

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



**William Steuk**  
Judge

**Kimberly Binford**  
Clerk of Court

**"When they are impartial and independent, courts earn public trust and confidence as they balance needs for social order and individual freedom in the 'ordinary administration of criminal and civil justice.'"**

## HURON MUNICIPAL COURT 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

2025 Employee Roster
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William Steuk.....Judge  
Kimberly Binford.....Clerk  
Julie Ortega.....Deputy Clerk  
Jenna Heery ..... Probation Officer/Deputy Clerk

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Pursuant to section 1901.14(A)(4) of the Ohio Revised Code, the following report, relative to the operation of the Huron Municipal Court for the year 2025 is respectfully submitted.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Huron Municipal Court is to provide a fair, impartial, and efficient resolution of the matters brought before it, without unnecessary delay, in a courteous manner.

### DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

The Municipal Court is committed to providing fair and impartial resolution of all issues in a manner that is efficient for all parties involved. The Municipal Court is also committed to ensuring that defendants strictly comply with all judicial orders. Finally, the Huron Municipal Court is committed to operate the court well within the boundaries of its budget, and to report in a timely manner all revenues and expenditures to the appropriate agencies, thereby earning and maintaining the public's respect, confidence and satisfaction.

## MUNICIPAL COURT

The Constitution of the United States and the Ohio Constitution both established three separate branches of government: the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary. The doctrine of “separation of powers” is embodied in the framework of the Ohio Constitution, the U.S. Constitution, and the system of representative government and constitutional democracy. The authority to operate the court and make determinations as to the appropriate level of funding needed to operate the court, are decisions that are within the exclusive authority of the courts. These are matters about which the courts have the constitutional obligation to protect and preserve from interference from another branch or level of government. These principles are at the heart of the separation of powers framework endorsed by the Founding Fathers in the Federalist Papers, and evident in the Federalist Paper #52:

*In order to lay a due foundation for that separate and distinct exercise of the different powers of government, which to a certain extent, is admitted on all hands to be essential to the preservation of liberty, it is evident that each department [branch of government] should have a will of its own....The great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department [branch of government], consists in giving to those who administer each department, the necessary constitutional means, and personal motives, to resist encroachment of the others...Ambition must be made to counter ambition.(Federalist #52)*

The creation and maintenance of the municipal courts is reserved to the General Assembly pursuant to Ohio Const. art. IV, §1. The Huron Municipal Court was established in 1968 pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 1901.01.

The Huron Municipal Court is a single judge court where the part-time Judge acts as both the Presiding and Administrative Judge. The Judge serves a term of 6 years. The court employs one (1) full time Clerk of Court/Court Administrator and one (1) full time Deputy Clerk/Probation Officer and one (1) part time Deputy Clerk for the Civil Division.

### **Core Purposes of Courts: (as described by the Institute for Court Management)**

1. To Do Individual Justice in Individual Cases
2. To Appear To Do Individual Justice in Individual Cases
3. To Provide a Final Forum for the Resolution of Legal Disputes
4. To Protect Individuals from the Arbitrary Use of Government Power
5. To Provide a Formal Record of Legal Status
6. To Deter Criminal Behavior
7. To Rehabilitate Persons Convicted of Crime
8. To Separate Convicted Persons from Society
9. To Protect the Weak Against the Strong

### **Clerk of Court's Department:**

Huron Municipal Court is pleased to announce a leadership transition within the Clerk's office. After a distinguished career that began in 1996, Julie Ortega has officially retired as the Clerk of Court. While she has stepped down from her primary leadership role, we are fortunate that she continues to serve the court part-time as a Deputy Clerk. Effective October 24, 2025, Kim Binford, was sworn in as the new Clerk of Court. Having served with the Huron Municipal Court since January 2017, she is honored to step into this role and looks forward to continuing our commitment of serving the public in this new capacity.

The clerk shall do all of the following: file and safely keep all journals, records, books, and papers belonging or appertaining to the court; record the proceedings of the court; perform all other duties that the judges of the court may prescribe; and keep a book showing all receipts and disbursements, which book shall be open for public inspection at all times. The clerk shall prepare and maintain a general index, a docket, and other records that the court, by rule, requires, all of which shall be the public records of the court. In the docket, the clerk shall enter, at the time of the commencement of an action, the names of the parties in full, the names of the counsel, and the nature of the proceedings. Under proper dates, the clerk shall note the filing of the complaint, issuing of summons or other process, returns, and any subsequent pleadings. The clerk also shall enter all reports, verdicts, orders, judgments, and proceedings of the court, clearly specifying the relief granted or orders made in each action. The clerk of a municipal court shall receive, collect, and issue receipts for all costs, fees, fines, bail, and other moneys payable to the office or to any officer of the court. The clerk shall on or before the twentieth day of the month following the month in which they are collected disburse to the proper persons or officers, and take receipts for, all costs, fees, fines, bail, and other moneys that the clerk collects. Moneys deposited as security for costs shall be retained pending the litigation. The clerk shall keep a separate account of all receipts and disbursements in civil and criminal cases, which shall be a permanent public record of the office. The clerk shall have other powers and duties as are prescribed by rule or order of the court.

State law mandates that this department collect and disburse monies and maintain the records of the court. This department processes matters for and provides information to the Huron Police Department, State Highway Patrol, Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Erie County Sheriff, civil litigants, attorneys, prosecutors, criminal defendants, The Supreme Court of Ohio, The Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation and all other law enforcement agencies.

Money is paid into this department as fines and costs on traffic, criminal and civil cases. In 2025, the court operated well within the boundaries of its **\$278,263.14** budget, collecting **\$685,891.16** in fines and costs from both criminal/traffic and civil cases. From this total collected the court paid **\$331,156.47** to the City of Huron. This, combined with the reimbursement from the county in the amount of **\$73,969.06**, for the Judge and Clerks' salaries, provided an overage to the General Fund of **\$34,675.19**. As required by statute, fines and costs were distributed to the various law enforcement agencies, state agencies and to the City of Huron and are shown in the following pages.

