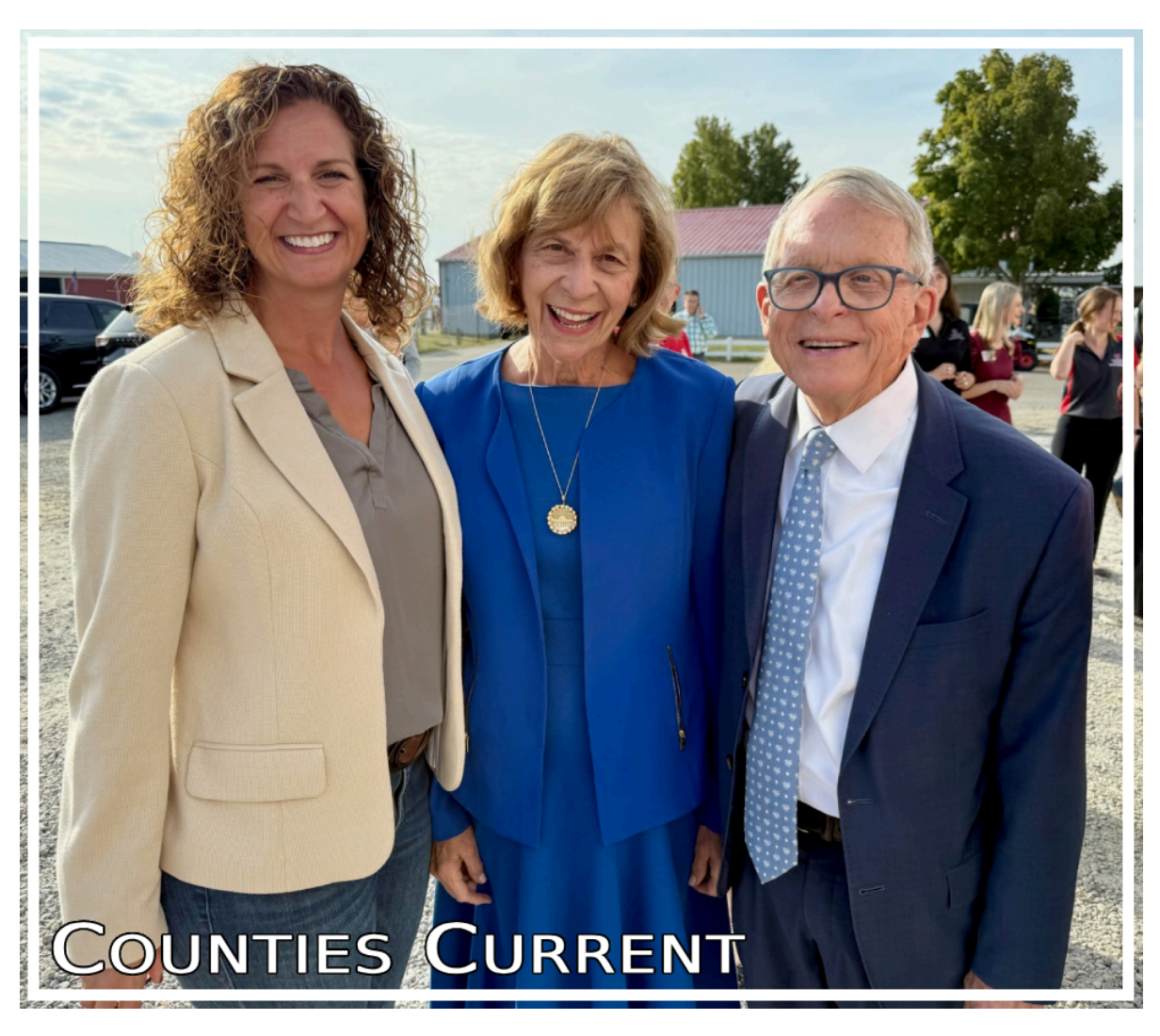

September 22, 2025

Clark County Commissioner Melanie Flax Wilt took in the Ohio State University's Farm Science Review with Governor and First Lady DeWine last week. The Farm Science Review is an annual event that highlights the latest innovations in agricultural production and features field demonstrations of corn and soybean combines, tillage, nutrient and lime applications, and drainage installations.

