

**KNOX COUNTY PROBATE-JUVENILE COURT
2019 ANNUAL REPORT**



Judge Jay W. Nixon

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO
PROBATE-JUVENILE DIVISION

JAY W. NIXON, JUDGE
CHRISTINA I. REIHELD, MAGISTRATE

DIANE S. RANDALL
COURT ADMINISTRATOR

JEREMY E. PAYNE
DIRECTOR OF PROBATION

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

I am pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report of Knox County Probate/Juvenile Court for your information and use. This report includes information about the programs offered by the Court and Juvenile Probation Department to the youth of our county as well as statistical information regarding the number and type of cases filed. I hope this report is informative and useful.

Knox County Probate/Juvenile Court appreciates the dedication and experience of the Knox County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Knox County Public Defender's Office, Knox County Job & Family Services, private attorneys, as well as every law enforcement agency of Knox County, including the Knox County Sheriff's Office, the Mount Vernon City Police Department, the Fredericktown Police Department and the Danville Police Department.

The Court would also like to thank the following for their assistance and cooperation in helping the Court and juveniles of Knox County: Mount Vernon City Schools, Centerburg Schools, Danville Schools, East Knox Schools, Fredericktown Schools and The Learning Center. Also, Behavioral Healthcare Partners, The Children's Resource Center, Muskingum County Juvenile Detention Center, Richland County Juvenile Detention Center, and The Ohio Department of Youth Services, and all participating foster parents and counseling agencies.

In conclusion, I would like to personally express my sincere thanks to the Court staff for their continued service and dedication. With everyone working together, the Court is able to provide a high level of quality service to the citizens of Knox County.

Respectfully submitted,



Judge Jay W. Nixon

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Knox County Probate/Juvenile Court is to provide efficient, quality judicial services to the people of Knox County. Through the process of seeking the truth, the Court's goal is to firmly and fairly adjudicate and dispose of all matters brought before it. After disposition, every effort is made to enforce the Court's orders to ensure public safety. In addition, the Court strives to use all available resources to achieve the rehabilitation of our youth in order to make them more productive citizens of our community. Ultimately, the primary goal and mission of the Probate/Juvenile Court of Knox County is the attainment of Justice.

Knox County Probate/Juvenile Court Staff

Judge Jay Nixon is a native of Mount Vernon, Ohio. He attended Ohio University, graduating in 2003 with a B.A. in Psychology. He attended law school at the University of Dayton, graduating cum laude in 2009. Judge Nixon returned to Mount Vernon after law school to work at the firm of Zelkowitz, Barry & Cullers until he was appointed Magistrate of Knox County Probate/Juvenile Court in February of 2015 by Judge Jennifer Springer. Following the resignation of Judge Springer, Judge Nixon was appointed to the bench of the Probate/Juvenile Court in November of 2018.

Magistrate Christina Reiheld has resided in Knox County for more than ten years. She obtained her B.A. in History in 1998, and graduated summa cum laude from the University of Akron, School of Law in 2003. After practicing as a judicial law clerk for Judge Lynn Slaby on the Ninth District Court of Appeals and Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor with the Supreme Court of Ohio, Magistrate Reiheld served children and families for more than ten years as a private practice attorney and guardian ad litem. Judge Jay Nixon appointed Magistrate Reiheld to the Knox County Juvenile and Probate Court in January 2019.

Court Administrator Diane Randall has been with the Court since 1996. Diane manages the staff and operation of the Court as well as the financial duties. She is a 2011 graduate of the Certified Court Management Program and 2017 graduate of the Certified Court Executive Program through the Supreme Court of Ohio.

Chief Deputy Clerk, Lisa Moreland has been with the Court since 2000. Her duties include handling probate, estates, civils, trusts, name changes and many more cases.

Deputy Clerk Amy McCann started with the Court in 2013. Her duties include handling and processing all traffics, delinquency, unruly and adult contributing cases.

Deputy Clerk Angie VanWinkle joined the Court in 2017. Her duties include handling all Probate Guardianships and the Neglect/Abuse/Dependent cases.