The Clerks' office is ever grateful for the cooperation received from the municipalities of this court district, other courts and law enforcement agencies. The clerk's office looks forward to assisting you in the coming year. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed to the continued success of the court.

## HURON MUNICIPAL COURT 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

### SUMMARY REPORT

#### Traffic & Criminal Cases

<b>Number of Traffic Cases Filed in 2025:</b>	<b>1719</b>	
<b>Huron Police Department:</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Ohio State Highway Patrol:</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Erie County Sheriff:</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>38%</b>

<b>Number of Criminal Cases Filed in 2025:</b>	<b>394</b>	
<b>Huron Police Department:</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Ohio State Highway Patrol:</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Erie County Sheriff:</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources &amp; Other State Agencies:</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Misc. Other Agencies</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0%</b>

#### Civil Cases

<b>Number of Civil cases Filed in 2025:</b>	<b>194</b>	
<b>Number of Small Claims Cases Filed in 2025:</b>	<b>45</b>	
<b>Total Civil cases filed in 2025:</b>	<b>239</b>	

### TOTAL MONIES COLLECTED IN 2025

Criminal & Traffic Account:	\$ 559,048.10
Civil Account:	\$ 126,843.06
 Total Collections:	 \$ 685,891.16

## HURON MUNICIPAL COURT 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

2025 FINANCIAL REPORT
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Balance on Hand 1/1/2025:	\$ 15,750.75
Total Collections for 2025:	\$ 685,891.16

Total Cash:	\$ 701,641.91
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Disbursements:
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**City of Huron:**

Court Costs:	\$ 164,691.07
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 12,648.00
Computer Improvement Fund:	\$ 13,379.00
City Ordinance Fines:	\$ 63,040.00
Special Warrant Fund:	\$ 2,040.00
45% OSP Fines – General Fund:	\$ 11,238.20
45% OSP Fines – Hwy Patrol Fund:	\$ 7,996.20
Special Projects:	\$ 1,487.50
DUI Arresting Agency:	\$ 1,761.00
DUI Indigent Alcohol Fund:	\$ 3,235.50
Probation Fees	\$ 49,640.00

Total paid to City of Huron:	\$ 331,156.47
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**Erie County:**

Highway Maintenance Fines:	\$ 30,238.00
Regular Fines Collected:	\$ 39,524.75
Uniform Fines Collected:	\$ 53,084.00
Highway Safety:	\$ 30.00
Dog Fines:	\$ 00.00
Drug Fines:	\$ 600.00
Liquor Fines:	\$ 545.00
10% OSP Fines:	\$ 4,808.60
Sheriff Housing Fund:	\$ 1,097.00
Sheriff Fees:	\$ 151.74
DUI Arresting Agency:	\$ 363.00
Public Defenders Fee:	\$ 1835.00
Erie County Law Library	\$ 927.25

Total Paid to Erie County:	\$ 133,204.34
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**State of Ohio:**

Victims of Crime Fund:	\$ 15,075.00
Indigent Defense Fund:	\$ 47,793.90
Expungement Costs:	\$ 2,100.00
45% OSP Fines:	\$ 24,043.00
DUI Arresting Agency	\$ 135.00
OSP Drug Fines:	\$ 1219.99
Board of Pharmacy Fines:	\$ 390.00
50% Liquor Fines:	\$ 545.00
Seat Belt Fines:	\$ 1145.00
Highway Safety Fund:	\$ 60.00
Interlock Fee:	\$ 15.00
Bureau of Motor Vehicles:	\$ 15.00
Ohio Dept. Natural Resources	\$ 4,390.00
Legal Aid:	\$ 5,488.00
Drug Enforcement:	\$ 5,082.10
Ohio Department of Taxation:	\$ 00.00
Ohio Department of Public Safety:	\$ 250.00

Total paid to State of Ohio: \$ 107,746.99

**Miscellaneous Disbursements:**

Restitution Payments Collected and Disbursed:	\$ 6,914.22
Bond Refunds paid throughout Year:	\$ 12,987.75
Garnishment Payments (Civil Cases)	\$ 82,216.16
Bonds Forwarded to Erie County Common Pleas Court:	\$ 14,800.00
Capital Recovery Systems:	\$ 4,625.90

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS: \$ 693,651.83

BALANCE ON HAND DECEMBER 31, 2025: \$ 7,990.08

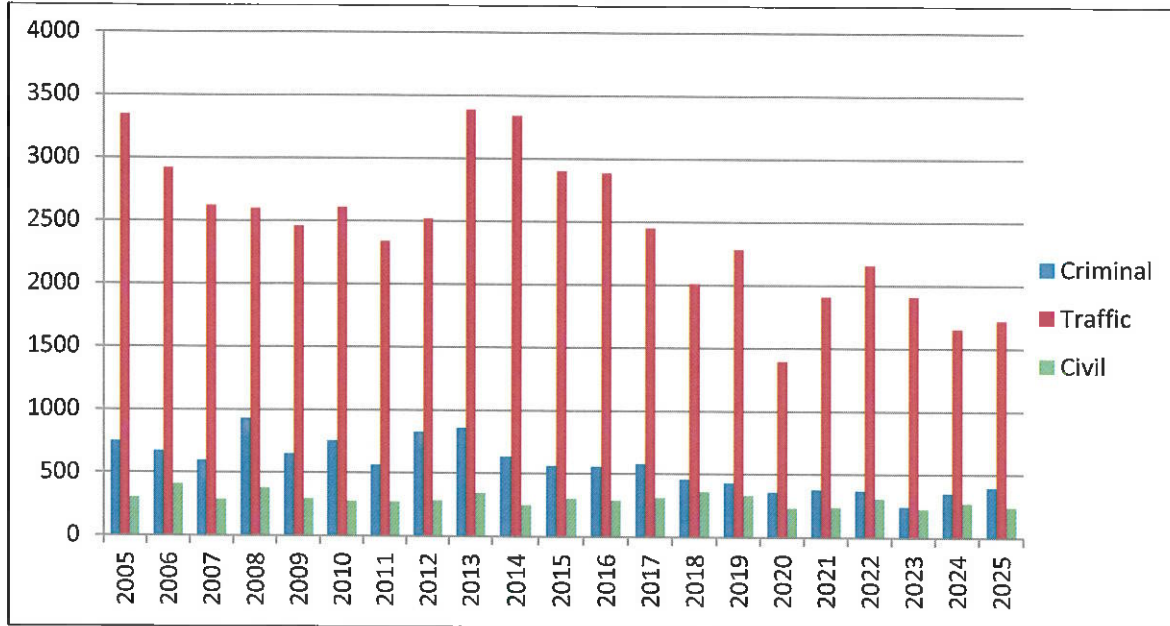
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The balance on hand represents bonds being held on pending cases in the Huron Municipal Court and will be carried over to the beginning of the year 2026.

