

PROTECTING ★ THE ★ UNPROTECTED

**OHIO ATTORNEY
GENERAL'S OFFICE**

2025

**Annual
Highlights**



DAVE YOST
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

The office that I'm privileged to lead is big — roughly 1,500 people working to do right by all Ohioans.

Although they are dispersed throughout the state and represent a spectrum of disciplines, the employees of the Attorney General's Office share a passion for justice and a belief in the universal dignity of all people. And nothing so tangibly demonstrates what we stand for as those occasions when we come to the aid of individual residents.

That's because behind every case we handle is a person desperate for help — the senior citizen caught in a Bitcoin scam, the homeowner ripped off by a contractor, the nursing-home patient abused by a caregiver, the teenager trafficked for sex, the community outraged by illegal dumpers, the family of a murder victim longing for answers.



What follows is a sample of the important work that my staff achieved in 2025, Big Good that ultimately affects every person in the state.

I am proud of their accomplishments, proud of their professionalism, and proud they have embraced a calling that, at its heart, is dedicated to serving others.

You

Yours,

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General

2025

Building a better Ohio

The work of the Attorney General's Office is driven by a simple imperative: **Protect the unprotected.** Dave Yost issued the directive when he took office in 2019, and he and his staff have been doggedly carrying out the order ever since.

One area of special concern for Attorney General Yost in 2025 was elder abuse. It's a growing, largely underreported problem that encompasses physical, psychological and sexual abuse as well as neglect and financial exploitation.

To combat this "often-invisible crime," AG Yost launched a statewide campaign to educate Ohioans, and to assure victims that others care about their suffering and that the best way to stop the crime is to report it. A key part of the campaign centers on partnerships with "front line" organizations that serve older Ohioans regularly — such as pharmacists, bankers and physicians.

Likewise in 2025, AG Yost continued to expand his fight against human trafficking by teaming with two transportation allies — TravelCenters of America (one of America's largest truck-stop chains) and the nonprofit group Truckers Against Trafficking. The collaboration focused on encouraging the public to report tips to Ohio's human trafficking hotline. In a show of force in September, task forces organized under AG Yost's Organized Crime Investigations Commission hit the streets, arresting 135 people in a human trafficking sting that blanketed the state.

Among other successes during the year, AG Yost and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission rolled out a comprehensive, technology-centered training model that begins a new era for law enforcement in Ohio. The overhaul is the culmination of recommendations made by Yost's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Police Training.

And, as it does every year, the Attorney General's Office vigorously pursued bad actors who seek to swindle Ohio residents, scam charities, defraud the health-care system, and poison the environment.

Their misdeeds, and the work of the office to hold them to account, are detailed in the following pages.



SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT, PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

The Attorney General's Office isn't a stand-alone law enforcement agency — it's a force multiplier. Through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) and the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), the office supplies training, technology, and investigative and forensic expertise to augment the crime-fighting ability of Ohio's 900+ police departments and sheriff's offices. In addition, the AGO provides grants to help agencies offset the cost of other needs.

the laws and policies pertaining to firearms use.

"Training used to be static — you'd sit in a classroom as someone lectured to you," said Tom Quinlan, executive director of OPOTA and chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. "We're far more into scenario-based training now, application training — something that officers actually take out of the classroom and can apply on their next shift."

Here are the task force's seven recommendations:

- 1. Update the Peace Officer Basic Training curriculum** to reflect contemporary police services and revise the physical fitness standard needed to graduate from a police academy.
- 2. Establish certification levels** to reflect an officer's training and experience.
- 3. Create a Tactical Patrol Officer Program** to enhance an officer's ability to handle unexpected and ongoing violent criminal events.
- 4. Add new technologies** and incorporate elements of reality-based situational decision-making scenarios into both basic and advanced training.
- 5. Develop integrated lesson plans** across training platforms.
- 6. Focus continuing professional training (CPT)** so that it keeps advancing police services.
- 7. Strengthen firearms standards and testing.** Firearms exam is a required course for 2026 CPT.

Ohio writes next chapter in training of police officers

A new era in law enforcement training has begun in Ohio, bringing with it a new standard for policing.

In early 2024, Attorney General Yost's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Police Training in Ohio returned seven wide-ranging recommendations, including revising peace officer basic training. The recommendations were approved and soon set into motion by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

By mid-2025, all the recommendations had either been implemented or were on the verge of being implemented.

"Police training in Ohio used to be patched together, with a course added here and there to address a timely need," Yost said. "The goal was to identify outdated methods and material and put into place a more progressive, holistic, technology-based model that would better serve law enforcement officers and their communities. In short, we want Ohio to serve as a national model by offering the best, most relevant training available year after year."

The result is a comprehensive training regimen that enhances communication skills, strengthens decision-making under stress, increases tactical skills for patrol officers, rethinks continuing professional training (CPT), rewards career-long education, and supplements officers' knowledge of



Immersive virtual reality becomes cornerstone of training

As part of the sweeping changes ushered in by the AG's Blue Ribbon Task Force, OPOTA introduced immersive virtual reality (VR) as a pillar of its new training regimen, for use in both basic and advanced law enforcement education and across many roles, including first-line supervisors, field training officers, patrol officers and tactical officers.

OPOTA's initial focus was on building a library of VR video simulations, developing a corps of certified trainers, and distributing VR headsets to police academies and OPOTA's seven regional training partners statewide.

Having achieved tremendous progress in all those areas, OPOTA worked to develop multiple one-hour, CPT-themed courses for each of the VR simulations the agency had created.

That means the state's 33,000 law enforcement officers can use VR training and related courses on OPOTA Online to earn all 16 hours of the general/elective credits needed to fulfill the statewide CPT requirements. (The eight hours of mandatory CPT courses cannot yet be fulfilled through VR training.)

It also means that officers have a wider selection of technology-enhanced, scenario-based CPT courses



to choose from and, because they're online, can take the courses whenever and wherever they choose.

The courses, free and available only through OPOTA Online, cover report writing, domestic violence, officer wellness, leadership and other topics. Each course yields one hour of CPT credit.

OPOTA's VR simulations, produced in collaboration with Ohio University, emphasize situational decision-making, which, research shows, decreases use of force, discretionary arrests and officer injuries. The training is designed to help officers develop "soft skills" (such as listening and de-escalation techniques) rather than tactical skills (such as shooting or making arrests).

Each VR simulation is between eight and 12 minutes long. The simulations must be led by an OPOTA-certified VR instructor, who conducts a 45-minute debrief as part of the training.

In June 2025, a second set of six VR simulations was released, bringing the total to 12. A third series of six videos, funded with a \$1 million grant from the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance, is set for release in 2026. The grant will also help pay for a mobile classroom that will make the training accessible statewide, even in the most rural areas.

OPOTA showcased the VR training to international audiences at the International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association in St. Louis and at the International Association of Chiefs of Police Tech Conference in Indianapolis.

BCI's Cold Case Unit adds to its record of success

BCI's Cold Case Unit, formed in 2020, helps local law enforcement agencies take a fresh look at unsolved homicides, including those involving unidentified remains. Led by Special Agent-in-Charge Roger Davis, the core team includes Criminal Intelligence Director Dana Forney and DNA Lab Supervisor Hallie Dreyer. When needed, agents, analysts and scientists from other BCI units assist the team.

Two cases in 2025, both out of Cleveland coincidentally, were especially notable. Each one had its share of dead ends and unexpected turns, but the investigative team persisted, revisited the evidence, applied new technology, and used every tool available to keep the cases moving forward.

