



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Stark County Family Court

Website:

<https://www.starkcountyohio.gov/family-court>

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STARK COUNTY CENSUS

Knowing Stark County's census information allows a better overall understanding of the court's data.

Stark County's total population, according to 2020 Decennial Census data, is 374,853. The county is the 8th largest by population in Ohio.

- 21.5% of the population is under the age of 18
- 78.5% of the population is over the age of 18
- The median age in Stark County is 42.1

Demographic Information

- Population that identifies as "one race" - 93.7%
- Population that identifies as "two or more races" - 6.3%

One Race

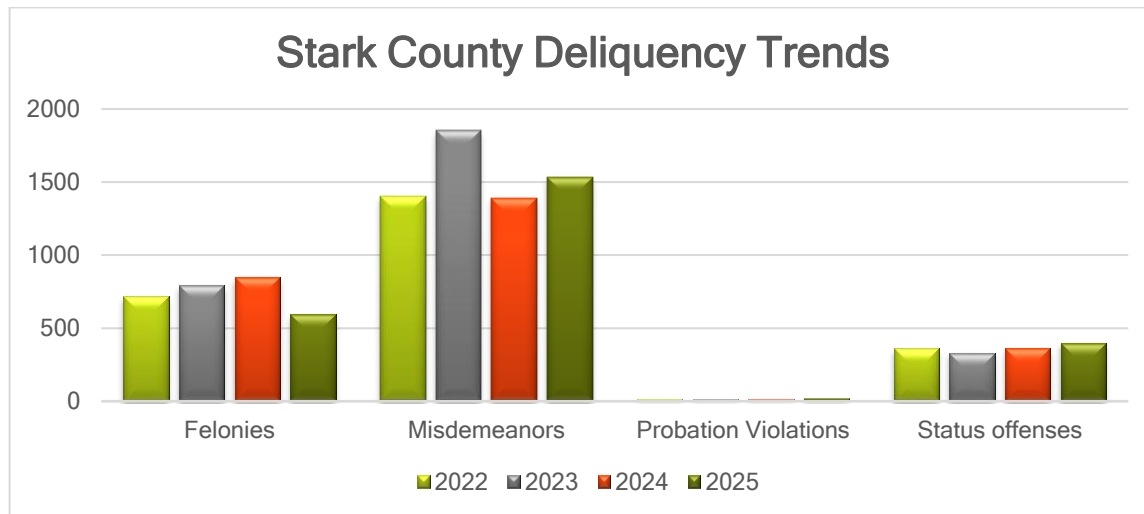
- White - 85.6%
- Black or African American - 8.1%
- Asian - 1.0%
- Hispanic or Latino - 2.4%

Families & Living Arrangements

- Total Households- 154,426
- Persons per household- 2.37
- Language other than English spoken at home- 3.1%
- Marital Status- 48.3% Married

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau

JUVENILE DIVISION REPORT



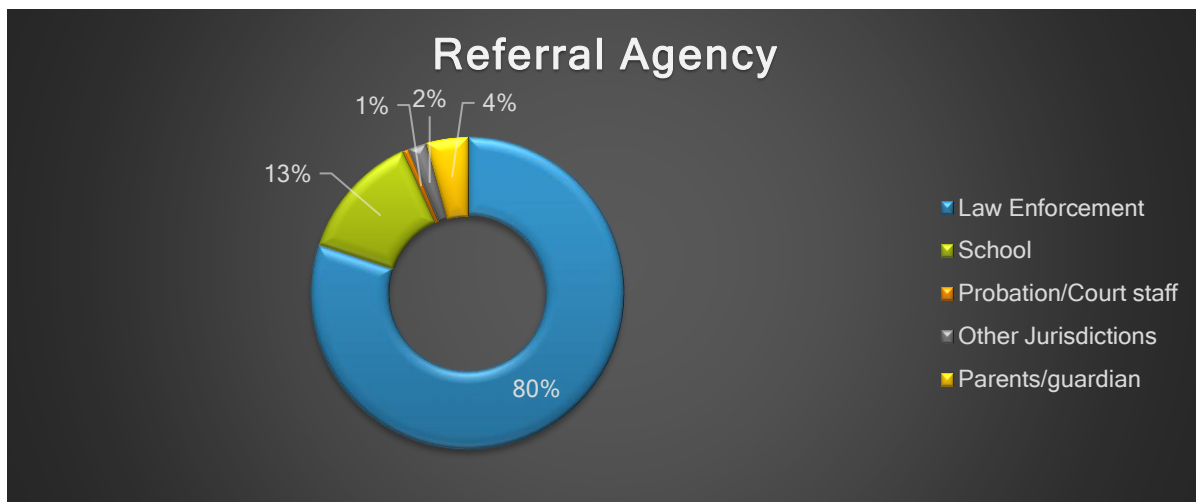
Overall, Stark County saw a slight increase in felony filings and a return to previous years' levels with misdemeanors.

In 2025, Stark County Family Court processed 2,493 cases alleging delinquency.

Referral Sources

The following chart depicts the referral sources for delinquency filings.

The descriptor, “Other Jurisdictions”, are cases transferred to Stark County from other courts. This occurs when a youth is charged in another county but resides in Stark.



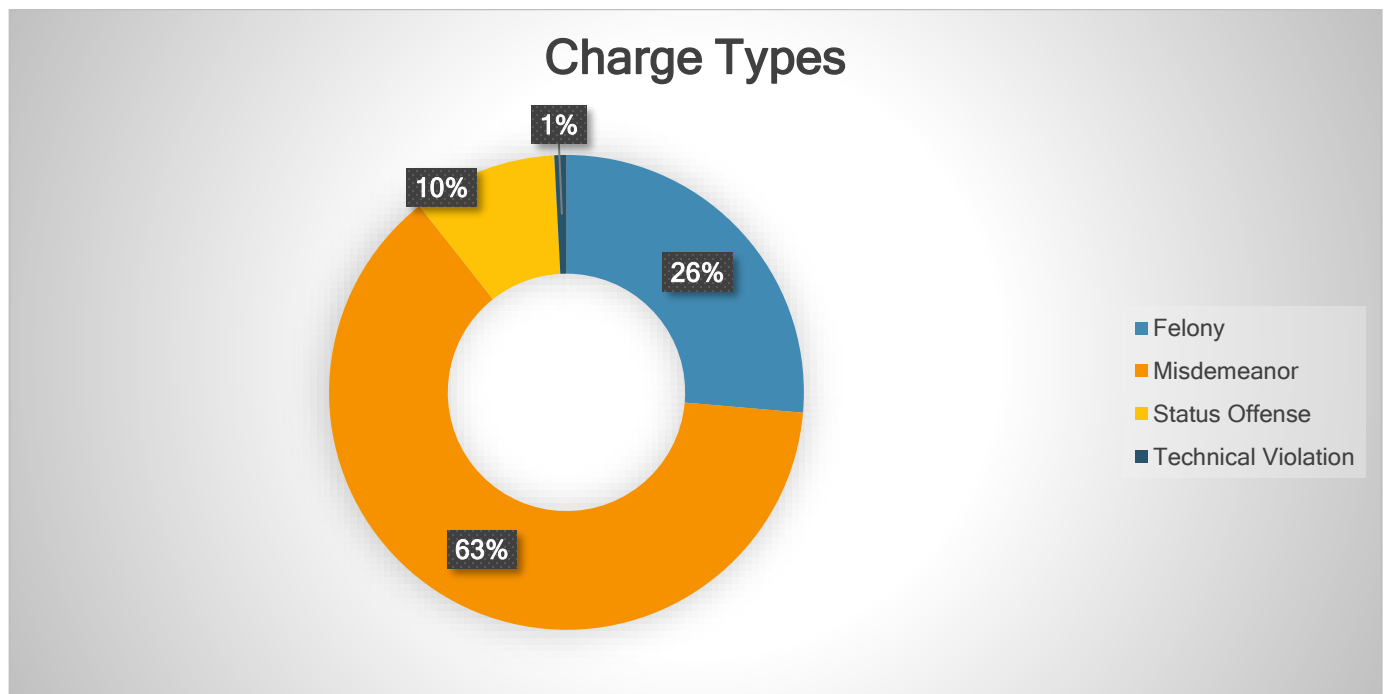
Charges

In 2025, there were 2,493 referrals alleging delinquency. A referral to Family Court is presented as a “charge type”. The most commonly known “charge types” are felonies and misdemeanors. However, Family Court also processes status offenses and technical violations.

A **status offense**, defined as “unruly”, is a charge that would not be criminal for an adult (over the age of 18). These include actions such as curfew violations and not listening at home. Unruly charges are not arrestable offenses on their own. Truancy charges are not counted here as they are highlighted in the “Truancy” section of this report. Status offenses can be referred to the Court by parents or law enforcement. There were 239 unruly complaints filed with the Court in 2025.

A **Technical Violation** is a complaint against a youth for not following court orders after a case is disposed. These violations can come from law enforcement or Probation Officers. In 2025, there were 21 technical violations filed with the Court. 15 from Probation and 6 from law enforcement.

