

Protecting Ohio's Families



Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine

ANNUAL REPORT
2014



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FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Protecting Ohio's Families

Dear Friends,

In 2014, my office built upon many of the initiatives we put in place during our first three years as we pursued our mission of protecting Ohio's families. Our work has helped bring criminals to justice, protect consumers' interests, safeguard children and seniors, and assist local law enforcement.

Here are some 2014 highlights:

- We continued to analyze thousands of previously untested sexual assault kits. By the end of 2014, my office had processed close to 6,000 kits forwarded to us from law enforcement agencies around the state as part of the Ohio Attorney General's Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Initiative. In Cuyahoga County alone, hundreds of defendants have been indicted and dozens have been convicted as a result of the initiative.
- Under our Crimes Against Children (CAC) Initiative we created to detect, investigate, and prosecute the victimization of our youngest citizens, we actively assisted local law enforcement organizations in their pursuit of those who prey on children. In 2014, the CAC unit worked 150 cases in 46 counties and made 19 arrests.

- In 2014, my office launched the Elder Justice Initiative to focus on and increase the investigation and prosecution of elder abuse cases and improve victims' access to services. Since we announced the initiative in May, we have received more than 100 requests for assistance and opened multiple criminal investigations.

- Identity theft joined our annual list of the top 10 consumer complaints for the first time in 2014. Last year, the number of identity theft complaints our office handled increased by more than 75 percent over 2013's total.

Every action my office takes is dedicated to protecting Ohio's families. I am proud of our staff's accomplishments and look forward to continuing our work.



Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General



FIGHTING CRIME

Protecting Ohio's Families

In 2014, BCI's lab analyzed **224,399** pieces of evidence for Ohio law enforcement, completed **38,085** cases and assisted **925** agencies.

Rape kit testing yields over 2,200 hits



After taking office in 2011, Attorney General DeWine learned that thousands of sexual assault kits that had never been submitted for DNA testing – some associated with crimes going back decades – were still on the evidence shelves of law enforcement agencies across the state. Late in 2011, Attorney General DeWine acted upon the recommendation of the task force formed to study the problem and urged law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio to send all of their previously untested kits to BCI for free lab analysis if they believed a crime had occurred.

By December 31, 2014, 149 law enforcement agencies had answered his call and had submitted a total of 9,056 kits for testing. Of the 5,928 kits processed as part of Attorney General DeWine's Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Testing Initiative, 2,244 – more than one-third – produced hits to DNA already in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). "This initiative has been incredibly successful, and I'm pleased that this effort is helping to bring justice to victims in Ohio," Attorney General DeWine said.

In Cuyahoga County, where more than half of the submitted kits originated, more than 240 defendants have been indicted and 66 have been convicted as a result of the initiative. For example, Richard Miller was indicted and pled guilty

after DNA and fingerprints connected him to two rapes. In 2005 and 2006, Miller broke into two Cleveland homes while each victim was sleeping and blindfolded and raped both victims.

Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy J. McGinty praised BCI and Attorney General DeWine, "...without whose leadership, vision and resources we could not do this. (Attorney General) DeWine's absolute determination to test all old rape kits," McGinty said, "has set a new standard for law enforcement."

To handle the influx of the thousands of kits, Attorney General DeWine hired 10 additional BCI forensic scientists to ensure the timely analysis of kits submitted as part of the SAK Testing Initiative. This additional staff enabled the older kits to be tested as quickly as possible without delaying the testing of the nearly 6,400 rape kits associated with recent crimes tested by BCI since 2011.

Agencies urged to submit kits

Law enforcement agencies wishing to submit untested kits or in need of more information about the initiative should call **855-BCI-OHIO (855-224-6446)**.

Lab maintains quick turnaround times

BCI's Laboratory Division operates facilities in London, Richfield, and Bowling Green and maintained excellent turnaround times in 2014 while accommodating an increased workload.

The lab analyzed 224,399 pieces of evidence for Ohio law enforcement in 2014, up from 169,736 the year before. Overall, the lab completed 38,085 cases and assisted 925 law enforcement agencies during 2014.

Turnaround times for DNA analysis stood at 20.9 days at the close of the year; for chemistry tests, 19.3 days; and for CODIS, 9.3 days. BCI's Identification Division entered 277,259 criminal offender prints into the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) – 64,748 were new and 212,511 were repeat offenders. The Identification Division also processed 1,331,285 civilian background checks.

Fast results get rape suspect off the streets

A BCI laboratory supervisor who heard an early morning news report about a 13-year-old girl's rape reached out to the Columbus Police Department and requested that the Department quickly submit evidence from the rape case to BCI. BCI was ready to rush the forensic biology testing

and, in slightly more than 24 hours after receiving the evidence, BCI uploaded a DNA profile into CODIS. A search of that database yielded a CODIS hit to a convicted offender who was arrested by the Columbus Police Department SWAT team that same night.

BCI helps locate suspect in 1995 out-of-state homicide case

Authorities from the New Britain (Connecticut) Police Department, the Massachusetts State Police, and the New York State Police asked for help from Attorney General DeWine's BCI and the Wayne County Sheriff's Office in locating an Ohio man accused of murdering his wife and daughter in 1995. Robert Honsch, who was living under an alias in Dalton, Ohio, was accused of killing his wife and daughter, who were both residents of the state of New York. Their bodies had been dumped in Massachusetts and Connecticut, respectively, and were found days apart in September and October of 1995, but had only recently been identified. Scientists at the Richfield BCI lab conducted prioritized forensic testing on evidence associated with the case and returned results to investigators in less than an hour. Honsch was arrested and held without bond in the Wayne County Jail.



New BCI lab at Bowling Green State University completed and open

The new BCI laboratory and investigations facility on Bowling Green State University's (BGSU) campus opened its doors in November 2014.

"The work being done in this 30,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility will be a key part of our ongoing mission to keep Ohio families safe," said Attorney General DeWine.

More than 40 BCI staff members at the new facility will provide both on-site investigative and laboratory services. The building is equipped with unique features, including a covered evidence-receiving location and modern labs outfitted with the latest technology, including two hydrogen generators for operating chemistry equipment.

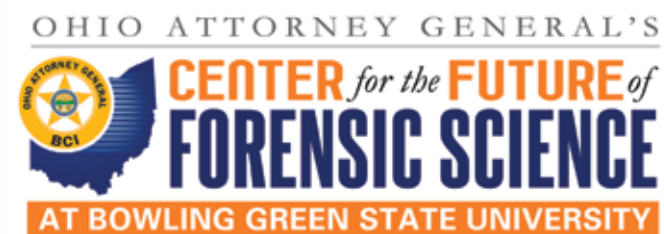


Currently, BGSU is one of only five college campuses in the country to house a crime lab. "We will have many students interested in forensic science, and our goal is to build that

career path for our students in the future," said BGSU President Mary Ellen Mazey. "This crime lab gives us that opportunity."

Forging a new partnership

The partnership between the Attorney General's Office and BGSU that brought forth the new BCI facility also established the Ohio Attorney General's Center for the Future of Forensic Science on BGSU's campus. The Center will help develop cutting-edge forensic science research techniques and will prepare students for careers in forensics, investigations, and research. In addition, the Center will provide forensic scientists, criminal investigators, and other law enforcement practitioners with professional development opportunities.



Internet-based tool enables law enforcement agencies to share information

BCI maintains the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), a state-of-the-art electronic information network that allows law enforcement agencies to share data on criminal histories, evidence submissions, missing children, gangs, protection orders, and many other topics efficiently and securely. The OHLEG system has more than 34,000 users who, during 2014, conducted more than 3.4 million searches.

Special prosecutors tackle complex cases

The Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section can be called on to prosecute major felony cases, such as homicides, sex offenses against children, white-collar crime, and public corruption. Assistant attorneys general within Special Prosecutions are available to work alongside prosecutors or take the lead if a county prosecutor has a conflict of interest or seeks assistance. In 2014, the section opened more than 400 cases in 69 counties.

As part of "Operation Buyer's Remorse" in Marion County, special prosecutors helped secure indictments against 39 individuals on 125 felony and misdemeanor charges having to do primarily with the sale and/or possession of heroin, cocaine, and prescription drugs, such as Percocet, Vicodin, and Xanax. Of the 39 defendants, 38 have been arrested, 37 have pled guilty and have been sentenced, one is awaiting trial, and one is still a fugitive.

In June, 2014, a Cuyahoga County man was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of a man at a Cleveland car wash in 2012. Special prosecutors presented the case to a jury, which found the suspect guilty of charges of aggravated murder, murder, and felonious assault.



BCI has deployed five 3D laser scanners around the state to help investigators better document complex crime scenes. Each scanner, which sits on a tripod and rotates 360 degrees, takes millions of precise laser measurements and hundreds of digital photographs. The result is a video that guides viewers, including investigators, prosecutors, and jurors, through a crime scene.

