

OHIO
Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost announces \$808 million opioid settlement agreement

OPIOID-CRISIS
Ohio reaches settlement agreement with opioid distributors, says state Attorney General Dave Yost

POLITICS
Ohio's largest public pension sues Facebook, saying the media giant misled investors

Opinion
Police defunding reversals suggest most of us want more police on our streets: Dave Yost

OHIO
Celebrating 100 years: Inside the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation

Ohio Politics
Ohio AG Dave Yost files lawsuit seeking to declare Google a public utility



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OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

HIGHLIGHTS

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LOCAL
Book is first to offer investigating police critical incidents



Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost sues feds over new deportation policy

Government & Politics
Ohio reaches \$88.3 million settlement with Centene in healthcare lawsuit

LOCAL
Largest human trafficking sting in Ohio history nets 161, including politician, firefighter

Ohio Sues Biden Administration Over U.S. Census Data

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost sues feds over restrictions on coronavirus relief aid

Dave Yost among 44 attorneys general urging Facebook to end 'Instagram for kids' proposal





My Fellow Ohioans,

At the Ohio Attorney General's Office, our motto is "Do Big Good." That means big good for our bosses, the people of Ohio.

Our agency has a staff distinguished by energy and talent, and some of the Big Good they did in 2021 is detailed in this report.

One example was pulling the plug on House Bill 6, a corrupt scheme to rip off Ohio electricity customers for billions of dollars. We went to court to block the law before ratepayers were gouged, then we froze the assets of one of those linked to the scheme to ensure that he could not profit from it.

After saving Ohio residents billions of dollars on their electricity bills, our office negotiated an \$808 million settlement with three of the biggest prescription opioid distributors that share responsibility for the opioid epidemic that has killed thousands of Ohioans. That money will go into a fund to provide relief to communities statewide for years to come.

In response to nationwide calls for more police accountability, a nationally known investigator in our Bureau of Criminal Identification put together a definitive guide to conducting investigations of officer-involved shootings. Following these best practices will ensure that such investigations are independent, thorough, expertly done and transparent.

We also increased the pressure on human traffickers throughout Ohio, arresting hundreds of sex buyers and bringing help to scores of victims of this destructive market.

Ohioans rely on this agency to right wrongs, protect the unprotected, and defend and enhance the quality of life throughout our state. This guide illustrates how we're fulfilling this mission.



Yours,

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General

MISSION STATEMENT

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE PROTECTS OHIO
AND ITS FAMILIES.



OUR ACTIONS ARE DRIVEN BY THEIR INTERESTS,
GUIDED BY THE RULE OF LAW
AND THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF JUSTICE.



WE WORK TO CONSTRAIN EVIL AND
EMPOWER GOOD, WITHOUT PARTISAN PREFERENCE
OR SUBJECTIVE JUDGMENT, AS DEFINED
BY THE LAW AND BY THE CONSTITUTIONS OF
THE UNITED STATES AND OHIO.

2021

A year of big wins

Despite the obstacles that persisted along with the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the staff of the Ohio Attorney General's Office (AGO) continued to adjust, logging numerous successes in fulfilling Dave Yost's mission of protecting the unprotected and, as the attorney general is fond of saying, "doing Big Good" for the state. Among the office's many highlights in 2021, Attorney General Yost took action against corporations looking to make money by cheating the public, stood up to federal intrusions on Ohio's sovereign authority, and diligently supported both the state's crime victims and its hardworking safety forces. More specifically, the attorney general:

- ★ Saved Ohio consumers \$2 billion via lawsuits he filed after the House Bill 6 scandal broke.
- ★ Brought Ohio communities together to secure an \$808 million settlement with three of the largest distributors of opioids. The money will help local communities statewide recover from the crisis and fight addiction.
- ★ Filed lawsuits against the federal government to fight unconstitutional COVID-19 vaccination mandates, prevent federal money from funding abortions, and preserve state authority in taxation and public health.
- ★ Began posting online full investigations of officer-involved shootings that were fatal and were prosecuted by the AGO — for complete transparency.
- ★ Sued health-care giant Centene Corp. over pharmacy benefit management schemes used to reap millions of dollars in overpayments from the Ohio Department of Medicaid. The action led to an \$88.3 million settlement.

These and other AGO successes of 2021 are revisited on the pages that follow.

Ohio AGO has wide reach, deep roots

Ohio's Attorney General is the chief law officer for the state, and the office has a proud history stretching back to 1846. Some facts:

- ★ About 1,490 people work for the Ohio Attorney General's Office in 10 locations throughout the state.
- ★ The office consists of roughly 30 "sections." Based on number of employees, the largest are the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), Collections Enforcement and Health Care Fraud. **See more details about the sections on Pages 22-24.**
- ★ Every month, as many as 286,000 people visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov to find background-check locations, search the database of missing Ohioans, pay debts owed to the state and seek help with consumer protection issues, among many other services and guidance provided by the agency.

Attorney General saves Ohioans nearly \$2B in FirstEnergy case

In the late 2010s, with cheap and abundant natural gas providing formidable competition, FirstEnergy found itself in a bind with its expensive nuclear power plants. Complicating the situation, the federal government rescinded permission for the Akron-based company to pass those costs on to customers. Instead of innovating and adapting, FirstEnergy decided to pursue a "legislative solution," as the company's then-CEO innocuously described an audacious conspiracy. Impelled by greed and a river of FirstEnergy cash, then-Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder and other key players formed an "unholy alliance" to pass a law forcing Ohio residents to provide a huge financial windfall for the utility company. When indictments were issued, then-U.S. Attorney David DeVilliers said the case involved "likely Ohio's largest bribery and money-laundering scheme ever."

