

# MEDINA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS PROBATE & JUVENILE DIVISIONS

## WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER



I hope you all enjoyed your holiday season and had the chance to spend quality time with family and friends. In Juvenile and Probate Court, our staff embraces the holiday spirit by caring for others and creating smiles wherever we can.

We continued our annual tradition of delivering stuffed bears to the Windfall school with Santa Claus in December. It is such a joy to see the smiles on students' and teachers' faces when Santa walks into the room. Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court began this project in 2007 and the excitement and happiness that overflows from the classrooms will always make it one of my favorite days of the season. This project continues to be a success thanks to the generosity of my staff who make the purchase of the bears possible every year.

My team never ceases to amaze me when they also take it upon themselves to initiate a kind gesture. Lead Juvenile Deputy Clerk Arlene Getto organized a food drive for those in need due to the government shutdown in November. Thanks to her efforts and the efforts of staff, we were able to donate approximately 230 items to Feeding Medina County in just a matter of two weeks.

We've also hired a new Probate Deputy Clerk and a File Clerk who have been wonderful additions to our team. We know they will do great work for the Court and community.

Juvenile and Probate Court is moving into 2026 with a positive attitude and hopes for a successful and efficient year. We hope the same for you!

Sincerely,  
*Judge Kevin W. Dunn*

## IN THIS ISSUE:



**ANNUAL BUILD-A-BEAR  
DELIVERY AT WINDFALL**



**JUVENILE PROBATE  
STAFF**



**MEET OUR NEW  
FILE CLERK DEBBIE**



**MEET OUR NEW PROBATE  
DEPUTY CLERK SHELLEY**



**Medina County Court of Common Pleas, Probate & Juvenile Divisions**

225 E. Washington Street, 4th Floor, Medina, OH 44256

Juvenile Court: (330) 725-9709

Probate Court: (330) 725-9703

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

## JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT STAFF COLLECT DONATIONS FOR FEEDING MEDINA COUNTY



During the recent government shut down where we saw an increased reliance on food pantries, staff of the Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court rallied together to try to make an impact. Lead Deputy Clerk for Juvenile Court, Arlene Getto, reached out to Feeding Medina County for a list of items that could help federal workers and those affected by social security or limited SNAP benefits. Feeding Medina County provided a wish list of items that would be most beneficial in the pantry. This included dried or canned goods and microwaveable items. Staff tried to focus on donations that would not require too many perishable items to create a meal. The food drive wish list was posted and circulated among staff to donate what they could.

“The Court’s role of protecting and providing assistance to Medina County residents doesn’t only exist when they are within our courtrooms,” said Judge Kevin W. Dunn. “I’m very lucky to have a staff that cares for others and puts in the extra effort to help individuals and agencies within our community.”

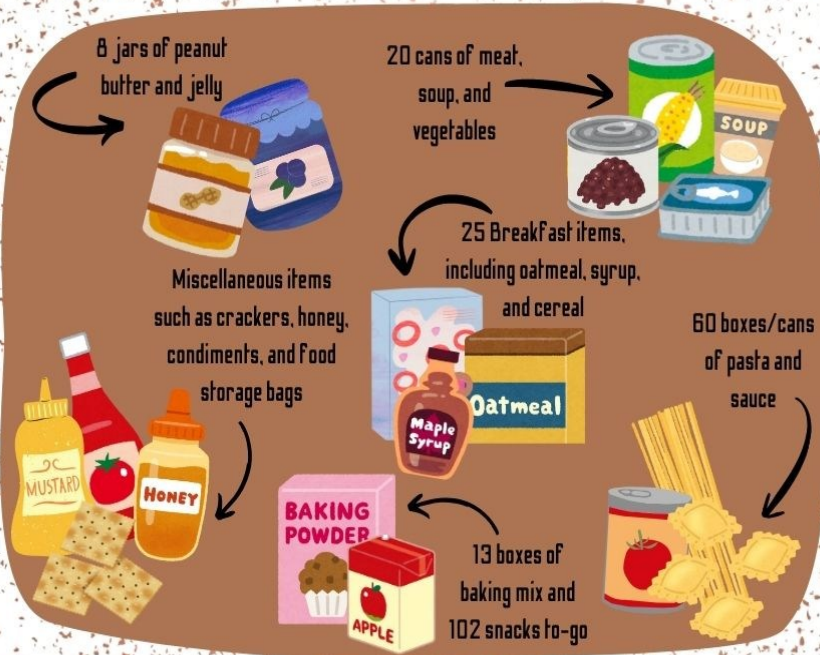
Donations received include boxes of pancake mix and syrup, cereal, oatmeal, peanut butter, jelly, soup, canned chicken and tuna, pasta and pasta sauce, macaroni and cheese, applesauce, fruit cups, granola bars, beef broth, and baking mixes. In total, staff accumulated approximately 230 items for donation to Feeding Medina County.

“The recent government shutdown reminds us that we should come together to help others in our area who may be experiencing food insecurity if we are able,” Getto said. “Our day-to-day focus in Court is on the elderly, children, and families and I’m so pleased with the effort the staff put in within a short span of time.”