The 3D scanners are used primarily in homicide and officer-involved shooting investigations and are strategically located around the state – in Clark, Lake, Mercer, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas counties – to make them available quickly throughout Ohio.



Commission brings together local law enforcement resources to pursue criminals operating across jurisdictions

Attorney General DeWine oversees the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) which provides structure and support to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies that uncover organized criminal enterprises within their jurisdictions. The Commission combats these criminal enterprises primarily by establishing task forces in one or more counties where organized criminal activity is suspected or detected.

In 2014, task forces associated with the OOCIC seized illegal and prescription drugs with a street value of more than \$23.5 million; seized more than \$5.2 million in U.S. currency; served 600 search warrants; arrested 811 individuals on 1,966 felony counts; and seized 232 firearms.

2014 Task Force successes include:

- The Southwest Ohio Violent Crimes Task Force solved 10 homicide cases and a murder-for-hire plot; Attorney General DeWine recognized the task force with a Group Achievement Award in 2014.
- The Major Crimes Task Force of Meigs and Gallia Counties investigated and indicted 42 individuals on various felony-level drug charges, including trafficking in heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, prescription pain medication, and LSD.

- The Washington and Morgan County Major Crimes Task Force conducted six coordinated search warrants into the businesses, residence, and associated addresses of a suspect and, as a result of the search warrants, seized \$20,000, multiple pounds of cocaine and marijuana, five vehicles, two jet skis, and other items.
- The Miami Valley Bulk Cash Smuggling Task Force seized more than \$300,000 and 48 pounds of cocaine after an investigation led to a traffic stop and follow-up search warrants; another investigation into an alleged drug trafficking organization resulted in the seizure of \$630,000 and led to the discovery of a “stash house” where deliveries of almost 1,000 pounds of marijuana were received regularly.
- The Central Ohio HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas) Task Force, after serving several search warrants, seized \$93,000, 95 pounds of marijuana, and six firearms; after their investigation led to the discovery of a Columbus “stash house,” the Task Force seized \$75,000, 28 pounds of methamphetamine, 11 pounds of heroin, 15 firearms (13 of which were stolen), and made two arrests.



Fugitive Safe Surrender resolves outstanding warrants



In June 2014, Attorney General DeWine conducted his fifth Fugitive Safe Surrender Program. During the four-day event in Akron, 1,548 individuals – some from as far away as Florida and Georgia – turned themselves in and 3,669 warrants were cleared.

One young woman who came forward at the event had been on the run for 10 years. She wanted to clear her three felony warrants so she could get a job and have a future with her 3-year-old daughter.

“We are pleased that so many people took advantage of this opportunity to surrender and do the right thing,” said Attorney General DeWine. “Some of these individuals have been running from their past warrant or warrants for years. Now that they’ve cleared up their past, they can focus on a better future.”

While this is not an amnesty program, judges give favorable consideration to those who voluntarily turned themselves in during the event. The majority of those who surrendered were released on the same day after having their cases heard and adjudicated.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Protecting Ohio's Families

Attorney General DeWine's Crimes Against Children Unit worked **150** cases in 46 counties; helped **73** local law enforcement agencies; processed **60** requests for assistance; executed **24** search warrants; and made **19** arrests.

Protecting kids from predators

Attorney General DeWine created the "Crimes Against Children Initiative" to detect and investigate all the ways – especially sexual and other forms of abuse – that children are victimized, to bring the offenders to justice, and to connect the victims with resources for healing and recovery. The initiative was launched in 2011 and is carried out by the Special Prosecutions Section, Crime Victim Services Section, BCI's Crimes Against Children (CAC), and Cyber Crimes Units.

While the CAC unit handles the full spectrum of crimes against children, the most common involve child pornography and sexual abuse cases. BCI agents troll the Internet for predators, lead and assist with investigations, and make high-tech resources and training available to local law enforcement. In 2014, the unit opened 150 cases in 46 counties, helped 73 local law enforcement agencies, and processed 60 requests for assistance. The unit executed 24 search warrants and made 19 arrests.

As part of the CAC Initiative, BCI's Cyber Crimes Unit received 234 separate submissions for forensic review of material related to crimes against children.

In one case, the CAC unit partnered with the Chillicothe Police Department and found William Noble sharing child pornography through online file-sharing networks. A follow-up investigation confirmed that he produced as well as shared pornographic photos and videos of local children, and was also engaged in molesting two children. Noble was convicted of multiple counts of pandering obscenity involving minors, rape, gross sexual imposition, and voyeurism. In February 2014, Noble was sentenced to 30 years to life in prison.

Office keeps focus on school safety

Ohio law requires all schools to file safety and building floor plans with the Ohio Department of Education, which forwards the plans to the Attorney General's Office. Safety plans must be updated every three years, and floor plans must be submitted whenever significant construction or renovation takes place. The plans are made available to emergency responders through the office's Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway, a secure, online resource for law enforcement. At year's end, 99 percent of the state's 4,465 schools required to submit plans were in compliance.

Because teachers and other school personnel are the true first responders to school crises, the Attorney General's Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) offers

"School Shootings: How to be Aware, Prepare, and be a First Responder in a Crisis." The course instructs attendees on ways to identify potential problems in advance and steps to take during an incident. In 2014, OPOTA conducted 15 sessions throughout the state, reaching 1,563 educators and law enforcement officers.

Child safety and foster care improved

After holding eight Child Safety Summits throughout Ohio in 2012, Attorney General DeWine brought together child welfare experts from across the state and convened the Foster Care Advisory Group to develop recommendations in response to the issues highlighted in the Summits.

In April 2014, the Advisory Group released its recommendations, many of which the Ohio General Assembly incorporated in House Bill 213. The new law updates requirements for court-appointed Guardians ad Litem; permits foster parents and foster children to participate in court hearings having to do with potential returns to biological families; allows foster children to participate in normal childhood activities by clarifying liability issues for state agencies; takes steps to reduce the number of children who linger in long-term foster care; and allows for

the termination of parental rights when a child or a sibling of that child is abused or neglected on three separate occasions.

House Bill 213 was passed unanimously by both the Ohio House and Senate and was signed into law on June 17, 2014.



"BCI Science School was created to help expose young students in our state to the practical applications of science. I want kids to dream big about their future careers, including thinking about a career in science."

We are proud of the work done by our scientists at our BCI Crime Labs in London, Richfield, and Bowling Green. We hope that the passion our staff has for science helps spark a love of science in these young minds through the BCI Science School."

— Mike DeWine, Ohio Attorney General



Human trafficking is a top target

The heinous crime of human trafficking affects nearly every community. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that between 244,000 and 325,000 young Americans may be at risk for sexual exploitation. Ohio has been acknowledged by the Polaris Project, a national anti-human trafficking organization, as a leader in the country for our efforts to strengthen laws, punish traffickers, and protect victims.

The Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission – which consists of elected and appointed officials, as well as representatives from law enforcement, social service agencies, religious organizations and schools – helped secure passage of House Bill 130, the “End Demand Act.” The new law toughened penalties for trafficking minors under the age of 18, increased opportunities for victims to receive services, and improved protections for victims with developmental disabilities.

To help law enforcement officers, OPOTA added courses to its basic training on recognizing victims of human trafficking and how to respond. In 2014, 2,548 newly commissioned peace officers completed that basic training. OPOTA's “Human Trafficking: Basic Overview” was attended by 28 officers and 11 officers completed the Missing and Human Trafficking instructor courses. A total of 2,399 officers completed the online eOPOTA training.

The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, authorized through the Attorney General's Organized Crime Investigations Commission, includes officers and agents from BCI, Homeland Security Investigations, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Columbus and Powell police departments, the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio, and the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office in partnership with the Salvation Army of Central Ohio. In 2014, the task force secured seven convictions and 26 indictments, rescued 17 victims, and referred 84 potential victims to social services.

A father and son were arrested and indicted on charges of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking, sex trafficking of a minor, and sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion after a Task Force investigation found that Keith Arrick Sr. and Keith Arrick Jr. forced one juvenile and multiple women to engage in commercial sex acts. The Arricks were accused of using various Columbus-area hotels to harbor the women and recruiting customers online. The elder Arrick allegedly threatened the women with physical violence if they tried to quit performing commercial sex acts. In December 2014, Keith Arrick Jr. was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison; Keith Arrick Sr. was awaiting sentencing at the close of the year.

Resources to fight human trafficking

For online training and other resources to address human trafficking, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking.



Grants from Attorney General make a difference for Ohio kids



Attorney General DeWine supported Ohio Reach – an organization dedicated to expanding college graduation among foster youth – with a \$1 million grant in 2014. With this grant, Ohio Reach was able to hire a full-time staff member who, in 2014, provided training to colleges and universities about how they could better meet the needs of Ohio foster youth attending their institutions. The new staff member also assisted Columbus State Community College, Ohio University, and Cuyahoga Community College with creating specialized programs for foster youth.



Grant funding from Attorney General DeWine helped open seven new Boys and Girls Clubs across Ohio in 2014. This is part of a multi-year expansion that will result in 15 new club sites serving as a safe place for children to learn after school.



