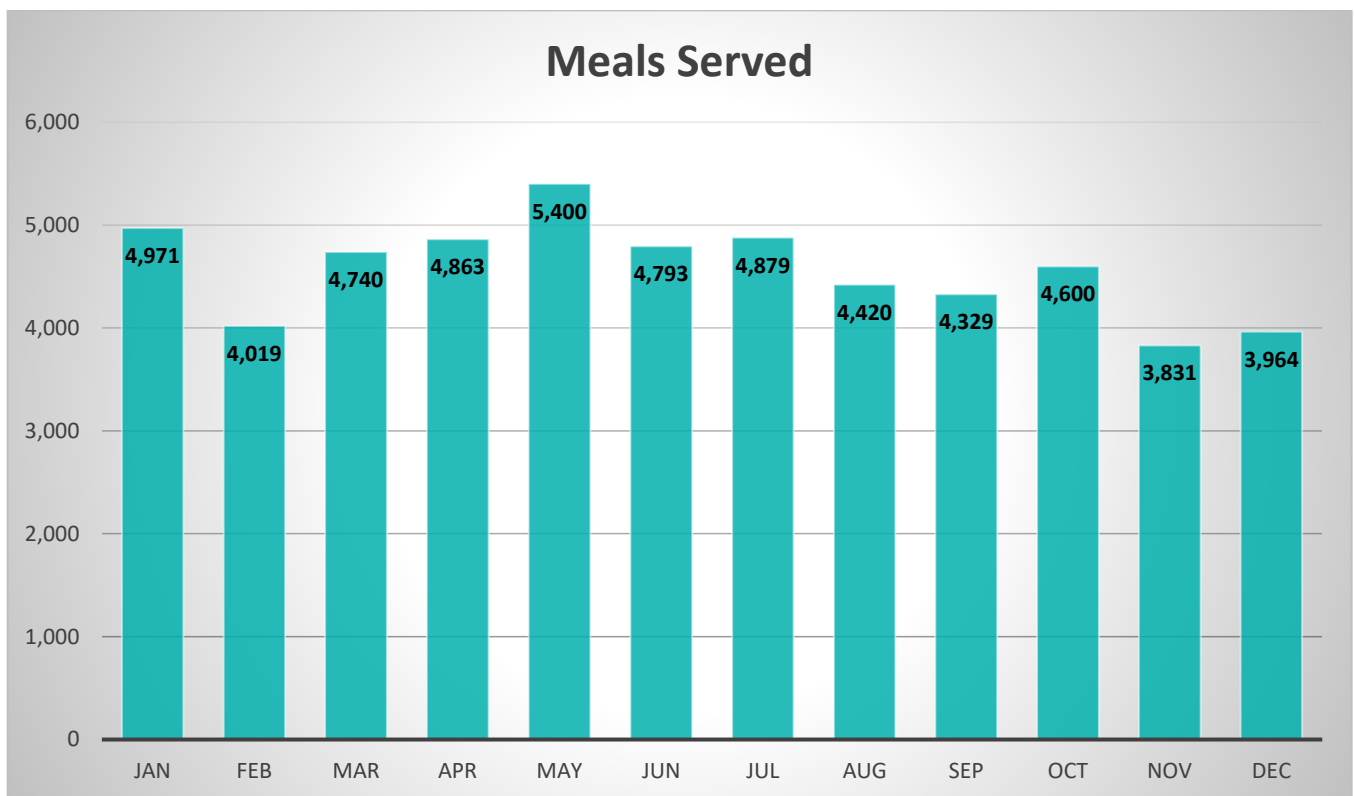
The Detention Facility is under the command of Chief Deputy Jodie Lange. Chief Lange has over 28 years of experience and she has spent her entire career at the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. Chief Lange has held the ranks of Corrections Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and now Chief Deputy. Chief Lange reviews programs for inmates, and she participates in the Mercer County Prevention Coalition and the Colt CHIP health group. She is responsible for the overall operations in the detention facility.

