



For Immediate Release

May 18, 2021

Summit County Common Pleas Court to Pilot Statewide Sentencing Data Platform Project Beginning May 24th

Summit County, Ohio: Judge Amy Corrigan Jones, Administrative Judge of the Summit County Common Pleas Court General Division, announced the Summit County General Division will serve as a pilot site under the Ohio Sentencing Data Platform Project, an effort launched by the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission.

The Criminal Sentencing Commission approached Summit County to be one of the foundation courts in an effort to implement the system and database across Ohio. Dr. Hazem Said, Professor and Director of the School of Information and Technology at the University of Cincinnati, will be onsite May 24 through May 26 to begin the pilot program.

Upon hearing Summit County will serve as a pilot site, Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor stated, "I am so proud of the Common Pleas Court judges of Summit County who have banded together and volunteered to pilot the Sentencing Data Project. Both Judge Amy Corrigan Jones and Judge Christine Croce have been involved with the group advising the creators of this program. The collection of data from all aspects of our criminal justice system is the ultimate goal."

Judge Christine Croce serves on the Ohio Sentencing Data Platform Governance Board and Ohio Sentencing Data Policy Work Group, a sub-committee of the Governance Board. Judge Amy Corrigan Jones serves on the Judges Advisory Group, whose members are ambassadors for the Ohio Sentencing Data Platform project and engage their communities and colleagues on the progress and importance of the data platform. The group also acts as a sounding board among judges to offer input and discuss the efforts to implement the Ohio Sentencing Data Platform.

"It has been a great honor to serve on the Judges Advisory Group, whose work will assist the judiciary in maintaining the public's trust and helping judges and decision makers have the best information available to perform their public service duty in the most impactful way," stated Corrigan Jones.

Jones continued, "We need to ensure fairness in every stage of the criminal justice system and the Ohio Sentencing Data Platform is a tool that will help inform judicial decision making."

Judge Croce explained, “The Sentencing Data Platform is a critical component in the use and collection of data in Ohio’s criminal justice system and will be a tremendous help to those involved in the criminal justice system.”

The project started in late 2019, when Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor asked the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission to convene a Uniform Sentencing Entry Ad Hoc Committee. The purpose of the Committee was to develop a model, uniform felony sentencing entry and to coordinate with the Supreme Court’s Commission on Technology and the Courts in developing guidelines for the sentencing database.

The Commission partnered with the University of Cincinnati to work with pilot courts on developing the database. Dr. Hazem Said, will be in Summit County May 24 through May 26 to observe felony pleas and sentencing hearings to gain an understanding of how they are conducted in Summit County.

“This phase of the project allows for a measured, thorough and comprehensive opportunity to examine systems and current practices so we can model the process into the database,” explained Dr. Said.

Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission Director Sara Andrews explained, “The adoption of the felony sentencing documents is the first step to begin standardized, aggregate felony sentencing data collection in Ohio. The Ohio Sentencing Data Platform will move courts to a data-informed environment that allows for a thorough understanding and analysis of the criminal justice system by its own actors and those making policy decisions while increasing transparency with the public.”

Andrews continued, “We are grateful to Judge Amy Corrigan Jones and her colleagues at Summit County Common Pleas Court for serving as a pilot court in our effort to create a timely, accurate, comprehensive and shared felony sentencing database. The Ohio Sentencing Data Platform will help inform decision-making and give judges information to impose sentences in accordance with the purposes and principles of felony sentencing.”

The Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission received a 2021 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance grant to further the project and more courts will be able to participate in the future.

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Contact: Susan Sweeney, Esq.
Assistant Court Executive Officer
Summit County Common Pleas Court – General Division
ssweeney@cpcourt.summitoh.net

Sara Andrews
Director
Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission
Sara.Andrews@sc.ohio.gov