Highly trained Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteers often provide “best-interest” representation in court for abused, neglected, or dependent foster youth. A \$2 million grant from the Attorney General's Office brought CASA programs to six counties that did not previously have them (Carroll, Cuyahoga, Gallia, Hocking, Meigs, and Perry) and helped expand existing CASA programs in five other counties (Athens, Butler, Columbiana, Franklin, and Lucas).



BATTLING DRUG ABUSE

Protecting Ohio's Families

'Marin's Story,' a video the Attorney General's Office produced about a young woman's addiction and overdose death, was widely viewed across Ohio and as far away as Australia.

No county, city, or suburb in Ohio is immune to drug abuse. The Attorney General's Office confronts the problem from several perspectives and with multiple resources. Several sections of the office are involved in the effort and actively assist local law enforcement, prosecutors, and communities.

Heroin epidemic addressed in statewide community forums

Building on work that began in 2013, Attorney General DeWine's office conducted 11 community forums in 2014 (out of 13) across the state to raise awareness of, and explore solutions to, Ohio's heroin epidemic. Forum attendees – including law enforcement, local and state government officials, social service representatives, families affected by addiction, and concerned citizens – discussed issues associated with drug abuse, identified drug trends unique to each region, and addressed the need for accessible, affordable, and effective treatment. The forums generated dialogues and ideas that led to the formation of the Overdose Prevention Task Force, the launch of a recovery pilot program in Lucas County, and a grant to help Lima and Allen counties investigate heroin trafficking along the I-75 corridor.

Heroin Unit Resources

The Attorney General's Office provides assistance and resources for communities dealing with heroin and other drug problems. Contacts include:

- Prosecution assistance: **614-644-7233**
- BCI Tip Line: **855-BCI-OHIO (855-224-6446)**
- Education and outreach: **614-644-5808**
- Research: **614-466-4320**
- Grant advice: **614-466-6963**
- Victim assistance: **614-466-8245**
- Legislative information: **614-728-7275**
- Law enforcement training: **740-845-2696**
- Prescription drug drop boxes: **614-644-8901**



Drug abuse outreach team informs communities about Ohio's opiate epidemic

Attorney General DeWine's Drug Abuse Outreach Team educates students, parents, educators, law enforcement, elected officials, and community organizations across Ohio about the state's opiate epidemic. In 2014, the team participated in dozens of drug information and outreach events, one of which was the "Protecting Ohio's Families: Start Talking!" Heroin Summit. Attorney General DeWine, Governor John Kasich, and the Alliance for High Quality Education held the summit, which brought together representatives from nearly 40 school districts to discuss the heroin epidemic, how to engage communities in the fight against drug abuse, and best practices for prevention.

In 2014, the Attorney General added two staff members to the outreach team, both of whom are mothers who each lost a child to a drug overdose.



In 2014, the Attorney General's Office produced "Marin's Story," a powerful educational video about Marin Riggs and how Marin's addiction and overdose death affected her family. "Her smile, which lit up the room, was extinguished by her heroin addiction, which lured her back after six months of sobriety," Marin's mother said. "We hope to encourage

other parents to talk to their kids and know that heroin is readily available almost everywhere."

"Marin's Story," which was produced in cooperation with her family, is available for viewing on the Attorney General's website at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

Overdose Prevention Task Force looks at ways to modernize drug-related data collection

While compiling up-to-date heroin overdose death statistics for the community drug forums, Attorney General DeWine discovered that no standard protocol for classifying drug overdose fatalities existed in Ohio. As a result, he formed the 15-member Overdose Prevention Task Force, which includes representatives from the Ohio State Coroners Association, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, and the Ohio Attorney General's Office. The task force will recommend ways to strengthen current tracking and overdose death classification procedures.



Grants pay for pilot program, investigators

Attorney General DeWine's office provided a \$650,000 grant to launch the Lucas County Recovery Pilot Program that will bring together community partners and resources to help those suffering from heroin addiction. The program seeks to prevent relapse by removing barriers to treatment and gaps in recovery. The participating partners – which include the Lucas County Sheriff's Office, the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office, members of the Lucas County Board of Commissioners, and the University of Toledo – will study and evaluate the outcomes and the effectiveness of the program for its potential use as a model for recovery in other communities across the state.

Grant money from the "Ohio Attorney General's Office Safe Neighborhoods Initiative" funded two investigators for two years in both the Lima Police Department and the Allen County Sheriff's Office. The investigators will focus on stopping heroin trafficking and other criminal activity along I-75 through Allen County. The Lima Police Department and the Allen County Sheriff's Office received \$272,192 and \$247,409, respectively.

Bulk Currency Smuggling Task Forces target drug trafficking dollars

Attorney General DeWine's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) sponsors several Bulk Currency Smuggling Task Forces throughout Ohio to investigate and intercept large-scale illegal drug and cash transactions. By reducing the flow of drug trafficking money, the task forces disrupt the operations of criminal enterprises.



Cooperation among federal, state, and local law enforcement partners has brought about several successes. For example, in one March investigation, the Miami Valley Bulk Cash Smuggling

Task Force seized almost 50 pounds of cocaine and more than \$300,000. In a December investigation, the Central Ohio HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas) Task Force confiscated firearms, methamphetamine, heroin, and cash. In October, the Toledo Bulk Cash Smuggling Task Force seized more than 2,000 pills made from heroin that were pressed and made to appear as though they were normal prescription medication. And in September, the Southwest Ohio Bulk Cash Smuggling Task Force arrested four individuals from Ohio, California, and Mexico during a traffic stop on State Route 32 in Clermont County and seized more than 650 pounds of marijuana headed for a rural home in southeast Ohio.

Drug drop boxes keep unwanted prescription medications off the streets

Attorney General DeWine partnered with the Ohio Department of Health and the Drug-Free Action Alliance in 2012 to provide secure, mailbox-style disposal bins to more than 60 law enforcement agencies. The bins enable residents to discard unwanted and expired medications to prevent current and potential drug abusers from accessing opiates. During the second year of collection, which ended in October 2014, residents emptied some 8.4 tons (16,910 pounds) of unused prescription pills from their medicine cabinets into the drug drop boxes.



Unintentional drug overdoses are Ohio's leading cause of accidental death. Ohioans can safely dispose of unused medications through the Ohio Prescription Drug Drop Box Program.

Office sponsors drug abuse prevention and education efforts

D.A.R.E. To educate students about drug abuse and give them the tools to make smart decisions, the Attorney General's Drug Use Prevention Grants provided \$3.7 million in funding to 182 local law enforcement agencies, including 11 new grant recipients. The funds support school-based programs and helped 288 Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) and school resource officers work with nearly 420,000 students during the 2013-14 program year. More than 100 new school resource officers were trained at OPOTA's London and Richfield campuses during the 2013-14 program year.



Targeting improper prescribing

The Attorney General's Office brings cases before the State Medical Board of Ohio to suspend or revoke the licenses of doctors who improperly prescribe controlled substances. In 2014, four doctors' licenses were suspended and 12 doctors' licenses were revoked for improper prescribing.



Actions slow synthetic drug sales

After investigators from BCI, the Ohio Department of Taxation, and the METRICH Drug Task Force found evidence of the sale of synthetic drugs at his business, Tiffin store owner Shawn Stagnolia pleaded guilty to charges of aggravated possession of drugs, permitting drug abuse, distribution of tobacco products with intent to avoid payment of tax, possession of untaxed tobacco products, and failure to file a withholding return. The Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section assisted with the criminal case. Stagnolia was sentenced to three years in prison.

Attorney General DeWine also helped local law enforcement and prosecutors bring numerous civil lawsuits to halt the widespread over- and under-the-counter sale of synthetic drugs in convenience stores, carry-outs, smoke shops, and other retail outlets.

These illegal drugs – sold for between \$25 and \$45 per pack – are marketed as synthetic marijuana, herbal incense and bath salts, among others. They cause extreme agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, and suicidal behavior, and they pose serious threats to law enforcement officers and medical personnel.

In 2014, the Attorney General's Office used an innovative approach to prevail in two Belmont County cases in which the respective business owners were ordered to close their stores for up to one year because of synthetic drug sales. The Ohio Court of Appeals affirmed the trial court rulings and the Supreme Court of Ohio refused to hear the store owners' appeals.