Aliza Sherman

The 53-year-old nurse and mother of four was killed on March 24, 2013, outside the Stafford Law Co. in downtown Cleveland. Her divorce trial was to begin the next day, and she had received a text from her attorney, Gregory Moore, to meet at his office that afternoon.

BCI's Cold Case Unit is led by a core team made up of Special Agent-in-Charge Roger Davis, center; Criminal Intelligence Director Dana Forney, far right; and DNA Lab Supervisor Hallie Dreyer, second from right. Other BCI staff members have routinely assisted as needed, including Criminal Intelligence Analysts Jen Dillion, left, and Lisa Savage, second from left.



A security video recorded a person approaching her from behind and stabbing her 11 times.

In June 2021, with no suspect in hand and few leads, Cleveland Police asked BCI's Cold Case Unit to lead the investigation. The unit ultimately zeroed in on Moore's cellphone use, analyzing and aggregating all the disparate digital evidence over thousands of hours.

On May 2 of this year — after a grand jury indicted him on murder, conspiracy and kidnapping charges — Moore was arrested in Austin, Texas, and returned to Cuyahoga County.

In the indictment, prosecutors allege that Moore and at least one other unnamed individual conspired to kidnap Sherman because Moore was unprepared for the trial and was unlikely to be granted another delay. The indictment noted that Moore had a history of calling in bomb threats to delay court appearances, a pattern that members of Stafford Law Co. were aware of.

On July 3, Moore posted a \$2 million bond and was released from jail. A trial date has not been set.

Danny Lee Mitchell

The 20-year-old Cleveland man was last seen on April 2, 1980, heading to a bar in the 6300 block of Euclid Avenue. The next month, less than a quarter-mile away, a demolition crew discovered human remains in a derelict building they were preparing to raze. Unidentified and unclaimed, the John Doe was eventually buried in Potter's Field.

It took 45 years to confirm the connection, but John Doe would turn out to be Mitchell.

Investigators began looking into that possibility in 2020. But they struggled to recover a usable DNA sample from the scalp hair preserved from John Doe's autopsy, so they had nothing to compare to the DNA previously submitted by Mitchell's family.

In 2022, BCI and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office requested help from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). The center agreed to fund additional advanced DNA testing and, later, secured federal funding for another round of testing.

In February 2025, Astrea Forensics, a California lab known for its success with difficult cases, developed a full DNA profile from the hair samples. BCI and experts from NCMEC then collaborated with genealogists from Innovative Forensic Investigations to compare the profile to DNA from Michell's family, which confirmed the identity. The exhaustive and collaborative efforts of BCI's Cold Case Unit, Criminal Intelligence Unit and Laboratory — as well as key external partners — were instrumental in solving the decades-old mystery.

Grants target addiction problem in Ohio jails

Like jails around the country, Ohio's jails have a drug problem. In some places, an estimated 75% of inmates have substance-use disorders, often related to opioids. It's no surprise that overdose is a leading cause of death among inmates.

To help fight the scourge, Attorney General Yost created a grant program offering \$60 million over several years to help jails monitor and treat inmates — and ultimately to break the cycle of addiction and incarceration that afflicts so many of them. The program was later expanded to include community-based correctional facilities that serve as secure, short-term residential programs for felony offenders.

Nearly \$11 million was awarded in 2025 to 49 jails serving 54 counties, and to 13 community-based correctional facilities.



Attorney General Yost speaks with Ashland County Sheriff Kurt Schneider, whose office was awarded a grant.

"While a jail is no substitute for a rehab center," Yost said, "these grants will aid recovery and support better outcomes for inmates struggling with substance abuse."

The grant program awards county jails up to \$200,000 per year to hire a full-time addiction-services coordinator or contract with a company that provides such services. Additionally, any county that operates a jail can apply for a \$50,000 grant to fund medications and supplies for inmates experiencing opioid withdrawal.

All sheriffs, regardless of whether they received money in 2025, are eligible for a fresh round of funding in 2026. The grant program is funded with money from opioid settlements negotiated by Yost's office.

New BCI unit specializes in use-of-force cases

To better serve law enforcement agencies and municipalities throughout the state, BCI in 2025 created a stand-alone team dedicated to investigating shootings and other critical use-of-force incidents involving law enforcement officers. The team is called the Force Investigations Unit.

The change was prompted by an increasing volume of requests from local law enforcement agencies for independent, third-party investigations. Since 2020, BCI is averaging more than 63 OICI cases a year.

According to BCI Assistant Superintendent Mark

SIZABLE SEIZURES

OOCIC Drug Interdiction Task Forces work behind the scenes to keep narcotics out of Ohio communities.

	FENTANYL	METH	MARIJUANA	COCAINE	PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOMS	PREScription PILLS	FIREARMS	CURRENCY	STREET VALUE OF DRUGS
2025	86 pounds	757 pounds	5,482 pounds	357 pounds	6 pounds	13,566 pills	440	\$4.1M	\$75M
TOTALS	1,240 pounds	3,914 pounds	23,812 pounds	2,351 pounds	122 pounds	301,814 pills	2,774	\$70.3M	\$471M

Kollar, the bureau conducts about 85% to 90% of the officer-involved shooting investigations statewide — "the new normal" for the agency, he said.

The Force Investigations Unit consists of 18 special agents and two special agent supervisors, split into two teams to cover the state.

In addition to its primary role, the unit frees up agents in the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) — who can devote more time to assisting local law enforcement with other types of cases, including homicides, public corruption, financial crimes and voter fraud. The task of investigating officer-involved shootings and other use-of-force cases previously fell to SIU.

Task forces seize \$75 million in narcotics in 2025

Law enforcement task forces organized under the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC), an arm of the Attorney General's Office, confiscated more than \$75 million in illegal drugs in 2025, along with 440 firearms and \$4.1 million in currency.

Since 2019, when Attorney General Yost took office, OOCIC task forces have seized more than 300,000 prescription pills, 1,200 pounds of fentanyl, 2,300 pounds of cocaine and 2,700 firearms.

OOCIC major drug task forces operate in 17 Ohio counties, serving 52.6% of the state's population. Task forces typically involve local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Two task forces established to fight organized retail theft

In early 2025, legislation was signed into Ohio law to crack down on the growing problem of large-scale retail theft by organized crime rings, which sell the goods on the black market for significant profit. It's estimated the crime costs Ohio businesses upwards of \$3 billion annually.

The law created a specific felony offense, increased penalties, and authorized the creation of task forces under the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, an arm of the Attorney General's Office. Two task forces have been established so far, in the Toledo and Dayton areas.

On May 28, investigators with the Northwest Ohio Regional Retail Crime Task Force, led by Wood County Sheriff's Office and the Perrysburg Township Police Department, arrested two men on fifth-degree felony charges of identity fraud and forgery. The arrests followed a tip from a local Walmart reporting potential gift-card fraud. In arresting the men, investigators discovered multiple gift cards bought with credit-card information belonging to a victim in Florida.

In December, a total of five men were indicted in Montgomery County Common Pleas Court stemming from two separate investigations by the Tactical Crime Suppression Unit (TCSU) Organized Retail Crime Task Force, led by the Kettering Police Department.

FIGHTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Attorney General Yost's fight against human trafficking focuses on identifying and prosecuting traffickers, decreasing demand, and helping victims. He has pushed to change state laws, educate police and prosecutors, and make a difference for survivors. The fight involves multiple elements of the office, including the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, the Special Prosecutions Section, the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, and the Human Trafficking Initiative.