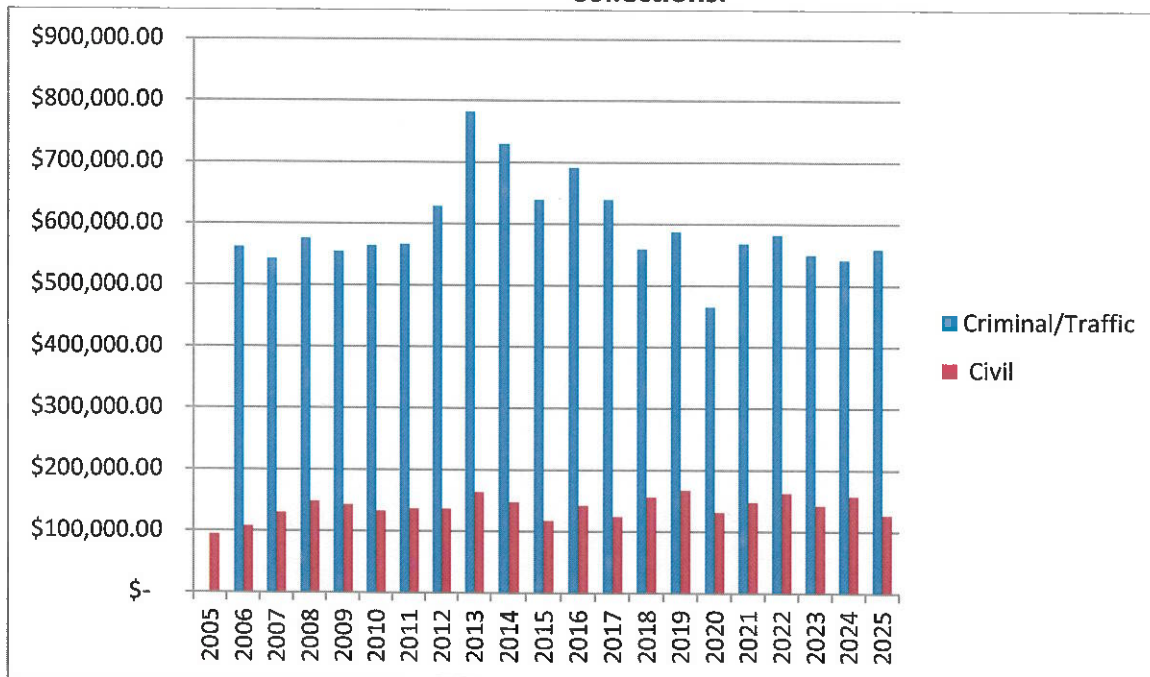


## HURON MUNICIPAL COURT 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**Cases Filed:**



**Collections:**





**CALENDAR YEAR 2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

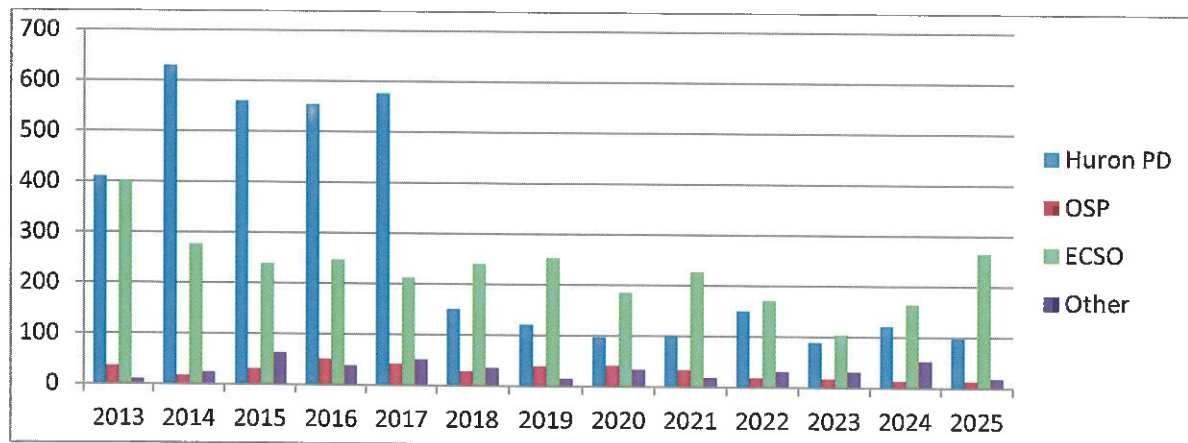
- Maintained the Huron Municipal Court website, which holds all court forms, the current court docket, case look-up and online payments.
- Batched all current overdue accounts for Criminal, Traffic and Civil to Capital Recovery Systems for help in securing payment.
- Court Rules updated and sent to the Supreme Court of Ohio, as required by law.
- Continued to maintain a self-sustaining probation department to monitor offenders, as well as, all court ordered requirements.
- Maintained a 100% or better clearance rate of cases in the Criminal, Traffic and Civil Divisions: 139%, 111%, and 119% respectively, for 2025.
- Successfully resolved 286 civil conflicts, 1,784 traffic violations and 516 criminal offenses.
- Processed and disbursed a total of \$82,216.16 in civil garnishments. These were processed and returned to the plaintiffs in a timely manner.
- Collected and disbursed \$6,914.22 in restitution payments (note: not all restitution payments are paid through the court; they can be made directly to the victim.)
- Complied with and met all requirements for the State of Ohio Audit through the City of Huron with no finding for recovery.
- Collected \$685,891.16 in monies and properly distributed all monies to the appropriate agencies: Erie County Auditor, City of Huron, State of Ohio, Ohio State Board of Pharmacy, Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Public Transportation and Erie County Sheriff's Office in the time prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code.
- Reported all unclaimed funds to the City of Huron as prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code.
- Continued to utilize the video arraignment system to eliminate the cost of transporting prisoners for court hearing.
- Issued 199 warrants for arrest and served a total of 228 warrants on defendants.
- Held 105 regular court sessions with 3,211 cases scheduled during those sessions.
- Reconciled all bank accounts to open items, monthly, with no discrepancies.