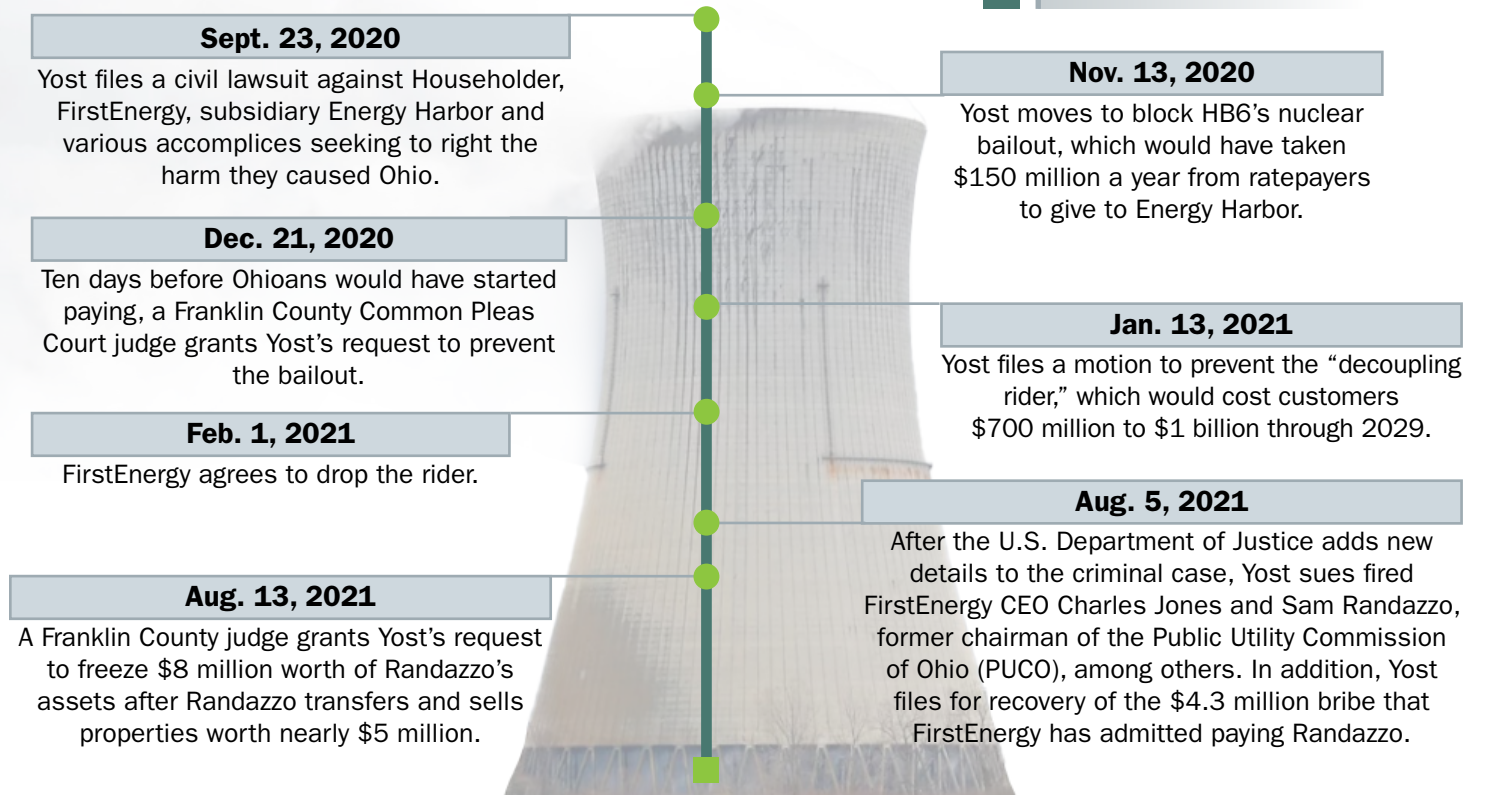
At the heart of the scheme was House Bill 6, which included a nuclear bailout funded by Ohio ratepayers to the tune of more than \$1 billion and a "decoupling" provision — called a rider — that would have seized even more of Ohioans' hard-earned money to ensure that, every year, FirstEnergy matched the record profits it made amid the wildly extreme weather of 2018.

After the scandal broke, Attorney General Yost immediately moved to protect the interests of Ohioans, preventing FirstEnergy from collecting billions from HB6.

DID YOU KNOW?

A scam that keeps on taking

Through a bankruptcy process, FirstEnergy spun off its unprofitable nuclear business as a standalone entity, using the promised HB6 bailout to make the new company, Energy Harbor, viable. Now, Energy Harbor and associated companies — which have far less money than FirstEnergy and are unable to raid ratepayers' pockets — will be responsible for decommissioning and environmental repair costs. When those exceed its ability to pay, Ohio, its ratepayers and taxpayers could be the ones footing the bill.



Yost unites Ohio to bring home \$808M settlement in opioid case

In mid-August, the clock was ticking down on Ohio’s chance to secure an \$808 million settlement from three of the largest distributors of prescription opioids, whose reckless actions had fueled the opioid crisis that had cost tens of thousands of Ohioans their lives.

The money was desperately needed to begin repairing the damage throughout Ohio, but the distributors — Cardinal Health, McKesson and AmerisourceBergen — would settle only if the majority of the state’s local governments agreed to the deal.

Yost issued an alert to local officials throughout the state that a historic opportunity hung in the balance.

“We need to put these resources to work in our local communities for treatment, prevention and education,” he said during an August press conference. “So every politician in the state needs to do the right thing. It’s ‘we’ time, not ‘me’ time.”

Ohio’s local governments heeded AG Yost’s call for unity. In fact, every local government litigant except one signed on to the OneOhio deal — and, now, settlement money is set to be distributed throughout the state every year for the next 18 years.

Between 2007 and 2020, 38,868 people in Ohio died of opioid overdoses.

ONEOHIO DETAILS

Under the OneOhio plan, the state’s settlement money will largely be distributed locally:

- 55%** to a foundation that benefits Ohio communities.
- 30%** for community recovery programs at the local level.
- 15%** to the state of Ohio.

These statistics underscore the human toll:

- From 2007 to 2020, **38,868 people in Ohio died** of an opioid overdose — or 2,776 Ohioans per year.
- The COVID-19 pandemic fueled a spike in fatal opioid overdoses, with **11.01 Ohioans per 100,000 dying** of such an overdose during the second quarter (Q2) of 2020. The previous high was 10.87 per 100,000, in the first quarter of 2017.
- The hardest-hit counties in Q2 of 2020:** Scioto (35.22 deaths per 100,000), Fayette (20.67) and Franklin (19.43)
- Overall in Q2 of 2020, **opioid overdose deaths increased in 67%** of Ohio’s 88 counties.
- Ohio’s **rate of opioid overdose deaths rose nearly 30% in 2020** from the year before.

Sources: Ohio Department of Health; Attorney General’s Scientific Committee on Opioid Prevention & Education (SCOPE)



DID YOU KNOW?

A previous opioid settlement

- In February, AG Yost settled with a consulting company that had profited by recklessly promoting the prescription opioids that fueled Ohio’s opioid death toll. McKinsey & Co. agreed to pay the state \$20 million in 2021 and \$4.7 million spread over the ensuing four years.

Synthetic fentanyl raises overdose risks

- In October, Central Ohio law enforcement seized a haul of drugs that turned out to be 4.4 pounds of fentanyl and 4.4 pounds of parafluorofentanyl, a chemical variant even more potent than fentanyl.
- AG Yost sent out an alert: The bulk seizure was a symptom of a growing problem discovered by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). From October 2020 through January 2021, the lab identified parafluorofentanyl in four drug seizures submitted to BCI by local authorities. By September 2021, the number of detections in evidence had risen dramatically — to 130 in September, 168 in October, 217 in November and 174 in December. The bureau has now identified parafluorofentanyl in evidence from 78 of Ohio’s 88 counties, and three additional counties with their own drug labs have likewise confirmed seeing it.
- Gathering such crucial information is part of the daily work at BCI, which takes part in a multistate system to identify new synthetic opioids. The bureau examines drugs submitted to the agency and shares the data so that labs throughout the country can quickly detect new drugs when they show up.

Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OpioidCrisis to learn more about the settlement.

Yost team places high priority on victim-informed policies

No one likes to arrest the victims of human trafficking. To access assistance programs offered by the criminal justice system, however, some victims may first need to be arrested for breaking prostitution or soliciting laws.