Examples of synthetic drug packaging



2014 OOCIC TASK FORCES' NARCOTICS SEIZURES

Drug	Amount Seized	Street Value
Heroin	51 pounds	\$2,315,972
Cocaine	91.25 pounds	\$4,143,754
Methamphetamine	86.3 pounds	\$3,918,969
Marijuana	6,229.6 pounds	\$12,459,200
Opioid Pain Pills	10,296 pills	\$257,400
Other prescriptions	3,963 pills	\$19,815
Crack Cocaine	1.2 pounds	\$54,493
MDMA	2.1 pounds	\$30,725
Khat	1,114.8 pounds	\$296,437
Hashish	1.9 pounds	\$4,070
Other Narcotics		\$9,150
Total drug value		\$23,509,985



2014 OOCIC TASK FORCES' OTHER STATISTICS

Individuals Indicted	652	Human Trafficking Victims Rescued or Referred	74
Arrests	811	Human Trafficking Arrests & Indictments	32
Search Warrants Served	600	Human Trafficking Tips Received	149
Firearms Seized	232	U.S. Currency Seized	\$5,208,710



Academy responds to evolving needs of agencies

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) meets the diverse training needs of Ohio's busy and budget-conscious law enforcement agencies by offering new courses in varied formats and multiple locations. Whether through classroom, simulator, portable training facility, or online settings, local departments benefit from the academy's first-rate instruction at little or no cost to them.

OPOTA continues to offer a wide range of courses at its main campus and Tactical Training Center in London and its campus in Richfield. In 2014, London's 306 classes attracted 4,441 students and Richfield's 115 classes drew 3,586 students.

OPOTA's Mobile Academy conducted 206 regional trainings with a total enrollment of 6,543 officers in 2014. Through its free eOPOTA lineup, the academy provided 90 courses online in which law enforcement officers and others completed 70,717 course sessions.

The academy also offers education for peace officers and other law enforcement professionals during the annual Attorney General's Law Enforcement Conference. Nearly 900 people attended the October 2014 conference, which featured 30 workshops with numerous experts.

OPOTA develops training for naloxone, procedural justice, and leadership

After House Bill 170, which allows officers to carry and administer naloxone, was signed into law in March 2014, OPOTA developed two free online training courses – one for law enforcement and one for the public – covering risk factors for overdoses, signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose, and steps for administering naloxone. Also known as Narcan, naloxone reverses the effects of opioids on the brain and can limit or stop an overdose when administered to an individual overdosing on heroin or a prescription opioid.

To strengthen departments' relationships with their communities and improve officer safety and efficiency, OPOTA began offering a free course on Procedural Justice and Police Legitimacy.

OPOTA started offering "Leading for Law Enforcement," a free, eight-hour course designed to challenge officers to discover their leadership capabilities, in the fall of 2014.

Commission creates curricula for peace officer training and reviews officer certification

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission helps shape training and compliance standards for more than 30,000 peace officers from nearly 1,000 agencies as well as corrections, private security, probation, parole officers, humane agents, and bailiffs. In 2014, the commission and its staff issued 7,620 basic training certificates, and administered 3,303 state certification exams.

In addition, the commission provides direction and curricula for peace officer basic training academies and sets the curricula for corrections, private security, probation, and parole officers and humane agents. Staff updated 85 lesson plans covering 540 hours of instruction for peace officers, corrections staff, and others in public safety or private security.

Resources for law enforcement

Many services and tools for law enforcement can be found at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement.

Commission sets Continuing Professional Training (CPT) requirements

For 2014, the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission established the minimum number of Continuing Professional Training (CPT) hours: Between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014, the appointed peace officers and troopers from every appointing authority were required to complete four hours of CPT. To be eligible for reimbursement, that time was to include at least one hour covering crimes against families with the remaining three hours spent on general law enforcement topics.

Attorney General forms working group to review police training in Ohio

After several incidents of officer-involved shootings and use-of-force situations in Ohio and the nation ended tragically, Attorney General DeWine called together a special working group to conduct a thorough review of the quality, availability, and practical application of peace officer training. "Improving the trust between police and the communities they serve is vital to the functioning of our state and the safety of our communities," Attorney General DeWine said. "Equally important is ensuring that officers who encounter dangerous, life-threatening situations have the knowledge, skills, and judgment necessary to react in an appropriate manner."



OPOTA's classrooms take to the road

Many of OPOTA's firearms and driving courses utilize 14 new, state-of-the-art simulators housed in climate-controlled trailers that can be parked near local departments. The firearms simulators can be set up quickly in local facilities. In 2014, the academy conducted 189 trainings using the simulators, training more than 6,500 officers. With provided schemes or those they build themselves, instructors show how to answer high-risk calls, conduct pursuits, clear intersections, and enhance other skills. The firearms simulators feature more than 425 scenarios, software to create new scenarios, and a library of firearms drills and exercises.

One of OPOTA's newest offerings is conducted in Portable Training Facilities (PTFs) designed especially for building officers' skills during unknown- and high-risk building searches. The 24-square-foot structures, constructed with an aluminum framework and plastic walls, can be quickly set up in nearly limitless configurations with various room sizes, hallways, doorways, and target placement. The configuration of the structures can be flexible and can travel to local departments, or be set up at the London or Richfield campuses.

To learn more

Law enforcement can arrange for firearms, driving, PTF, and subject control courses in their area by sending an email to AskOPOTA@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.

Grants reduce "revolving door effect" between criminal justice, mental health systems

Attorney General DeWine and Ohio Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, retired, co-chair the Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness, which works to prevent individuals with mental illness from cycling in and out of the criminal justice system.

The Attorney General awarded nearly \$500,000 in grants to six pilot programs aimed at assisting those with mental illness, including veterans, youth, seniors, and homeless individuals. In 2014, Hancock and Mercer counties used their \$25,000 grants to hire staff to assist inmates in jail with crisis counseling and re-entry planning. Inmates received necessary treatment and were connected to services when they were released. The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) used its \$82,500 grant to contract with the National Youth Screening & Assessment Project and provide training on the use of an automated version of a mental health screening tool in Ohio detention centers.

In addition, the Attorney General's office gave the Ohio Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) \$245,000 to boost the number of officers with Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, produce a documentary on mental illness and the criminal justice system, and develop a roadmap for reducing the likelihood of individuals with serious mental illness cycling in and out of the criminal justice system.

Safe Neighborhoods Initiative puts repeat violent offenders on notice

"The Ohio Attorney General's Safe Neighborhoods Initiative" began in 2013 with the goal of breaking the cycle of crime caused by repeat violent offenders. Through the Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, law enforcement, community and church leaders, social service providers, and affected families work together to convey expectations and consequences related to gun violence. It also offers help to offenders and spells out the tough penalties for homicides and shootings.

Akron, Ashtabula, Fostoria, Fremont, Hamilton, Lima, Steubenville, and Warren have participated in Safe Neighborhoods "call-ins."

Lima Police Chief Kevin J. Martin, a partner since January 2014, is encouraged by the initiative. "More than 70 young people have been engaged through the call-ins. Each of these young people has been involved in past acts of violent crime to varying degrees," said Chief Martin. "This does not solve all of the issues of violence within the Lima community, but it has been a big step forward."

Badges for Baseball expands

In its third year, Ohio's Badges for Baseball program pairs kids with local law enforcement officers to learn baseball fundamentals along with leadership, respect, communications, and other life skills. In the six participating cities – Canton, Dayton, Lima, Lorain, Youngstown and Zanesville – 816 young people ages 10 through 12 took part in the program with 94 mentors during 2014.

In addition to regular programming, 25 youth and six mentors from all six partner cities traveled to Baltimore, Maryland, and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation Overnight Camp. From June 9-13, the young people played baseball at the Ripken Academy and participated in team building and personal life skills activities. A program staff member at Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Muskingum County (Zanesville) had this reaction: "The week was not just about baseball, but learning life lessons of respecting yourself, respecting others, waiting your turn, being part of a team, and supporting that team through winning and losing. This was a great experience for me as a chaperone and an even better experience for my group."



In 2014, the Attorney General's Office awarded nearly **\$1 million** in first-time money from Ohio's new Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund to **25** rape crisis centers around the state.

The Attorney General's Office helps victims and their families rebuild their lives in the aftermath of violent crime. The Crime Victim Services Section provides compensation to cover many eligible costs, as well as programming, funding, and training for victims and victim service providers.

Fund compensates victims

The Ohio Victims of Crime Compensation Fund can help victims and their families cover medical expenses, lost wages, funeral costs, and similar expenditures. Since it was created in 1976, the fund has paid out more than \$348 million, including \$7.3 million in 2014. Total claims processed during 2014 reached 4,958, of which 4,110 were new filings.

Training sharpens advocates' effectiveness

The Crime Victim Services Section provides expert training programs and helps develop policies to serve Ohio's most vulnerable victims of crime. In 2014, the section trained more than 4,820 criminal justice professionals, victim advocates, and community members on issues affecting victims of crime.

In 2014, some 30 training sessions emphasized the importance of collaborative, victim-centered responses to domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

The Attorney General's Two Days in May Conference on Victim Assistance, one of the nation's largest crime victim advocacy events, featured nationally recognized speakers and 35 workshops. Nearly 1,000 victim advocates and criminal justice professionals attended the 2014 conference.

Informing Ohioans about offenders' status

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) is an automated service that enables Ohioans to track the status of offenders in state or county custody. In 2014, new registrations reached 39,774 and telephone site searches totaled 38,837. Greater use of smartphones moved more inquiries to email and VINEmobile: During 2014, email events increased approximately 20 percent and the VINEmobile application received 62,144 "hits," or about 5,000 per month.