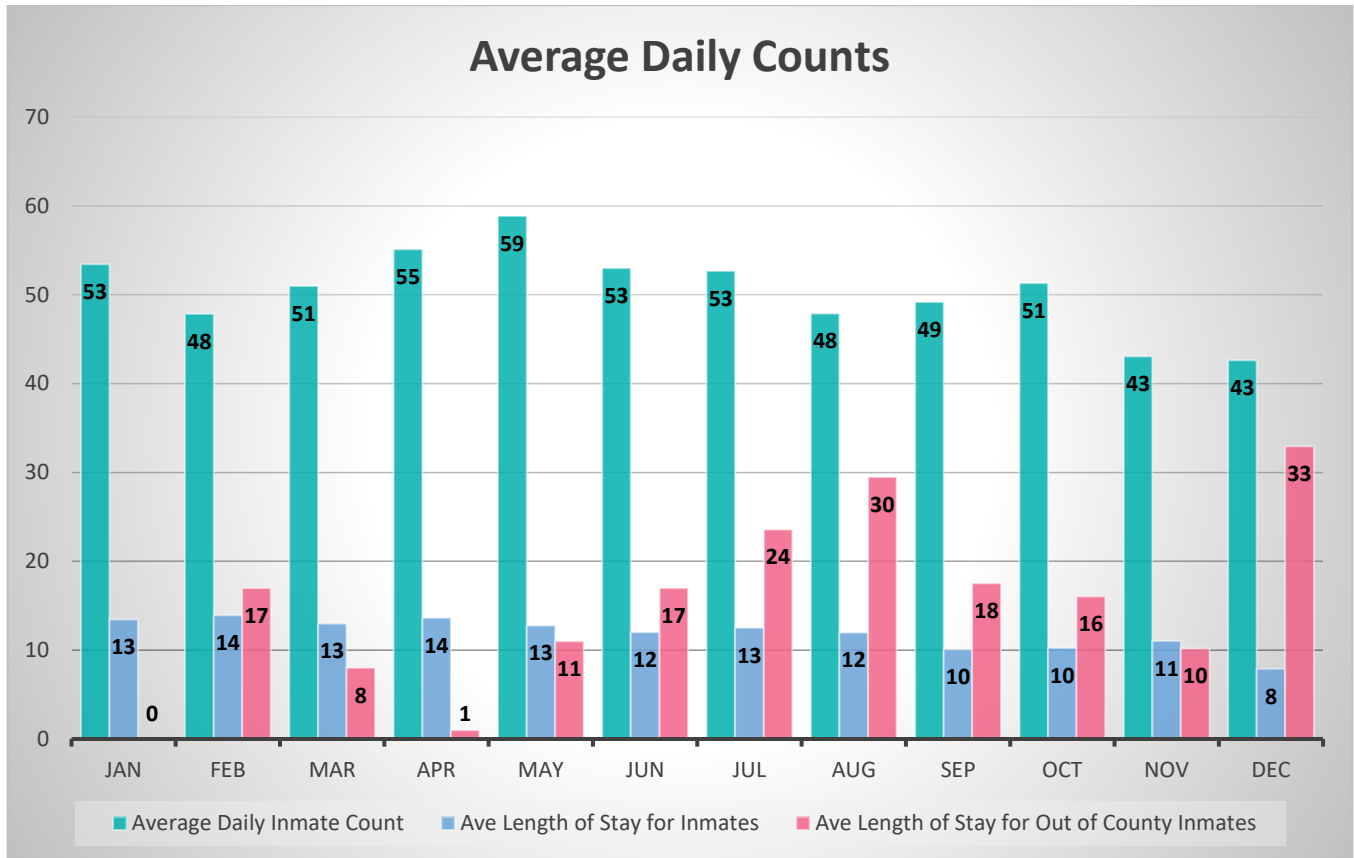
Captain Martin Emerine

Captain Martin Emerine oversees all the day to day operations in the detention facility. Captain Emerine has 30 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, and Captain of both the enforcement division and the jail.