The following graph illustrates the 2025 charge types. Misdemeanor charges continue to yield the highest percentage of delinquency charges in Stark County.



The most common **misdemeanor** charges were:

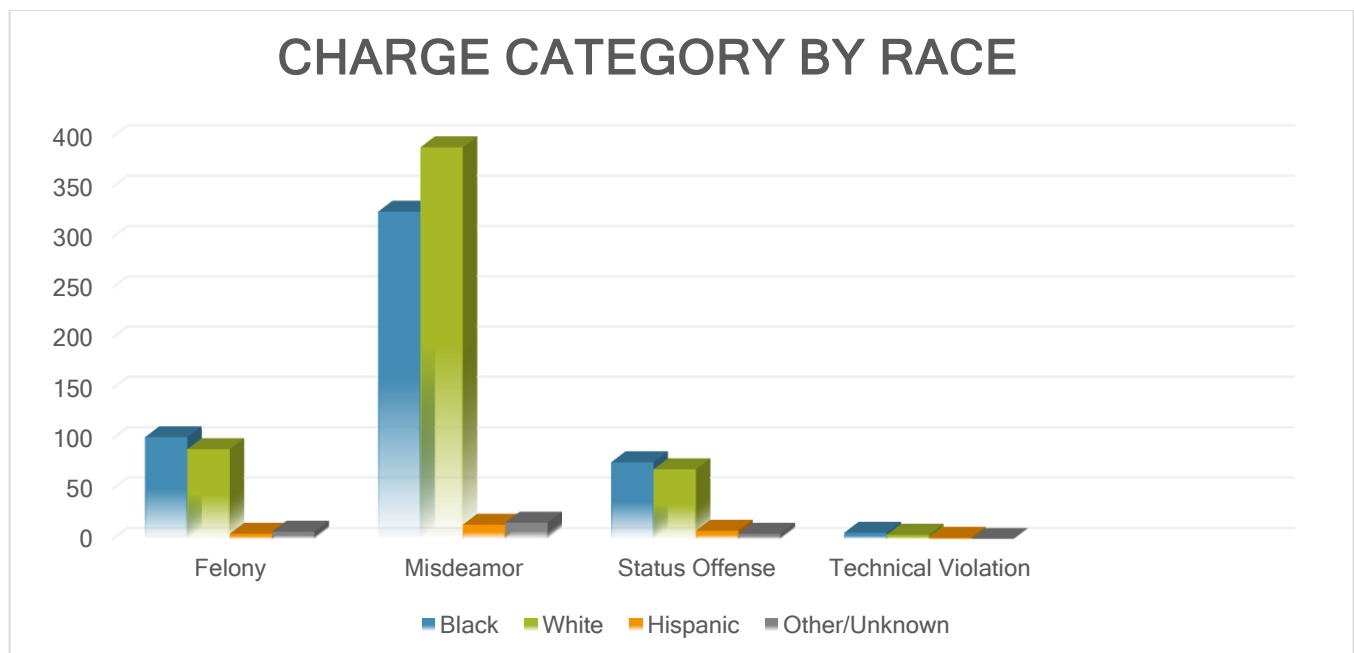
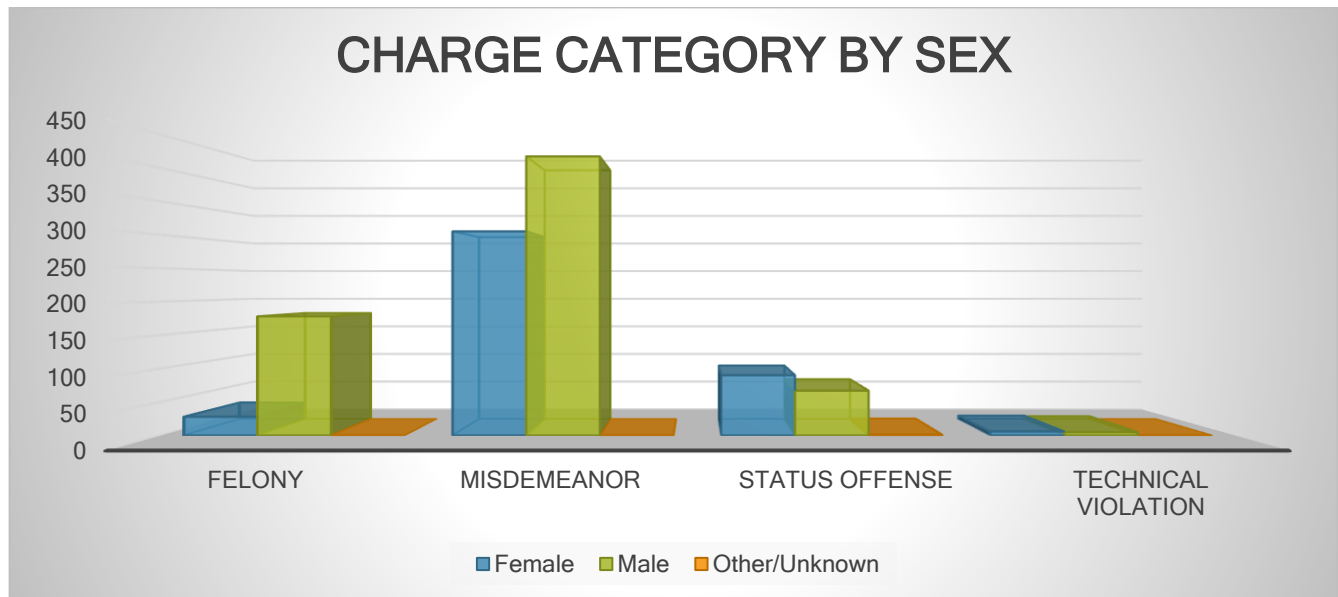
Domestic Violence	300 complaints
Contributing to the Unruliness or Delinquency of a Child	178 complaints
Disorderly Conduct	168 complaints

The most common **felony charges** were:

Felonious Assault	67 complaints
Felony Assault	52 complaints
Firearm on or about Person	47 complaints

Charge Demographics

The following illustrates the 2025 charge demographics.



Formal and Informal Case Processing

Upon a “referral source” filing a complaint, the court determines whether the charge will be managed through *formal* or *informal* case processing.

Rule 9 of the Rules of Juvenile Procedure states “In all appropriate cases formal court action should be avoided and other community resources utilized to ameliorate situations brought to the attention of the court.” To affirm this rule, the Family Court Judges established criteria which allows for the informal processing of a case. The criteria used is based upon the type of offense, a juvenile’s history with the court, and age. The informal case processing is managed by a practice known as Diversion.

Formal case processing is the traditional method of a judicial hearing officer deciding upon the disposition of a case.