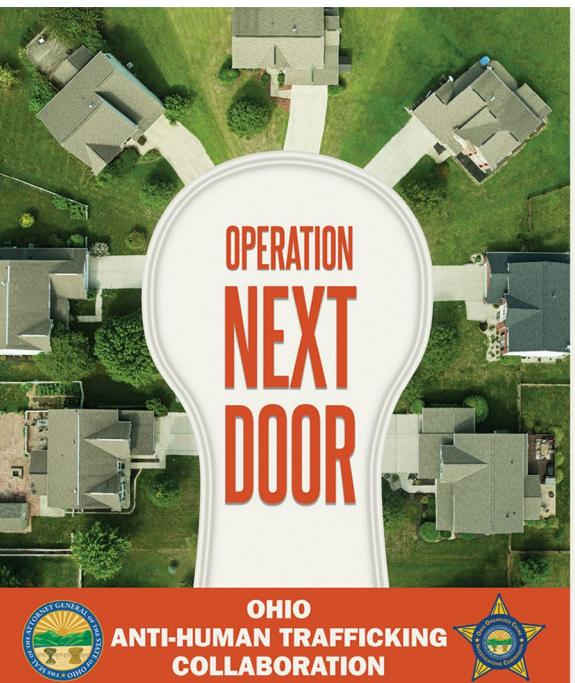
Yost enlists help of two key transportation allies

As part of his ongoing efforts to increase awareness, AG Yost and his Human Trafficking Initiative teamed with Ohio-based TravelCenters of America — one of America's largest truck-stop chains — and the nonprofit group Truckers Against Trafficking.

The collaboration is aimed at encouraging the public to report tips to the Ohio-specific human trafficking hotline: 844-END-OHHT. For its part, Truckers Against

Trafficking distributed hotline bumper stickers to its trained truckers who drive Ohio routes, and TravelCenters of America displayed the number on digital screens in its Ohio stores.

Truckers Against Trafficking has trained more than 1.9 million people since 2015. Its courses are free, online and self-paced. All 18,000 employees of TravelCenters of America take the training annually.



BY THE NUMBERS



135 arrested in statewide human trafficking sting

A statewide human trafficking operation conducted in September by more than 100 law enforcement agencies resulted in the arrest of 135 people seeking to buy sex — including from minors.

During the multiday sting, 67 human trafficking survivors were referred by law enforcement to health-care and social-services organizations. Notably, task forces recovered two teenage girls, 14- and 17-years-old.

"Operation Next Door was named to highlight the proximity and prevalence of human trafficking," AG Yost said. "Too often, we are lulled into the false narrative that these crimes happen only in the

shadows. This is simply not true — human trafficking occurs in plain sight and, unfortunately, may even be fueled by your co-workers or neighbors."

The operation targeted both buyers of sex and suspected traffickers, with 32 people arrested on felony charges that include promoting prostitution, compelling prostitution, seeking sex with a minor and drug trafficking. An additional 103 individuals were charged with engaging in prostitution or solicitation.

Operation Next Door took place in urban centers, suburban communities and rural areas. The crackdown was spearheaded by human trafficking task forces organized by OOCIC across the state.



AN ONGOING BATTLE, IN EVERY CORNER OF THE STATE

Although the attorney general's annual statewide human trafficking operation attracts the most media attention, individual task forces organized under Yost's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission log many other successes throughout the year.

Leader of drug, human trafficking, fraud ring gets life

In October, a Columbus man who coerced addicts into prostitution, ran a drug trafficking ring, oversaw a pandemic-relief-fraud scheme, and tampered with witnesses was sentenced to life in prison.

The conviction and sentencing of Ricco Maye resulted from the collaborative efforts of federal, state and local agents, including those assigned to the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.

Testimony from his 2024 trial established that Ricco Maye "used individuals to buy and sell drugs, sell women for sex, and fraudulently apply online for COVID-19 relief funds."

He was sentenced in U.S. District Court to life in prison with no opportunity for probation.

Beginning in at least 2018, Maye's drug trafficking

ring distributed narcotics to addicts in street-level quantities. He regularly bought narcotics from supply sources inside and outside Ohio and used addicts to help sell the drugs in Columbus.

Maye gave drugs to women free and exploited their addiction by forcing them into prostitution, which he facilitated by placing internet prostitution ads. He collected the proceeds, enforced specific rules on the women, and punished the women through physical violence.

Maye also was found guilty of providing fentanyl that resulted in an overdose death and directing threats against a potential government witness.

Ringleaders operated for decades near elementary school

Two leaders of a large-scale drug and sex trafficking ring that operated near an elementary school from 2008 to 2022 were sentenced in U.S. District Court to a combined 52 years in prison.

The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force led the investigation, which eventually led to the indictment of 23 people.

From 2008 until June 2022, Patrick "White Boy Pat" Saultz and Cordell Washington ran a ring that sold fentanyl, cocaine and crack cocaine out of more than 20 Columbus residences and distributed larger amounts to regional drug traffickers, who

then trafficked the narcotics to West Virginia and northern Ohio. Most of the drug dealing took place within 1,000 feet of Burroughs Elementary School in Columbus.

Their operations also included sex trafficking, labor trafficking, fraud and money laundering.

Saultz was sentenced in March to a prison term of 264 months — nearly 22 years. In June, Washington was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Concurrent with the drug operation, the men ran a sex trafficking ring that required women who were given drugs to engage in prostitution.

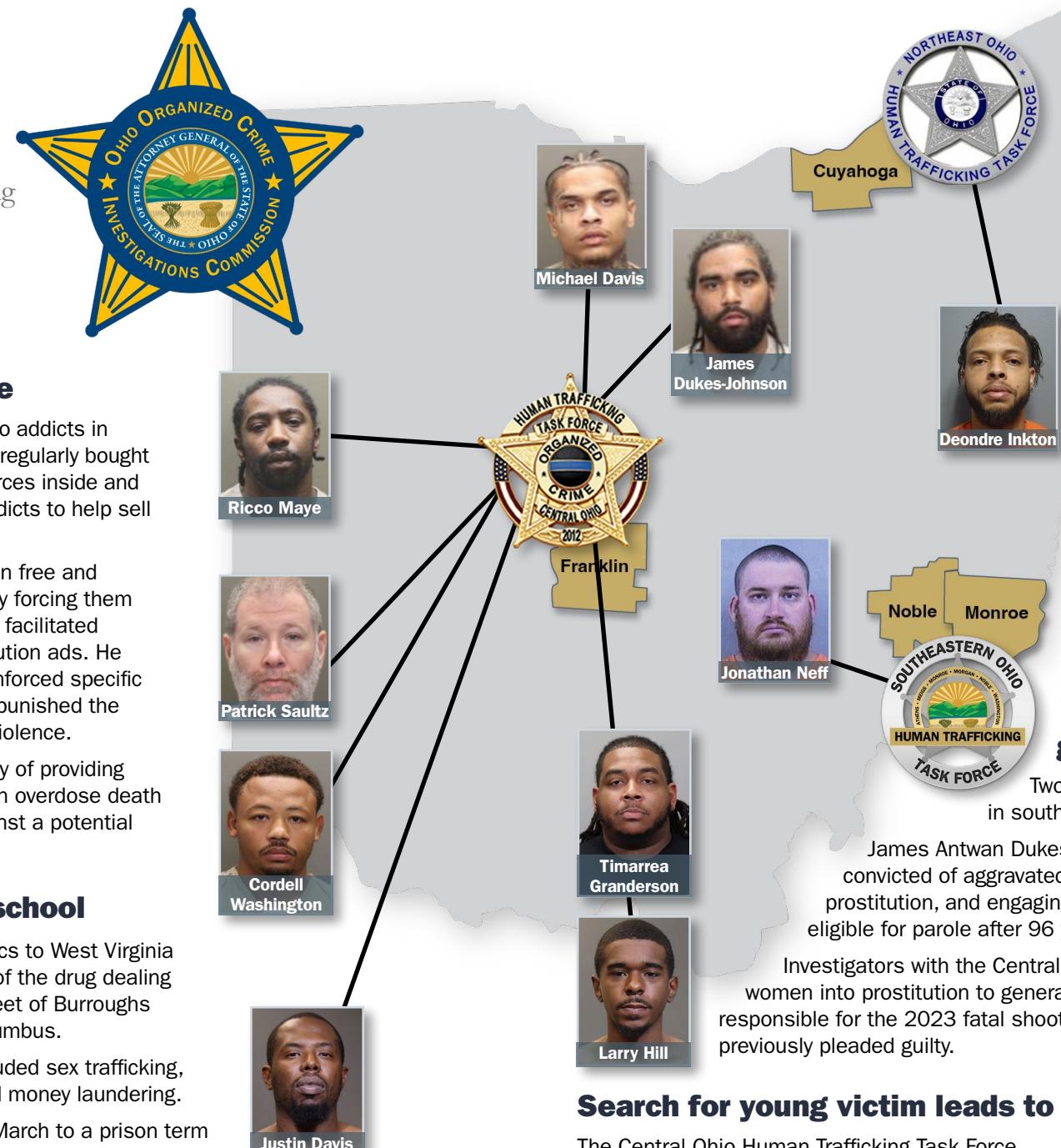
Columbus ring indicted on human trafficking and drug charges