Association and Member News | State and Federal News |
Education and Grants | County News |
Job Postings

Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

Back to Top

Behavioral Health Drug Program shifts to assistance model, submissions must be sent by February 15

House Bill 96, the state operating budget, altered the Behavioral Health Drug Program, which provides funding to counties for the cost of certain drugs dispensed to inmates of county jails and Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF), from a reimbursement model to a financial assistance model.

R.C. 5119.19 defines psychotropic drugs for the purposes of the program. Stimulants prescribed for the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are specifically excluded from the definition of psychotropic drug.

The total amount available for SFY 2026 is $6.5 million. Half of the total is available for each six-month funding period. Awards will be based on the previous six-month request. If requests exceed the funds available, assistance will be reduced proportionally.

Funding requests for the first half of SFY 2026 (July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025) must be submitted by the county sheriff's office/CBCF to the Department of Behavioral Health by February 15, 2026. Failure to submit funding requests by the specified date will result in the request being denied.

The Department will notify the jails/CBCFs and the local ADAMHS boards the amount that each jail/CBCF will receive for the reporting period and upload funds to the applicable ADAMHS Board in the Grants and Funding Management System.

More information about the program can be found on its webpage.

OCCO endorses Stark County Commissioner Alan Harold for OPERS Board

The Ohio Council of County Officials (OCCO) unanimously endorsed Stark County Commissioner Alan Harold for the County Employees seat on the Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS) Board of Directors. OCCO is an organization representing the collective interests of county elected official row officer associations.

You can read the endorsement letter here.

Ballots have been sent to county employees and retirees in the system and must be submitted by October 3.

Microsoft to cease support for Windows 10 in mid October

Microsoft has announced that Windows 10 will reach end of life on October 14, 2025, meaning the operating system will no longer receive security patches, updates, or technical support. For counties, this creates a significant cybersecurity risk, as unsupported systems become prime targets for ransomware and other attacks. To protect critical services and taxpayer money, counties must act now to prepare for the transition.

Key Steps Counties Must Take for Windows 10 End of Life

1. **Inventory & Assess Systems** – Identify all county devices still running Windows 10 and determine which are compatible with Windows 11. Eligible devices can upgrade at no additional cost.
2. **Strengthen Interim Security** – Until the deadline, keep Windows 10 fully patched, enforce encryption, and limit network access for legacy systems.
3. **Review Policies & Train Staff** – Update IT and cybersecurity policies to reflect the deadline, and train employees on the risks of operating unsupported systems.

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

RUMPKE

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

Back to Top

Attorney General issues opinion on county treasurer pay raise issued

Last week, Attorney General Dave Yost released Attorney General Opinion 2025-019, concerning the effective date of the county official pay raise in House Bill 96 as it applies to county treasurers.

The opinion finds the increase in salary for county officials provided by HB 96 takes effect on September 30, 2025, which is after the start of the county treasurer's current term of office. By operation of Article II, Section 20 of the Ohio Constitution, the county treasurer's salary may only increase at the annual rate of one and three-quarters percent until another term commences.

OMHAS hosting Adult Mobile Crisis Stakeholder Listening Session for CCAO members and county staff

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) will host a stakeholder listening session on adult mobile crisis for CCAO members and key county staff. The listening session will take place virtually on Thursday, September 25 from 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org for access to the virtual meeting link.

OhioMHAS intends to increase Adult Mobile Crisis Services statewide as part of its continued commitment to increase access to behavioral health services in Ohio communities. To inform service design, implementation planning, and procurement, OhioMHAS is conducting a series of listening sessions with stakeholders. These sessions will help the department:

- Understand the current landscape of adult mobile crisis response across Ohio
- Learn about innovative approaches, lessons learned and models to scale
- Learn from promising local practices and challenges
- Gather input on priorities for service expectations, staffing models, financing mechanisms, and payment strategies
- Build a foundation for ongoing collaboration

Participants are asked to come prepared to answer the following questions:

- How are you staffing adult mobile crisis in your community?
- How are you paying for adult mobile crisis in your community?
- What outcomes are you measuring for mobile crisis and what system alleviation have you seen from use of adult mobile services in your community?
- Where experienced gaps or considerations for statewide implementation of Adult Mobile Crisis Services?