Deputy Clerk Damika Shadwick joined the Court in June 2018. Her duties include handling child support, custody and visitation cases.

Deputy Clerk Alexandria Hite started with the Court in February, 2020. Her duties include Intake, Marriage Licenses and processing of Child Support cases.

Bailiff Gil Borchers has been with the Court since January, 2016. His duties include Security of the Courtroom and management of hearings and recordings of court proceedings.

Juvenile Probation Staff

Director of Probation **Jeremy Payne** has been employed with the Knox County Juvenile Probation Department since September 2005. Jeremy is responsible for the management of staff and the operation of the Juvenile Probation Department. He also oversees the Drug Court Program which is certified by the Ohio Supreme Court and is a 2017 graduate of the Certified Court Management Program.

Assistant Director of Probation **Melinda Marmet** has been with the Juvenile Probation Department since 2003. Melinda is responsible for assisting the Director of Probation with department operations and staff management, as well as overseeing the Mental Health Court Program and is currently enrolled in the Certified Court Management Program through the Supreme Court of Ohio.

Probation Officer **Ashley Groves** started working for the Knox County Juvenile Court in 2011. Ashley is responsible for managing a caseload of youth on reporting probation as well as the truancy cases that have been filed with the court.

Probation Officer **Kevin Holley** started working for the Knox County Juvenile Court in 2012. Kevin is responsible for overseeing Probation's sexual offender caseload as well as other youth placed on probation.

Intake Specialist and Probation Department Clerk **Erica White** has been with the Knox County Juvenile Court since December 2017. Erica was hired full time to oversee a number of different tasks. She does intakes, social histories, administers drug screens, and oversees the non-reporting caseload to make sure court deadlines are met.

Transportation Officer, **Mike Cunningham** joined the Court in July 2019. His duties include transporting juveniles to and from detention centers and appointments, and serves legal documents to clients of the Court. He also processes DNA and fingerprints of youth that are directed to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

Probation Programs and Services

The Knox County Juvenile Probation Department employs a Director of Probation, Assistant Director of Probation, two Probation Officers, Intake Specialist/Probation Clerk and a Transportation Officer.

Intake

The intake process is twofold, upon filing of a complaint by the prosecutor's office, it is determined whether the case should be scheduled for an Official Hearing before the Judge or Magistrate or schedule for a Diversion Hearing with Director of Probation. In general, first time offenders who have committed a nonviolent offense may be eligible for a Diversion Hearing. All other offenses are scheduled for an Official Hearing.

The second part of the intake process occurs once the youth has been to an Official Hearing and placed on Probation. This part of the process is to explain what was ordered in court, getting demographic information from the youth and parents, having medical releases, the rules of probation and other release of information forms signed.

Diversion Hearings

Diversion Hearings are unofficial hearings held with the Director of Probation and the Youth along with the Parents. The youth and parent must be willing to agree to the terms of the diversion contract and complete those terms within the number of days specified. The terms of diversion could be to complete a certain number of hours of community service, seek counseling, write an apology letter, and/or attend the court's contracted fitness program. If the youth completes the terms of the diversion contract, the case is dismissed.

Reporting Probation

One of the most common dispositions in the Juvenile Court is for youth that have entered an admission to the charges brought against or found guilty during a trial is for that youth to be placed on probation.

Probation officers are responsible for supervising the youth that are placed on probation by the Court and monitoring compliance with the Court orders and rules of probation. Supervision of the youth is conducted through home visits, school visits, and office visits. Officers will also attend school meetings, such as IEP or discipline meetings, family team meetings, which involve other service providers and the parents. Probation Officers will also visit youth if they are placed outside the home in juvenile detention facilities, foster care homes, or residential treatment facilities. Probation Officers are required to maintain regular contact with youth on reporting probation.

Probation Officers are also required to attend each scheduled Court hearing regarding a youth. They are responsible for providing the Court with recommendations for dispositions and giving up to date information regarding that youth's progress. Staff of the Probation Department is certified in the Ohio Youth Assessment that was developed by the University of Cincinnati. This

assessment determines the youth's risk level, areas needing treatment, and also measures progress.