Keeping Ohioans informed of offenders' status

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) is an automated service that allows Ohioans to track the status of offenders in state or county custody. The Attorney General's Office and Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association make Ohio's VINE program possible. To register, visit www.vinelink.com or call 800-770-0192.

Office directs federal and state grants that support service providers

The Attorney General's Office administers federal and state grants to victim service providers, including domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, victim/witness assistance programs, advocacy organizations for child victims, and similar government and nonprofit agencies.

The federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and State Victims Assistance Act (SVAA) grants are derived from court costs and fees. During the 2014-15 funding year, 280 providers throughout the state received VOCA and SVAA grants totaling more than \$18 million.

A Franklin County program assisting victims with hearing difficulties, a Hamilton County community victim advocate program, and a Vinton County victim advocates program working with homeless youth are among this year's newly funded organizations.

In 2014, the Attorney General's Office awarded nearly \$1 million in first-time money from Ohio's new Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund to 25 rape crisis centers that help sexual assault survivors around the state. The Attorney General's Office administers the fund, which was established as part of House Bill 108.

Grants expand sexual assault services

The Attorney General's Office has committed to adding services for survivors of sexual assault to underserved areas. In Perry and Meigs counties, expansion efforts directed toward Ohio University created a 24/7 local crisis hotline, and sexual assault prevention publications were made available in public libraries. HelpLine in Wyandot and Crawford counties now offers Sexual Assault Response Teams and trained advocacy services to local victims. Expansion funds flowing to Clinton County signaled that all counties originally identified as having few to no services for survivors of sexual assault now have services available.

The Attorney General's Office, in partnership with the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV) and selected sexual assault service providers, is determining core service availability to ensure that every victim has access regardless of where he or she lives.

The office is also engaged in efforts to reduce youth homelessness. During a symposium held in April 2014, homeless or formerly homeless youth shared personal stories, services to transition-age youth were discussed, and presentations and breakout sessions examined the issues related to the topic. The office will partner with several youth shelters to survey young people facing homelessness and find out about the victimization they experience.



Since announcing the Elder Justice Initiative, the Attorney General's Office has received more than **100** requests for assistance.

In May 2014, Attorney General DeWine launched an Elder Justice Initiative to increase the investigation and prosecution of elder abuse cases and improve victims' access to services. The Crime Victim Services Section spearheads the initiative, which also draws on the resources of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and the Consumer Protection, Health Care Fraud, and Special Prosecutions sections. The team helps local communities with investigations, forensic analysis, case presentation and prosecution, and training and technical assistance.

Since the initiative's announcement, the office has received more than 100 requests for assistance and has opened multiple criminal investigations. Most of the complaints involve financial exploitation of victims 60 years of age or older and losses range between \$2,000 and \$1 million.



Older adults at risk

1 in 9 older adults who participated in a recent U.S. Department of Justice study reported experiencing some form of mistreatment - financial, emotional, or physical.

Ringleader who scammed seniors sentenced to prison

The Attorney General's Economic Crimes Unit, in cooperation with the Ross County and Pickaway County sheriffs' offices, investigated Circleville resident Charles Kuhn Jr., who was the ringleader of a group that targeted elderly victims in Ross, Pickaway, and Hocking counties. The group operated a scheme in which they convinced their victims to loan them money with the promise of large returns on their "investments." Kuhn pleaded guilty to charges of engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity and was sentenced to eight years in prison.

Nursing supervisor convicted of attempted neglect of elderly patient

After the Attorney General's Health Care Fraud Section determined that a patient was seriously hurt when the driver of a care facility's van she was riding in swerved to avoid hitting a deer, nursing supervisor Kathy Schwaben was found guilty of attempted patient neglect. The victim, who had not been secured in the seat of her wheelchair by a lap or shoulder restraint, was thrown from her wheelchair and sustained several fractures. After the crash, authorities said the 81-year-old victim did not receive medical treatment because Schwaben failed to perform a physical assessment of the woman.

Preble County attorney found guilty of theft from elderly and disabled adults

After the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) found that he took more than \$208,000 from four victims' bank accounts between 2007 and 2013, Brookville attorney James Thomas Jr. was found guilty of stealing money from several elderly and disabled individuals while working as the guardian of their estates. The victims - all Preble County residents - ranged in age from 41 to 72. Thomas was sentenced to 4.5 years in prison and ordered to pay \$208,094.65 in restitution to the victims.

The case was prosecuted by Attorney General DeWine's Special Prosecutions Section; investigators with the Preble County Sheriff's Office assisted BCI with the investigation.

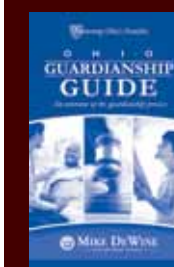
Franklin County attorney indicted for theft from an elderly person

After an investigation by agents of the Attorney General's Health Care Fraud Section and BCI, a Franklin County Grand Jury indicted Paul Kormanik on two felony counts of Theft from an Elderly Person or Disabled Adult. The Columbus attorney was accused of improperly transferring more than \$40,000 into his personal account from the bank accounts of two wards after their deaths. Kormanik was the court-appointed legal guardian for the wards.

Guide clarifies guardianship responsibilities

The Attorney General's Office compiled and distributed a new, user-friendly Guardianship Guide to better equip individuals to serve as guardians or protect relatives under guardianship. Copies of the guide were mailed to Probate Courts across the state and to advocacy groups, such as the Ohio Area Agencies on Aging and Disability Rights Ohio.

The Attorney General's Office prepared the Guardianship Guide with input from Disability Rights Ohio, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Department, the Ohio Department of Aging, State Representative Dorothy Pelanda, Trumbull County Probate Judge Thomas A. Swift, and the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging.



A quick guide to guardianship

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, State Senator Shannon Jones, and State Representative Dorothy Pelanda introduced The Ohio Guardianship Guide. People placed in guardianship are especially vulnerable. This resource familiarizes interested parties with the role of guardians, the extent of their authority, and the rights the ward continues to maintain. Copies are available at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/guardianshipguide.



PROTECTING CONSUMERS

Protecting Ohio's Families

More than **1,300** complaints were fielded by the Attorney General's Identity Theft Unit in 2014.

To protect consumers, the Attorney General fights fraud and unfair business practices, helps to resolve consumer complaints, enforces consumer protection laws, helps people who have been harmed by identity theft, and investigates and prosecutes cases.

Investigations protect consumer interests

The Consumer Protection Section opened 350 investigations in 2014. It filed 41 lawsuits for unfair, deceptive, or unconscionable business practices, while it obtained 58 judgments and compliance agreements valued at more than \$8.1 million.

Ohio reached a settlement with a Web-based Cincinnati business that offers change-of-address services. After finding Change-My-Address.com/Change-of-Address.us through online searches, consumers would click on the company website, thinking they were going to the United States Postal Service (USPS) change-of-address service. Consumers then completed their change of address information online, unaware they were signing up for the company's service at a cost of \$19.95-\$29.95 – the same service USPS provides for \$1. The company was ordered to make new disclosure requirements on its website and establish a \$3 million national refund pool. As many as 16,000 consumers in Ohio, with others nationwide, were entitled to refunds from the business.

Misleading advertising and billing practices claims were resolved by an Ohio-led multistate \$3.8 million settlement with Sirius XM satellite radio. Sirius XM will make significant changes to its business practices regarding cancellations and automatic renewals and will provide restitution to eligible consumers. Ohio's share of the overall payment to the states is \$322,000.

Pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline, LLC's marketing of its drugs Advair, Paxil, and Wellbutrin led to a \$105 million settlement with Ohio and 44 other states. Glaxo-SmithKline (GSK) addressed allegations that it unlawfully promoted the benefits of the drugs and provided improper financial incentives to sales representatives marketing the drugs. The settlement required GSK to reform its marketing and promotional practices. Ohio's share of the settlement was more than \$2.8 million.

Making sure consumers get what they pay for led to an agreement with Ohio Mulch Supply Inc. resolving allegations that some bags of mulch were coming up short. The Ohio Department of Agriculture tested random bags between March and May of 2014 and found that some did not measure as labeled. Ohio Mulch will be issuing rebate coupons for one, free 2-cubic-foot bag of mulch.

Attorney General DeWine's office also investigated claims of price gouging of bottled water during the August 2014

Toledo water ban, when residents were told not to use or drink city water. Attorney General staff conducted site visits, interviewed consumers, and examined hundreds of documents as part of the investigation, which continued through the end of 2014.

Attorney General cracks down on scammers

Attorney General DeWine's Economic Crimes Unit helps county prosecutors and local law enforcement investigate and prosecute economic crimes. Investigations have led to 117 indictments and 93 convictions since the unit was created, with 32 indictments and 27 convictions in 2014 alone.