Diversion

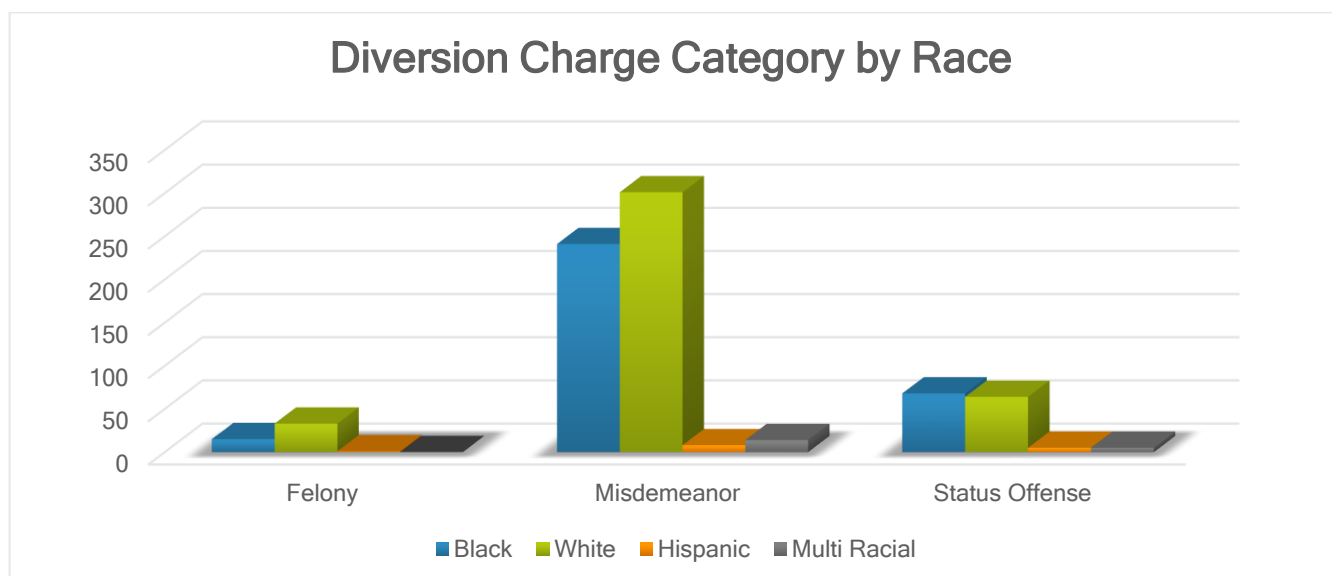
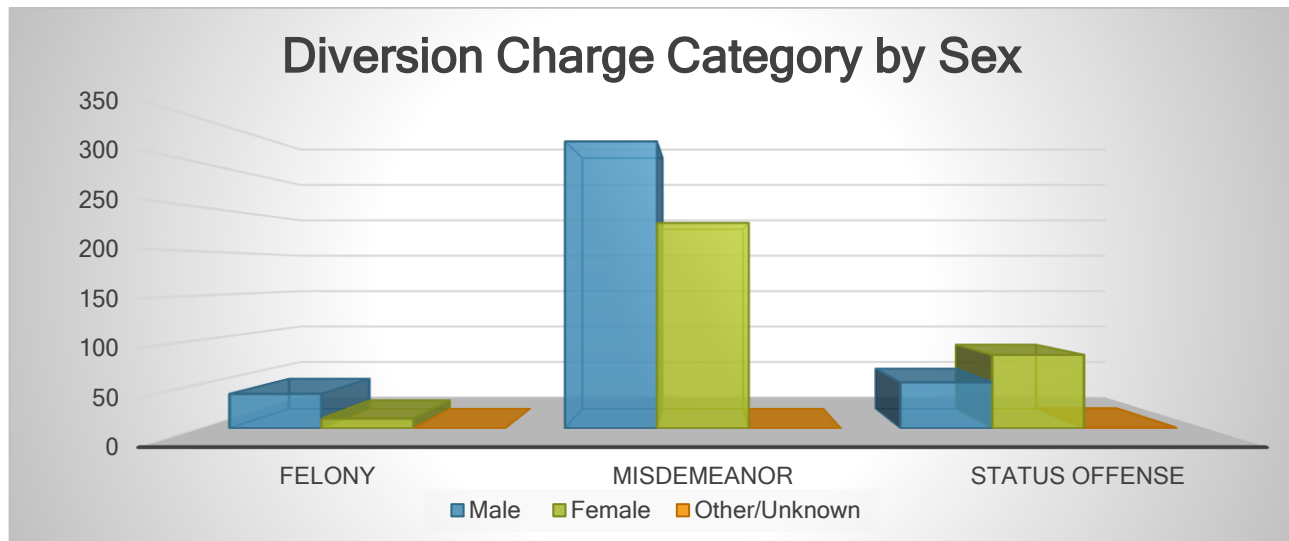
The standardized definition of diversion, as provided by the Ohio Supreme Court is “redirection of youth from the formal processing of juvenile court which occurs prior to the youth’s initial appearance before the Judge”. Best explained by the Anne E. Casey foundation, (and adopted in the Ohio Supreme Court’s May 2021 Juvenile Diversion, Toolkit for Judicial Use), “The purpose of diversion is to redirect youth from involvement in the formal juvenile court system in an effort to hold youth accountable for their behavior without resorting to legal sanctions, court oversight, or the threat of confinement to mitigate future risk and subsequent delinquent behavior. By creating informal alternatives to court processing, diversion interventions serve as an opportunity to reduce the criminogenic effects that entry into the juvenile justice system and incarceration have on long-term youth development such as increased recidivism, stigmatization, and increased criminal-justice costs.”

In 2025, 1,028 cases, which accounted for 880 youth, were managed by Diversion. The average diversion age was 14.7; 85% of diversion cases closed successfully; 4% closed unsuccessfully; 1% received additional criminal charges during the life of the diversion case; and 9% of the diversion cases were unsuccessful and returned for formal court processing.

The most common charges managed by the Diversion Department were:

Domestic Violence	169 complaints
Unruly (excluding truancy)	150 complaints
Disorderly Conduct	111 complaints

Diversion Charge Demographics



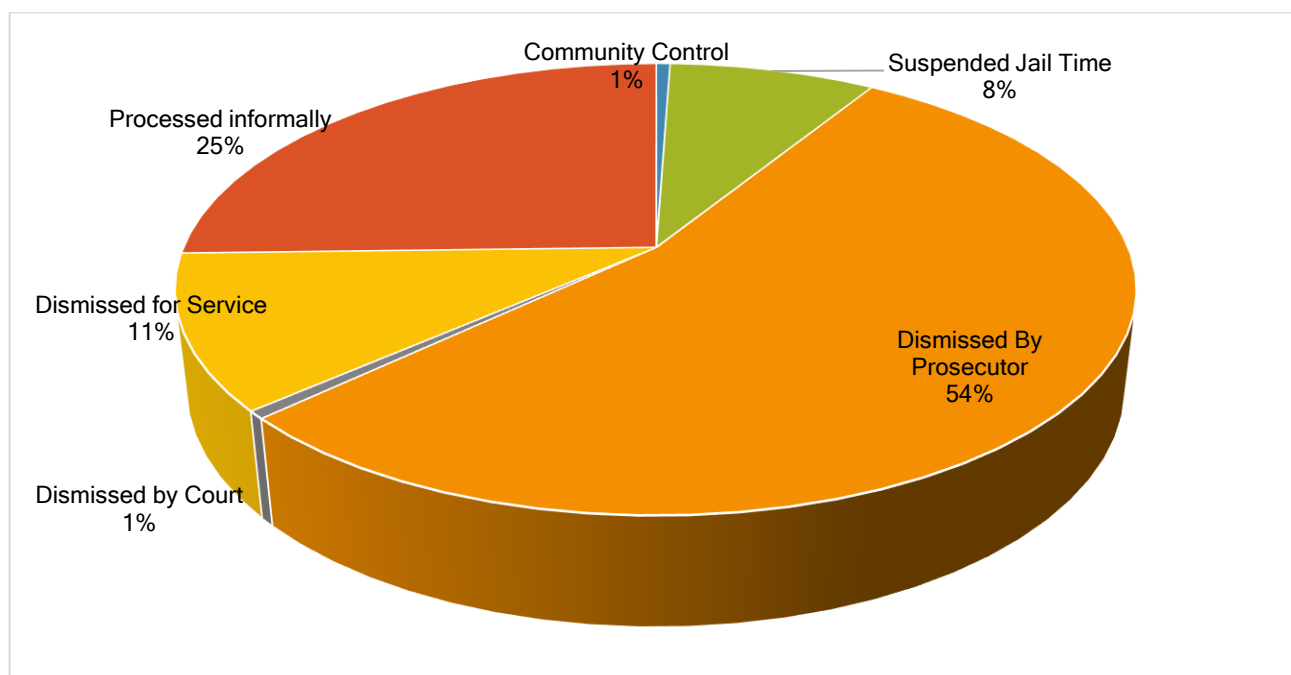
Truancy

Stark County Family Court, in collaboration with the Stark County Family Council, developed and implemented processes designed to mitigate formal habitual truancy charges.

Family Council and Family Court's Behavioral Health Services Department offers truancy conferences as a service to our county school districts. These conferences are designed to work with the parent/guardian, and age-appropriate child, to identify the barriers to consistent school attendance and develop a plan to mitigate said barriers. 210 conferences occurred during the 2023/2024 school year. These conferences resulted in 159 complaints of truancy being filed.

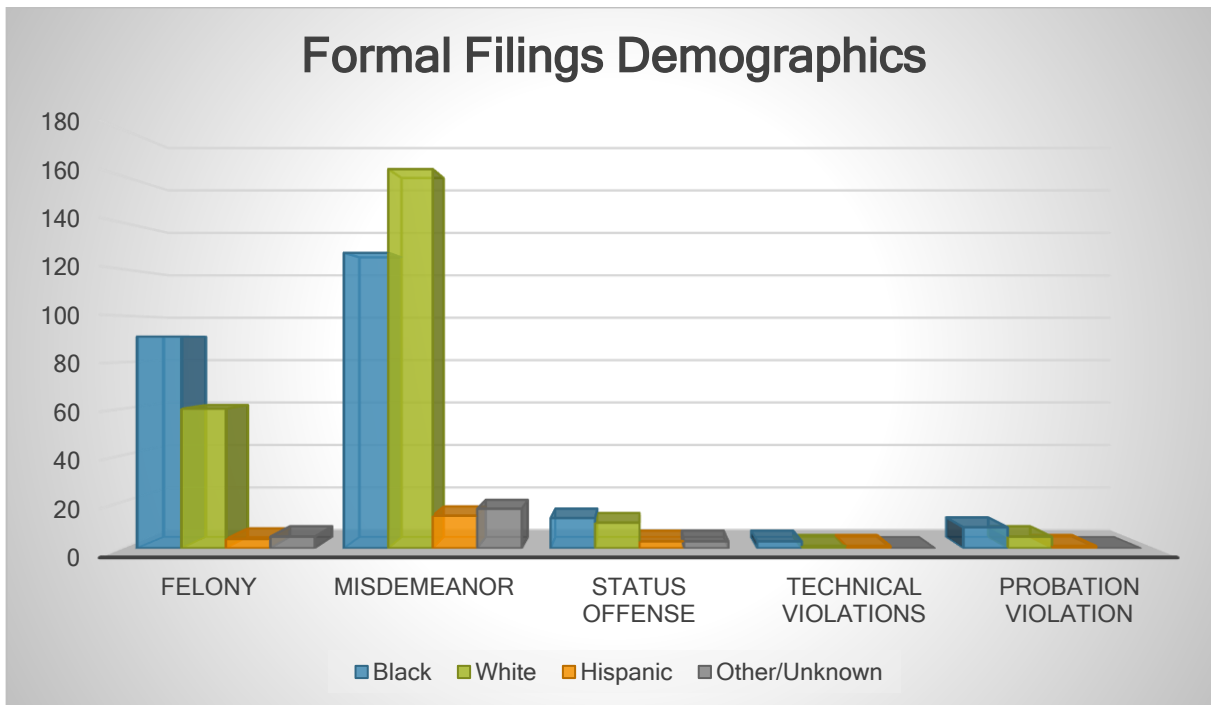
130 truancy cases were managed through the Court's Diversion program, while 29 cases were formally processed. Of those, 14 youth were adjudicated as truant.