All youth on probation are subject to random drug screens. Instant drug screens are administered on youth. If a positive screen is submitted, that screen is sent to Redwood Toxicology Laboratory for confirmation. If the screen is confirmed positive by the Redwood Toxicology Laboratory, the Probation Officer will file a probation violation on the youth.

The Probation Department provides an on-call officer, (available 24 hours a day), for law enforcement to contact when severe juvenile related matters occur. A Probation Officer will authorize the youth to be sent to juvenile detention or assist in determining an alternative placement pending a Court hearing.

Out of Home Placements

There are some youth in Knox County who require placement outside of their home in a secure facility. The decision to take a child from his or her home is never easy and is used as a last resort when the community based services have been exhausted.

Ohio Department of Youth Services

The Ohio Department of Youth Services is the state correctional system for juvenile offenders ages 10-18 who have been found guilty of a felony level offense. The commitments range from a minimum period of 6 months to a maximum period of the youth's 21st birthday. The Department provides treatment and educational programming to meet each youth's needs. A Parole Officer is assigned to the youth upon release to assist their transition from the institution back into the community.

Perry Multi County Juvenile Facility

The Perry Multi County Juvenile Facility located in New Lexington, Ohio is a 20 bed secured facility for male youth adjudicated of a felony offense. This facility is used as an alternative for the youth who may otherwise be placed in the Department of Youth Services. The facility addresses a number of areas of need. These areas include substance abuse counseling, mental health counseling, academic, future planning and life skills. The program is a 4 phase program that each youth must work through in order to successfully complete the program. The "Thinking for a Change Program" is also utilized.

Juvenile Detention Facilities

The Knox County Juvenile Court currently uses the services of two detention facilities out of county due to our county not having a juvenile detention facility. The two facilities utilized are Muskingum County Juvenile Detention Center and Richland County Juvenile Detention Center.

Youth placed in these two detention facilities can be placed there by court order for any misdemeanor charge or higher. Sentences range anywhere from 1 to 180 days to be served in detention. The Court contracts 3 beds with Muskingum County Juvenile Detention Center and 2 beds with Richland County Juvenile Detention Center.

Referral Agencies

- **Village Network**

The Village Network includes Brite Futures Counseling Services and the Children's Resource Center. Brite Futures provides outpatient mental health counseling for the individual, family, and groups. They also provide referred clients with case management. The Children's Resource Center is an inpatient facility that provides the same services for youth placed there as Brite Futures but the youth lives at the facility. They also teach independent living skills.

- **Behavioral Health Care Partners**

Behavioral Health Care Partners provide counseling, case management, and pharmacological management. They are also partnered with the Knox County Juvenile Court in the Mental Health Court specialized docket. They provide a full time case manager to assist probation with the Mental Health Court caseload.

- **The Freedom Center**

The Freedom Center provides drug and alcohol counseling, both individual and group sessions. They also assist with case management and some mental health counseling. The Freedom Center partners with the Knox County Juvenile Court's Drug Court program which is part of the Specialized Docket. They assess each client referred, provide recommendations to Juvenile Probation and provide the client with a treatment plan. They also facilitate Parent Project, a program that parents of juveniles may be ordered to participate in.