Two of the unit's biggest cases in 2014 involved a theft ring and a "sweetheart scam," both of which targeted elderly victims.

Attorney General DeWine's office got guilty pleas from the ring leader and six others in a multi-county scam that stole about \$400,000 from at least six elderly victims in a three-year period. The thieves convinced the victims to loan them money, with the false promise of hefty returns. The seven scammers pled guilty to engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, theft, telecommunications fraud, and conspiracy.

A Maryland man charged with defrauding elderly individuals of more than \$1.1 million in a "sweetheart scam" was indicted, thanks to the work of the unit. One of the victims was an Ohioan who reported losing hundreds of thousands of dollars. The scam: Con artists searched online dating websites to initiate romantic relationships with elderly men and women in order to take their money. The defendant was indicted on conspiracy, mail fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering charges.



Resources for consumers

The Attorney General's Office provides a wide range of resources and information for consumers. To file a consumer complaint, research past complaints, request a consumer awareness workshop, and find other resources, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Consumer.



Services help repair damage of identity theft

Identity theft damage can linger for years, causing victims' credit reports and financial lives to suffer. Identity theft for the first time made it onto the top 10 consumer complaints list for 2014. The Attorney General's Office helps victims repair the damage and move forward.

Established in 2012, the Identity Theft Unit has worked on more than 2,160 identity theft complaints. In 2014, the unit received 1,342 complaints and helped victims eliminate more than \$190,000 in fraudulent charges. In one case, the unit resolved a \$10,000 fraudulent account for an active-duty military member stationed in the United Kingdom. The unit also resolved 35 complaints for minors in foster care, a group particularly vulnerable to this crime.

The Identity Theft Unit offers two programs. In the traditional assistance program, advocates work on behalf of victims to contact credit reporting agencies, creditors, collectors, and others that may have information resulting from fraudulent circumstances. Under the self-help option, the office provides identity theft victims with a step-by-step guide explaining how to resolve problems. A consumer advocate is available to assist as needed.

Activities raise consumers' awareness

The Consumer Protection Section's Education Unit informs Ohioans about their rights as consumers and warns them about scams. The staff conducted more than 200 workshops and offered information at various events, including Attorney General Mike DeWine's 2014 Law Enforcement Conference.



Using grant funding awarded to the section, the office designed and successfully implemented the Senior Advocate Fraud Education (SAFE) program. At the core of the SAFE program is a new presentation about fraud targeting seniors, including a SAFE Toolkit. The toolkit includes spiral-bound written material and an audio/video

DVD with an hour-long narrated slide presentation. The section distributed SAFE Toolkits to every public library in Ohio, about 700 locations.

Attorney General DeWine personally promoted the SAFE program, delivering the toolkits to several libraries across the state. The SAFE program was often featured in local media, increasing public awareness about senior fraud and the help available through the SAFE Toolkits.

2014 TAKE ACTION VIDEO CONTEST



'Action!'

Teams or individuals from 53 Ohio high schools submitted 214 videos to the Attorney General's sixth annual Take Action Video Contest to raise awareness of Internet safety. The contest awarded a total of \$5,000 in college scholarships to the top three teams or individuals who submitted a 60-second video on Internet safety. Overall, 366 students participated in the contest. View the videos at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/TakeActionContest.

Top 10 consumer complaints



Staff members fielded 28,000 consumer complaints in 2014. Complaint specialists contact the businesses involved to address the complaints and, if necessary, work to bring them into compliance with Ohio law.

The year's top 10 complaint-generating areas were:

1. Motor vehicles
2. Collections, credit reporting, or financial services
3. Household goods or property improvement
4. Internet, phone, or TV services
5. Professional services
6. Shopping, food, or beverages
7. Do Not Call violations
8. Identity theft
9. Health and beauty
10. Utilities

Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/ConsumerComplaint or call 800-282-0515 if the Attorney General's Office can assist you with a consumer issue.



Dispute resolution service aids thousands

The Attorney General’s Office fielded more than 28,000 complaints in 2014, and complaint specialists worked with individuals, businesses, and nonprofits in resolving differences through an informal dispute resolution service. Many participants were able to get their money back, receive goods or services they paid for, or reach some other favorable agreement. More than \$2 million was returned or adjusted.

In one instance, the floor a Monroe County consumer paid for was peeling up within a year of installation. The company refused to come out to inspect the problem – until the consumer filed her complaint. Within days of the office’s intervention, the company corrected the issue and the consumer was very pleased: “They came right out and fixed everything perfect. Without your help, they would never have even returned a call to me. Thanks so much!”

A consumer in Mahoning County contacted the Attorney General’s Office after paying \$3,900 for asphalt repairs that turned out to be shoddy. The company’s contract did not comply with Ohio law and within three weeks of filing a complaint, the consumer received a full refund and was thankful for the speedy resolution.

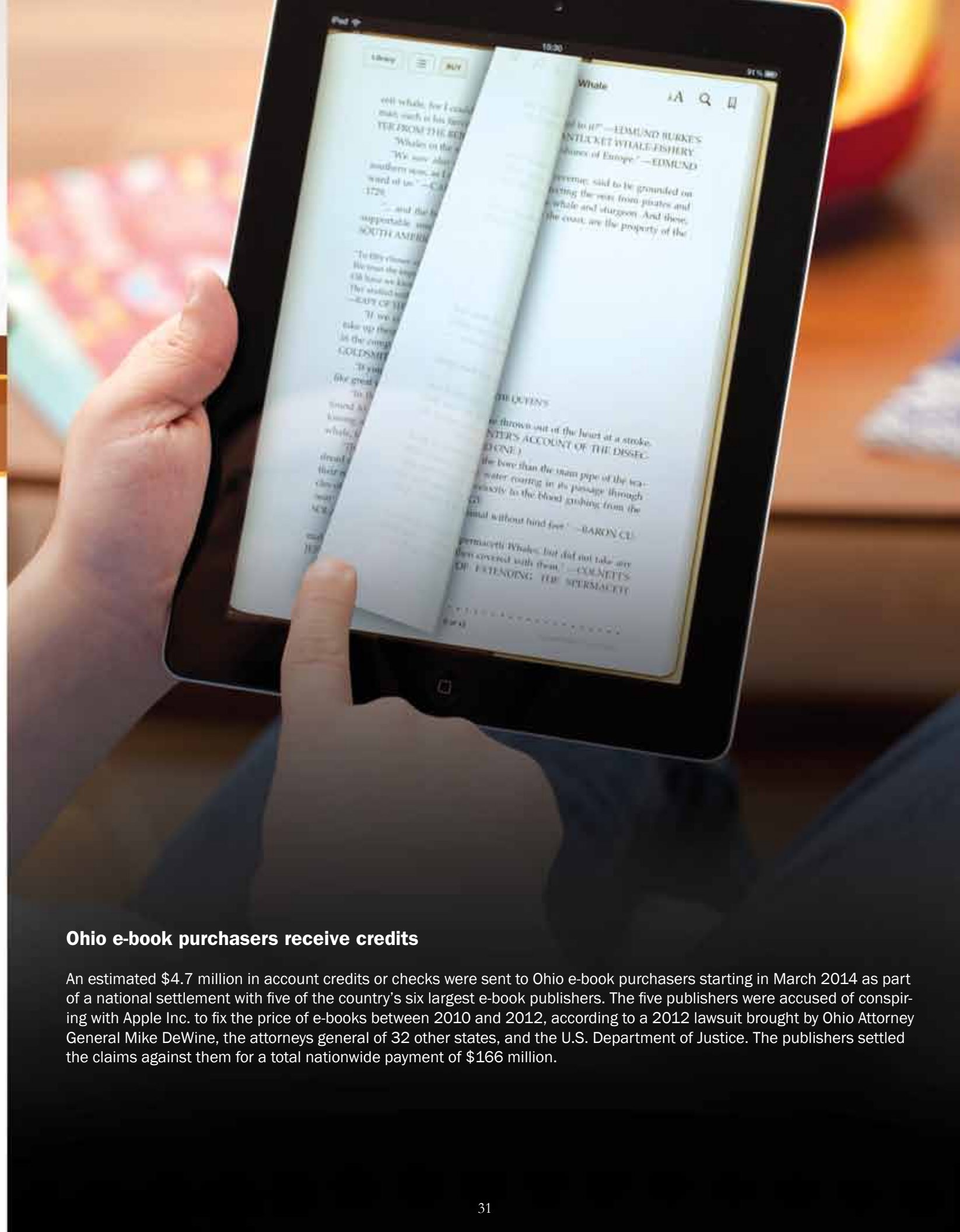
Protecting Ohioans’ charitable giving

Most Ohio charities abide by the law and use donations properly. However, that is not always the case. That’s what happened with Mansfield Tygers Bingo. The Ohio Attorney General’s Office investigated and prosecuted, resulting in a \$6.4 million jury verdict.