Inmate Population Statistics

In 2021, the Mercer County Adult Detention Facility booked in 910 inmates. Of those inmates; 656 were male and 254 were female. The Detention Facility served 54,809 meals in 2021. Daily inmate totals vary. The following chart shows daily inmate trends and meals served by month.





Detention Facility Income

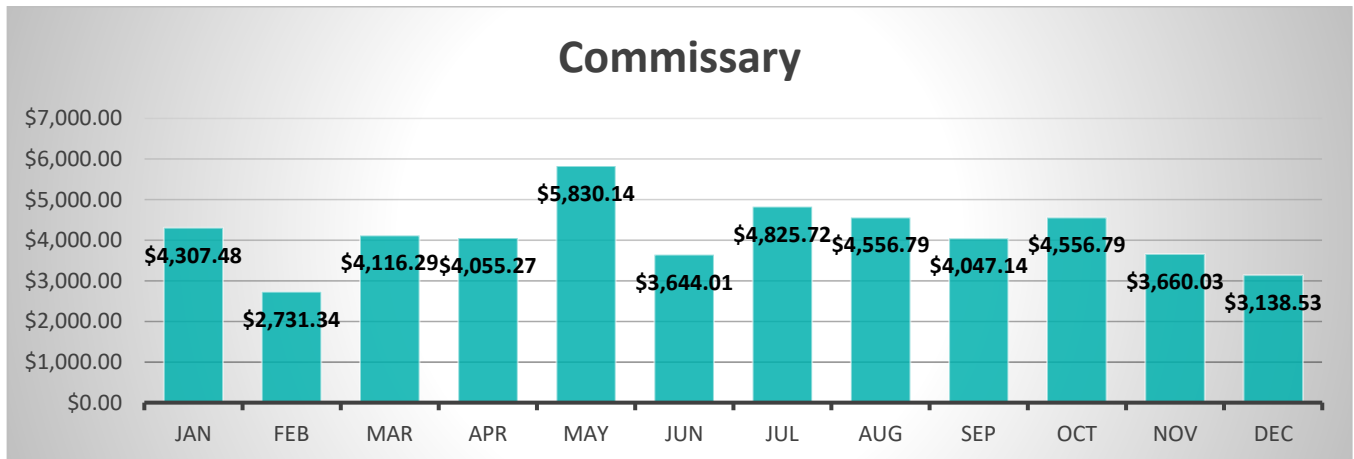
The Detention Facility does generate revenue. This revenue is generated by the inmates through various sources and programs. The following charts show where the revenue comes from and a description of the program. Revenue is received from housing inmates for other agencies, commissary, medical reimbursement, inmate work release. These programs save money for the tax payers of Mercer County. Total revenue generated for 2021 was \$127,010.00.

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Money Received for housing	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$5,900.00	\$5,750.00
Commissary	\$4,307.48	\$2,731.34	\$4,116.29	\$4,055.27	\$5,830.14	\$3,644.01
Medical Reimbursement	\$881.24	\$928.16	\$1,238.51	\$2,426.61	\$1,269.67	\$1,044.71
Money Received from Work Release	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$1,155.00	\$1,400.00	\$825.00

	July	August	September	October	November	December
Money Received for housing	\$4,650.00	\$4,700.00	\$6,250.00	\$13,350.00	\$4,550.00	\$9,300.00
Commissary	\$4,323.45	\$4,648.47	\$4,047.14	\$4,556.79	\$3,660.03	\$3,138.53
Medical Reimbursement	\$1,085.64	\$933.79	\$856.88	\$534.62	\$307.47	\$788.79
Money Received from Work Release	\$1,125.00	\$1,015.00	\$1,540.00	\$2,545.00	\$1,050.00	\$0.00