Five people accused of running a drug and human trafficking ring on Columbus' West Side were indicted in September on dozens of criminal charges following an eight-month investigation by the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.

The two men and three women face charges of

selling cocaine, fentanyl and buprenorphine, as well as trafficking people for commercial sex work between Nov. 1, 2024, and March 10, 2025.

Justin Davis is accused of running the organization. Jeffrey Willis, Cieara Tesso, Renika Crowley and Roselind Fout are also charged in the case.



Cleveland man trafficked women in Ohio, 11 other states

Deondre Inkton, a Cleveland man who trafficked 12 women across multiple states for prostitution, was sentenced in March to 30 to 37½ years in prison. He pleaded guilty to trafficking in persons, promoting prostitution, sexual battery, money laundering and possessing criminal tools.

Investigators with the Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force said Inkton was connected to more than 4,000 online sex advertisements spanning Ohio and 11 other states, with 2,000 ads specifically tied to Ohio. He physically and sexually abused his victims to coerce them into prostitution, then collected the proceeds through cash and electronic transactions.

Prosecutors said Inkton began researching how to become a "pimp" as early as 2014. His computer contained Google searches for "What do pimps say?" and images of related pop-culture items, such as the book *Pimpology*.

Violent human traffickers get life sentences

Two members of a violent human trafficking ring that operated in south Columbus were sentenced in June to life in prison.

James Antwan Dukes-Johnson, 29, and Michael Anthony Davis, 22, were convicted of aggravated murder, trafficking in persons, compelling and promoting prostitution, and engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity. Dukes-Johnson will be eligible for parole after 96 years; Davis, after 81 years.

Investigators with the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force said the group forced women into prostitution to generate money for buying narcotics. Group members also were responsible for the 2023 fatal shooting of 39-year-old Adrian Smith. Four other co-defendants previously pleaded guilty.

Search for young victim leads to arrest of 2 Texas men

The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force arrested two Texas men accused of trafficking four victims, including one juvenile. Law enforcement agencies in Texas had informed the task force on March 13 — four days before the arrest — that the juvenile was likely in Columbus.

Task force members took 27-year-old Timarrea Granderson into custody that evening. One of the

victims was with Granderson when he was arrested. Later that day, authorities arrested 26-year-old Larry Hill after he barricaded himself inside a Columbus home that was being rented as an AirBnB. Two trafficking victims were discovered there. A fourth victim was rescued at an unspecified location.

Granderson and Hill were extradited to Texas.

Southeast Ohio man arrested in rape of child

A Noble County grand jury indicted a 33-year-old Woodsfield man on nine counts of raping a child following an investigation by the Southeastern Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.

Detectives from the Noble County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, arrested Jonathan Neff on July 25, 2025. Neff was taken to the Noble County jail.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

In coordination with local, state and federal agencies, the Attorney General's Office — specifically BCI and the Environmental Enforcement Section — investigate and prosecute crimes that taint Ohio's air, water and soil.

Shine a Light on Dumpers initiative earns international award

Recognizing the growing toll that open dumping and open burning are having on communities in Ohio, Attorney General Yost and his environmental team created Shine a Light on Dumpers, a collaborative initiative involving BCI special agents and attorneys in his office, as well as local law enforcement agencies.

The initiative, launched in April 2023, targets a problem that wasn't being addressed effectively by any other local, state or federal agency — specifically, criminals who use their property or someone else's to illegally dispose of scrap tires, trash, garbage, and other solid waste from industrial, commercial, agricultural and community operations.

In late October, the International Association of Chiefs of Police celebrated the success of Shine a Light on Dumpers by awarding the Attorney General's Office the Chief David Cameron Leadership in Environmental Crimes Award. The prestigious award recognizes agencies that have improved their communities through environmental crimes prevention, investigation and enforcement.

"Ohio is not anyone's garbage can," Yost said. "This award is proof that when local partners join forces and have access to the right tools, environmental crime doesn't stand a chance."

The attorney general's Environmental Enforcement Section has two units that deal with environmental

crimes: BCI's Environmental Enforcement Unit, which provides investigative assistance and technical equipment, and the Criminal Prosecution Unit.

Although the units often work cases that are referred to them by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency or the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, they also work directly with local law enforcement agencies and prosecutor's offices.

The full scope of Shine a Light on Dumpers encompasses training, education, legal guidance, technical equipment, and investigative and prosecutorial assistance. Experts from the Attorney General's Office provide these resources to local law enforcement agencies so that those agencies (with help from the public) are equipped to put a stop to illegal dumping in their communities.

As part of the initiative, Yost's office in April awarded \$1 million in grants to Ohio communities seeking to

clean up illegal dump sites and deter future offenses. The grants were funded by settlement dollars secured by Yost's office. Twenty-nine grants were awarded for projects in communities in every region of Ohio.

Maumee commits to sewer upgrades to stop river pollution

In 2020, the city of Maumee reportedly told the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency that it had been illegally discharging untreated human waste into the Maumee River for decades.

The city alleged that portions of its sanitary sewer system overflowed during heavy rains, requiring it to regularly pump wastewater from certain manholes to relieve flow in the sewer system and prevent sewage from backing up into homes.

In 2021, under orders from the EPA, Maumee commissioned an engineering firm to conduct an extensive study to identify the steps needed to eliminate the overflows and bring the city back into compliance with Ohio's laws on water-pollution control.

The final study was issued in April, and, after extensive negotiations, Maumee officials, the Attorney General's Office, and the Ohio EPA agreed to a consent decree in August that defines a plan to move forward. A Lucas County judge approved the decree in October.

The settlement dictates that Maumee will implement infrastructure upgrades that were outlined in that study; sets requirements related to record-keeping, reporting, public notification and emergency response; and

establishes a timeline to complete the work. The city also must pay a \$10,000 civil penalty.

"Sewage doesn't belong in a scenic river," Yost said. "I'm glad to see that Maumee's city leaders are serious about tackling the source of this pollution once and for all."