Please RSVP to Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org for access to the virtual meeting link.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

Back to Top

Save the date: CCAO and CyberOhio Cybersecurity Program Webinar on October 9

CCAO and CyberOhio will host a webinar on October 9 at 2:00 p.m. regarding the implementation of R.C. 9.64 and county cybersecurity programs. Registration information will be sent this week and available in next week's issue of Counties Current.

Topics will include:

- What Ohio Revised Code Section 9.64 requires of political subdivisions
- Cyber incident reporting and ransomware response obligations
- Public records exceptions for cybersecurity documents
- Practical steps to begin or enhance a compliant cyber program
- Free resources available through CyberOhio and state partners

CyberOhio offering "How to Use NIST CSF to Build a Cyber Program" webinar

On September 24 at 12:30 p.m., CyberOhio will host a webinar that walks you through using the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) as your roadmap to build or enhance a comprehensive cyber program. This session will be especially geared toward local entities building a cyber program to come into compliance with R.C. 9.64.

What You'll Learn:

- The core components of the NIST CSF: Govern, Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, Recover
- How to align these components with your organization's people, processes, and technology
- Practical steps & tools to assess current posture and prioritize improvements
- Tips for communicating risk and gaining support from leadership

Click here to register.

2025 Cyber Summit to be held November 19

Join cybersecurity leaders, government officials, education and nonprofit professionals at Ohio's premier cybersecurity gathering. Hosted by the Ohio Innovation and Technology Association in partnership with the State of Ohio, the CyberOhio Summit is your chance to dive into the state's cyber landscape — from new standards and legislative updates to best practices and collective defense. The event will take place on November 19 at the Fawcett Center in Columbus.

Registration is available here.

Application window for drug task force grants open through October 9

RecoveryOhio and the Office of Criminal Justice Services have opened the RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Fund grant application window. Applications must be sent by October 9 to be considered.

Grants are open to local (county, municipal, township, and village law enforcement) law enforcement agencies, provided the agency is a part of a drug task force. The drug task force must meet four criteria:

- It participates in the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System or the Uniform Crime Reporting program.
- It must ensure deconflictization through Ohio High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.
- It reports drug activity to Drug Incident Summary Collection Overview system on a monthly basis, collaborates with the Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center, and adheres to Ohio Task Force Commanders Association (OTFCA) Best Practices.
- It attends OTFCA meetings.

Funds from the grant program are intended to enable drug task forces to build new or strengthen existing partnerships and enhance treatment and education resources. Funds may also be used to defray expenses incurred in performing enforcement of Ohio's drug laws.

More information about the program, including how to apply, can be found here.

Grant writing workshop to be held in Toledo in early October

Grant Writing USA is hosting a two-day grant writing workshop in Toledo on October 7 and 8. The class will provide tips on how to write grant proposals and identify available grant opportunities.

Registration costs $495 and includes lifetime access to Grant Writing USA's Alumni Resource Center. Registrants can use the discount code "Special100" for a $100 discount.

Government agencies can pay for registration within 30 days after the event.

If you have questions about the event, please contact Tammy Pitts at tammy@grantwritingusa.com.

Heritage Ohio hosting annual conference in Stark County in October

From October 14 to October 16 (Tuesday to Thursday), Heritage Ohio will be hosting its annual conference in Canton. The conference will focus on how communities can revitalize un- or underused historic properties.

Sessions at the conference include, among others, the following:

- Examples of how Opportunity Zones, tax increment financing (TIFs), and other incentive programs have helped transform downtowns;
- A guide to applying for federal historic preservation tax credits;
- Case studies on the cities of Canton, Huron, and Troy; and
- How Ohio's building code regulations applies to historic properties.