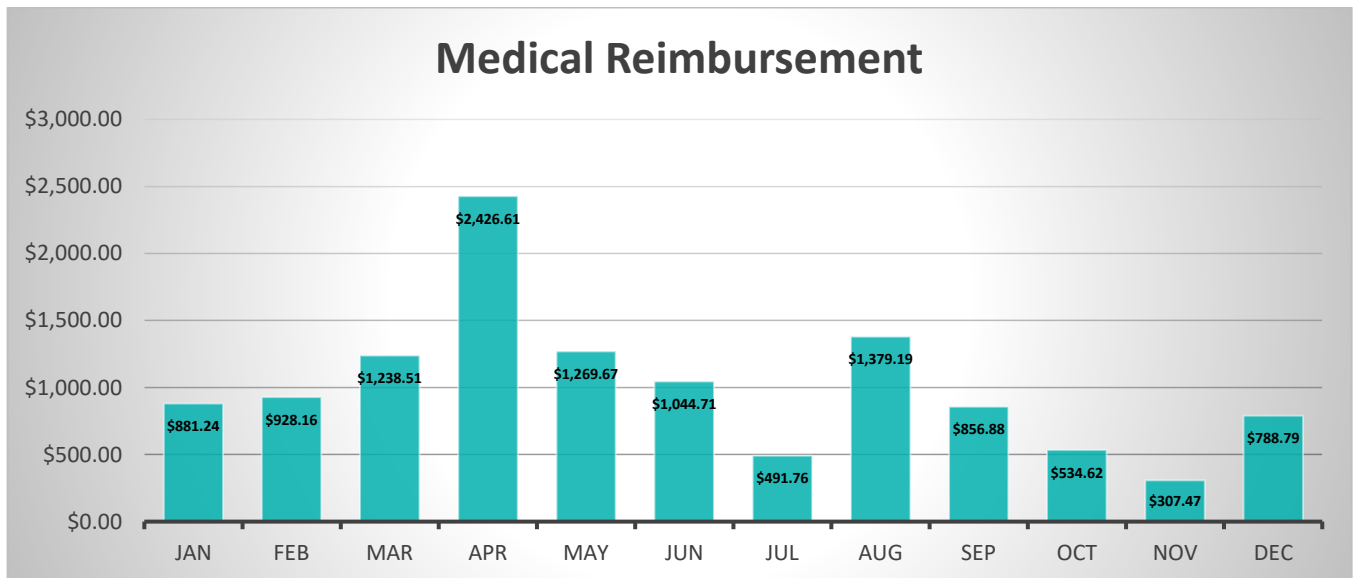
Commissary

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 \$49,058.94 was collected through commissary in 2021.



Medical Reimbursement

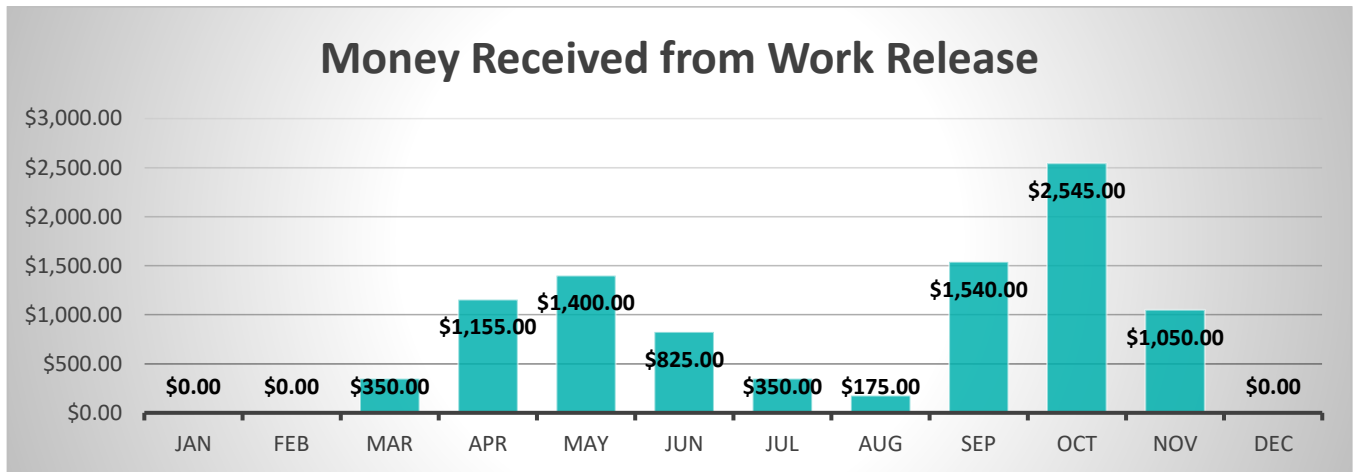
Medical Reimbursement funds are collected from inmates that require medical treatment while incarcerated at the Detention Facility. Inmates are billed for medical costs incurred while housed at the Detention Facility. When money is deposited on an inmates' account, a portion of the money is used to pay their outstanding medical expenses. In 2021, a total of \$12,269.09 was collected through the medical reimbursement program.