Along with Truancy charges, the Court saw an influx of adult charges for parents failing to send their children to school. These charges were filed under the ORC 2919.24, Contributing to the Unruliness or Delinquency of a Child. The Court processed 199 of these charges. The Court piloted an informal program to process the increase in these cases. Outcomes of these filings are as follows:



Formal Case Processing

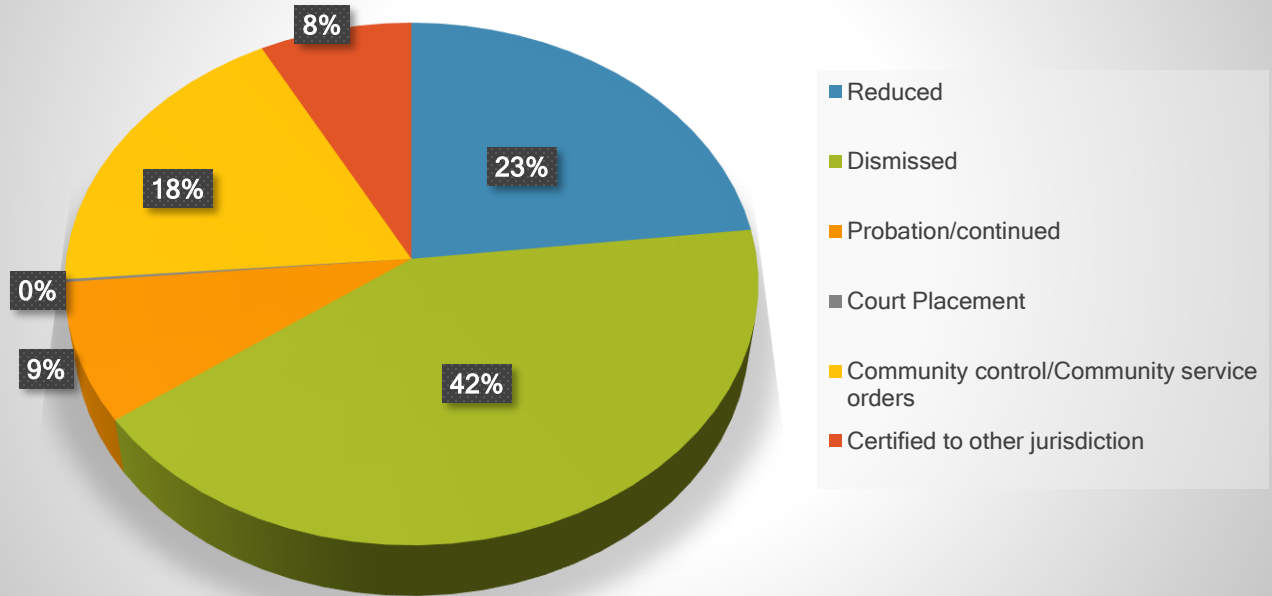
522 youth were responsible for 1,435 delinquency complaints and technical violations formally processed in the Court. Of those youth, 57% were male and 43% were female. Additional demographics are depicted below:



Outcomes for Formally Processed Cases

The following graph represents dispositional orders of formally processed delinquency cases. Cases that are formally processed are subject to consequences including but not limited to; detention, probation, restitution, court placement and/or other custody orders.

Formal Dispositions



It should be noted that in 2025, the Court bound over 12 youth, consisting of 77 criminal complaints, to the General Division. This was an increase over the past year.

Probation

Probation spent much of 2025 continuing to develop processes and data entry requirements to maintain participation as a Title IV-E Court. As a title IV-E Court, Probation Officers work to reduce criminal risk factors, as well as, for all IV-E eligible cases, working to reduce a child's imminent risk of removal from their home.

The following depicts the Probation caseload for 2025.

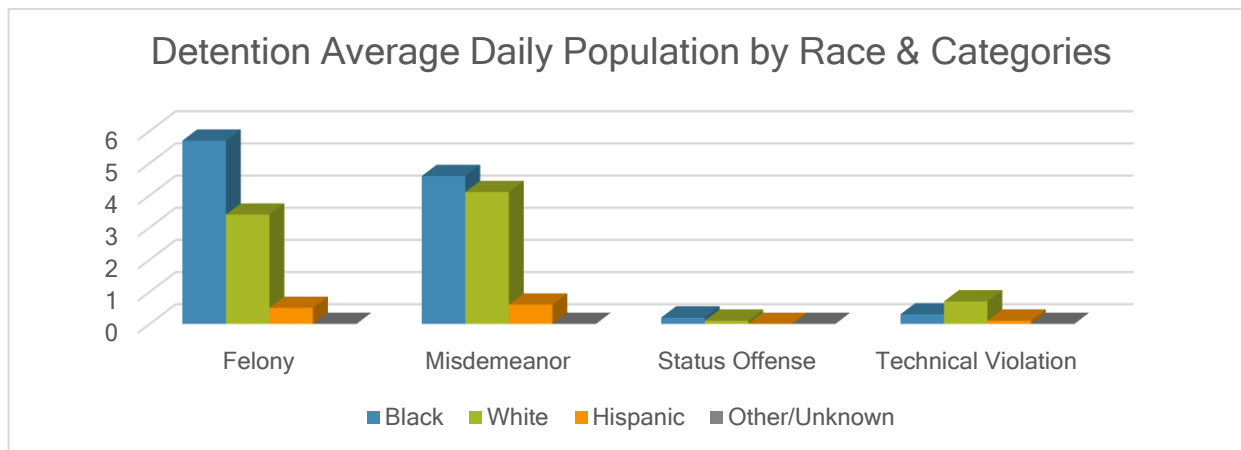
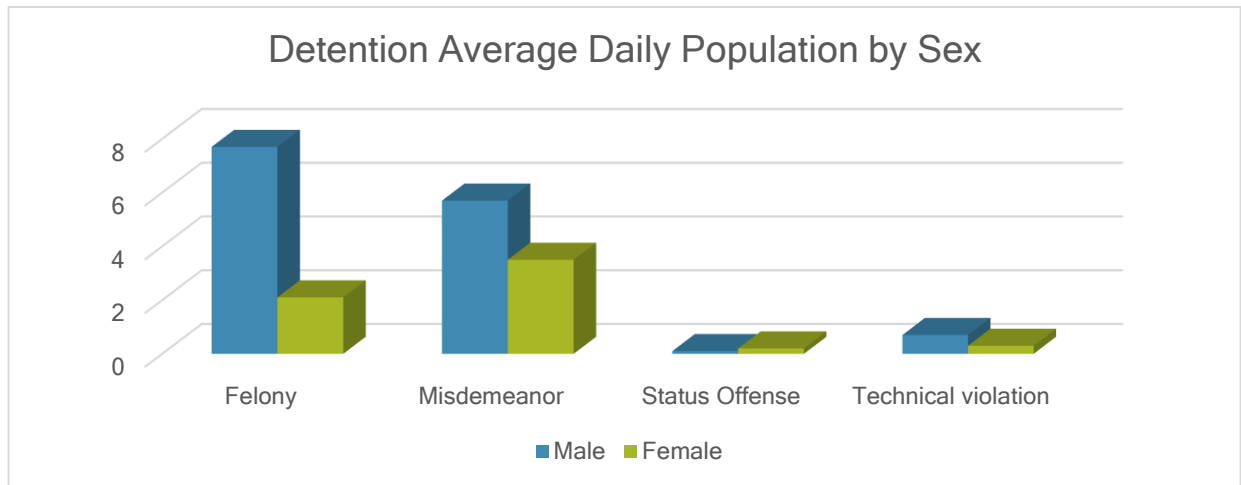
Participant Count (new)	132
Average Age of Participant	15.6
Race/Ethnicity	
Latino/Hispanic	0
Black/African American	45
White/Caucasian	59
Two or more races	28
Other	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0
Hawaiian Native/Other Pacific Island	0
N/A	2
OYAS Risk Level	
Low	51
Moderate	70
High	11

Detention

In Stark County, when a youth is arrested, s/he is placed in detention. Additionally, detention, determined by a hearing officer, may be used during the pendency of a formally processed case, or, as a form of disposition.