Some survivors say an arrest is the only thing that could have separated them from their trafficker — to allow them to get the help they needed to build a new life.

“Arresting isn’t the answer, but, for me, going to jail gave me some time to clear my thinking,” said Mandie Knight, a survivor who assisted with victim services during the “Ohio Knows” human-trafficking sting in September.

In 2017, Knight completed the Franklin County CATCH Court program — which helps human-trafficking survivors overcome addiction and learn the skills needed to get their life back on track — and now serves as a resource manager for Freedom a la Cart, a thriving catering company that trains and employs survivors of human trafficking. She is a wife and mother and a college student studying forensic criminology.

“Had I not been arrested, had I not gone to jail, and had I not suffered some consequences for the decisions I was making, I wouldn’t be here,” Knight said.

These days, when the Attorney General’s Office runs stings targeting “johns” through task forces formed by the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, advocates are on site to offer victims services, including a safe place for them to go.

Law enforcement officers usually have trauma-informed training, and they make clear that their intent is to assist victims, not punish them.

“It is critical to recognize that, for many survivors, the road that takes them to healing and sobriety leads through a non-traumatic arrest and an intensive program,” AG Yost said.

“Rightfully, there is debate on this issue,” he continued. “As a former prosecutor, a year ago I would have said arrests need to happen.

But as I’ve listened to advocates and gotten to know survivors who didn’t come through the system, I’ve realized that answers aren’t that simple. There are many roads to recovery.

There’s also more discussion to be had — which will yield more solutions. The AG’s Human Trafficking Initiative, consisting of experts in trafficking prosecutions and victim services, helps steer office policy and push for more effective laws, practices and services throughout Ohio.



LEFT: Operation Ohio Knows, one of several successful human trafficking stings coordinated through the AGO in 2021

BELOW: AG Yost and his counterpart in Kentucky, Daniel Cameron, going to bat for human trafficking victims



DID YOU KNOW?

Critical changes to justice system

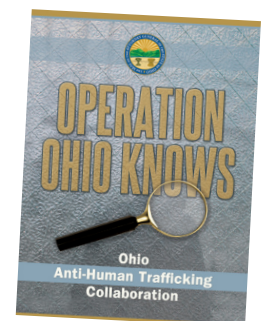
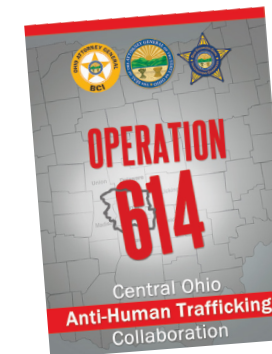
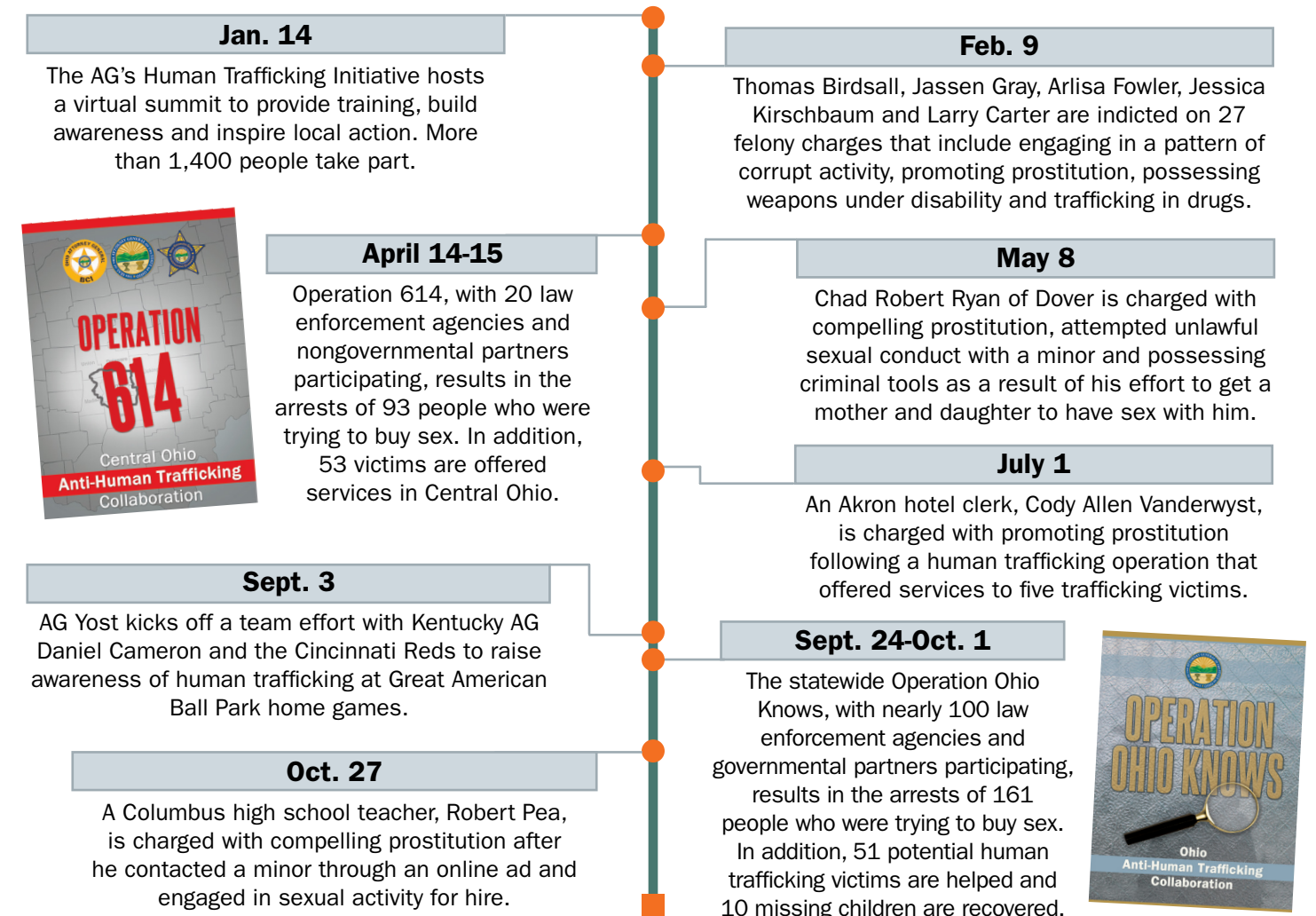
- A state law marking a victory in the fight against human trafficking took effect in April. The AG and his team pushed for two key measures: One separated the “soliciting” criminal charge so that “johns” face tougher punishment than “prostitutes,” including mandatory “john school,” where they learn how their participation in the illegal sex market leads to the exploitation and abuse of victims. The other granted 16- and 17-year-old trafficking victims the same legal protection that younger victims have.

Resources for parents

- AG Yost’s Human Trafficking Initiative put together handy guides to help parents navigate online risks and talk to their children about staying safe in cyberspace. Find them via the “Awareness publications” link at OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking.



A MEASURE OF 2021 PROGRESS IN THE HT FIGHT



Yost repeatedly moves to block federal government overreach

Under the U.S. Constitution, the federal government does not have the authority to do whatever it wants however it wants. And when the Biden administration overstepped its authority, AG Yost was there to stand up for Ohioans.