A Richland County jury listened to testimony in a case against Kendall Clemons, a bingo operator, who was alleged to have engaged in a pattern of acts that defrauded the Mansfield Tyger All Sports Booster Club, and a related sports scholarship fund that should have been used to assist student athletes. Verdict proceeds will be used to make the beneficiaries whole and also be directed toward four other charities that were harmed through Clemons’ activities with other groups’ bingo activities.

Six other defendants in the civil case who had been involved with the Boosters and its bingo operations reached a settlement to pay damages of \$926,250, which are in addition to the \$6.4 million verdict.

Clemons and her husband, William Clemons, were both incarcerated over criminal charges related to the bingo operations.



Ohio e-book purchasers receive credits

An estimated \$4.7 million in account credits or checks were sent to Ohio e-book purchasers starting in March 2014 as part of a national settlement with five of the country’s six largest e-book publishers. The five publishers were accused of conspiring with Apple Inc. to fix the price of e-books between 2010 and 2012, according to a 2012 lawsuit brought by Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, the attorneys general of 32 other states, and the U.S. Department of Justice. The publishers settled the claims against them for a total nationwide payment of \$166 million.



Counties have received **\$75 million** in grants from the Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward program to help revitalize properties.

Efforts help communities, families rebound

The mortgage foreclosure crisis left many Ohio cities fighting a blight of deteriorating properties. To steer these communities back to the path toward economic vitality, Attorney General DeWine initiated the Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program.

The \$75 million grant program, which concluded December 31, 2014, helped pay for the demolition of declining properties. It was funded through Ohio's share of a national settlement related to unacceptable loan practices attorneys general reached with the five largest mortgage service providers.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office reimbursed counties \$75 million for demolition expenses. Counties contributed more than \$44 million for demolitions. This cooperation led to removing more than 14,600 residential units. These efforts were intended to remove blighted properties and make the property more productive, help increase community property values, and remove structures that posed a danger as a fire hazard, location for criminal activity, or physical injury threat.

The Mahoning County Land Bank, Austintown Township, and Habitat for Humanity of Mahoning County demolished a blighted property in Austintown and built a new, ADA-accessible house for a retired Marine and his family.

Construction is almost complete on 40 homes for low-income residents after the Lucas County Land Bank used Moving Ohio Forward funds to demolish abandoned properties throughout Toledo's Old Towne neighborhood. The land was then acquired by NeighborWorks Toledo Region as part of its larger Cherry Legacy Homes project.

Mansfield responded to 21 police and fire calls at 102 Raymond Avenue between February 2010 and August 2011. Thanks to the program, the city demolished the derelict property and helped stop the health and safety threats it created.

The national mortgage settlement also provided Ohioans with more than \$526 million in various forms of relief. Nearly 10,042 borrowers received an average of \$38,100 through mortgage modifications or debt forgiveness. More than 2,700 Ohio borrowers obtained an average interest rate reduction of 2.95 percent on their mortgages, exceeding the national average. The ability to refinance is saving these 2,700 Ohioans about \$77 million over the life of the loans. About 33,576 borrowers who were foreclosed between 2008 and 2011 received cash payments of \$1,480, totaling almost \$50 million.

Attorney General DeWine continues to pursue mortgage servicers who harmed Ohioans with abusive loan-servicing practices. For example, Ocwen Financial Corp. agreed to provide \$2 billion in principal reductions to those who owe more than their properties' value, and \$125 million cash

payments to nearly 185,000 foreclosed borrowers of Ocwen, Litton Loan, or Homeward Residential Holdings. In Ohio, Ocwen will provide an estimated \$37.7 million in first-lien principal reductions, and 6,630 loans will be eligible to receive a cash payment.

SunTrust agreed to provide \$500 million in loan modifications and \$40 million in cash payments to borrowers foreclosed on from 2008 to 2013. Ohio borrowers will receive an estimated \$1.8 million in loan modifications or other relief, and 800 borrowers are eligible for a direct cash payment from a pool of \$644,000.

Remaining settlement funds allowed for the provision of some grants to programs designed to enhance safety and help families and youth with housing-related issues. For example, Ohio's legal aid societies are sharing a 2012 grant of \$4 million to assist families with foreclosure issues. Through August 2014, the societies assisted nearly 23,000 families through the grant, including 9,938 seniors, 7,220 disabled residents, 3,040 veterans, and 1,521 victims of domestic violence. More than 1,230 children were able to remain in their homes. The societies reported saving 955 homes from foreclosure, preserving \$2.7 million in home value.

When an Ohio man became disabled after an organ transplant, he and his wife faced losing their home. The local legal aid society stopped the auction of their home, helped with a Save the Dream application, and handled negotiations with the couple's mortgage servicer.

An 80-year-old Ohio homeowner in poor health was solicited by a debt settlement company that promised to cut her debt in half and negotiate with her creditors. The company failed to deliver and a creditor sued the homeowner. The Legal Aid Society of Columbus got the action dismissed. Legal Aid also recovered the money paid to the debt settlement company, and negotiated a reduction in her other debt.

Services benefit small businesses

Just as it works to protect consumers, the Attorney General's Office helps protect small businesses and others from fraud, scams, deceptive behavior, and unfair business practices. The same dispute resolution services offered to consumers are also available to small businesses and nonprofits. In 2014, the office received 1,179 complaints and helped adjust, recover, or save almost \$77,000 for small businesses and nonprofits.

Resources for businesses
 A business guide and other resources are at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Business.



FIGHTING HEALTH CARE FRAUD

Protecting Ohio's Families

Recoveries of **\$23.5 million** were made by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, along with a record **163** indictments.

Medicaid Fraud Control Unit tops nation

Attorney General DeWine's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit ranked first in criminal convictions and second in criminal indictments among all such units nationwide in federal fiscal year 2013. News of the top ranking came in 2014, during which the unit processed 960 complaints, posting 163 indictments (a new record for the unit), 142 convictions, and 35 civil settlements. Recoveries totaled \$23.5 million. Significant 2014 Medicaid fraud cases included:

- Extencare Health Services, Inc. paid \$28 million to settle claims that it failed to provide proper care at its nursing homes. Extencare was alleged to have failed to adequately staff its nursing homes, leading to the failures of care. The settlement applied to 33 Extencare facilities, six of which are in Ohio.
- Awad Hassan and Raghida Halaoui, the husband-and-wife owners of Healthcare Transportation LLC, a Reynoldsburg ambulette (wheelchair van) provider, were convicted of Medicaid fraud. Hassan was sentenced to serve three years in prison, and Halaoui received a three year suspended sentence. The couple was ordered to pay \$791,000 in restitution to the Medicaid program. The Attorney General's investigation found that the couple billed Medicaid for ambulette services that Hassan was not legally allowed to provide due to a previous conviction.

tion. Despite his exclusion from participation in federally funded healthcare programs, investigators found that Hassan participated in the management of the company, ostensibly owned and operated exclusively by Halaoui. The pair also billed the Medicaid program for ambulette services they never provided.

- Beth Stein, the office manager for the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky office of Compass Healthcare Inc., a durable medical equipment provider, was convicted of Health Care Fraud and Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud, and was sentenced to serve one year and one day in prison. Stein was ordered to pay \$199,155 in restitution to Medicaid, Medicare, Anthem BlueCross BlueShield, and Humana. The Attorney General's investigation found that Stein billed Medicaid for compression stockings that were never delivered, and billed for more expensive "custom" stockings, while actually providing only off-the-shelf stockings. In addition, Stein forged physician prescriptions and "Certificates of Medical Necessity" to support her false claims.
- Antwain and Temeca Hamilton, the husband-and-wife owners of Star Medical Transportation, a Maple Heights ambulette (wheelchair van) provider, were convicted of Health Care Fraud. Antwain Hamilton was sentenced to serve 30 months in prison, and Temeca

Hamilton, who was also convicted of Witness Tampering, was sentenced to serve 33 months in prison. The couple was ordered to pay \$823,283 in restitution to the Medicaid program. The Attorney General's investigation found that the couple billed for the transportation of ambulatory consumers, in violation of Medicaid rules and their provider agreement. In addition, they billed for transportation services they never provided, mileage they never logged, and the services of attendants who were not present during the transports. The Hamiltons were the company's only employees, and they billed for transportation services allegedly rendered while they were vacationing in Hawaii, Myrtle Beach, Cancun, and elsewhere.

Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit fights for workers and taxpayers

Attorney General DeWine's Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit processed 180 complaints, posting 113 indictments and securing 83 convictions. Recoveries totaled \$1.7 million. Significant 2014 Workers' Compensation fraud cases included:

- Buddy Long of Lancaster was convicted of workers' compensation fraud, and was sentenced to serve 17 months in jail (suspended) and five years of community control. In addition, he was ordered to pay restitution to the Bureau of Workers' Compensation in the amount of \$165,358. Long was collecting workers' compensation benefits as a totally disabled person, while also working as a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning technician.

To report fraud and abuse

To report possible Medicaid fraud or patient abuse in a care facility, call **800-282-0515** or visit **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/ReportMedicaidFraud** or **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/ReportPatientAbuse**.