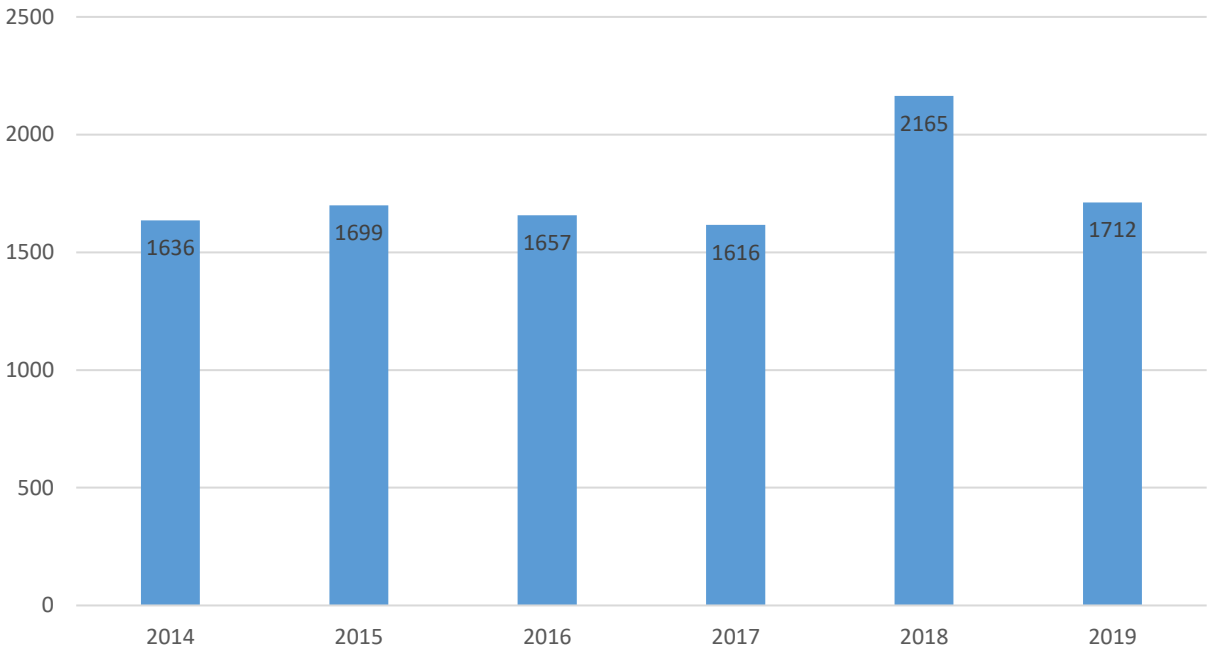
- **Opportunity Knox**

Opportunity Knox helps referred clients with credit recovery for school academics, GED prep, and job placement. They provide a summer work program for referred youth to get job experience during the summer months when they are out of school.