- Continued to monitor and try new avenues for collections of the \$514,704.00 in outstanding debt owed to the court.
- Successfully continued the process of collecting fines and costs via the internet through n-court; collecting a total of \$282,069.64 with 1,674 transactions for 2025.
- Scheduled approximately 491 pre-trials, motion hearings, court trials, and various other hearings for the Criminal/Traffic Division, while the Civil Division scheduled approximately 85 court hearings and four additional afternoon dockets for Regional Income Tax Hearings throughout 2025.
- Sent weekly report of all convictions to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles and sent weekly reports to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation of all reportable offenses. Reported monthly to the Supreme Court of Ohio.
- Court staff continues to scan and destroy all old cases in accordance with Court Rule 4.

**CALENDAR YEAR 2026 DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES**

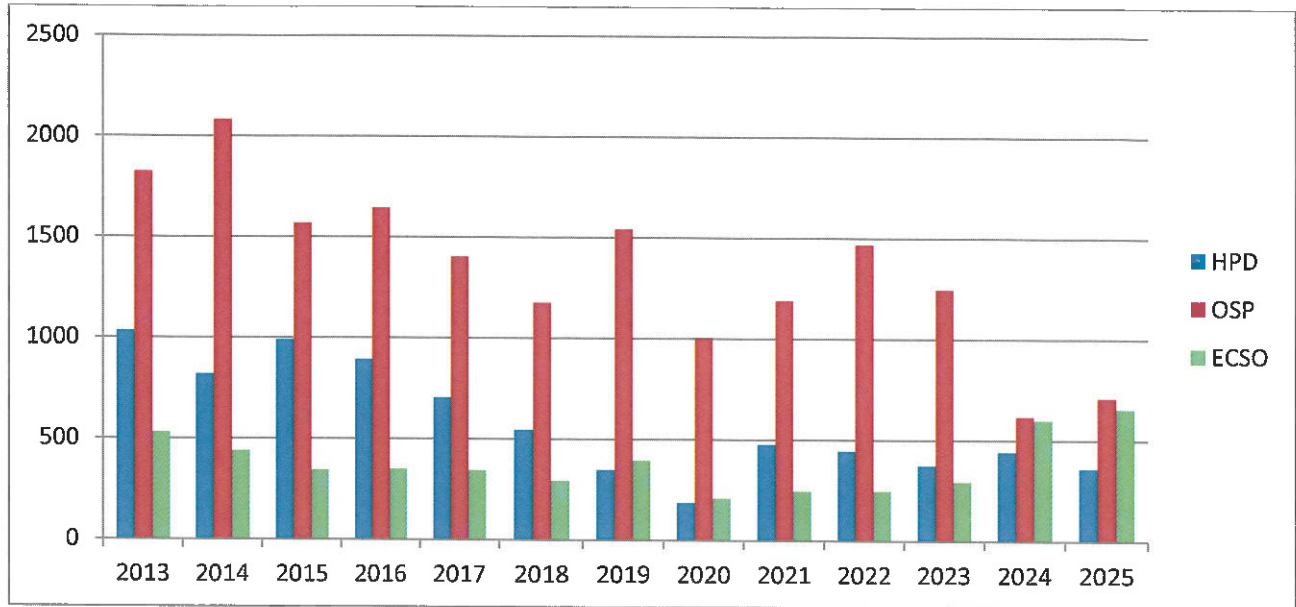
- Maintain high-profile in state and local professional organizations such as the Ohio Association of Municipal and County Court Clerks, the Ohio Judges Association, Ohio Judicial Association, the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Ohio Association for Court Administration and the Ohio Chief Probation Officer's Association.
- Consistent sentencing of defendants as to deter crime in the city.
- Actively seek and monitor all accounts receivable by seeking new avenues for collections.
- Implement and monitor 2026 budget.
- Develop staff through continued education programs and performance evaluations.
- Develop Probation staff through professional organizations and continued education.
- Continue to work with Erie County's Mental Health, Drug and Domestic Violence Courts, as well as various counseling agencies to better assist with individuals' treatment goals and lessen recidivism.
- Continue to assist defendants with our DUS License Reinstatement Project which helps individuals work with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to become valid drivers.
- Continuation of scanning old case files to alleviate the burden of storage for court records.