Maumee officials expect to spend \$120 million on infrastructure repairs.

Yost demands scrapyard stop unpermitted torch cutting

Attorney General Yost moved to immediately halt illegal torch cutting at a northwestern Ohio scrapyard that has been producing foul-smelling emissions and a haziness in the village of Cygnet.

Alongside a complaint filed in Wood County Common Pleas Court in October, Yost's office requested an emergency order against Bates Recycling alleging that the company lacks the required permit to conduct torch cutting as part of its scrap-processing operations, including the handling of railroad steel.

Besides the strong odors, the torch cutting allegedly has produced rusty-colored plumes, reducing roadway visibility for motorists, and prompted reports of respiratory issues and skin irritations from area residents.

"This company does not operate in a vacuum, and therefore needs to follow Ohio's environmental laws," Yost said. "These regulations were established to prevent negative health impacts to the workers as well as the public."

Yost's complaint alleges violations of Ohio's air-quality regulations and asks that the Ohio EPA be allowed to inspect the facility before operations resume. The complaint also seeks a civil penalty of up to \$25,000 for each day the violations occurred.

Torch cutting is a process that uses a high-temperature flame to break down metals and other materials for storage, transport, shredding or smelting.

The Wood County Common Pleas Court agreed with Yost's office that an injunction was necessary. The court ordered Bates Recycling to cease its nuisance activities, including torch cutting railroad parts without permit approval from the Ohio EPA.

Companies fined \$3 million for 'toxic mountain' of e-waste

Closed Loop Refining and Recovery was paid to accept truckloads of computers and TVs built with cathode-ray tubes (CRT), a technology that had become obsolete with the advent of flat-panel displays such as LCD and plasma.



BCI Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge Brent Kirkpatrick, third from left, accepts the Chief David Cameron Leadership in Environmental Crimes Award on behalf of the Attorney General's Office at the 2025 annual conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police in Denver. With Kirkpatrick are, from left, BCI Special Agent-In-Charge Roger Davis; BCI Superintendent Bruce Pijanowski; Ken Walker, past president of the IACP; Wayne Kline, a member of the IACP Board of Directors; and BCI Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge Joshua Durst.



**Closed Loop
Refining and
Recovery**

The plan was to amass enormous stockpiles of CRT glass in warehouses on Columbus' South Side, then melt the glass in a furnace to produce two distinct commodities that could be sold for a profit: lead and pure glass.

But only half of the plan was ever accomplished. For four years beginning in 2012, electronic waste piled up in two large warehouses on Watkins Road and Fairwood Avenue. The furnace was never built, however, and in 2016 Closed Loop Refining and Recovery and its sister operation, Closed Loop Glass Solutions, shut their doors and walked away. The owners didn't even bother locking the doors on one of the warehouses. More than 150 million pounds of CRT glass was left behind amid a dusting of phosphor powder and lead.

In July, a Franklin County judge signed off on a magistrate's decision to impose \$3 million in civil penalties against the Closed Loop operators.

"These companies dumped a toxic mountain of waste and vanished, but the consequences caught up with them," Attorney General Yost said. "This is the final chapter in one of the largest hazardous-waste cases our office has ever taken on."

The Attorney General's Office brought the action against Closed Loop as well as the property owners, Garrison Southfield Park and Olymbec USA, both incorporated in the state of Delaware, at the request of the Ohio EPA.

The complaint alleged that Garrison and Olymbec leased the Columbus warehouses to Closed Loop, which also ran an operation in Arizona. Once it was obvious that Closed Loop was not going to clean up the warehouses, the property owners spent \$17 million over 3½ years to decontaminate both sites. In 2023, Yost's office settled with Garrison and Olymbec for \$250,000, acknowledging their responsible actions and financial contributions to the cleanup.



PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

Attorney General Yost harbors a special contempt for predators who exploit Ohio's most vulnerable victims, including the elderly. "Shouldn't some things be off limits — even to criminals?" His Elder Justice Unit includes experts from multiple sections across his office: the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Consumer Protection, Crime Victim Services, Health Care Fraud, and Special Prosecutions. The message is loud and clear: Elder abuse in any form will not be tolerated.

Yost launches initiative to curb elder abuse, exploitation

Ohio has seen a 400% increase in the past seven years in cases of elder abuse, which includes neglect as well as physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and financial exploitation. Even more astounding: In the vast majority of cases, the abuser knows the victim well.

To highlight the problem and increase reporting of elder abuse and exploitation, Attorney General Yost launched a statewide campaign aimed at educating Ohioans about this "devastating yet often-invisible crime" and eliminating any stigma associated with being a victim.

Estimates show that one in 10 Ohioans age 60 or older suffer abuse, but that only one in five cases are reported.

"There is an epidemic of underreporting," Yost said. "Our elders need to know that there is no shame in being victimized. The shame belongs only to those who harm and take advantage of vulnerable residents."

In remarks presented at the October meeting of the Attorney General's Elder Abuse Commission, Yost introduced a video — titled "What's Done in the Dark" — featuring several Ohioans who have fallen victim to elder abuse.

The video is a central component of the awareness campaign and is being shared by Yost's Elder Justice Unit at public events throughout Ohio. The video (<https://vimeo.com/1129893268>) is also the centerpiece of new Elder Abuse Resources webpages on the attorney general's website.

Apart from feeling embarrassed, abuse victims may fear retaliation, may have physical or mental limitations,



**SCAN THE QR CODE to
visit the new Elder Abuse
Resources webpages on the
attorney general's website.**

may be dependent upon their abuser, or may blame themselves for the abuse — factors that contribute to the underreporting problem.

Yost said it's important for aging Ohioans to know that others care about their suffering and that reporting the crime is the best way to put a stop to it.

"I cannot stress this enough: You are not alone. You are the victim, and we are here to help."

Partnering with pharmacists: A key tool in fight against abuse

As part of his statewide campaign targeting elder abuse, the Attorney General's Office partnered with the Ohio Pharmacists Association to promote the initiative and educate pharmacists on how to spot elder abuse and exploitation.

David E. Burke, executive director of the Pharmacists Association, said the organization is eager to see the collaboration "lead to the prosecution of these heinous acts against seniors. Pharmacy plays a role in maintaining health and dignity. With this effort, that assistance extends beyond the pharmacy counter."

The Attorney General's Office is developing training for pharmacists to help them identify those being exploited or abused. Pharmacies also will be showcasing campaign materials in their stores and attaching information to prescriptions.

The partnership is the first of many that Yost's office is seeking to form with "front line" organizations that regularly come in contact with older Ohioans.

"It's going to take all of us — pharmacists, bankers, law enforcement, physicians, retirement communities, and you and me — to get at the root of this scourge," Yost said. "Our senior citizens deserve dignity, protection and justice as much as anybody else."

Retirement community caregiver sentenced to prison for rape

Wayde Shankle, 36, of Ashtabula, pleaded guilty in Ashtabula County Common Pleas Court in September to raping two residents of Villa at the Lake, a residential care community where he worked as a nurse aide. One of the victims was a patient in the community's memory-care unit.

Immediately after the plea, the judge sentenced Shankle to eight to 12 years in prison and ordered him to register with the county sheriff as a Tier III sex offender for the rest of his life.

The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigated the case, with assistance from the Conneaut Police Department and the FBI.

"This was a horrific case of elder abuse at the hands



of a predator masquerading as a protector," Yost said. "My deepest thanks to the investigators and prosecutors who fought for the victims and brought this abuser to justice."