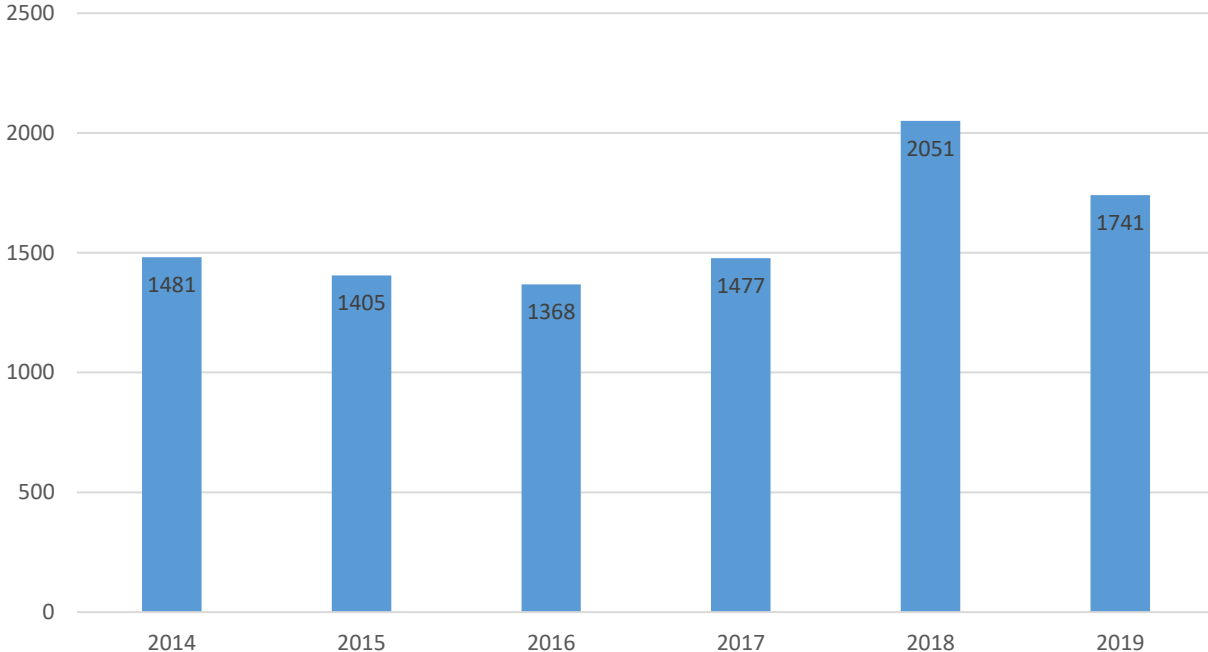
- **Knox Works/Touch Pointe**

Knox Works help young adults age 18 and up with job placement, interviewing skills, resume writing, and being an advocate for the client when it comes to getting a job. Touch Pointe focuses on couples and helps strengthen their marriage. This not only creates healthy families but also helps develop proper communication skills. Knox Works/Touch Pointe also provides clients with the Parent Project Program.

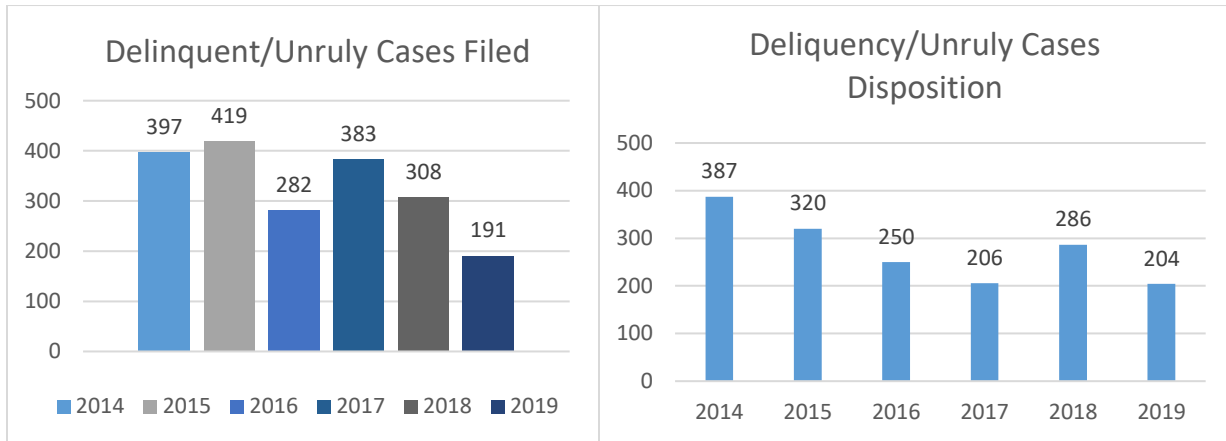
Total Probate/Juvenile Court Cases Filed



Total Probate/Juvenile Court Cases Closed



DELINQUENCY CASES 2019



2152.02 (F) “Delinquent child” defined:

“Delinquent child” includes any of following:

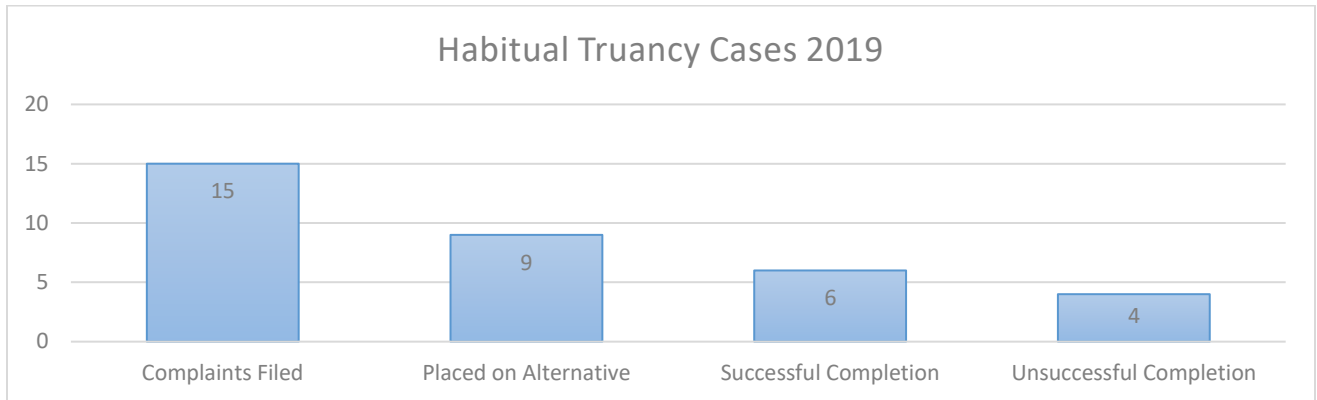
1. Any child, except a juvenile traffic offender, who violates any law of this state or the United States, or any ordinance of a political subdivision of the state that would be an offense if committed by an adult.
2. Any child who violates any lawful order of the court made under this chapter or under Chapter 2151. of the Revised Code other than an order issued under Section 2151.87 of the Revised Code.
3. Any child who violates division (C) of Section 2907.39, Division (A) of Section 2923.211 or Division (C)(1) or (D) of Section 2925.55 of the Revised Code.
4. Any child who is a habitual truant and who previously has been adjudicated an unruly child for being a habitual truant.
5. Any child who is chronic truant.

Official Delinquency Filed	156
Official Unruly Filed	35
Total Cases Filed	191

Official Delinquency Disposed	171
Official Unruly Disposed	33
Total Case Disposed	204

Total Felony Disposed 13

TRUANCY CASES 2019



HABITUALLY TRUANT CASES JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER 2018

2151.011(B) (18) and 2151.022(B) Habitually Truant “Unruly child” defined:

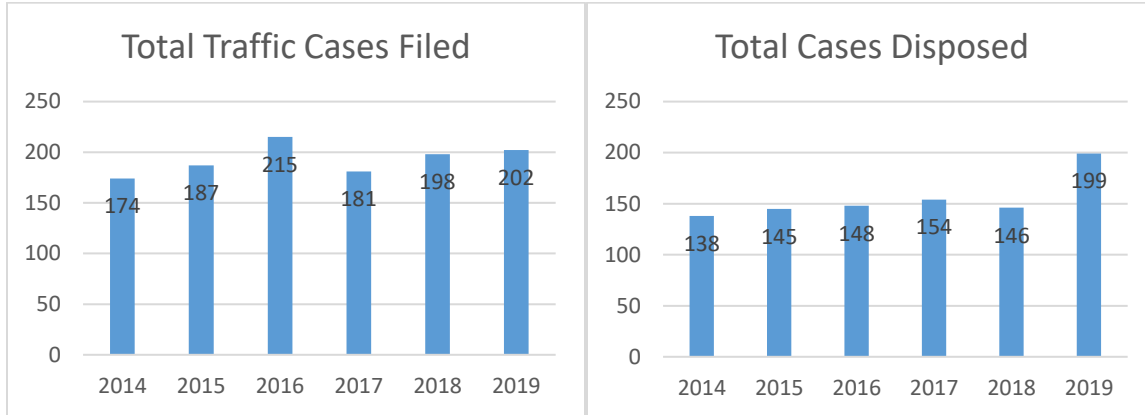
Any child who has been absent without legitimate excuse for said absence from the public school the child is supposed to attend for:

1. 30 or more consecutive school hours
2. 42 or more hours in one school month
3. 72 or more hours in a school year

Habitual Truant “Unruly child” Filed	15
Placed in alternative to adjudication under R.C. 2151.27(G)	9
Successful completion of alternative to adjudication	6
Failed to complete alternative to adjudication and adjudicated unruly	4

Male Ages		Female Ages	
Eleven	0	Eleven	0
Twelve	2	Twelve	1
Thirteen	0	Thirteen	0
Fourteen	0	Fourteen	0
Fifteen	0	Fifteen	2
Sixteen	3	Sixteen	3
Seventeen	4	Seventeen	0
Total	9	Total	6

TRAFFIC CASES 2019



2152.02(N) “Juvenile Traffic Offender” defined:

Any child who violates any traffic law, traffic ordinance, or traffic regulation of this state, the United States, or any political subdivision of this state, other than resolution, ordinance or regulation of a political subdivision of this state the violation which is required to be handled by a parking violations bureau or joint parking violation bureau pursuant to Chapter 4521. of the Revised Code.