**WORKLOAD MEASURES**

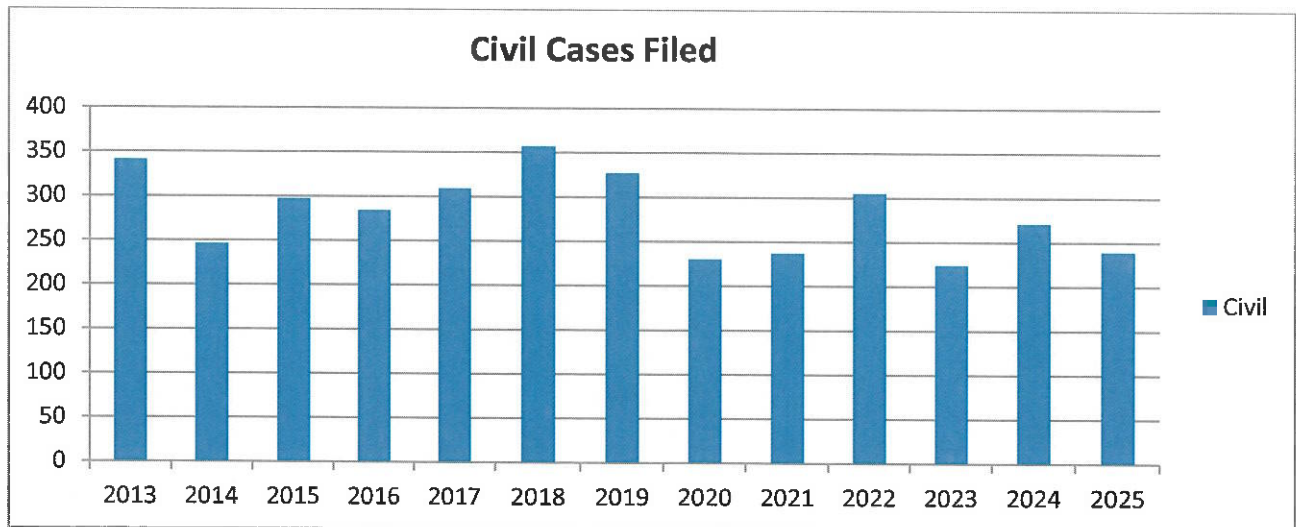
**Criminal Cases Filed**



### Traffic Cases Filed



### Civil Cases Filed



### PRODUCTIVITY MEASURES

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual
Criminal/ Traffic Receipts	\$581,783	\$549,479	\$541,175	\$559,048
Civil/Small Claims Receipts	\$162,561	\$142,095	\$157,432	\$126,843
Expenses	\$274,300	\$261,080	\$249,404	\$278,263
Paid to City	\$341,842	\$330,449	\$311,768	\$331,156
Clearance Rates for Cases				
Criminal/Traffic	114%	113%	114%	125%
Civil	121%	126%	118%	119%

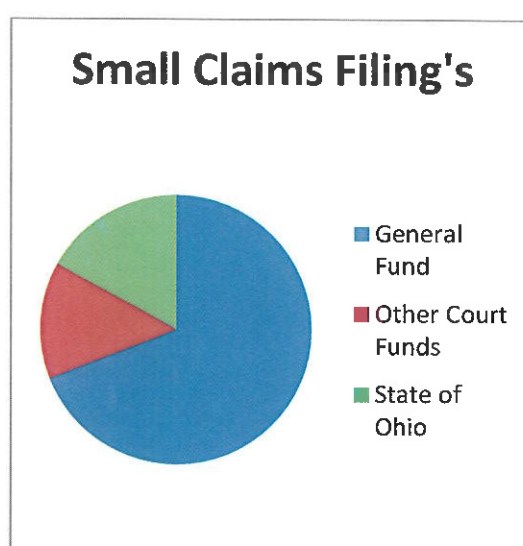
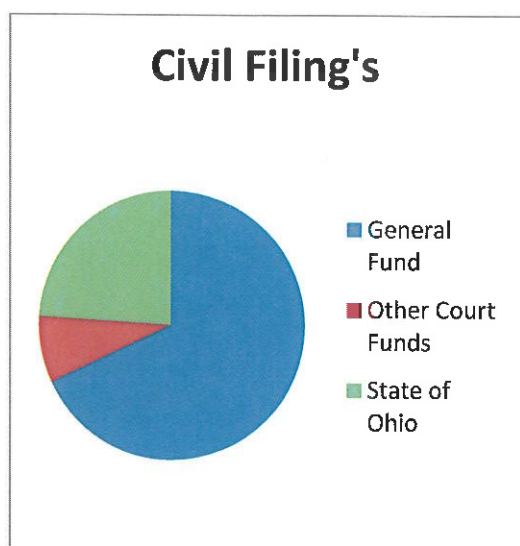
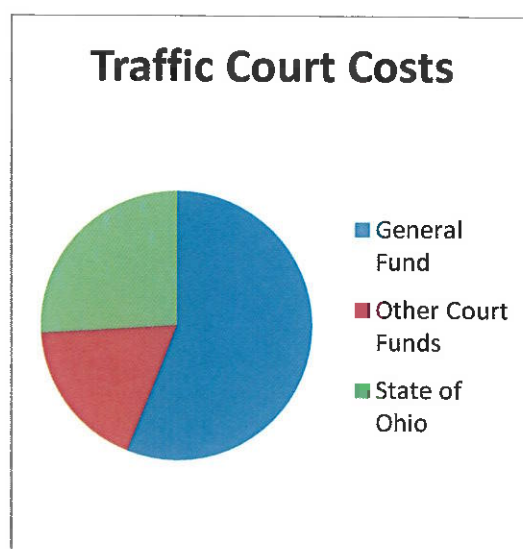
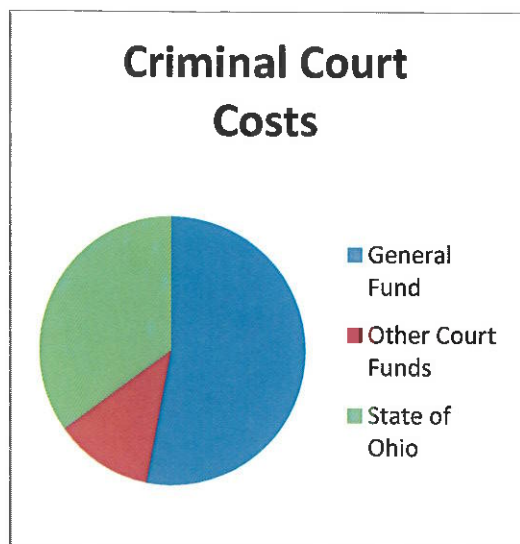
## FUND ACCOUNTING TO SHOW SELF-SUSTAINING OPERATION OF COURT