Research indicates that detention has no diminishing effect on juvenile delinquency. In fact, detention is considered a contributing factor, exacerbating criminal risk for youth assessed as low to moderate to criminally reoffend. Therefore, hearing officers try to refrain from the use of detention, unless there is a substantial risk of serious harm, a significant public safety risk, or other identified risk factors necessitating its use. In 2025, Stark County admitted 607 youth into detention. The average length of stay for these youth was 15 days.

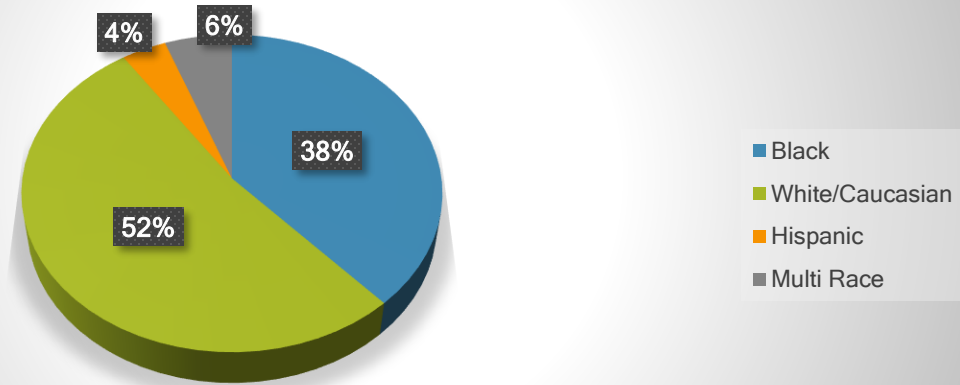
The following graph represents the average daily population in detention based on demographics and levels of charge.



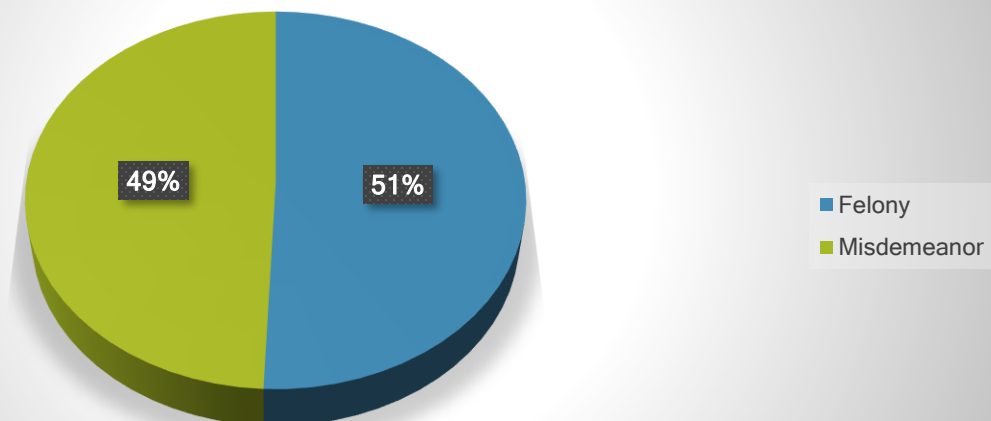
Alternatives to Detention

Stark County Family Court utilizes the Pretrial Release Program as the primary alternative to detention. Juveniles placed on this program are monitored by a continuum, ranging from direct supervision up to, and including, electronic monitored house arrest (EMHA). Pretrial Release is an option available to a hearing officer during the pendency of a delinquency case. In 2025, 212 juveniles were supervised on the Pretrial Release Program and averaged 55 days on the program.

Pretrial Release Demographics

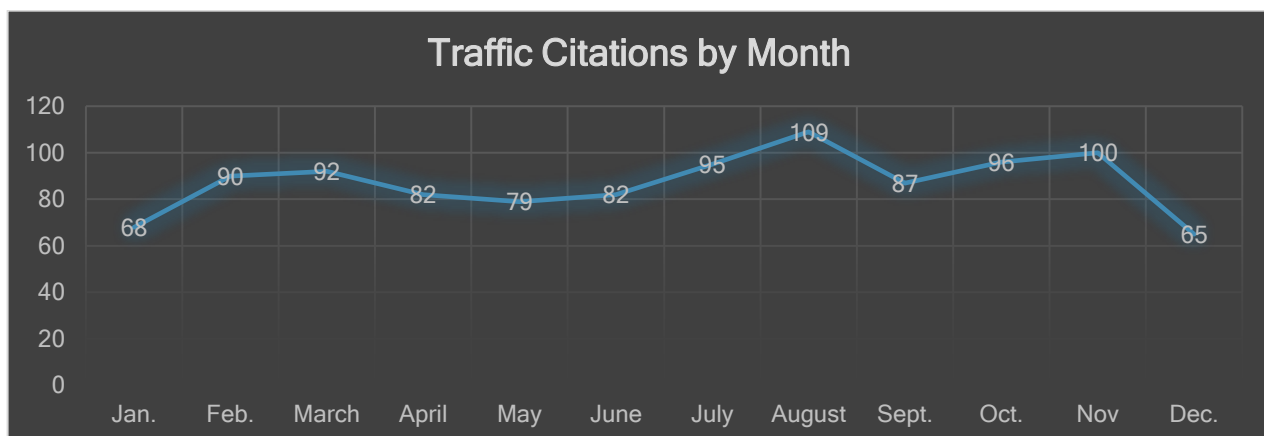
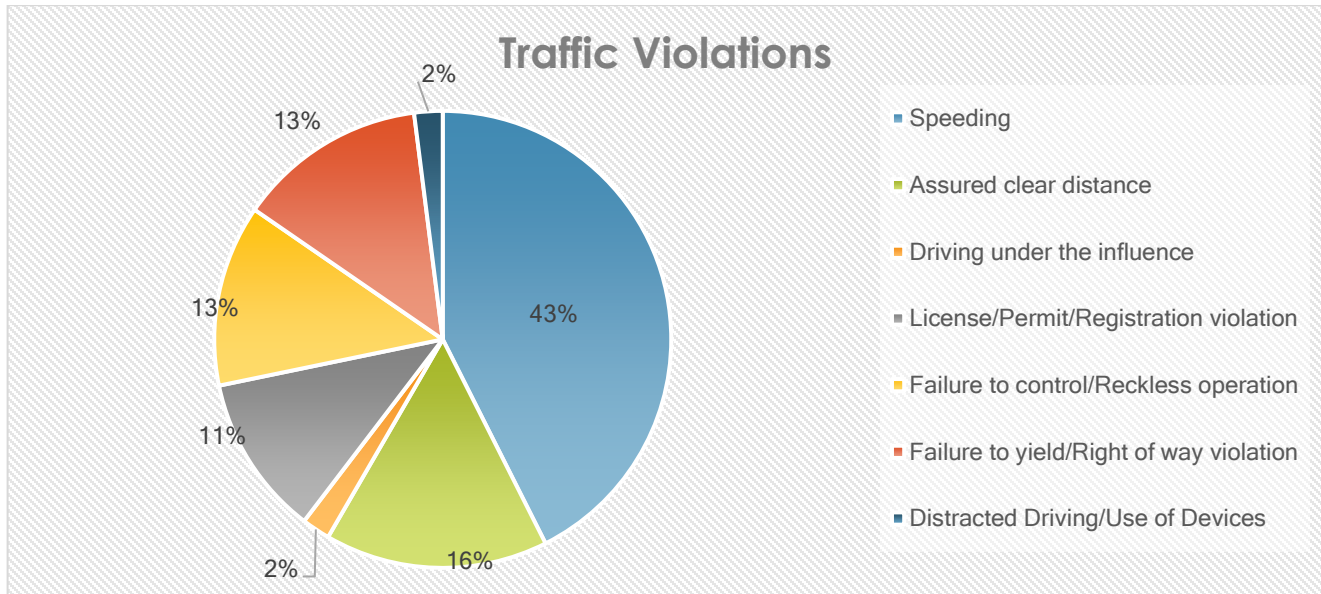