In November, for example, Yost sued the administration for trying to impose vaccine mandates on federal contractors and private employers with 100 employees or more.

“Ohioans are the experts on Ohio, and we should decide what laws work best for us,” Yost said. “It’s not just me saying that — the U.S. Constitution is a stickler for what powers are the states’ to enforce.”

Other instances in which AG Yost challenged the feds when they went too far:

REWRITE ON SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

Ohio and 17 other states filed suit after two agencies essentially rewrote federal law on sexual discrimination — a responsibility that belongs solely to Congress. To wit: The Department of Education unilaterally expanded Title IX to apply to sexual orientation and gender identity in schools, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission moved to mandate that employers adopt practices regarding pronouns, access to shared bathrooms and other such matters. To be clear, the Attorney General’s Office bars discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. But if the president wants similar prohibitions at the federal level, he must seek the approval of Congress.

‘MACHINE GUN’ DEFINITION

Ohio and 17 other states filed a brief in federal court to defend an earlier ruling that the Justice Department overstepped its authority in amending the definition of machine guns to include firearms with a bump stock attached.

BANK ACCOUNT INFO ACCESS

Ohio and 19 other states wrote the Treasury Department to oppose a proposed federal policy that would provide the federal government with access to nearly every American’s bank account and financial transaction information.



“Whether Ohio decides to tax its own citizens is not up to anyone but Ohio. That’s according to the U.S. Constitution. The separation of powers is real, and it exists for a reason.”

Attorney General
Dave Yost

ABORTION FUNDING REVERSAL

Abortion clinic rules eased by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) prompted AG Yost to sue in October 2021, and 11 other states joined his fight.

At issue: the decision by HHS to drop a requirement that federally funded family-planning clinics be physically and financially independent of abortion clinics and refrain from referring patients for abortions.

“Federal law prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion, and that law means nothing if the federal money isn’t kept separate,” said Yost, Ohio’s former state auditor. “You can’t ‘follow the money’ when all the money is dumped into one pot and mixed together.”

CENSUS DATA IN A TIMELY FASHION

When the U.S. Census Bureau announced that it couldn’t release population estimates until Sept. 30 — six months later than required by federal law — AG Yost recognized the ramifications.

A new constitutional amendment governing the state’s 10-year redistricting process had been passed by Ohio voters, and the measure included a strict schedule with a round of proposed legislative district maps due by Sept. 1.

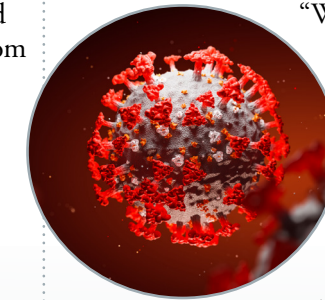
Because redistricting is based on the updated census data, the federal delay in providing that data conflicted with Ohio’s redistricting deadline.

“The people of Ohio have found ways to meet their responsibilities throughout the pandemic,” Yost said. “Why should the government create a double standard?”

The AG sued the Census Bureau in February to force it to meet its obligations, and the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals sided with him. The bureau turned over data on Aug. 12 — 49 days earlier than it had planned.

COVID FUNDS WITH A POISON PILL

In its final round of COVID-19 stimulus, the federal government offered Ohio \$5.4 billion in badly needed assistance with one massive condition: The state had to agree to unspecified limits on its power to cut taxes.



“Whether Ohio decides to tax its own citizens is not up to anyone but Ohio,” Yost said. “That’s according to the U.S. Constitution. The separation of powers is real, and it exists for a reason.”

The attorney general sought a preliminary injunction in March and, unsurprisingly, won the case.

“The Biden administration reached too far, seized too much and got its hand slapped,” Yost said. “This is a monumental win for Ohio and the Constitution.”

AUTO EMISSIONS RULES

In July 2021, AG Yost led a coalition of 16 states in urging the U.S. EPA to refrain from reinstating California’s Clean Air Act waiver, a permission that in essence allows California to dictate what cars everyone else in the country drives. This amounts to an unconstitutional delegation of federal authority.

Such a waiver, which allows California to set its own more-strict emissions rules, means automakers follow California rules in order to sell in the nation’s biggest state. But that drives up auto costs for everyone and gives the Golden State a right denied to all other states.

“This is not the United States of California,” Yost said. “Any necessary national standards should be set by the federal government.”



AG shares investigative files in officer-involved shootings

An officer-involved shooting can be traumatic for a community, especially if there is any question about the appropriateness of an officer's action. Attorney General Yost has stepped forward to ensure that Ohioans get access to the full story of what transpired and to guide law enforcement agencies through investigations featuring evidence-proven best practices.

"Police have power because the public gives it to them, so any time they use force on our behalf, justice requires that the resulting investigation be independent, complete and transparent," Yost said. "Pieces of information, out of context and isolated from other information, can easily lead reasonable people to a wrong conclusion."

That's why, when the Attorney General's Office prosecutes an officer-involved shooting that was fatal, the entire case file is posted online for anyone to see — for complete transparency. The posting could come after a grand jury finds no cause to issue an indictment, or an officer is indicted and either convicted or acquitted.

Full investigation files might include field reports, dispatch records, crime scene reports, laboratory results, officer interviews, autopsy reports, personnel files of the involved officers and any camera or video footage.

Although BCI doesn't investigate every police shooting in Ohio, it has agreements with some law enforcement agencies throughout the state to probe any police use of deadly force. Any agency, whether or not it has such an agreement, can request the bureau's assistance. For the sake of community trust and fairness, agencies are advised to avoid investigating their own.

The Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section also offers communities independent prosecutors for use in cases that may present conflicts of interest.

BCI has set the bar high nationally with its protocol for investigating officer-involved shootings. In 2021, **Special Agent Supervisor Mark Kollar's book** on the topic was published to help law enforcement agencies across Ohio navigate such critical incidents.

To order or download your book, go to www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/BestPractices.



AN OPEN BOOK ON CLOSED CASES

Case files posted online in 2021:

- ★ Vincent Belmonte, Cuyahoga County
- ★ Arthur Keith, Cuyahoga County

Case files whose release is pending disposition:

- ★ Andre Hill, Franklin County
- ★ Innes Lee, Cuyahoga County

To view case files, go to www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/InvestigativeDocuments.



The Akron Police Department receives the first-ever Star Academy certification, a program initiated in 2021 by Attorney General Yost. Holding the framed certificate is Akron Mayor Daniel Horrigan (in suit); to the left of Horrigan is Police Chief Steve Mylett.

OTHER NEW INITIATIVES

Star Academies: Started in November, this program certifies law enforcement basic-training academies that put extra effort into exceeding state standards. The goalposts, set by a panel of academy experts, aim to produce more effective officers and safer communities.

OPOTA Online: The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy introduced a new portal in June for online training. New courses focus on high-impact lessons on timely and crucial topics and are designed to make a bigger impact on online learners.