According to [feedingmedinacounty.org](http://feedingmedinacounty.org), food distributions occur on the first Thursday of the month at Hidden Hollow Camp in Lodi, the second Thursday of the month at Grace Baptist Church in Brunswick, the third Thursday of the month at the Fairgrounds in Medina, and the fourth Thursday of the month at Art Wright Stadium in Wadsworth.

## FOOD DRIVE STATISTICS

Approximately 230 items were donated by staff



## WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

According to FeedingMedinaCounty.org, food insecurity refers to the USDA’s measure of a lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Lack of nutritious food on a regular basis leads to many health, social and emotional issues. Food insecurity is not isolated to families living below the poverty line. When low-to-moderate-income families have challenges and cannot meet their basic needs, food insecurity becomes a major concern. They often need to make difficult decisions, such as paying rent or filling prescriptions, versus purchasing nutritionally adequate foods. Feeding Medina County’s mission is to nourish our neighbors in need. Our vision is a Medina County where everyone has enough to eat.

## COURT CLOSINGS

Please note that Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court will be closed on the following days in 2026.

Court closings are also posted to our website [www.medinaprobate.org](http://www.medinaprobate.org).

## COURT CLOSINGS

MEDINA COUNTY PROBATE AND JUVENILE DIVISIONS WILL BE CLOSED THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

- MONDAY, JANUARY 19 - MLK DAY
- MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16 - PRESIDENTS' DAY
- MONDAY, MAY 25 - MEMORIAL DAY
- FRIDAY, JUNE 19 - JUNETEENTH
- FRIDAY, JULY 3 - INDEPENDENCE DAY (OBSERVED)
- MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 - LABOR DAY
- MONDAY, OCTOBER 12 - COLUMBUS DAY
- WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11 - VETERAN'S DAY
- THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26 - THANKSGIVING
- FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27 - DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING
- FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY

2026

## JUDGE DUNN AND STAFF JOIN SANTA FOR ANNUAL BUILD-A-BEAR DELIVERY AT WINDFALL



Judge Kevin W. Dunn joined Santa Claus at the Windfall School December 19 to personally deliver stuffed bears to students for the holidays. Seven boys and eight girls, from kindergarten through 4th grade, received the bears dressed as superheroes and princesses, purchased from the Strongsville-Southpark Build-A-Bear store. In addition, Windfall staff collected books to gift to students in grades 5th through 12th.

"I look forward to this day every year," Judge Dunn said. "Seeing the students light up and smile when we walk into the room with Santa is the best way to kick off the holiday season."

Build-A-Bear deliveries began in 2007 under Retired Probate and

Juvenile Court Judge John J. Lohn. Funding for the Build-A-Bear Project is provided through voluntary donations by Medina County Probate and Juvenile staff who contribute during optional Dress Down Days on the last Friday of each month.

Youth in the Medina County Juvenile Court Community Service Program also assist with the project by dressing and boxing the bears, as well as by creating personalized holiday cards for each child.

"It's important to us that we involve youth in our Community Service program each year," Judge Dunn said. "This project shows the kids that their small act of kindness can have a big impact on their community."

Windfall School is a branch of the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities located inside the Medina County Achievement Center. Students are encouraged to learn at their own pace, according to their individual needs and abilities.

In addition to the bear delivery at Windfall, 16 bears will also be provided for children involved with Medina County Job and Family Services and 13 bears will be given to wards within the Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program or other programs as needed.



## DISTRIBUTION OF BEARS PER AGENCY

### WINDFALL SCHOOL

7 Boys  
8 Girls

### GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM

1 Boy  
2 Girls

### JOB & FAMILY SERVICES

8 Boys  
8 Girls

### EXTRA

5 Boys  
5 Girls



# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU COME TO COURT



## BEHAVIOR IN COURT

The Court is a serious and dignified place. You must behave accordingly. Respect is to be paid to the Judge, Magistrates, and all Court personnel.

- When the Judge or Magistrate enters the courtroom, you should stand up until you are told to be seated.
- You must be quiet and attentive in Court.
- Speak only when directed to do so by the Judge or Magistrate.
- Keep in mind that the proceedings are recorded on audiotape, so please speak clearly.
- Chewing gum, food, and beverages are not permitted in the courtroom.
- Be on time.



## PROPER ATTIRE

- If your appearance is not considered appropriate by the Judge or Magistrate, you will be sent home and ordered to appear at another time.
- Modest, clean, and appropriate clothing is required.
- Do not wear shorts, flip flops, midriff tops, mini skirts, tube tops, torn jeans, or t-shirts with offensive graphics.
- Remove all facial piercings before coming to Court.



