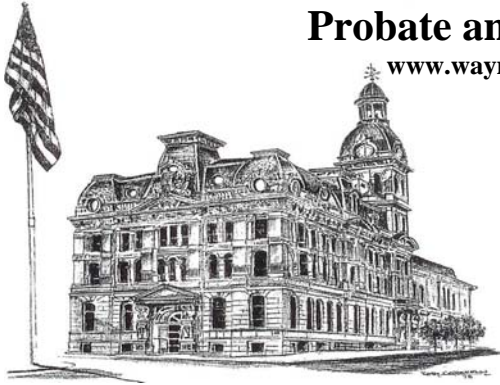


# WAYNE COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

## Probate and Juvenile Divisions

[www.wayneprobateandjuvenile.org](http://www.wayneprobateandjuvenile.org)



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**RAYMOND E. LEISY, JUDGE**

### NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **WAYNE COUNTY JUVENILE COURT PROBATION DEPARTMENT RECEIVES FIRST STATE CERTIFICATION**

Wooster, Ohio – Judge Raymond E. Leisy has announced that the Wayne County Juvenile Court’s probation department is the first in Ohio to receive certification to complete assessments for juvenile sex offenders.

Under recently enacted law, juvenile sex offenders in Ohio will be required to receive assessments, treatment, and transition services from programs that have been certified by the State of Ohio on or before 2010.

In order to qualify for certification, the probation department had to meet or exceed criteria established at the state level and pass a review by the Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment Program Certification Advisory Board. This Board reviewed the probation department’s sex offender protocol along with the various assessment components used to evaluate each juvenile adjudicated delinquent of a sex offense. Continuing education is another requirement for certification as is proficiency in needs and risk assessment.

“One of the many things I am proud of in the operations of the court is the extensive professional training of our probation department,” Judge Lesiy said. All of the court’s six probation officers hold bachelor’s degrees in social work or a related field and attend continuing education training each year. Five are also licensed social workers – a licensure well above the requirements to execute the duties of a probation officer. Three

of the probation officers are members of the Ohio Supreme Court's permanent roundtable on juvenile sex offenders which meets regularly to discuss and update members on issues of juvenile sex offender programming and management. Wayne County's juvenile sex offender service and oversight panel was recently featured in the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities' newsletter. This panel meets monthly to review juvenile sex offender cases and includes representatives from juvenile probation, juvenile parole, Family & Children First Council, Children Services, Victim-Witness Assistance, The Counseling Center, Catholic Charities, and Your Human Resource Center. The group's main task is to make sure each juvenile sex offender is demonstrating appropriate effort in their treatment and that necessary services are being provided to the juvenile and their family.

In addition to supervising juveniles placed on probation, the probation officers prepare pre-dispositional reports and recommendations for juveniles adjudicated delinquent of sexually oriented offenses. These reports are submitted to the judge or magistrates of the court to assist in fashioning a disposition or sentence for the juvenile that will address community safety and have the highest likelihood of success in reforming the juvenile's behavior.

Wayne County Juvenile Court hears approximately fifteen cases each year involving sexually oriented offenses committed by juveniles. Such cases usually require a more intensive term of probation supervision and treatment compared with other types of delinquent acts. Although probation duration is indeterminate, the usual period on probation for juvenile sex offenders is eighteen months to two years.

Juveniles placed on probation for felony-type offenses, including sexually oriented offenses, receive a suspended commitment to the Ohio Department of Youth Services. ODYS is the juvenile prison system in Ohio. If a juvenile fails to successfully complete probation, they may be committed to ODYS and can be held in a juvenile prison facility until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Certification is valid for two year periods, and the probation department's current Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Certification is effective from October 15, 2008 to June 30, 2010.

Readers interested in finding out more about the court and its probation department can log-on to the court's new website at [www.waynprobateandjuvenile.org](http://www.waynprobateandjuvenile.org).