Stolen Gun Portal: This tool lets people considering buying a gun search its serial number in an online database listing weapons reported as stolen. The portal, launched in February, can help consumers make smart purchases and lead to the recovery of stolen firearms.

Portable Drug Analysis:

Handheld drug-testing devices were sent to three Ohio regions in October to provide quick identification of meth, cocaine and some types of pills. Speedier cases (which previously would have required a wait for lab results) benefit police, prosecutors and potential suspects.



"The Akron Police Department and Chief Steve Mylett are models of outstanding police work — and that starts with proper training. The Akron academy has earned this designation by going above and beyond the minimum requirements to ensure that officers receive the best training available."

Attorney General Dave Yost

— in announcing the first recipient of the AG's Star Academy designation

AG Yost cleans up after jail failures

Joseph Arquillo was a 47-year-old veteran who had gotten hooked on painkillers after his Navy career ended. He moved on to hard drugs and, on Aug. 28, 2018, was arrested for a parole violation — he had failed to charge the battery on his ankle monitor.

Arquillo was booked into the Cuyahoga County Jail, and, for the next nine hours, no one checked on him as he quietly suffered a fatal overdose on the floor of a community cell.

He was among eight inmates who, over a span of six months in 2018, died amid shockingly inhumane, abusive and unsanitary conditions at the Cuyahoga County Jail, a tragedy that underscores the irrevocable harm that can result when public officials lose sight of their obligation to safeguard those placed in their custody.

The jail was overcrowded and understaffed, and pleas for additional medical staff were turned down, as leaders sought to turn the jail into a money-making enterprise by housing inmates from surrounding jails.

AG Yost's team served as special prosecutors for multiple cases stemming from wrongdoing, culminating in the sentencing of former jail Director Kenneth Mills in October 2021. He received nine months in jail, the maximum, for falsification and dereliction of duty. In addition:

- ★ **Martin Devring**, ex-corrections officer, got 30 days for tampering with records and dereliction of duty in Arquillo's death.
- ★ **Stephen Thomas**, ex-corrections officer, got two years for felony bribery and theft in office.
- ★ **Marvella Sullivan**, ex-corrections officer, got 60 days and community service for attempted bribery and drug trafficking.
- ★ **Idris-Farid Clark**, ex-corrections officer, got 18 months for attempted felonious assault, extortion and unlawful restraint.
- ★ **Robert Marsh**, ex-corrections officer, got 30 days for assault.
- ★ **Nicholas Evans**, ex-corrections officer, got nine months for attempted felonious assault and tampering with evidence.
- ★ **Timothy Dugan**, ex-corrections officer, got 10 days for attempted abduction and assault.
- ★ **Eric Ivey**, ex-jail warden, got community control for obstructing justice and falsification.
- ★ **John Wilson**, ex-corrections officer, got three years of probation for assault.



DID YOU KNOW?

More problems, more action

The work of AG Yost to protect the public and force corrupt officials out of office goes beyond the Cuyahoga County Jail. In other cases in 2021, the Attorney General's Office:

Took action against:

- **Wapakoneta Mayor Thomas Stinebaugh**, who was indicted on public corruption charges related to business dealings conducted while in office.
- **Former Scioto County corrections officer Billy Thompson**, who was indicted on felony charges stemming from his role in the death of a jail inmate.

Won the convictions of:

- **Marion County Common Pleas Judge Jason Warner and his wife, Julia Warner**, who were each sentenced to two years in prison after they left the scene of a car crash that injured a 19-year-old man.


Initiated suspension proceedings against:

- **Kenneth Johnson, a Cleveland City Council member** who went on to be convicted of stealing from local and federal government and was sentenced to six years in prison.

1 JANUARY
The AG settles a case involving Healing Heroes, a charity that collected more than \$500,000 from Ohioans who wanted to help veterans. Very little of the money collected, however, was used to help veterans. The settlement requires the Florida founders to pay penalties and permanently leave the charitable sector.

2 FEBRUARY
Together with Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael O'Malley, Yost announces a second indictment related to a Cleveland theft ring. John Harrison, Joseph Adams, Dwayne D. Robertson and Jason Jachna face a total of 50 felony charges, including drug trafficking, theft, grand theft, receiving stolen property, breaking and entering, and vandalism.

3 MARCH
The AG helps shut down a robocall outfit that collected \$110 million "for veterans, children and first responders." In truth, Associated Community Services kept 90% of the money and harassed people to get it. Five hundred of the unluckiest were called 5,000 times each.



4 APRIL
Waste hauler Donald W. Combs of Milford is ordered to pay \$1.5 million in civil penalties in a case brought by the AG's Environmental Enforcement team. In addition, Combs, who had illegally dumped acres' worth of trash into piles extending as high as 20 feet, is sentenced to four years in prison.

5 MAY
Yost secures guilty verdicts against two men who sexually assaulted teenagers in separate cases: Jared Stewart, a high-school track coach in Williams County, and Brandon Wadsworth of Elyria.




6 JUNE
An investigation by the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force leads to the indictment of two Columbus men — Jamie Lee Cason, 27, and Demetrius Alford, 34 — on human trafficking charges. The task force was formed under the AG's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission.

7 JULY
The AG wins the indictment of seven people in Mahoning County accused of burning buildings and faking burglaries to fraudulently collect more than \$1 million from insurance companies.



8 AUGUST
Jason Rowland of Jackson County is convicted and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for the 2012 rape of a 4-year-old. Rowland had spent years hiding out on the West Coast, but the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) helped track him down and the AGO prosecuted him.




9 SEPTEMBER
Buckeye Lake residents Shawn B. Harmon and David Johns are arrested on felony drug-trafficking charges after an AG-authorized task force investigation nets 24.5 pounds of suspected methamphetamine from the Hebron and Heath areas.

10 OCTOBER
Bonnie Kimpling, who led the P.A.T.H. School for Autism and stole \$150,000 from it, is sentenced to 90 days in jail and fined thousands of dollars after an AG investigation. In a separate case, Shawnte Hardin is indicted on 37 counts related to providing funeral services without a license in Lucas, Cuyahoga, Summit and Franklin counties. BCI investigated the case.

11 NOVEMBER
In a Noble County case in which the Attorney General's Office assisted with the investigation and prosecution, Tyler Thompson is sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for killing his fiancée, Leah B. Hines. Hines, 27, was fatally shot in the chest on March 21 at her Belle Valley home.

12 DECEMBER
Together with six other attorneys general and the Federal Trade Commission, AG Yost reaches a settlement that shuts down an illegal scheme orchestrated by the founding CEO of Vyera Pharmaceuticals that fleeced patients using the lifesaving drug Daraprim.



AG Yost's team unravels costly pharmacy scheme

Pharmacy benefit managers control most of Ohioans' prescription-drug plans. They make consequential decisions, such as how much medications will cost, which prescriptions will be covered and how much pharmacies will be paid.

Such middlemen are especially important for Medicaid, a taxpayer-funded medical assistance plan that provides coverage to about 2.9 million low-income Ohioans.

When he was Ohio's auditor of state, Yost found that PBMs managing the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) program were artificially inflating prices and charging more for prescriptions than they paid pharmacies to dispense them. PBMs, such as health-care giant Centene Corp., then kept the difference.