## WHAT THE CLERK CAN DO FOR YOU

- Help you understand how the Court works
- Answer questions about Court procedures
- Help to find information regarding your case
- Answer questions regarding monies owed to the Court
- Direct you to other agencies who can provide assistance
- Direct you to where you have to appear in Court



## WHAT THE CLERK CAN NOT DO FOR YOU

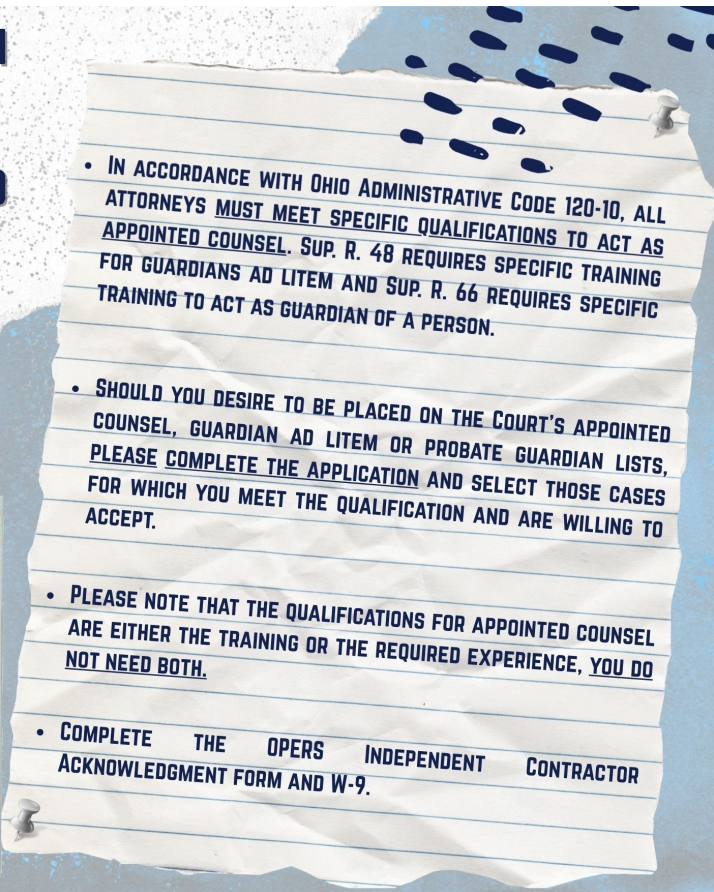
*Please note the staff of the Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court is prohibited by law (Ohio Revised Code Section 4705.07) from providing legal advice. Providing legal advice, no matter how small, can result in criminal charges for staff including fines and jail time.*

- We cannot tell you what forms to fill out based upon your circumstances. If you ask for a specific form, the court can provide that to you.
- We cannot tell you how to fill out a form but can check the form to make sure all areas are filled out completely before filing.
- We cannot tell you what to file or how to file with the exception of letting you know that a form is incomplete, not properly signed, or requires a filing fee.
- We cannot tell you whether or not you must appear at hearing. That information is contained in the hearing notice or court order.
- We cannot tell you what type of case to file based upon your specific circumstances.

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN APPOINTED COUNSEL? HERE'S HOW

**CONSULT AN ATTORNEY**  
 If you would like to consult an attorney, please call the **Medina County Bar Association** at (330) 725-9794 or **Community Legal Aid** at (800) 998-9454

RETURN ALL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:  
 JENNIFER MOORE,  
 COURT ADMINISTRATOR  
 MEDINA COUNTY  
 PROBATE AND JUVENILE COURTS  
 225 E. WASHINGTON ST., 4<sup>TH</sup>  
 FLOOR  
 MEDINA, OHIO 44256



# Q&A WITH OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBERS



**SHELLEY BURR,**  
PROBATE DEPUTY  
CLERK

**Q: What made you want to work for Medina County Probate Court?**

A: I previously worked for the Clerk of Courts in various divisions and I genuinely missed the work. I found it very

rewarding to assist the public and help people navigate the court system during important moments in their lives. That experience showed me how meaningful court service can be.

**Q: What is one thing you hope to accomplish during your time here?**

A: I hope to help people feel supported and less overwhelmed when they come to court. I want to be someone they rely on for information and respectful help.

**Q: What do you like best about Medina County?**

A: I love the small-town feel. The square in Medina is a great place to visit on the weekends during summer months. I especially enjoy the Saturday Farmer’s Market.

**Q: What is one habit that keeps you most productive at work?**

A: I like to stay focused and organized—ensuring my work is done correctly and timely, while helping people if they require assistance.

**Q: What is your favorite quote?**

A: If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.



**DEBBIE AKERS,**  
PROBATE/  
JUVENILE FILE  
CLERK

**Q: What made you want to work for Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court?**

A: I have lived in

Medina for 30 years and thought I would take a chance to work for the judicial system in Medina. So happy to be here!

**Q: What is one thing you hope to accomplish during your time here?**

A: Learning the court system since this is my first time within in this type of environment.

**Q: Do you have a particular habit that keeps you most productive and on task at work?**

A: I take notes on paper so I can stay organized and focused.

**Q: What do you like to do best in Medina County?**

A: I love the parks and trails.

**Q: What is your favorite quote?**

A: Treat others how you would like to be treated.

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:**

You can view all available positions with Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court by visiting the Employment Tab on our website at [www.medinaprobate.org](http://www.medinaprobate.org)