	General Fund 2023	General Fund 2024	General Fund 2025
Receipts:			
Reimbursement from County:*	\$ 75,154.31	\$ 65,737.56	\$ 73,969.06
Court Costs:**	\$152,269.06	\$144,574.50	\$164,691.07
City Ordinance Fines:***	\$ 63,012.05	\$ 74,027.50	\$ 63,040.00
State Patrol Fines:	\$ 20,412.02	\$ 12,347.60	\$ 11,238.20
 TOTAL RECEIPTS	 \$310,847.44	 \$296,687.16	 \$312,938.33
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$261,080.19	\$249,403.80	\$278,263.14
 TOTAL OVERAGE TO GENERAL FUND:	 <u>\$ 49,767.25</u>	 <u>\$ 47,283.36</u>	 <u>\$34,675.19</u>

\* The City of Huron is reimbursed for 40% of the Judge and Clerk's salaries and benefit compensation as prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code whereas, 100% of this expense is budgeted for in the court's budget.

\*\*Court costs are established by the Presiding Judge and set forth in a standard fee schedule. A great misconception is that court costs are established to support the operation of a Municipal Court; however, the majority of costs are established by the Ohio Legislature and are sent to the State of Ohio at the close of every month. The Court collects \$110.00 per case for criminal and traffic offenses, of this amount, the court contributes \$58.00 and \$61.00 from traffic and criminal cases, respectively to the General Fund. Civil Filings fees are again, established by the Presiding Judge and state fees are collected in these as well. For a civil filing fee of \$120.00, \$85.00 goes to the General Fund and for a small claim filing of \$75.00, \$55.00 goes to the General Fund.

\*\*\*City Ordinance Fines are all fines collected from offenses cited under the City Codified Ordinances; through the Huron Police Department.



### Court Special Funds

The court has four special funds that have been established. These funds are held by the City of Huron for the use and purposes set forth by statute. Monies can only be expended upon court order.

**Indigent Alcohol Fund:** The Indigent Alcohol Fund is a statutory fund, established under Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.191(H)(1) and provides that the court may order the use of these funds for payment of the cost of the attendance at an alcohol and drug addiction treatment program of a person who is convicted of an OVI offense and who is determined by the court to be unable to pay the cost of attendance at the treatment program. Collections for this fund come in two forms, from defendants who plead to a conviction of OVI and from the State of Ohio Department of Public Safety as a portion of reinstatement fees paid. The total of these funds are reported to the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services through the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Erie and Ottawa Counties.

**Ignition Drivers Interlock and Alcohol Monitoring Fund:** Pursuant to RC 4511.19(l)(1) the Court has established a Special Projects Fund called the Indigent Drivers Interlock and Alcohol Monitoring Fund. Fifty dollars of the fine imposed for certain repeat OVI offenders are to be deposited into this fund and are used exclusively to cover the cost of immobilizing or disabling devices, including certified ignition interlock devices, and remote alcohol monitoring devices for indigent offenders who are required by a judge to use either of these devices. Again, collections for this fund come from two sources: convictions for an OVI and portion of reinstatement fees paid through the State of Ohio.

**Court Computer Fund:** This fund was established in 1998 in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 1901.261(A)(1). The court collects \$10.00, \$7.00 and \$3.00 from Criminal, Traffic and Civil, respectively, per case to fund this account, allowing the court to be independent and not place a burden on its funding authority.

**Court Improvement Fund:** This fund was created in 1998 in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 1901.26(B)(1). The court collects \$10.00 from Criminal and \$6.00 from Traffic and Civil per case to fund this account, again, allowing for the court to expend monies upon court order and to alleviate any burden upon the funding authority.

## **SPECIAL COURT FUNDS**

### **Accounting for 2025**

	<u>Computer Fund</u>	<u>Capital Projects Fund</u>	<u>Ind Alc Trtmnt</u>	<u>Ind Int &amp; Alc Trtmnt</u>
Revenues:	\$ 13,379.00	\$ 12,648.00	\$4,086.92	\$ 3,444.76
Expenses:	\$ 14,860.11	\$ 2,945.00	\$ 00.00	\$ 00.00