As attorney general, Yost authorized an investigation that found that Centene and subsidiary Buckeye Health Plan had been tapping a web of subcontractors to collect millions of dollars in overpayments from ODM.

In March, the AG sued, accusing the company of:

- ★ Filing reimbursement requests for amounts already paid by third parties.
- ★ Failing to accurately disclose to ODM the true cost of pharmacy services.
- ★ Artificially inflating dispensing fees.

Three months later, Centene agreed to pay Ohio \$88.3 million to settle the lawsuit.

"It has taken a huge effort by my team to untangle this scheme," Yost said. "And now that we know how it works, the alarm bells should be ringing for anyone using similar tactics."

The AG has launched a new initiative to scrape back even more ill-gotten gains from PBMs.



DID YOU KNOW?

Animals in need of protection

- In April, Attorney General Yost initiated an investigation into executives at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium who were accused of personal use of zoo assets. "Charity may begin at home for an individual, but it's trouble when an executive for a charitable organization uses company resources for friends and family," Yost said. The zoo is a 501c3 organization. The attorney general is charged with protecting and regulating the charitable sector.



In Youngstown, Attorney General Yost presents the 2021 Distinguished Civilian Leadership Award to the daughters and husband of the late Victoria Allen. The AG also renamed the award in Allen's honor.



'THE EPITOME OF A SERVANT LEADER'

Victoria Allen, a Youngstown resident committed to bringing together her community and law enforcement, was honored with the 2021 Civilian Leadership Award, given out annually as part of the attorney general's Law Enforcement Conference.

The married mother of three and mother in spirit to dozens of others led a local Block Watch and the local Crime Stoppers, and officers and judges nominated her for helping to locate missing children and elders and wanted fugitives; gather information about crimes; and calm crowds at crime scenes.

Allen dedicated countless hours to securing help for needy families and planning neighborhood celebrations, including block parties that drew more than 1,000 people.

"Her heart, her faith and her indomitable will set a shining example for all of us," AG Yost said of Allen, who died unexpectedly over the summer, before the 2021 conference took place.

In her memory, Yost renamed the annual honor the Victoria Allen Civilian Leadership Award.

Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LEC to read more about the 2021 LEC award winners.

Advances keep coming at crime-fighting bureau



In 1921, the Ohio General Assembly passed a law creating a minor criminal records agency that, in its early years, was housed at the Ohio Penitentiary and staffed largely by prisoners. From those humble roots, the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation transformed into the powerhouse that it is today, providing:

- ★ Accurate records for background checks to reassure parents, employers and others that those hired for sensitive positions (bus driver, teacher, government worker, etc.) have not been convicted of disqualifying crimes.
- ★ State crime lab services that identify illegal drugs sold in our neighborhoods and the DNA of murderers and rapists. This forensic science gets dangerous criminals off the streets so they can't hurt more people.
- ★ Investigators who offer expertise throughout Ohio after crimes are committed, people go missing or officers are involved in critical incidents.



The attorney general speaks during BCI's 100th anniversary celebration at the bureau's main location in London.

DID YOU KNOW?

A dogged investigation

- In 2021, Jake Wagner and his mother, Angela Wagner, pleaded guilty for their parts in killing eight members of the Rhoden family five years earlier in Pike County. Two more Wagners await trial in the case, which was investigated from the start by a task force that includes at least 33 BCI professionals. More than 1,100 tips were cleared; 500 interviews completed; 700 pieces of evidence tested; and 500 subpoenas, search warrants and court orders requested.



BUSIER THAN EVER AT THE CENTURY MARK

At the centennial observance in 2021, AG Yost and the BCI staff celebrated the past and looked forward to the successes that will result from recent initiatives to enhance the bureau's capabilities.

Among these new efforts:

- ★ **The Cold Case Unit** focuses on helping local law enforcement take a fresh look at unsolved homicides and sexual assaults — a collaborative effort among BCI investigators, criminal analysts and forensic scientists.
- ★ **The Officer-Involved Critical Response Team** is fielding more work as its reputation for trusted, independent investigations draws interest from local law enforcement agencies. Agencies have continued to sign memorandums of understanding to have BCI conduct investigations of these incidents.
- ★ **Massively parallel DNA sequencing** enables millions of fragments of DNA from a single sample to be

sequenced in unison instead of one at a time; it also provides more information than does traditional DNA testing.

- ★ **Mitochondrial DNA testing** examines a type of DNA that is maternally inherited. It is more robust and plentiful than the type targeted in traditional testing, making it helpful in unidentified remains cases.
- ★ **A \$25 million replacement for the Automated Biometric Identification System**, the system organizing the state's 6 million criminal records, supports more rapid retrieval of data, allowing for faster identification of criminal suspects.
- ★ **SWIFT RMS (records management system)**, one piece of the upgraded Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG) system, offers police agencies case management, incident reporting, jail booking, property room management, regional sharing — basically everything they've been requesting.

Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/BCI to watch a video celebrating the anniversary.

AG Yost helps to restore federal crime victim assistance

A major responsibility of the Attorney General’s Office is to distribute federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds to more than 350 local programs that help thousands of Ohio crime victims and survivors with medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, courtroom advocacy and temporary housing.

In recent years, the amount of money in the federal Crime Victims Fund — which is supported by criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties and other federal assessments — has declined steeply. Ohio’s share of this funding fell from \$117 million in 2018 to \$38 million in 2021, a devastating cut for Ohio victims.

Last year, Attorney General Yost joined a nationwide coalition of attorneys general urging Congress to restore and strengthen the fund. In July, Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed a bill to do just that.

As more funding becomes available, the AGO will rush it to Ohio’s crime victims and their families.

AG ADVOCATES FOR CHANGES IN RULES FOR OHIO’S COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Attorney General Yost worked with the General Assembly last year to ease the eligibility rules for Ohio’s crime victim compensation program after it became clear that rule restrictions were keeping many people from receiving aid.

“If you’re a victim of crime, it doesn’t matter what your background is,” Yost said. “Somebody who has been raped who has maybe a felony conviction for drugs or bad checks experiences exactly the same consequences and traumatic effects that anybody else would.”

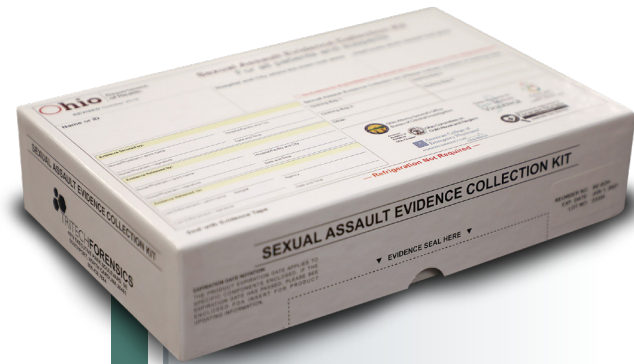
The Ohio compensation program provides financial assistance to victims of violent crime to pay for medical and funeral expenses, counseling, lost income and similar expenses.

Senate Bill 36, signed by the governor in November, should lead to many more application approvals when the new law takes effect in March.