Cryptocurrency scam victims get justice in Cincinnati

In separate cases in the Cincinnati area, BCI's Electronic Financial Investigations (EFI) unit recovered a combined \$70,000+ that had been lost by two elderly women in cryptocurrency scams. Both women received prompts on their computers indicating that they had been hacked, then were instructed by a scam artist posing as an IT technician to deposit money in a cryptocurrency kiosk.

The EFI unit was created to assist Ohio law enforcement with the investigation of financial crime cases committed via the internet, with a primary focus on investigations involving cryptocurrency.

Agents and personnel from various BCI units — Forensic Accounting, Special Investigations, Cyber Crime, Special Victims, Criminal Intelligence, and Public Official Corruption — provide expertise and investigative resources to electronic fraud investigations.

The unit began actively focusing on cyber-fraud cases in December 2024. In fiscal year 2025 alone, it opened more than 170 cases in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies.

SUPPORTING PROSECUTORS STATEWIDE

The Special Prosecutions Section of the office supports prosecutors who request help in cases involving complex issues and higher-level offenses, such as child abuse, human trafficking, capital murder, financial crimes, drug trafficking, and public corruption.

Justice prevails in cold case murders of mother, child

Thirty years after a mother and her 17-month-old son were found dead in their burned-out mobile home outside Marietta, the man responsible for the 1995 double murder was sentenced to life in prison.



In August, Scott Hickman, 53, was convicted in Washington County Common Pleas Court of four counts of aggravated murder and two counts of murder in the deaths of 28-year-old Kimberly Fulton and her son, Daniel, who were killed before the home was set on fire.

Hickman was arrested in 1998 but released due to a lack of evidence. The case went cold until it was re-examined in 2019 by the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Criminal Investigation's Cold Case Unit. Hickman was indicted and arrested in 2021.

Man who dated mother of 4 pleads guilty in her death

A Huron County man pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter, tampering with evidence, and gross abuse of a corpse in the disappearance of his girlfriend, Amanda Dean, six years ago.

Frederick Reer, now 42, of Townsend Township, was arrested by BCI agents in February 2024. BCI determined that Reer killed Dean inside a residence where the couple lived, then cleaned the crime scene and disposed of the evidence. Dean's body has never been found.

Reer was sentenced to 14 years in prison on Jan. 5, 2026 in Huron County Common Pleas Court.

2001 murder cold case ends with husband's guilty plea

Paul Hicks was found guilty in December of three counts of murder and one count of kidnapping in the death of

his estranged wife, resolving a cold case more than two decades old.

At about 8 p.m. on Oct. 18, 2001, Regina Hicks, 25, left her boyfriend's residence in her white Chevrolet Camaro to pick up her son. But she never arrived. On Monday, Oct. 22, the car was found in a pond in Willard, Ohio, her body inside.

On Jan. 9, 2026, Hicks was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison. The case was investigated by BCI and tried in Huron County Common Pleas Court by the Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section and the Huron County Prosecutor's Office.

Death threats against judge, lawyers put man in prison

A Northwest Ohio man was sentenced to 10 years in prison for threatening to kill his lawyer, prosecutors and a judge, all of whom were involved with his road-rage case. Eric Braun, 49, of Bellevue, was sentenced by an Ottawa County judge after he was found guilty of four counts of intimidation of a witness in a criminal case and one count of aggravated menacing. Braun initially was charged in Ottawa County with improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle and aggravated menacing for a February 2023 road-rage incident. He made the threats during the criminal proceedings.

Phone repairman stashed customers' nude photos

A Gallia County man who worked for a cellphone-repair business was sentenced to prison for downloading nude photos from customers' phones. Calvin Jordan, 27, of Gallipolis, was sentenced to 49 to 51 years in prison and ordered to register as a Tier II sex offender. More than 40 customers — some male, others female — were victimized, including minors ranging in age from 14 to 17. Jordan worked at Direct Computing Solutions (aka DC Solutions) in Gallipolis when the crimes took place. Investigators with the Gallipolis Police Department and BCI determined that Jordan had downloaded the private photos from December 2021 to April 2022.

DEMANDING INTEGRITY IN HEALTH CARE

Attorney General Yost vigorously pursues bad actors who seek to abuse the health-care system. Of particular note in 2025 was the work of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU), an arm of Yost's Health Care Fraud Section. The MFCU is part of a nationwide network that serves to protect the Medicaid system; it is funded predominantly through federal funds. Investigators with Ohio's MFCU work with local law enforcement, BCI, and a host of public and private partners.

Medicaid cheat tries again, gets 6 to 9 years in prison

A Dayton woman who was convicted of Medicaid fraud in 2019 and banned from working as a Medicaid provider couldn't resist scamming the system once more, this time for \$1.5 million.

Janay Corbitt, 36, pleaded guilty in Franklin County Common Pleas Court to second-degree felony theft and three third-degree felony counts of identity fraud and was sentenced in April to six to nine years in prison. She also was ordered to pay \$1.5 million in restitution to the Ohio Department of Medicaid.

Corbitt was indicted in May 2024 after an investigation by the Attorney General's Office. Because she could not become a Medicaid provider under her own name, she stole multiple identities — including that of a woman she befriended on Facebook — to open and operate two sham behavioral-health-counseling agencies in the Dayton area. She also stole the identities of several Dayton-area licensed counselors, using their credentials to bill Medicaid for services that were never provided.

Corbitt was arrested in August 2024 in Dallas, Texas, after she spent months on the lam.

In 2019, Corbitt was convicted of theft and ordered to pay \$204,412; she has paid \$6,255.

\$1.5 million billing scheme lands doctor in prison

A Columbus doctor who billed the Ohio Department of Medicaid \$1.5 million for equipment he never bought was sentenced in June to two years in prison.



MFCU investigators determined that Dr. Robert Florea — through his clinic, Buckeye Health and Research — billed Medicaid over three years for more than 5,100 pieces of equipment, including braces for joint and back pain. Records show he bought only 460 items.

A Franklin County Common Pleas Court jury convicted Florea, 49, and his company of Medicaid fraud, a third-degree felony. He surrendered his medical license at the start of the year.

Besides the prison sentence, Florea and Buckeye Health and Research must pay \$1.5 million in restitution and court costs. The clinic is no longer in operation.

California dreaming: \$5.7 million fraud ends in prison sentence

Sally Njume-Tatsing, formerly of Pickerington, owned and operated three Ohio home health-care businesses, even though she lived in California during most of the time she owned the businesses.

Still, she did all the Medicaid billing for the businesses, located in Reynoldsburg, Mount Vernon and Parma. All were called Labelle Home Health.

While billing Medicaid for home health-aide services, Njume-Tatsing inflated the hours of services provided, billed for registered nurses when licensed practical nurses were used, and billed for care for patients who were either dead or ineligible.

In September 2024, she was found guilty in federal court of 13 counts of Medicaid fraud and was sentenced in April 2025 to 3½ years in prison. She was ordered to pay \$5.7 million in restitution to Medicaid.

Attorney General Yost's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit worked with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio to investigate and prosecute the case.

Drugmakers accused of price-fixing to pay \$49.1 million

Two drugmakers accused of participating in a long-running scheme to inflate the prices of certain generic prescription drugs and limit market competition agreed to settle the case for a total of \$49.1 million.

Ohio consumers who bought the drugs between May 2009 and December 2019 may be eligible for compensation from the settlement.

The drug manufacturers involved in the antitrust lawsuits are Apotex of Toronto and Heritage Pharmaceuticals of Eatontown, New Jersey. Apotex's share of the settlement is \$39.1 million and Heritage's is \$10 million.