Pretrial Release Delinquency Types



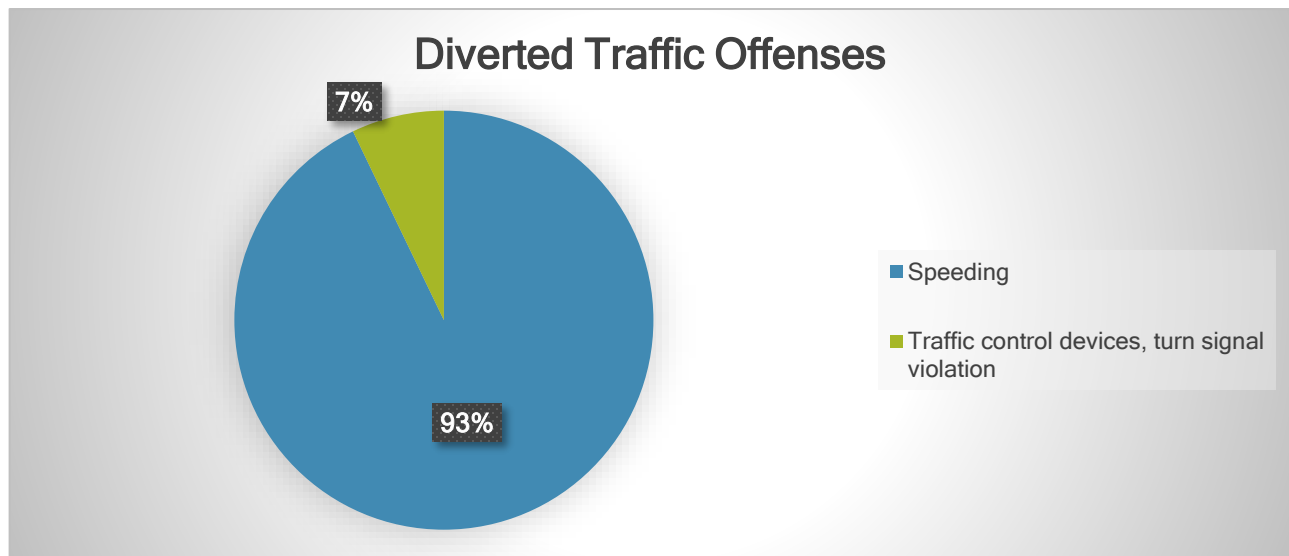
Juvenile Traffic

The Court processed 1,076 juvenile traffic cases in 2025. The following graphs depict violation types and monthly case totals.



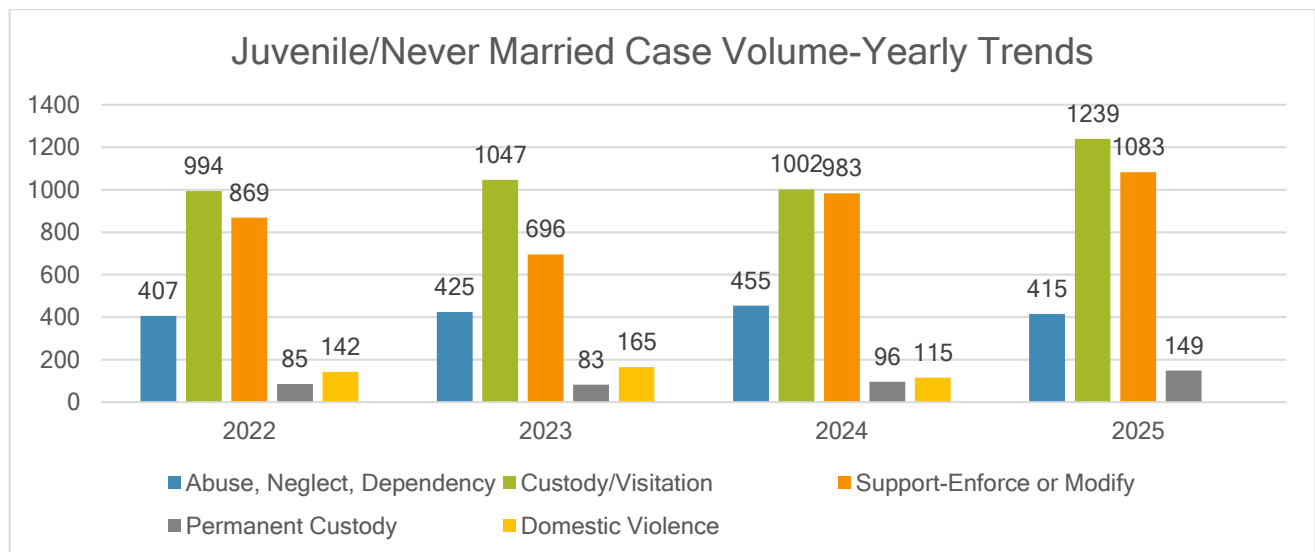
Traffic Diversion Program

Traffic Diversion targets drivers under the age of 18, with minor, first-time traffic violations. Participants in this program complete a driver's training program, as well as pay all fines and costs. The traffic case can be completed with no points assigned to the participant's record. In 2025, 77 traffic cases were sent through Traffic Diversion, with 98% being successfully completed. Cases not successfully diverted are referred to formal court processing.



Juvenile Court Case Volume

Family Court has jurisdiction over case types that involve custody, child support, and abused, neglected or dependent children. These cases would be filed without a marriage termination. The following demonstrates 4 years of juvenile case volume outside of delinquency hearings.



CASA/GAL

A Court Appointed Special Advocate / Guardian ad Litem, (CASA/GAL) is a trained community volunteer appointed by Stark County Family Court to represent the best interests of a child during a Court proceeding that involves Child Protective Services. In 2025, CASA served 214 children, 119 families with 28 CASA volunteers. 56 cases were closed, 26 resulting in legal custody to a relative or third party, 12 ended in adoption, 1 youth emancipated, and 17 children reunified with their family.

B.U.I.L.D. (Boosting Understanding, Interventions & Legal Defense)

The B.U.I.L.D. program is funded, in part, by a Supreme Court grant. The grant ended in 2025, however, the Court has continued funding due to the program's impact within the community. B.U.I.L.D.'s program design focuses on pre-petition legal representation and supportive service connection for families in the early stages of a child welfare case, before a child is removed from the home. B.U.I.L.D. works to strengthen vulnerable families by providing parental support and legal advocacy while the custodial parent(s) works to correct identified concerns with the goal being to avoid involvement of the Family Court System.

B.U.I.L.D. was developed through collaboration with the Stark County Family Council, Stark County Children Services, Stark County Public Defender's Office, Stark County Legal Aid and 4 private attorneys with extensive family law experience. The following depicts B.U.I.L.D.'s annual case work from October 2024 through September 2025.

Oct. '24 - Sept. '25

Total Referrals in 2024	Did Not Engage	Open cases/total program participants in 2024	Successful closure*	Unsuccessful closure*
37	2	26/37	18	3

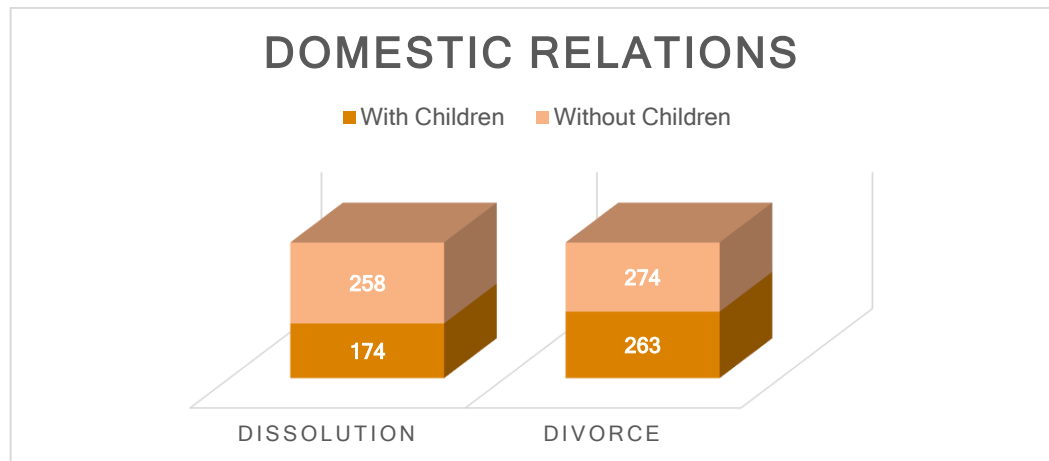
*cases overlapped from 2024-2025

Domestic Relations Division

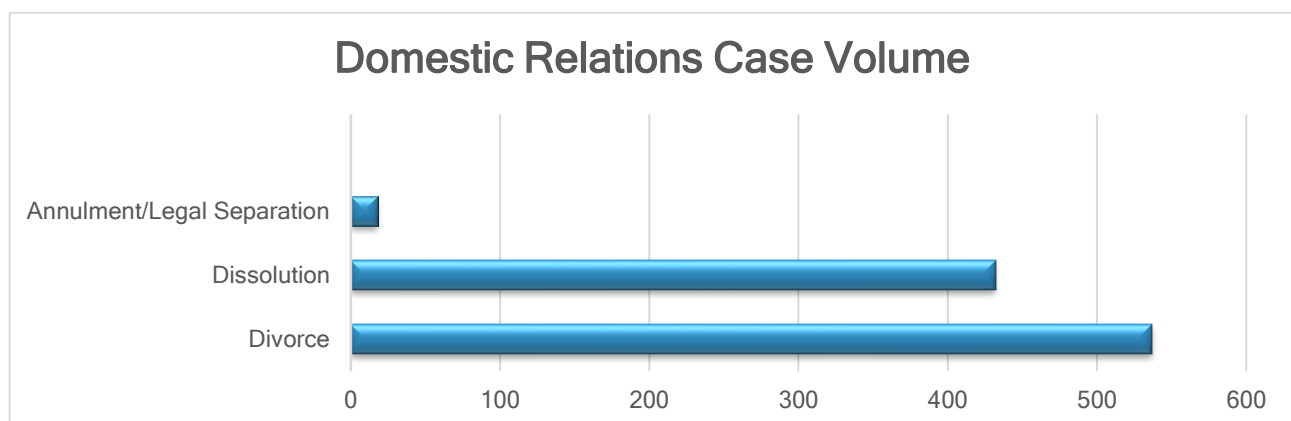
The Domestic Relations Division addresses cases involving domestic couples, including Divorces, Dissolutions, Domestic Violence, Child Support, Child Custody and Visitation. Domestic Relations case types are described on the following pages.