Among the more notable changes: Crime victims with a criminal history will no longer be automatically denied assistance based solely on a prior criminal conviction.

Other changes include:

- ★ Eliminating the provision of the law that prevents someone in possession of drugs from receiving aid.
- ★ Allowing victims’ relatives who suffer severe trauma from witnessing the crime or showing up in the immediate aftermath, and caretakers of children who are sexually assaulted, to receive aid.
- ★ Preventing the denial of support for family members of victims who are killed based on allegations regarding the victim’s actions.
- ★ Prohibiting the denial of a claim based solely on prior felonious conduct.



DID YOU KNOW?

Tracking system for assault victims

- Through Dec. 31, 2021, more than 4,200 kits had been entered into the Ohio Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System, which was launched in 2020 by the Attorney General’s Office. The system lets victims of sexual assault anonymously check the status of their examination kit evidence — to verify that it has been submitted for testing and/or see where it stands in the testing process.

WHAT DRAWS THE MOST COMPLAINTS?

The AG’s Consumer Protection staff fielded more than 20,500 complaints in 2021. The top five complaint-generating categories were:

- 1 MOTOR VEHICLES
- 2 SHOPPING, FOOD OR BEVERAGES
- 3 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
- 4 HOME OR PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
- 5 COLLECTIONS, CREDIT REPORTING OR FINANCIAL SERVICES

AG corners the market on consumer protection

Among the attorney general’s chief responsibilities is protecting Ohio consumers from unfair, deceptive, or unconscionable acts or practices by fighting fraud, advancing fairness in the marketplace and working with Ohioans to resolve complaints. In 2021, AG Yost’s Consumer Protection staff aided more than 20,500 consumers who sought help with identity theft, scams, vehicle titles and other matters. Doing right by consumers? Here is just a small sampling of the AGO’s 2021 wins:

CONTRACTING SCAM

After pleading guilty to engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, contractor Patrick Wilson in August was sentenced to eight years in prison and ordered to pay \$413,750 in restitution for stealing a combined \$412,000 from homeowners in Ohio and West Virginia. Wilson had accepted large down payments from 34 clients to buy building materials for decks, pole barns, garages and houses, but he never delivered the supplies, completed the work or refunded the money. The Attorney General’s Office investigated and prosecuted the case.

TORNADO GRIFTERS

AG Yost separately sued two Dayton-area contractors, Robert T. Green and Tyler A. Puckett, accused of exploiting homeowners hit by the 2019 tornadoes. Green’s TK Home Improvement and Puckett’s StormAid Restoration peddled home-improvement services in the wake of the natural disaster. Consumers reported having paid for services that were not provided or were performed in shoddy fashion. Both cases were settled late in December. Puckett was ordered to pay \$259,052 in consumer damages and \$25,000 in civil penalties; Green, \$64,350 in consumer damages and \$50,000 in civil penalties.

SLOW-MOVING INTERNET

In June, the AG reached an agreement with Frontier Communications after accusing the Connecticut company of charging customers in underserved areas of Ohio for levels of internet speeds that weren’t possible. Frontier serves more

than 84,000 residential customers in Ohio. As part of the settlement, the company agreed to upgrade its service to underserved areas of Ohio, stop overbilling customers for unreliable service and stop deceiving customers.

AUTO-TITLE PROBLEMS

After fielding 84 complaints about Michael Ray Auto Group, which operated in Cleveland from March 2018 through September 2019, AG Yost sued the used-car dealership and its owners over violations of consumer protection laws and failure to deliver vehicle titles. The AGO made customers whole with payments from the Title Defect Recision (TDR) Fund, a program that helps used-car buyers resolve title problems. In November, a judge ordered Kenneth Wayne Adams of Strongsville to reimburse the TDR Fund \$156,028.21 and pay \$150,000 in civil penalties.

TICKET REFUNDS

Ohio, nine other states and the District of Columbia coordinated an investigation after receiving numerous complaints that the ticket reseller StubHub was violating its own refunds policy. The policy promised full refunds on ticket purchases, including fees, for canceled events. StubHub, though, suspended that policy in March 2020, after the mass-cancellation of events triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The change affected 12,000 consumers who had bought tickets to Ohio events before March 25, 2020. The case was resolved in September when StubHub agreed to honor its refund policy and promptly process any refund requests going forward for the events at issue.

Three years into job, Yost checking goals off his list

When Dave Yost assumed the job in January 2019, he set out to learn the ins and outs of the Attorney General's Office, discovering the tricky, sticky issues bogging down productivity and the biggest opportunities for improvements.

Working with his executive staff and section leaders, he then established a "22x22" list of high-priority goals that he wanted to complete before the end of his first term.

At the end of 2021, with a year to go, Yost has achieved 21 of those 22 goals.

EXTERNAL GOALS

From the "big opportunities" side of the list, the Attorney General's Office, among other things, has:

- ★ Ensured an equitable resolution (OneOhio) for opioid litigation so that the most affected areas of the state will get their fair share of settlement money.
- ★ Recaptured money that pharmacy benefit managers inappropriately charged Ohio's health-care systems.
- ★ Cross-checked felony and mental illness records with concealed-carry gun licenses and designed a system to ensure disqualified people aren't getting the permits.
- ★ Started a robocall initiative that made Ohio one of the most difficult states in the nation for "bad apple" robocallers to operate in.
- ★ Doubled the number of Organized Crime Investigations Commission task forces working to shut down human traffickers and expanded the number focusing on bulk drug seizures.
- ★ Created a Cold Case Unit at BCI; a study on genetic predisposition to opioid addiction; and the Ohio School Threat Assessment Training program, which identifies and helps troubled students before they turn to violence.

Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/CARES to learn more about the AGO's new debt collection system.



Attorney General Yost and his staff have completed 21 of the 22 first-term goals that they set after he assumed the job in January 2019.

INTERNAL GOALS

From the "office productivity" side of the list, the Attorney General's Office, among other things, has:

- ★ Consolidated office locations, including eliminating a second downtown Columbus location, and instituted work-from-home policies to cut expenses.
- ★ Secured WiFi networks and shored up technical security deficiencies, including an upgrade to the newest version of Windows across all office computers.
- ★ Signed contracts to initiate an overhaul of the "dinosaur of a system" used to manage debt collections and revised the procedures for resolving collections disagreements.
- ★ Upgraded the BCI-provided Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway, a web platform used by agencies throughout Ohio to investigate crimes, store records and share critical information.
- ★ Instituted an attorney-mentoring program.



Detailing the AGO structure

The Attorney General's Office consists of more than 30 sections and special divisions, each with distinct duties. The team works hard to fight crime and help victims heal, to support law enforcement and consumers, and to safeguard those in need. The public-facing sections and divisions are:

ANTITRUST

The section promotes competition in the marketplace by enforcing state and federal antitrust laws. It also offers training to government personnel on detecting bid-rigging and safeguarding the procurement process against vendor collusion.

APPEALS

The section, headed by the state solicitor, represents the state and its agencies on appeals in the U.S. Supreme Court, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the Ohio Supreme Court. The Appeals Section determines the cases for which the state will seek review and the positions it will take in those cases.

BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

The state's official crime lab and criminal records repository, BCI serves the criminal justice community and offers expert investigative services to local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. The bureau has five major divisions: Identification, Laboratory, OHLEG, Special Investigative Services and Technical Investigations.

CHARITABLE LAW

The section regulates charities in the state to ensure that donations are not misappropriated and that proceeds are used for charitable purposes. The section encourages sound board governance, oversees a registry of charities and professional solicitors, and licenses bingo operations. It also represents Ohio's Liquor Commission, Lottery Commission, Horseracing Commission and Casino Commission.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The section represents the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, prosecuting cases on its behalf. The Civil Rights Section also conducts free training for employers, HR professionals, landlords, condo associations and businesses throughout Ohio to promote compliance with fair employment and fair housing laws.

COLLECTIONS ENFORCEMENT

The section collects outstanding debt for state government agencies, boards and commissions, and all public colleges and universities. It also works with more than 539 local governments and courts to collect their outstanding debts. In 2021, the section collected \$524.1 million, which was returned to its government and school clients.

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The section operates the Attorney General's Help Center, which the public can contact to file a complaint against a business; report tips on illegal gaming, health care fraud and patient abuse; request educational materials; and more. In 2021, the Help Center fielded 79,574 phone calls, handled 19,455 online inquiries and received 7,690 pieces of mail.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES

The section acts as legal counsel for all elected officials in statewide offices. It includes the Public Records Unit, which publishes the annual Sunshine Law Manual.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

The section ensures a safe and strong marketplace for consumers and businesses through education, dispute resolution and enforcement of consumer laws. Eight units within the section are tasked with more specific duties, including investigating and prosecuting violations of the Consumer Sales Practices Act, educating Ohioans about their rights, and resolving consumer disputes.

COURT OF CLAIMS DEFENSE

The section defends the state in cases filed in the Ohio Court of Claims and argues appeals of those cases in the 10th District Court of Appeals and the Ohio Supreme Court. The section's Construction Litigation Unit prosecutes defective construction claims on behalf of the state.



Malorie Kulp, a BCI forensic scientist, shows a saliva analysis to students attending a Junior Achievement event in October at the Clark County Fairgrounds.

CRIME VICTIM SERVICES

The section provides funding and services to victims, training to professionals who assist them and crime prevention programs to Ohio communities. It also puts on the annual Two Days in May Conference on Victim Assistance, is responsible for the administration of the federal Victims of Crime Act and State Victims Assistance Act grant programs, and houses the Human Trafficking Initiative.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The section has three units:

- ★ **The Capital Crimes Unit** works to uphold death sentences, which can require years of litigation in federal courts. The unit also aids, by request, county prosecutors trying death penalty cases.
- ★ **The Habeas Unit** works to keep dangerous criminals in prison by opposing litigation brought by inmates who seek to overturn valid convictions.
- ★ **The Corrections Unit** represents Ohio's Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and Department of Youth Services in lawsuits brought by inmates.

EDUCATION

The section handles litigation for the Ohio Department of Education and the State Board of Education; works to revoke or suspend the licenses of educators who fail to meet professional obligations; and provides legal counsel to universities, community colleges and technical colleges.

EMPLOYMENT LAW

The section provides legal advice and representation on employment matters to state departments, agencies, commissions, elected officials and public colleges and universities. These services save state resources by protecting against unsupported legal claims, reduce legal fees for outside counsel and help ensure that the state employs people worthy of public trust.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

The section investigates and prosecutes those who violate environmental laws and represents state agencies that safeguard Ohio's natural resources. In 2021, it filed 35 civil cases in state and federal courts and collected almost \$1.85 million in fines and penalties. The section's combined judgments, settlements and restitutions last year totaled more than \$4.92 million — plus an estimated \$39 million in injunctive relief.

EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

The section provides counsel to eight cabinet agencies and about 80 state boards and commissions. It includes two distinct units: Labor Relations and Transportation. In 2021, the section successfully represented these clients as plaintiffs and defendants in various administrative, state and federal court proceedings. The section opened 759 cases (including 301 involving litigation) and closed 742 cases.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

The section represents the Department of Aging; Department of Insurance and health-related professional licensing boards; the Department of Health; the Department of Medicaid and Department of Job and Family Services; the Unemployment Compensation Division of ODJFS; and the Department of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and State Board of Psychology.

HEALTH CARE FRAUD

In 2021, the section was responsible for 213 indictments and 177 convictions as well as the recovery of \$28.2 million in restitution orders and settlements. It consists of two units:

- ★ **The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU)** investigates and prosecutes health care providers who defraud the state Medicaid program and also enforces Ohio's Patient Abuse and Neglect Law, which protects the mentally and physically disabled and the elderly from neglect and abuse in long-term-care facilities. The unit is consistently one of the national leaders in indictments and convictions among all 53 MFCUs in the United States.
- ★ **The Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit** prosecutes claimants, employers and health care providers who defraud the Ohio Workers' Compensation Program.

OHIO ORGANIZED CRIME INVESTIGATIONS COMMISSION

The commission assists local law enforcement agencies in combating pervasive organized crime — drug dealing and human trafficking, for example — through the creation of task forces composed of law enforcement officers and justice officials. The task forces receive wider jurisdiction and subpoena powers as well as operational help, funding and commission oversight.

OHIO PEACE OFFICER TRAINING ACADEMY

The academy and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission oversee training and certification requirements for the 33,000+ law officers in the state and private-security, corrections and humane agents. Staff members also put on the Fallen Officers Memorial and Law Enforcement Conference.

POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The section works with state legislators and their staff members to turn ideas into initiatives and laws that better protect Ohioans.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The section represents the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and the Power Siting Board, which reviews plans for new energy facilities. In 2021, the section helped secure \$695,000 in forfeitures and \$527,750 in refunds/credits to customers from competitive retail electric and natural gas providers for violations of marketing and solicitation rules, a \$250,000 forfeiture from a utility company for gas pipeline safety violations, and \$255,262 in forfeitures from motor carrier companies and drivers after PUCO settlements and administrative hearings.

SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS

Upon the request of a local authority, AGO attorneys can serve as lead prosecutors in cases in which a conflict of interest exists. Also, local prosecutors can call upon those in the section to serve as assistant prosecutors in cases that require specialized knowledge or greater resources. In 2021, the section opened 173 criminal matters in 46 of Ohio's 88 counties. The section had 18 trials during that time, including 14 resulting in a plea or guilty verdict.

TAXATION

The section represents the tax commissioner of Ohio, who is charged with administering and enforcing the state income tax, sales and use taxes, and several business and excise taxes.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The section provides legal counsel and advice to the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation and the Industrial Commission of Ohio. Typically, the cases focus on whether a claimant is entitled to participate in the workers' compensation fund and what type of benefits a claimant may be entitled to receive.



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

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Most commonly requested services

Reach our Help Center

800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Contact

Report a robocall

800-282-0515

OhioProtects.org

Submit a law enforcement tip

855-224-6446

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LETips

Report a scam

800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/ReportAScam

Pay a debt to the state

888-301-8885

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/PayOnline