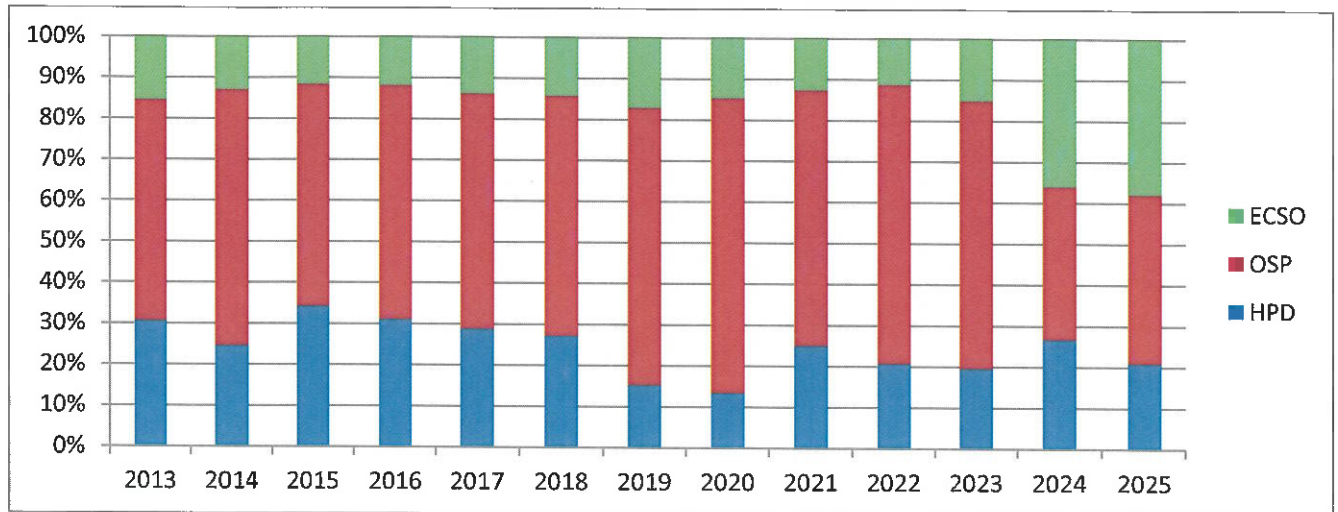
## **Jury Service**

In order to keep a current docket and for the efficient operation of the court it is necessary to have jurors available and jury trials scheduled on a regular basis. Jurors are randomly chosen from voting lists. We take this opportunity to thank the many citizens who were called for jury duty this past year, for their service to this court and to the community.



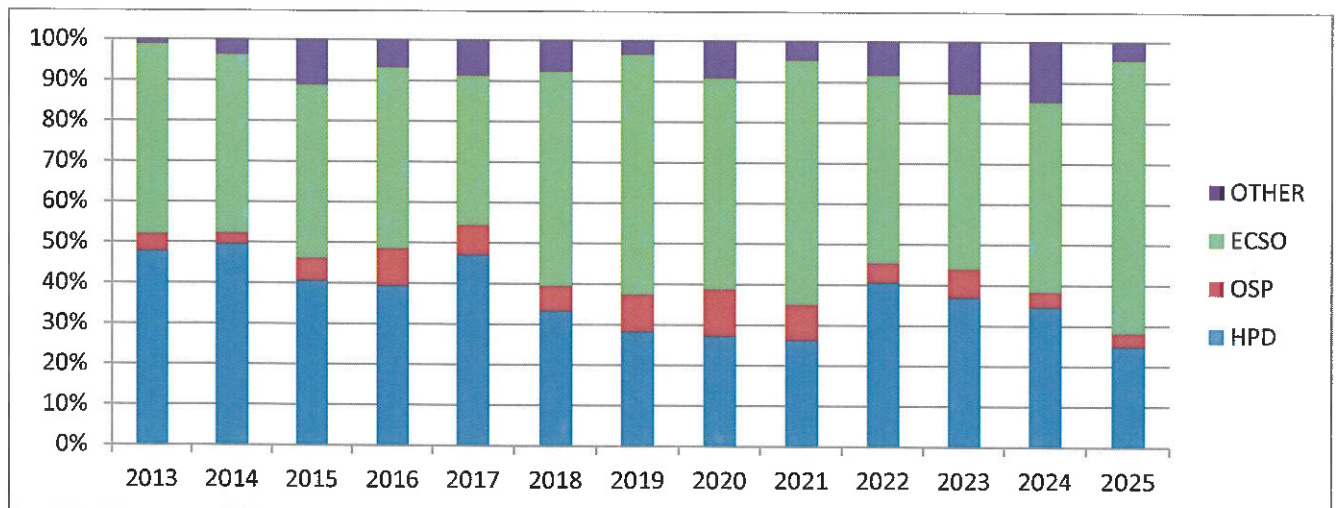
## TRENDS

### TRAFFIC OFFENSE TRENDS



The Erie County Sheriff's Department continues to increase the traffic citations filed within the Huron Municipal Court, as evidenced by the trends above. The Ohio State Highway Patrol has also increased the traffic citations filed this year and as Post 22 (Sandusky Post) re-establishes staffing levels, we anticipate a continued increase of citations. While the Huron Police Department's total number of citations filed with the Court has somewhat decreased, it is still stable overall. As the department strives for optimal staffing, we anticipate seeing a rise in filings in the upcoming year.

### CRIMINAL OFFENSE TRENDS



With a significant increase over the previous year, the Erie County Sheriff's Office continues to provide the majority of the court's criminal citations, as can be seen from the trends above. Both the Ohio State Patrol and the Huron Police Department continue to receive a consistent volume of criminal complaints. Last but not least, our Court received fewer citations from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.



**HURON MUNICIPAL COURT  
DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION**

The Huron Municipal Court Probation department was established in 2010 and is a self-sustaining department. The department offers many services: holding defendant's accountable, helping victims seek full restitution and offering solutions to individuals who struggle with addictions. This community control department monitors offenders to ensure compliance with their court ordered requirements. The Court collects fees from defendants who are placed on probation to support these efforts. Since its' inception, this department has remained self-sustaining.

The probation officer is also a deputy clerk for the Huron Municipal Court. It is considered a 40/60 full-time position whereas, the probation officer's salary and benefits are split 40% by the General Fund and 60% by the Probation Fund. At the conclusion of 2025 the probation officer was supervising approximately 174 probationers in varying stages of their probation requirements.