The settlement stems from three major antitrust complaints brought by Attorney General Yost and a coalition of nearly all states and territories against 30 corporate defendants and 25 individual executives.

★ **The first complaint**, filed in 2016, involved Heritage Pharmaceuticals, Apotex and 16 corporate defendants, two individual executives, and 15 generic drugs. Two former Heritage executives, Jeffery Glazer and Jason Malek, have since settled and are cooperating.

★ **The second complaint**, filed in 2019, targeted Teva Pharmaceuticals, Apotex and 18 of the nation's largest generic-drug manufacturers, naming 16 senior executives.

★ **The third complaint**, filed in 2020, focuses on 80 topical generic drugs that account for billions of dollars in U.S. sales and names 26 corporate defendants and 10 individual defendants. Six pharmaceutical executives have settled in this case and are assisting in the litigation.

The cases are built on evidence from several cooperating witnesses, along with a database of more than 20 million documents and millions of phone records showing communications among 600-plus sales and pricing executives in the generics industry.

The complaints describe an interconnected network of industry executives who secretly met at dinners and social gatherings and on private calls, using coded language such as "fair share," "playing nice in the sandbox," and "responsible competitor" to disguise illegal agreements.

Ohio to share in \$7.4 billion settlement with opioid maker

Attorney General Yost played a key role in securing a \$7.4 billion multistate settlement from OxyContin-maker Purdue Pharma and its owners that will provide funds for addiction treatment and prevention across Ohio and other states.

On Nov. 20, a federal bankruptcy court judge approved the settlement. Purdue filed for bankruptcy in 2019.

Communities nationwide will receive settlement funds over the next 15 years to support addiction treatment and prevention as well as recovery services. Most of the settlement funds will be distributed in the first three years. In Ohio, the state and local governments will receive up to \$198 million from the agreement.

"This is another major step toward accountability and recovery," said Yost, who joined a nationwide coalition of attorneys general in bringing the lawsuit. "The money won't undo the damage, but it will help communities in Ohio and elsewhere continue to address and overcome the unspeakable harm."

Under the ownership of the Sackler family, Purdue Pharma manufactured and aggressively marketed OxyContin and other opioid products for decades, contributing to the largest drug crisis in U.S. history.

The settlement resolves litigation against Purdue and the Sacklers, with those entities acknowledging their role in contributing to the epidemic with rampant production and aggressive marketing of opioids for decades. It also ends the Sacklers' ownership of Purdue and their ability to sell opioids in the United States.

The Purdue case is the latest in a string of settlements that Yost and his staff have brokered to help fund opioid recovery in Ohio. Their previous work includes:

- ★ An \$808 million settlement with opioid distributors Cardinal Health, McKesson and AmerisourceBergen.
- ★ A \$185 million settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc.
- ★ A \$24.7 million settlement with McKinsey & Co.
- ★ A \$114 million settlement with Walmart.
- ★ A \$679 million settlement with drug makers Teva and Allergan and pharmacies CVS and Walgreens.

PROTECTING OHIOANS' WALLETS

One of the most widely known aspects of the Attorney General's Office is its role in getting justice for consumers who have been ripped off by unscrupulous businesses and for donors duped by fraudulent charities. The AG's Consumer Protection and Charitable Law sections are central to these efforts and often represent a last line of defense for aggrieved Ohioans.

Yost sues insurer over first responders' unpaid medical bills

A Texas-based health insurance company that was unlicensed in Ohio and had stopped paying claims to retired first responders shut down its state operations in late August after Attorney General Yost filed suit.

State officials estimate that 3,400 retired police and firefighters bought policies through Thin Blue Line Benefits Association from 2023 to 2025. The company targeted retired first responders who were not yet 65 and, therefore, not eligible for Medicare.

Nearly 500 retirees complained to officials, including some facing more than \$100,000 in unpaid bills.

Thin Blue Line had an exclusive marketing agreement with the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police and, later, the national FOP.

Yost's lawsuit alleges that Thin Blue Line failed to obtain the proper registration or licensure in Ohio despite collecting monthly premiums of up to \$3,000 from customers.

In June, Yost and Ohio Insurance Director Judith French filed a lawsuit in Franklin County Common Pleas Court to stop Thin Blue Line from holding itself out as an insurance carrier in Ohio. The court granted an injunction and named the Ohio Department of Insurance as a conservator to preserve the company's assets.

In late July, the state of Arizona opened an investigation into Thin Blue Line after the its insurance department found that the company was unlawfully providing insurance. Arizona issued cease-and-desist orders.

AG Yost joins forces to put notorious robocaller out of action

Attorney General Yost and his counterparts in seven other states secured a permanent ban against a Texas-based robocaller that was responsible for billions of illegal calls, including millions sent to Ohioans.

John Spiller was found in contempt of court by a federal judge in Texas who imposed the strictest penalty possible, permanently prohibiting him from launching future telecommunications companies or otherwise operating in the telecom industry.

Spiller also is forbidden to collaborate with those who aided his illegal operations, make deceptive statements or use aliases in government filings. In addition, he must pay more than \$600,000 in attorney's fees and litigation costs for violating a 2023 court order that barred him from placing or facilitating robocalls — violations that last year prompted the attorneys general to seek the contempt order.

As owner of Rising Eagle Capital Group, JSquared Telecom, and Rising Eagle Capital Group-Cayman, Spiller offered robocall dialer and VoIP (Voice Over

Internet Protocol) service to telemarketers, facilitating massive volumes of robocalls, including many targeting numbers on the Do Not Call Registry. Many of the calls were illegal spoofs to sell short-term, limited-duration health insurance plans.

Hicksville man's new business, like old one, prompts action

Attorney General Yost filed a lawsuit in Defiance County in November accusing an online consulting business and its owner of accepting excessively large down payments, making misleading claims and failing to provide the services promised. Seven consumers filed complaints against Cole Dockery and his business, Ecommerce Business Builders (EBB). More than \$142,000 is in dispute.

In July 2022, Yost's office took action against Dockery and three others who ran an unregistered business, National Anglers Association, which sold fishing lures it regularly failed to deliver and enrolled customers in a monthly fee-based subscription service they never agreed to join. In January 2024, Dockery and his company agreed to pay \$4,579.37 in restitution and \$3,500 in civil penalties.

Yost's lawsuit says that EBB, through social-media posts, promoted "opportunity plans" promising consumers a quick way to maximize profits after an initial investment, which initially varied from \$6,700 to \$32,100. The plans offered assistance in creating online stores to sell various products through platforms such as Amazon and TikTok Shop.

Yost and other AGs crack down on retailer's deceptive practices

The online clothing retailer behind brands such as JustFab, ShoeDazzle and FabKids agreed to a \$1 million settlement after Attorney General Yost and 32 other AGs accused it of deceptively marketing its VIP Membership Program and making it difficult for consumers to cancel memberships.

The attorneys general alleged that Louisiana-based TFG Holding offered discounted prices to consumers enrolled in its VIP program, with members charged \$49.95 a month unless they made a purchase in that month or logged into their accounts by the sixth day of the month to "skip" the monthly charge. If consumers did not make a purchase or skip, the charges accrued as store credits for future purchases. Some consumers were unaware that they were even enrolled in the program.

As part of the settlement, the company must stop assessing recurring charges to any consumer who enrolled in its VIP Membership Program before May 31, 2016, and must pay restitution.

AG brings down hammer on crooked contractors

For as long as there have been homeowners, a small subset of contractors has sought to take advantage of them in violation of the state's Consumer Sales Practices Act.