Inmate Work Release Program

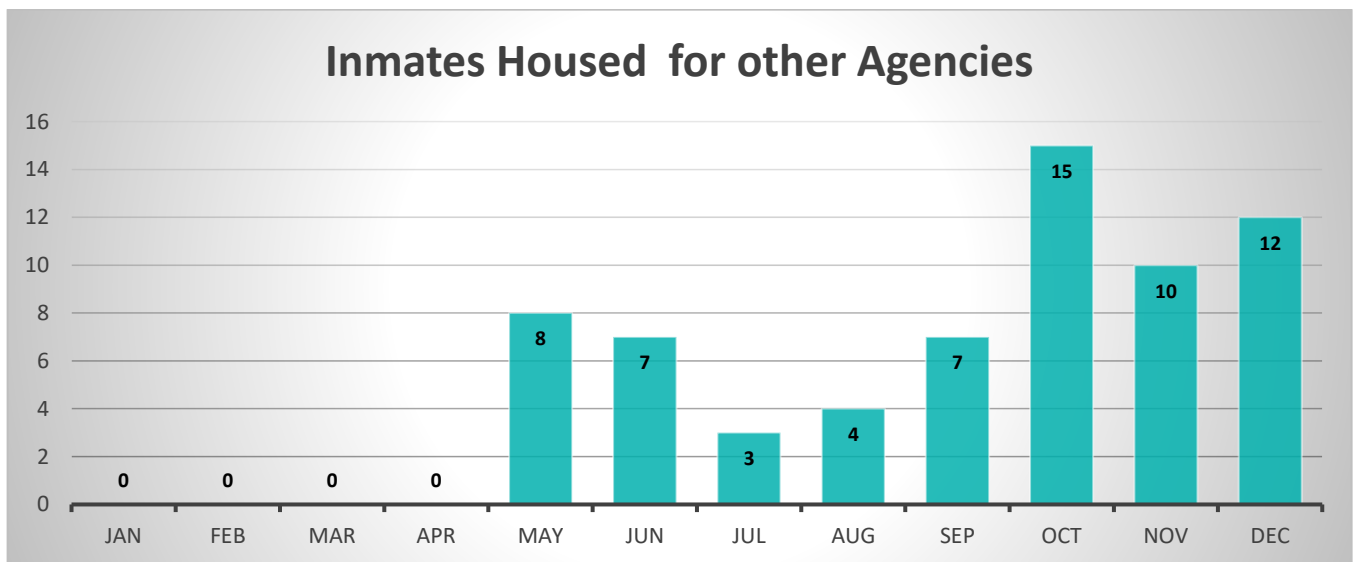
Work Release is a program by which inmates can be allowed to be released from the county jail during the time he or she is scheduled to work. Participants in the work release program must have a job and hours that can be verified. Inmates are released during those work hours. Program participants are 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 2021, a total of \$11,005.00 was collected through the inmate work release program.



Inmates Housed for Other Agencies

In 2021, a total of 66 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 \$54,650.00 was collected for housing inmates for other agencies in 2021.



County Wide Food Drive



Mercer County Fair



Drone



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

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 Shartzler 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. 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 totalled 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.