Divorce/ Dissolution

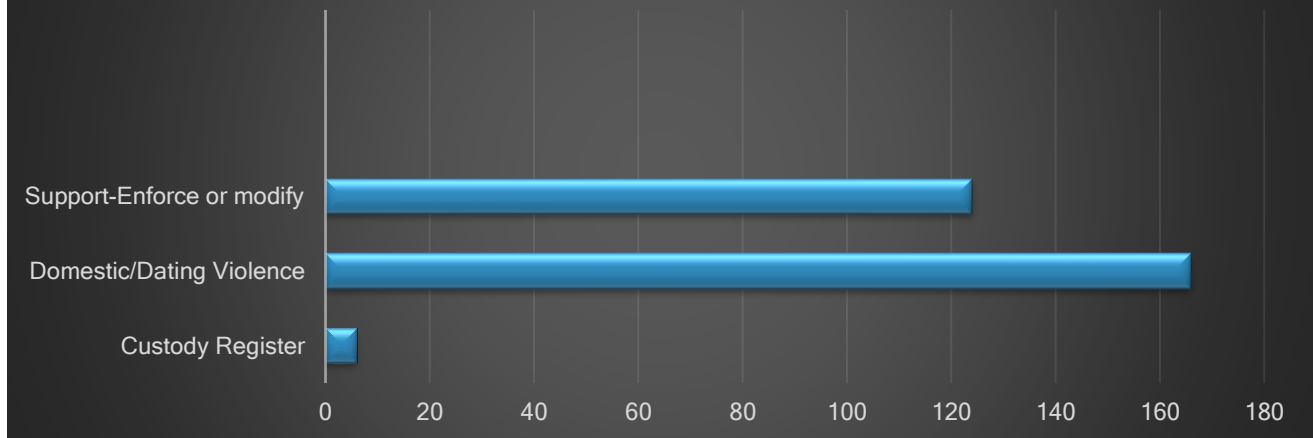
The Domestic Relations Division addressed 1,509 cases in 2025; 540 divorces and 495 dissolutions. The Division heard 215 Domestic Violence Civil Protection Requests.



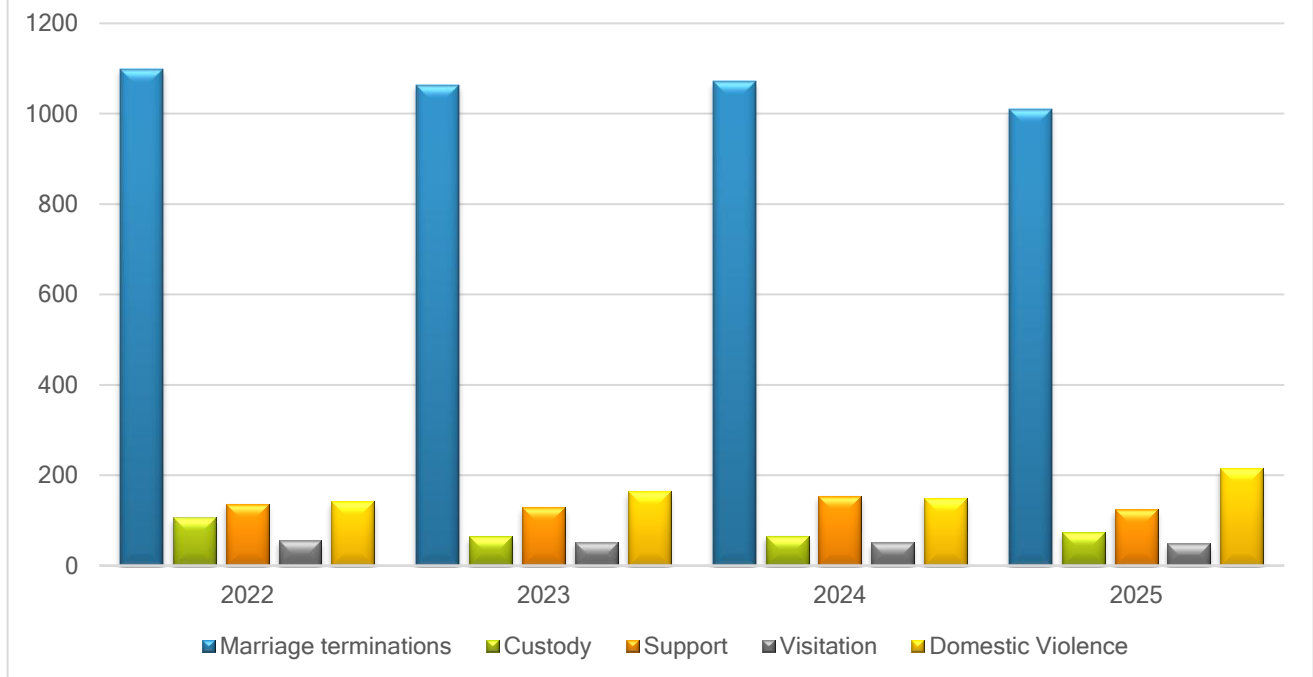
While divorces and dissolutions make up most cases processed by the Domestic Relations Docket, other case types are also included. The following graphs represent the volume of cases processed by the Domestic Relations Division in 2025.



Domestic Relations Case Volume-All Others



Domestic Relations Case Volume-Yearly Trends



Clearance Rates

Clearance rates are a metric used to determine the efficiency with which a case moves through the Court. From case filing to case completion, there are time standards from the Ohio Supreme Court that can be tracked. Not all cases can be closed on the same timeline, so case type is considered. The goal is to process cases through the Court without having them listed as “over time”.

The following graphs illustrate the history of case load and clearance rates for both the Domestic Relations and Juvenile Docket from Stark County Family Court. The clearance rate for these dockets statewide are also present for comparison. Rates listed at over 100% show a clearing of backlogged cases.

Juvenile Docket- Ohio Statewide

Annual Incoming Cases, Terminations, Clearance Rates

Year	Pending Jan. 1	Incoming Cases	Terminations	Clearance Rate	Pending Dec. 31
2025	51,629	167,922	172,031	102.4%	47,535
2024	53,338	177,671	179,380	101.0%	51,629
2023	53,323	182,675	182,660	100.0%	53,338
2022	54,948	177,487	179,045	100.9%	54,685
2021	50,949	175,540	171,541	97.7%	54,948

Juvenile Docket- Stark County

Annual Incoming Cases, Terminations, Clearance Rates

Year	Pending Jan. 1	Incoming Cases	Terminations	Clearance Rate	Pending Dec. 31
2025	978	4,586	4,771	104.0%	793
2024	940	5,118	5,080	99.3%	978
2023	962	4,907	4,929	100.4%	940
2022	810	4,815	4,663	96.8%	962
2021	899	4,367	4,456	102.0%	810

Domestic Relations Docket- Statewide

Annual Incoming Cases, Terminations, Clearance Rates



▼ Year	Pending Jan. 1	Incoming Cases	Terminations	Clearance Rate	Pending Dec. 31
2025	23,802	91,594	92,528	101.0%	22,866
2024	24,307	93,318	93,823	100.5%	23,802
2023	25,786	94,046	94,955	101.0%	24,307
2022	27,756	96,872	98,842	102.0%	25,860
2021	28,395	98,830	99,470	100.6%	27,756

Domestic Relations Docket- Stark County

Annual Incoming Cases, Terminations, Clearance Rates ⓘ



▼ Year	Pending Jan. 1	Incoming Cases	Terminations	Clearance Rate	Pending Dec. 31
2025	443	1,509	1,482	98.2%	470
2024	479	1,545	1,581	102.3%	443
2023	447	1,583	1,551	98.0%	479
2022	477	1,691	1,721	101.8%	447
2021	590	1,828	1,941	106.2%	477

Overview of the Stark County Family Court's Budget, Receipts, and Expenses in 2025

Family Court's annual budget is developed through a multi-stage process where State and Federal grant revenue, court fees, and any potential carryover funding from the prior calendar year and/or fiscal years are analyzed and aligned with projected operational costs of the Court and support services in the budget year. Prior to the start of the calendar year, the Judges submit an annual budget to the Board of County Commissioners for appropriation from the County General Revenue Fund.