Two cases stood out:

★ **Criminal past and present:** Roger Glenn Gray, an Indiana contractor with an extensive criminal history, was sentenced in April to 3 to 4½ years in prison for defrauding 14 Ohioans of more than \$105,000. Between April 7, 2022, and April 21, 2024, Gray — operating under the business name All Around Concrete — accepted payments for concrete work and home-improvement projects. In most instances, he either performed minimal work or none, failed to provide materials, and refused to issue refunds. He pleaded guilty in Hamilton County Common Pleas Court to a second-degree felony count of engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity. The court also ordered Gray to pay restitution to his victims. His criminal record includes a 2003 felony-theft conviction in Indiana; two Ohio convictions for felony theft from the elderly in 2012 in Hamilton County; and a 2014 misdemeanor theft conviction in Hamilton County.



★ **In trouble again:** In separate lawsuits brought in September, business owners Joseph Schlosser and Daniel Sechriest are accused of violating the Consumer Sales Practices Act. Schlosser, through the company Building With Faith Construction, offered general contracting and home-remodeling services in northwestern Ohio. The lawsuit seeks \$131,792 in damages for six consumers who said Schlosser did shoddy work or, in some cases, no work at all. Schlosser was previously charged criminally by the Henry County prosecutor and pleaded guilty to attempting to engage in a pattern of corrupt activity through his business. In August, he was sentenced to four days in jail and five years of community control, and ordered to pay \$154,644 in restitution. The lawsuit against Sechriest accuses him of billing customers and the customers' insurance companies for unapproved work, then putting a lien on the customers' homes for charges not covered by insurance. The total loss is about \$31,000. In 2007, Sechriest was found to have violated consumer protection laws through his remodeling company, Mastergard. And in 2013, he signed an assurance of voluntary compliance with the Attorney General's Office on behalf of his company, U.S. Restoration and Remodeling, for engaging in shoddy and unworkmanlike services. The civil lawsuit against Sechriest and U.S. Restoration and Remodeling is ongoing.

AG's radar always looking for shady used-car dealers

The AG's Consumer Protection Section fields tens of thousands of complaints a year from the public. The single-largest category is usually motor vehicles, and the bulk of those complaints usually involve used-car dealerships accused of violating the Consumer Sales Practices Act and the Certificate of Motor Vehicles Act.

Notable lawsuits brought by the office in 2025:

★ **Starfleet Cars, Delaware County:** Johnathan Paul Kirkham is accused of failing to properly transfer

titles to numerous consumers who bought vehicles from his dealership. Yost's office resolved 32 title-related complaints using \$138,135 from the state's Title Defect Recision (TDR) Fund, which aids consumers who do not receive titles within 40 days of a vehicle purchase, as required by Ohio law.

★ **Sirius Motors, Butler County:** Yost's office resolved six title-related complaints totaling over \$86,000 paid from the TDR Fund. Timothy Thacker and his Monroe used-car dealership are named in the lawsuit, which concluded in October with an award of \$86,333 to the TDR Fund and \$50,000 in civil penalties to the Attorney General's Office.

★ **Highway 22 Auto Sales, Fairfield County:** Yost's office resolved 10 title-related complaints using more than \$30,000 from the TDR Fund. This lawsuit names Debra Jeffers and her Lancaster dealership. The case concluded in July with an award of \$32,326 to the TDR Fund and \$50,000 in civil penalties to the Attorney General's Office.

Head of prison re-entry nonprofit sentenced in theft of \$207,000

The former director of a prison re-entry nonprofit was sentenced in December to 10 to 13 years in prison for stealing more than \$207,000 from the organization and its donors, including elderly Ohioans.

Thomas Ostrosky, 52, pleaded guilty in Lucas County Common Pleas Court to felony charges of engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, theft from a person in a protected class, solicitation fraud and telecommunications fraud. He was indicted in April and arrested in Dade City, Florida, following an investigation by Yost's Charitable Law Section.

The charges stemmed from Ostrosky's management of the Lazarus Experience, a Toledo-area nonprofit he founded in 2017. The organization, no longer in operation, was described as a Christian ministry providing re-entry services to incarcerated men.

Ostrosky must pay restitution of \$207,650.



Head of service-dog charity allegedly siphoned donations

A now-defunct Findlay nonprofit that purported to train and provide service dogs for people with chronic illness and disabilities is accused by the Attorney General's Office of serious misuse of charitable funds, mismanagement, and abuse of public trust.

In a lawsuit filed in Franklin County Common Pleas Court against Pawsible Angels Inc. and its former executive director, Michele S. Frank, the state alleges that \$25,000 in charitable donations was diverted to cover Frank's personal expenses.

Investigators from Yost's Charitable Law Section found that Frank, who controlled the nonprofit's finances and operations, used charitable funds to cover personal rent and utilities, debt and overdraft fees, medical bills, clothing, meals, dating services, and private music lessons.

Yost's office is seeking restitution, civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation, and a permanent injunction barring Frank from operating or serving on the board of any charitable organization in Ohio.

Yost moves to dissolve recovery nonprofit: 'The jig is up'

A Columbiana County nonprofit that describes itself as a ministry supporting addiction recovery is accused of misusing tens of thousands of dollars in charitable funds to cover the board president's personal expenses — food, gasoline, utility bills, Hulu subscriptions and more — even as he lived rent-free on the organization's property.

Yost's Charitable Law Section has filed suit to dissolve Lamb's House, a nonprofit in the village of Rogers, and has asked the court to appoint a receiver to manage the remaining assets. The filing names President Mark Altomare and two board members as defendants, accusing them of unjust enrichment, breach of fiduciary duty, and other violations of charitable laws.

"This nonprofit has served no charitable purpose for years, operating only as a personal ATM and a source of free housing for its president," Yost said. "The jig is up."

Lamb's House owns 43 acres of land containing a nine-bedroom house, a 13,000-square-foot commercial building and two barns.

Former booster club treasurer sentenced for stealing \$40,000

The former treasurer of a Wellston City Schools booster club was found guilty of felony grand theft and telecommunications fraud and sentenced to two years in prison for stealing more than \$40,000 from the organization.

An investigation by Yost's Charitable Law Section found that Lisa Frisby, 46, embezzled the money for personal use during her five years as treasurer of the now-defunct Big W Football Boosters.

With full control of accounts, Frisby successfully concealed her theft until the club's vice president grew suspicious and obtained the organization's bank statements, which did not match the account balances reported by Frisby.

She was ordered to pay \$40,200 in restitution.

Two ex-VFW officials convicted of scheme to steal funds

Two former VFW officials were convicted in separate trials for their parts in a check-writing scheme to steal donated funds meant to help needy veterans.

In January, Guy Andonian, a former quartermaster of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4044 in Columbus, pleaded guilty to telecommunications fraud, a third-degree felony. He was ordered to repay more than \$35,000 in funds stolen from the agency and sentenced to five years of community control.

In May, Todd Reveron, the former executive director of the nonprofit Veterans of Foreign Wars of Ohio Charities, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor count of receiving stolen property. Reveron was sentenced to three years of community control and fined \$1,000. The VFW of Ohio Charities was created in 2003 to help VFW locations generate charitable dollars to aid veterans in their communities.

Andonian and Reveron began their criminal activity after being connected through the VFW network. Andonian would write checks from VFW Post 4044's charitable accounts with the agreement that Reveron would deposit them into his personal or business bank accounts, then split the money with Andonian.

The check-writing scheme operated from October 2017 to September 2019.



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

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