REPRESENTING OHIO

Protecting Ohio's Families

Nearly **\$478 million** of debt owed to a variety of state agencies was recovered by the Attorney General's Office in 2014.

The Attorney General's Office defends the interests of Ohio's citizens and the many agencies, offices, boards, and commissions that are part of state government. This effort ranges from cases in county common pleas courts to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Protecting Ohioans' civil rights

The Attorney General's Office Civil Rights Section, with the U.S. Department of Justice, prosecuted a housing discrimination case against an apartment complex in Stark County. Former apartment managers testified that they were trained to only permit a certain number of African-American tenants to live in the complex, and to restrict families with children to first-floor or basement apartments. The case eventually settled, with the court ordering the defendants to pay approximately \$850,000 in damages and fees.

In another case, a property manager retaliated against three female tenants by hand-delivering eviction notices to them within hours of their sexual harassment complaint against a maintenance man of the property. One of the women complained that the maintenance man entered her apartment and walked into her bedroom while she was sleeping. The case settled for \$90,000 and the maintenance man was dismissed.

To arrange civil rights training

The Attorney General's Office conducts free training for employers, human resources professionals, landlords, condominium associations, and small businesses throughout Ohio to promote compliance with fair employment and fair housing laws. To arrange for training, call **614-466-7900**. For additional resources related to civil rights laws or issues, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/CivilRights.

Sunshine Laws keep Ohioans informed

The Public Records Unit within the Ohio Attorney General's Office developed eight short videos aimed at helping elected officials, public employees, media representatives, and citizens learn more about the state's Sunshine Laws regarding public records and meetings. They are available for viewing on the Attorney General's website.

These laws also require every elected official in Ohio to attend public records training once every term of office; 14 of these trainings in all corners of the state were conducted, drawing nearly 1,200.

Collecting payments owed to state agencies

The Ohio Attorney General's Office is tasked with collecting debt owed to state agencies, including state colleges and universities. The Collections Enforcement Section recovered \$477,696,975. This includes \$1.8 million collected for local governments through a voluntary program initiated in 2012.

Caring for the environment

The Attorney General's Environmental Enforcement Section investigates and prosecutes those who break environmental laws, and represents state agencies that safeguard Ohio's natural resources. In 2014, the Attorney General's Office filed dozens of enforcement cases in state and federal courts. These cases included enforcing laws protecting our air and water and regulations guiding the proper disposal of waste. The section obtained judgments requiring the payment of more than \$11 million in fines, penalties, or restitution for environmental violations, and also collected more than \$1.4 million from previously ordered fines and penalties.

- For example, in 2014, Mahoning County resident Ben Lupo and his business were investigated and prosecuted for dumping into the Mahoning River brine from oil and gas well drilling. He was sentenced to two years of incarceration and a \$25,000 fine.

- In another case, a suit was filed to force a Toledo-area construction and demolition debris landfill to make a \$400,000 upgrade to its operations and insure that an underground fire was extinguished. The company was also ordered to pay \$230,000 in penalties for past violations.
- A Temporary Restraining Order was obtained against a Wapakoneta business that was intermittently releasing clouds of toxic gases over nearby residents and businesses from its chemical handling and storage operations. The company must fix the problem before it operates again.

Helping to maintain the integrity of Ohio's education system

When educators do not meet professional obligations to their students, school districts, and communities, the Ohio Attorney General's Education Section undertakes efforts to revoke or suspend their teaching licenses. Informing its college and university clients is also a priority, such as the training provided to address obligations under Title IX in responding to allegations of sexual assault.



Defending Ohio laws

The Executive Agencies Section represents dozens of state boards and departments, including their ability to enforce laws passed by the legislature.

The Tobacco Enforcement Unit works with the Ohio Attorney General's Collections Section and the liquor unit of the Charitable Section. When the Division of Liquor Control did not renew the liquor permits of numerous establishments that had accrued Smoke Free Act violations, two of them appealed. The non-renewals were upheld after various commission hearings and court actions. Several other bars entered settlements with the Attorney General and the Ohio Department of Health to pay their fines and enforce the Smoke Free Act to avoid losing their liquor permits.

Another case of note in 2014 involved a ruling in favor of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, represented by the Ohio Attorney General's Office, regarding Ohio's Dangerous Wild Animal Law. Owners of exotic animals challenged the constitutionality of the law. But the Sixth Circuit upheld a District Court ruling that the law does not violate the First Amendment because it does not compel exotic animal owners to associate with any organizations or subsidize speech, and does not result in any governmental taking of private property.

Favorable resolution of disputed injured worker claims

The Workers' Compensation Section represents the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation and the Industrial Commission of Ohio, and works directly with both agencies to resolve workers' compensation appeals. Opposing counsel are encouraged to schedule in-house settlement conferences to resolve cases during the early stages of litigation to conserve resources and streamline the process when possible. In 2014, the settlement rate for these conferences held around the state ranged as high as 80 percent.

Regulation of utilities and costs to consumers

Customers of one utility saved about \$42 million when the Attorney General's Public Utilities Section successfully defended a Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) decision that disallowed improper fuel-related costs to be passed to consumers. It also successfully challenged the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in a matter related to potentially hundreds of millions of dollars in costs to Midwest states, such as Ohio, for power grid upgrades that would primarily benefit eastern states.

Improving travel safety in Ohio

The Attorney General's Transportation Section assisted the Ohio Department of Transportation in acquiring the right of way for several important highway construction or improvement projects in 2014. Its efforts helped facilitate the I-270/U.S. Route 23/State Route 315 corridor improvement project, also known as the North Side Fix, the Cleveland I-90 Innerbelt and George V. Voinovich Bridge projects, and the new Portsmouth By-Pass, allowing these multimillion-dollar construction projects to move ahead.

Enforcing wage laws and protecting workers

The Attorney General's Labor Relations Section represents the Ohio Department of Commerce Bureau of Wage and Hour Administration and the State Employment Relations Board. In one case in 2014, a local government employee filed a grievance and found her work hours cut. While representing the State Employment Relations Board, Labor Relations attorneys successfully prosecuted an unfair labor practice charge. The employer restored the employee's hours and paid her more than \$50,000 in back pay and benefits.

Representing state agencies

The Attorney General's Employment Law Section prevailed in numerous cases brought against Ohio in federal courts, state courts, and various administrative boards.

In one case, the Attorney General's Office successfully defended the Bureau of Workers' Compensation through several appeals against an employee who claimed "whistleblower" status regarding information sent in an email. However, the appellate court ruled that the email did not allege a criminal violation and so the legal definition of whistleblower did not apply. A further appeal by the employee to the Ohio Supreme Court was answered with a filing by the Attorney General's Office, and the court declined to accept the case.

Providing future attorneys insight into public service

The Attorney General's Office Public Service Mock Trial Competition offers law students practical insight into a public sector legal career. About 40 second- and third-year students from eight Ohio law schools took part in the second annual two-day competition, presenting both sides of mock marketing fraud cases. The Attorney General's Court of Claims Defense Section organized the competition, arranging for judges to judge the competition and fellow staff members, prosecutors, city solicitors, and law directors from across the state to coach participating students on a weekly basis over the course of several months. The 2014 winning team was from the University of Akron Law School.

by the Numbers 2014

420,000 *D.A.R.E.*

The approximate number of students who participated in the D.A.R.E. program.



\$2 million

returned or adjusted to consumers, businesses, and nonprofits through the Attorney General's informal dispute resolution service.

38,085

Cases that BCI completed overall. They assisted 925 law enforcement agencies.

11 The number of community forums held across the state by Attorney General DeWine's office to raise awareness of the heroin epidemic.



1,600

Total public records requests.

113 indictments posted by the Attorney General's Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit. Recoveries totaled \$1.7 million.



6,543

Officers enrolled in the 206 regional trainings offered by OPOTA's Mobile Academy.

277,259

criminal offender prints entered by BCI into the Automated Fingerprint Identification System.



15,461 online inquiries were made to the Ohio Attorney General's Constituent Services section

14,600

The number of blighted residential units removed with demolition expenses reimbursed to counties by the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward" program.

7

The number of new Boys and Girls Clubs sites created with grant funding from the Attorney General's Office. The clubs serve as a safe place for children to learn after school.

\$11 million

In fines, penalties, or restitution for environmental violations obtained by the Environmental Enforcement section.

\$42 million



what customers of one utility saved when the Public Utilities Section successfully defended a Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) decision that disallowed improper fuel-related costs to be passed to consumers.



459

The number of convictions made by Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission task forces.



FOR ASSISTANCE

The Ohio Attorney General's most frequently requested services:

Reach our Help Center

800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Contact

File a consumer complaint

800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/FileAComplaint

Submit a law enforcement tip

855-BCI-OHIO (855-224-6446)

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LETips

Report a scam

800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/ReportAScam

Pay a debt to the state

877-607-6400

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/PayOnline



Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine

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