**FINANCIAL STATISTICS:**

Total Fees Collected in 2025:	\$ 49,640.00
Total Expenditures for 2025:	\$ 46,163.06

**PROBATION STATISTICS FOR 2025**

**Yearly Total**

143 Defendants placed on Supervised Probation for the year 2025

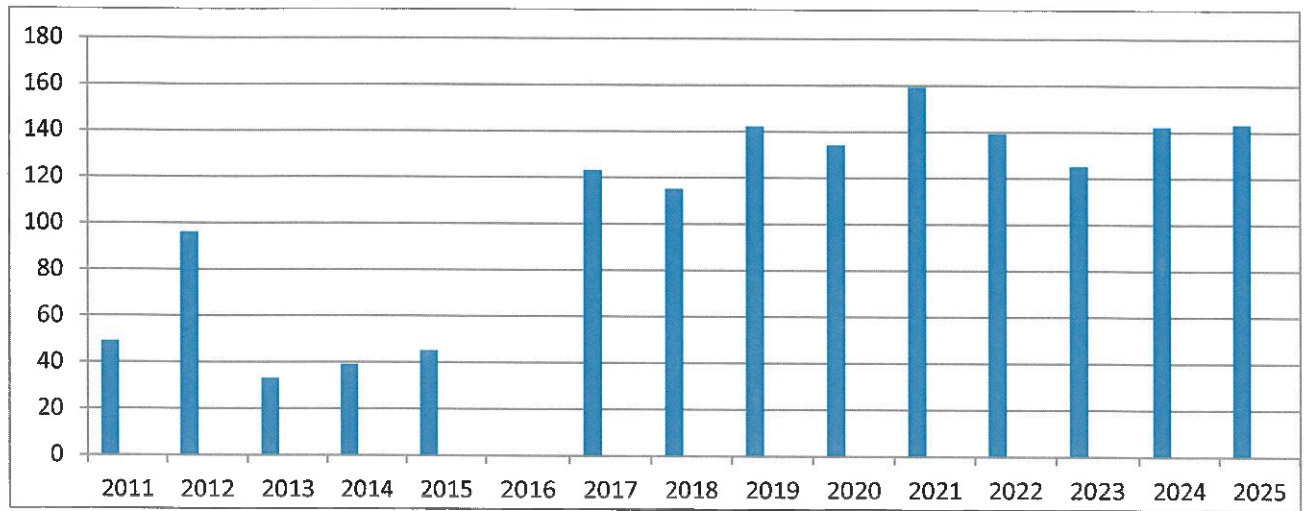
**2025 Activity**

- 106 Successfully completed Supervised Probation during the 2025 calendar year.
- 39 Probationers were released from probation unsuccessfully; jail time was imposed on these probationers in lieu of their supervised probation.
- 29 Successful Completion of Underage Diversion Program for 2025
- 3 Probationers admitted to residential treatment facilities in 2025
- 3 Successful Completions in Residential Treatment
- 0 Mediation Assisted Treatment Started
- 0 Deaths of Probationers due to overdose
- 67 Probable Cause Hearings held in 2025
- 68 Probation Revocation Hearing Held 2025

**Pending Year End**

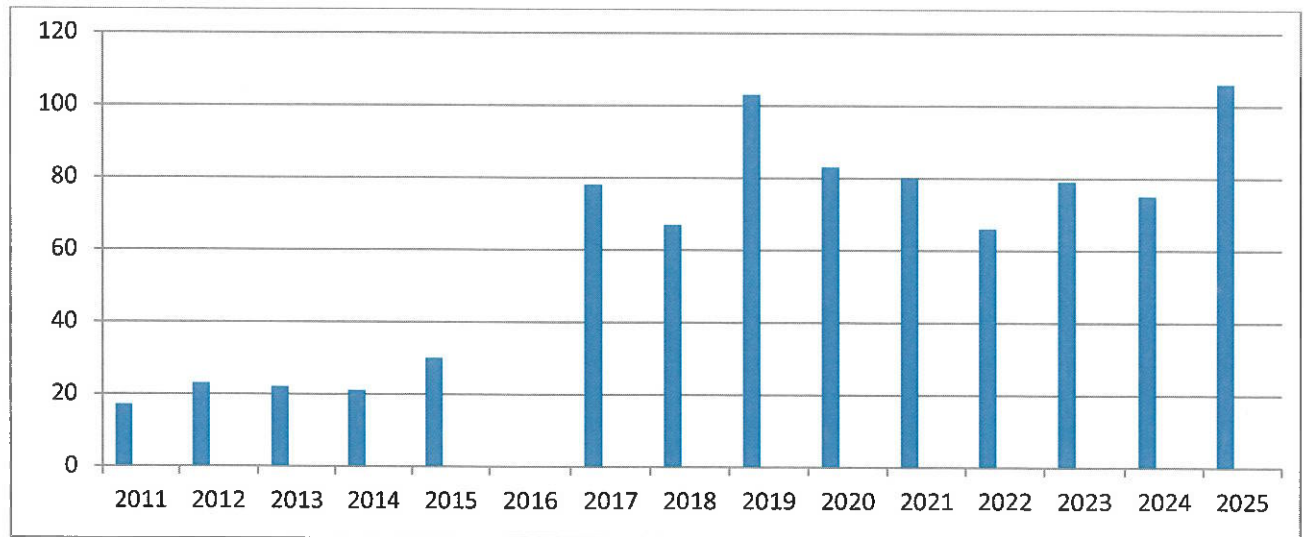
- 119 Active Probationers at the conclusion of 2025 (does not include probations on warrant)
- 6 Active Probationers on diversion or monitoring of program at the end of 2025
- 49 Probationers having an Active Warrant at the end of 2025

### PROBATIONS PLACED ON SUPERVISION



(Please note that we do not have any statistics for 2016 as we were in the process of hiring a new probation officer.)

### SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PROBATIONS



(Please note that we do not have any statistics for 2016 as we were in the process of hiring a new probation officer.)

I hope you have found this information informative, as the court strives to keep the public informed. Thank you for the opportunity to continue serving as Judge of the Huron Municipal Court. It is a position that I truly enjoy and consider an honor and a privilege to serve. We will continue our endeavor to improve the operation of the court and build confidence in our justice system to better serve both the community and the participants in the proceedings.

Thank you,



William Steuk, Judge  
Huron Municipal Court

A copy of this report will be sent to the following as required by Ohio Revised Code and a copy will be kept on file at the Clerk's office:

Huron City Council  
Board of Erie County Commissioners