Registration is open now and costs $350 for Heritage Ohio members and $400 for non-members. Registration can also be made for individual days.

COUNTY NEWS

Back to Top

Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

Henry commissioners updated on various topics, including 4-H

Crescent News, September 17, 2025

Henry County commissioners received updates on several matters during their Tuesday meeting, including the county's 4-H program.

Morgan Parcher, OSU Extension Office educator, reviewed 4-H numbers this year compared to the past few years.

For example, Parcher reported that participation in some programs, such as beef cattle, was down some, relating this to the present state of the economy and the cost. The number of 4-Hers with hogs bounced back this year to 2023 levels, according to Parcher, while poultry numbers were back up.

Overall, she reported that participation in kids in grades 3-12 was down 12, but the Cloverbuds program for younger ones was up by eight.

Parcher and commissioners also touched on how Junior Fair activities unfolded during the Henry County Fair in August, when the county's new community events center at the fairgrounds in Napoleon opened. The facility was used for the livestock shows this year.

Officials were happy with how things went, making mention of the experiences of 4-Hers and their animals when moving into the facility for fair week.

Commissioner Glen Miller commented that things went well, telling Parcher she did a "wonderful job."

The events center — built with private and public funds — opened not long before the fair opened. Construction got underway last year by the project general contractor (A.A. Boos & Sons, Inc., Oregon).

Parcher also told commissioners that she would like to move up the deadline for 2026 Junior Fair entries to June 1 (from mid-June).

Northeast District

Commissioners start opioid reimbursement website

Star Beacon, September 16, 2025

The Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners recently launched a new webpage to provide information regarding opioid settlement dollars received through national litigation against opioid manufacturers and distributors.

"Under the One Ohio Memorandum of Understanding, settlement funds are divided statewide, with 30 percent distributed directly to Ohio local governments, 55 percent directed to the OneOhio Foundation, and 15 percent allocated to the State of Ohio," a press release states.

Ashtabula County Commissioner Kathryn Whittington said the commissioners decided to create the webpage now because regular payments are coming through to the county.

"The website details allocation made in accordance with the OneOhio Memorandum of Understanding, which directs settlement funds toward prevention, treatment, recovery and enforcement efforts. Current allocations include support for the Crime Enforcement Agency of Ashtabula County, Safe Communities as well as the Andover and Orwell police departments and the 2004 Fund.

"The launch is part of our commitment to transparency and accountability. The webpage provides year-to-date totals, the length of payments, prevention, recover and enforcement efforts to address the opiod crisis," Whittington said in the release.

Commissioner J.P. Ducro said, "The opioid crisis has touched nearly every family in our community. But creating this webpage we are giving residents a clear view of how these funds are being used to strengthen prevention, treatment, and enforcement efforts.

Commissioner Casey Kozlowski said, "These dollars are meant to bring real, positive change. Launching this site ensures the public can follow the process and see that the money is directly supporting local solutions."

Central District

Franklin County Commissioners considering budget cuts in 2026

The Columbus Dispatch, September 18, 2025

When the Greater Columbus Arts Council announced earlier this summer that the county was pausing on $4 million in anticipated funding for artists, that was just the tip of the iceberg.

Franklin County is tightening the belt as it begins its 2026 budgeting process in light of expected reductions in money from the state and federal government. Franklin County Administrator Kenneth Wilson is asking all agencies to cut their budgets by 2.5% next year and recommending a 25% reduction in discretionary grants, or about a $14 million cut.

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners approved a $2.2 billion budget for 2025. The expected total budget for 2026 has not been determined yet, said Wilson. The county is just now starting the 2026 budgeting process in earnest as of Sept. 16, and Wilson will give the board his recommended budget in November.

Wilson said the focus is meeting residents' basic needs, such as shelter and healthcare, and maintaining the social safety net. He said the county approved funds for multiple health and human services emergency requests in 2025. This includes an additional $5 million for the Community Shelter Board, which funds the region's homeless shelters, on top of $6 million it received initially for the year.