Official Cases Filed 202

Unofficial Cases Filed 0

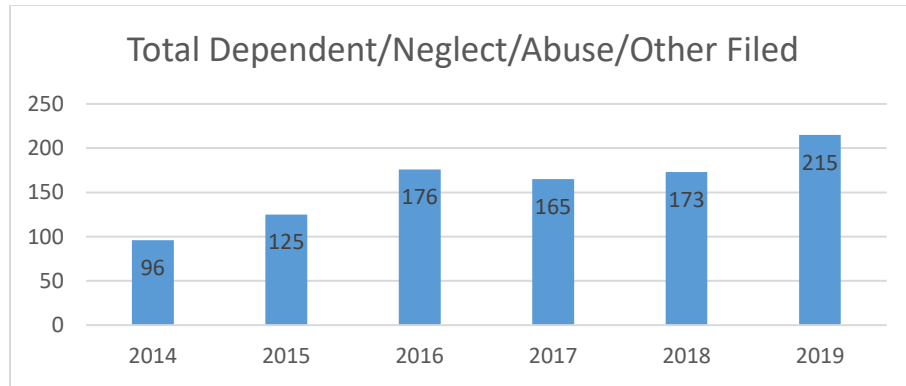
Total Cases Filed 202

Official Cases Disposed 199

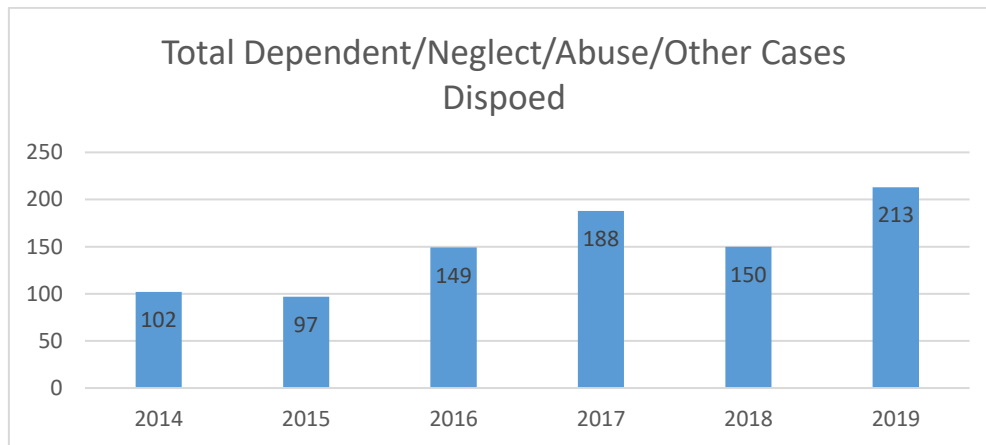
Unofficial Cases Disposed 0

Total Cases Disposed 199

ABUSE/NEGLECT/DEPENDENCY & OTHER

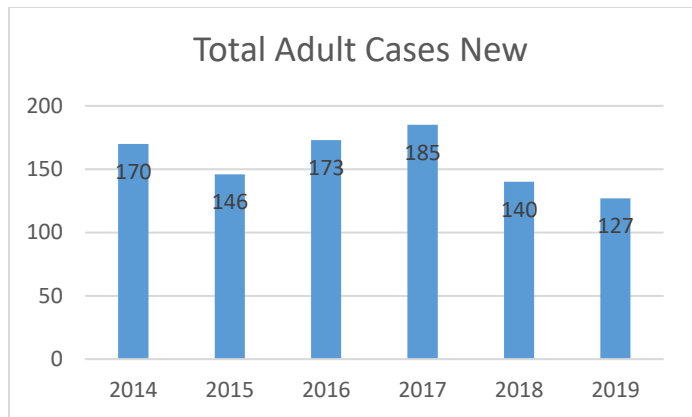


Types of Cases Filed - NEW	Cases
Abuse/Neglect/Dependency	215
Total	215

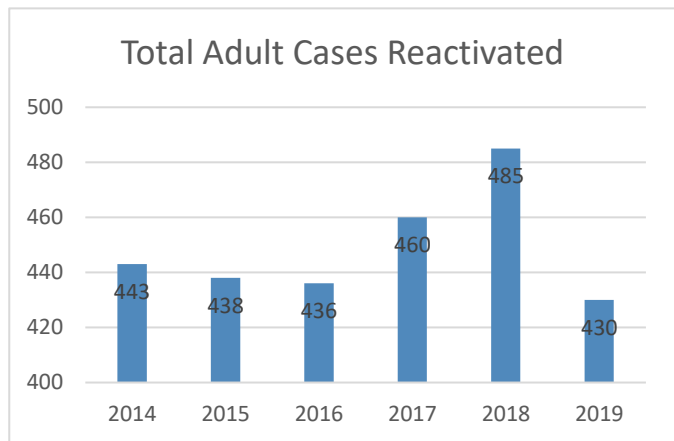


Types of Cases - Disposed	Cases
Abuse/Neglect/Dependency	213
Total	213

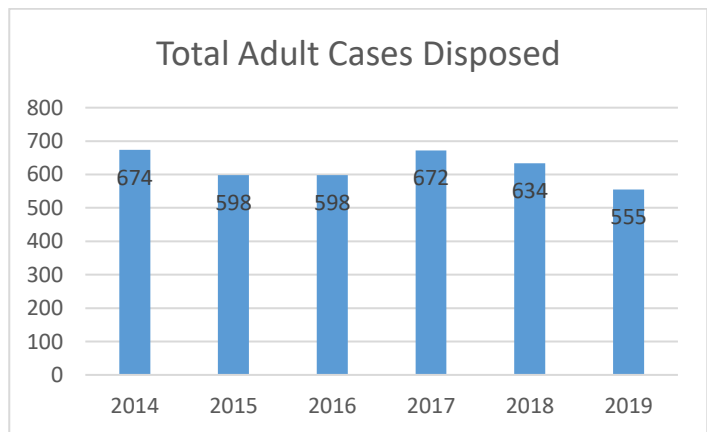
Types of Cases Filed - NEW	Cases
Custody/Visitation	37
Support	64
Paternity	8
Adult Contributing	18
Total	127



Types of Cases - Reactivated	Cases
Custody/Visitation	122
Support	289
Paternity	16
Adult Contributing	3
Total	430



Types of Cases - Disposed	Cases
Custody/Visitation	171
Support	338
Paternity	21
Adult Contributing	25
Total	555



KNOX COUNTY PROBATE COURT

In 2019, the Probate Court opened a total of 765 cases covering 13 different case types. Listed below are the totals filed.

Case Types	Number of Cases Opened
Adoption (PA)	26
Trust (PT)	3
Probate Civil (PC)	6
Estate (PE)	295
Mental Illness (PI)	6
<u>Guardianships</u>	27
Conservatorship	0
<u>Miscellaneous Filing Total</u>	56
Name Changes	38
Birth Correction/Registration	13
Structured Settlement	0
Disinterment	0
Miscellaneous filing/order	5
Marriage Licenses	346

Rule of Superintendence 66.01-66.09 became effective on June 1, 2015, making significant changes to guardianships, implementing education requirements for guardians and a stricter outlook on how guardianships should be monitored. While the figure above shows 26 new guardianship cases were filed, the Court is obligated to administer and monitor guardianships, and audit over 200 open guardianship cases and send mailings to inform all of our adult guardians of these changes. We continue to monitor our guardians to assure that they meet the new guardianship fundamentals training requirement.

In 2019, 346 marriage licenses were issued through the Court. These figures reflect one or both of the parties being married, are Knox County residents or Out of State residents of which the ceremony is being performed in Knox County.