Family Court receives revenue, expenses funds, and reports information, as required, to the originating source based upon three fiscal years, consisting of a standard calendar year (January-December), a federal fiscal year (October-September), or a state fiscal year (July-June). For standardization and comparative purposes of this report, receipt and expense detail between all funds were developed based upon a standard calendar year.

In 2025, the Stark County Family Court had a budget of \$8,511,147.35, in which a total of \$7,429,671.39 or 87.3% was expended amongst all funding sources.

The percentage of expenses attributed to each fund in 2025, in descending order is:

Fund	Percentage of Annual Expenses
County General Fund	61.91%
Youth Services / RECLAIM	26.96%
Federal Title IV-E	4.72%
Family Court Special Projects	4.37%
Supreme Court of Ohio LRP	1.94%
Family Court Computerization	0.10%

The percentage of expenses attributed by category in 2025, in descending order is:

Category	Percentage of Annual Expenses
Personnel (salaries and benefits)	77.68%
Purchased Services	20.90%
Supplies and Materials	0.73%
Miscellaneous	0.68%

Family Court's 2025 Budget (Figure 1), Appropriation/Receipt (Figure 2) and Expense (Figure 3) information is detailed below:

Calendar Year 2025 Budget Detail

	Community Trauma & Loss Grant	Computerization	General Fund - Juvenile	General Fund - Domestic Relations	Special Projects	Special Projects - Supreme Court Legal Representation	Supreme Court Legal Representation	Title IV-E Juvenile Administration	Youth Services - RECLAIM (304) January-June 2025	Youth Services - RECLAIM (319) July-December 2025	Total FC Budget
2025 Budget	\$10,616.41	\$22,523.89	\$4,171,560.27	\$908,592.64	\$541,301.87	\$174,705.12	\$156,248.11	\$364,029.48		\$2,161,569.56	\$ 8,511,147.35

Figure 1

2025 Family Court Budget

Calendar Year 2025 Appropriation and/or Receipt Detail

Expense Account Description	Community Trauma & Loss Grant	Computerization	General Fund - Juvenile	General Fund - Domestic Relations	Special Projects	Special Projects - Supreme Court Legal Representation	Supreme Court Legal Representation	Title IV-E Juvenile Administration	Youth Services - RECLAIM (304) January-June 2025	Youth Services - RECLAIM (319) July-December 2025	FC Receipts Category
Personnel Services	\$0.00	\$15,355.79	\$4,884,350.00		\$415,963.24	\$0.00	\$66,210.28	\$499,676.63	\$768,260.99	\$1,105,844.61	\$ 7,755,661.54

Figure 2

2025 Calendar Year Receipt Detail

Calendar Year 2025 Expense Detail

Expense Account Description	Community Trauma & Loss Grant	Computerization	General Fund - Juvenile	General Fund - Domestic Relations	Special Projects	SP - Supreme Court Legal Representation	Supreme Court Legal Representation	Title IV-E Juvenile Administration	Youth Services - RECLAIM (304) January-June 2025	Youth Services - RECLAIM (319) July-December 2025	FC Expense by Category
Personnel Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,211,550.31	\$661,043.86	\$166,200.20	\$79,795.20		\$0.00	\$467,555.90	\$362,564.78	\$ 3,948,710.25
Employee Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,183,706.31	\$127,190.30	\$65,062.18	\$41,397.23		\$0.00	\$219,023.19	\$186,602.06	\$ 1,822,981.27
Supplies and Materials	\$0.00	\$2,206.60	\$30,198.22	\$0.00	\$11,962.41	\$1,561.61		\$376.77	\$5,022.68	\$3,245.11	\$ 54,573.40
Purchased Services	\$0.00	\$5,432.24	\$377,464.75	\$0.00	\$64,725.25	\$21,371.05		\$350,240.03	\$381,313.61	\$352,264.19	\$ 1,552,811.12
Capital	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
Misc.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,697.52	\$0.00	\$16,390.10	\$350.05		\$0.00	\$15,692.23	\$9,465.45	\$ 50,595.35
	\$0.00	\$7,638.84	\$3,811,617.11	\$788,234.16	\$324,340.14	\$144,475.14		\$350,616.80	\$1,088,607.61	\$914,141.59	\$7,429,671.39

Figure 3

2025 Calendar Year Expenditures by Fund

Fund and Grant Description:

County General Fund:

The Stark County General Fund is primarily funded by sales tax revenue. The fund is additionally comprised of local conveyance and recorder fees, interest income, the Ohio local government fund, and state casino revenue tax. Stark County Family Court receives an allocation after submission of an annual budget to the Stark County Board of Commissioners. After being received, this allocation is then divided internally to support both the Juvenile and Domestic Relations divisions of the Court.

A combined 42 full and part-time positions were funded via the general fund, as well as the county portion of the court's 3 elected judges. Many other operating expenses are paid through the general fund, such as deputy security, interpreter services, court ordered behavioral health testing, information technology, and much more.

Youth Services / RECLAIM:

The Ohio Department of Youth Services grant, better known as RECLAIM, stands for Reasoned and Equitable Community & Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors. It is

a state-wide competitive grant that is applied for annually, each state fiscal year, and awarded to courts based upon a weighted formula of DYS/CCF commitments and felony adjudications. For standardization purposes, expenses shown were based upon the calendar year, combined between two state fiscal year funds. Additionally, multiple line items within RECLAIM have been grouped together. The separate allocations received by Stark County, within RECLAIM, are known as the Base Grant, the Subsidy Variable, Targeted, Competitive, BHJJ, and YE/EVB.

In 2025, the RECLAIM grant funded 16 full-time court positions in our supervision, diversion, and behavioral health departments, as well as 17 internal and/or community-based programs providing evidence-based treatment or support to court involved youth.

Stark County Family Court, in coordination with the Stark County Mental Health Board and Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health was awarded a behavioral health juvenile justice grant to support multisystemic therapy treatment for a two-year period from SFY26-SFY27.

Title IV-E Juvenile Administration:

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides federal reimbursement for a portion of the maintenance, administration and training costs of foster care children who meet federal eligibility requirements. The federal funding operates as a pass-through which is coordinated by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (ODCY) and open to juvenile courts meeting IV-E criteria.

In 2025, 4 court involved youth were placed in a licensed IV-E facility.

Supreme Court Prepetition Legal Representation Pilot

The legal representation pilot, known locally as BUILD (Boosting Understanding, Interventions, & Legal Defense), is funded by the Supreme Court of Ohio, and provides resources for advocates, both social and legal, to assist families in the early stages of a child welfare case, prior to a child being removed from the home, and often before an abuse or neglect petition is filed.

In 2025, 1 full-time engagement director position was partially funded via the BUILD program; 1 full-time peer support specialist position was funded out of the County GRF, via a contract with Family Council. BUILD operates in collaboration between the Family Court, Child Protective Services, Family Council, the Public Defender, Community Legal Aid, as well as contracted private attorneys.

This grant is currently in year five of what was intended to be a maximum of a four-year grant cycle. The annual amount awarded to selected courts was to decrease every year until available funding was exhausted. Therefore, as the annual award from the Supreme Court

decreases, it has required utilizing the Court's Special Projects fund and/or County GRF to cover a portion of program expenses. In grant year 5, ending September 30th, 2025, the maximum award amount from the Supreme Court is \$120,000. A separate fund number for the legal representation pilot was created to receive grant revenue.

Family Court Special Projects:

Ohio Revised Code allows for the court of common pleas of any county to authorize the clerk of courts to charge and collect applicable court fees under ORC 2303.20. Special projects funds can be utilized at the discretion of the judges to pay for a wide range of expenses deemed essential for efficient operation of the court.

In 2025, 1 full-time position was funded for the full calendar year via special projects, in addition to 2 separate positions being funded at various times throughout the year.

Family Court Computerization Fund:

The court of common pleas of any county may determine that for the efficient operation of the court, additional funds are required for computerization, and/or to make available computerized legal research services. Computerization is defined as the adaptation of a system or device, or the conversion of information into a form that can be stored or processed by a computer.

Community Trauma and Loss and Additional Gifts and Grants:

The Community, Trauma and Loss grant was originally awarded to the Family Court by the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton for a two-year period in the amount of \$70,000. In prior years, funds have been utilized to advocate and educate the community and train court staff on the needs of children who have experienced trauma. A minimal fixed amount remains as a resource to the court, although no funds from this grant were used in 2025.

Impact on Various Awards and Grants Received in 2025

The Stark County Family Court continually seeks funding opportunities to reduce expenses charged to the general fund or requiring the use of court assessed fees. In 2025, approximately 34% of court expenses were financed with either federal, state, or privately funded grants.

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