Expected reductions in revenue to the county include Ohio transitioning to a flat income tax of 2.75% even for the highest earners, meaning there will be less money coming in from the state's local government fund.

Wilson said he's also concerned that due to federal cuts, the county will have to pick up some administrative costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, often called SNAP and formerly referred to as food stamps.

At least one agency head, Franklin County Auditor Michael Stinziano, told The Dispatch his office will not have to cut staff or services because the county administrator warned everyone months ago to plan for these cuts.

Southwest District

Butler County poised to approve $20M tax break for property owners

Journal News, September 19, 2025

Butler County commissioners plan to give property owners a two-pronged tax break next year totaling roughly $20.1 million.

The first prong will benefit all property owners and provide a tax savings of roughly $100 per $100,000 of home value. The second measure provides targeted relief to nearly 19,000 homeowners who qualify for the Ohio Homestead exemption.

For part one, the commission intends to rollback about half of the county's inside millage collection next year for a total tax break of $12.5 million. For the second part, the commission is tossing what some have termed a "political football" that was authorized in the state's budget by removing some revenue from other taxing entities.

County Administrator Judi Boyko provided the commissioners a report from the county auditor that shows doubling the Homestead benefit would reduce revenues for all taxing bodies by about $7.6 million. For context, she provided another spreadsheet compiled by the auditor with rough estimates — before the actual taxes were collected — showing all taxing bodies collectively would likely receive a $78.3 million "windfall" from the 37% property value explosion in 2023.

"So clearly the increase from a couple years ago far outweighs any decrease from the Homestead exemption," Boyko said.

The only property tax reform measure in the biennium budget Gov. Mike DeWine didn't veto, the so-called "piggyback" property tax provision, gives county commissioners the authority to essentially double the state-funded Homestead exemptions and 2.5% owner-occupancy credits for eligible property owners using local dollars.

The commissioners only intend to deploy the doubled Homestead exemption. The 2.5% credit was estimated to give relief to roughly 105,070 homeowners totaling $8.9 million.

The Homestead exemption shields the first $28,000 of a property's value from taxation and the homeowner must be at least 65 years old or permanently and totally disabled. The income threshold is $40,000.

The county is expected to make an announcement on Monday about the tax break.

Southeast District

An Ohio county sees success with program connecting inmates to treatment, not just punishment

WTRF.com, September 12, 2025

Jefferson County leaders say a new program is helping turn arrests into second chances.

Addiction remains a major crisis in Ohio, with thousands of overdose deaths each year, even as the numbers begin to improve.

In Jefferson County alone—where nearly one in five residents lives in poverty and healthcare options are sparse—access to treatment can feel out of reach. That's why the new diversion program, offering addiction intervention at the front door of the legal system, isn't just innovative—it's essential.

"My first year as sheriff was terrible – That summer was terrible. What I realized was that a lot of these people who overdosed had just either been in jail or had just gotten out. They go out, use the same level as before, their tolerance isn't the same, and they're dying," said Jefferson County Sheriff Fred Abdella.

Sheriff Abdalla says the program couldn't have come at a better time, and county commissioners can already see the results.

"It's working very well. I was over there last week, and the jail was about 80% full instead of completely full," said Jefferson County Commissioner Tony Morelli.

The county-wide diversion program, starting at the jailhouse doors… is disrupting the addiction cycle in an effective way.

"So what happens now if someone is arrested, there's a professional there at the jail to do an intake," said Morelli.

It's a modern, collaborative approach uniting judges, deputies, probation officers, mental health services, the recovery board, and inmates to work as one.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

Back to Top

SEPTEMBER 26
Northeast District Meeting - Huron County

SEPTEMBER 29
Post Budget Briefing - Greene County

OCTOBER 3
Post Budget Briefing - Delaware County

OCTOBER 6
Post Budget Briefing - Jackson County

OCTOBER 10
Central District Meeting - Licking County

OCTOBER 13
Columbus Day - Legal holiday

OCTOBER 22
Northwest District Meeting - Mercer County

OCTOBER 31
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

Copyright © 2025 CCAO, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.