



February 23, 2026

In Case You Missed It:

[The OSBF is Hosting an AI & the Law Symposium, March 19, 2026 at the Statehouse](#)

[OJC's Court Technology Conference is April 8, 2026](#)

The Ohio Judicial Conference is dedicated to serving all Ohio judges. The Judicial Conference is the voice of the judiciary and a primary resource to ensure the fair, unbiased, open & effective administration of justice.

Legislative News: Two-Week Review

- [SB 295](#) (Sens. Manning, Patton) **Restoration of Competency**, signed by Governor, 2.20.26. The bill increases the time a defendant can be treated and evaluated for restoration to competency, if the most serious offense with which the defendant is charged is aggravated murder, murder, an offense of violence punishable by death or life imprisonment, or complicity to commit any of the aforementioned offenses. As introduced, that amount of time was 5 years (current law is 1 year); an amendment accepted on 2.18.26 changed that to 3 years. The bill goes into effect immediately.
- [HB 296](#) (Rep. M. Miller) **Delay Financial Sanctions After Release**, passed out of the House, 2.18.26. The bill delays the enforcement of financial sanctions for 180 days after an offender's release from prison or completion of transitional control.
- [HB 686](#) (Rep. Schmidt) **Adult Guardianship**, introduced 2.10.26. The bill allocates parental rights and responsibilities for adult children with disabilities.
- [HB 689](#) (Rep. A. White) **Fingerprinting and Disposition Reporting**, introduced 2.10.26. The bill generally modernizes fingerprinting and disposition reporting, per the recommendations of the Supreme Court's BCI Work Group.
- [HB 700](#) (Rep. Williams) **Legal Aid Funding**, introduced 2.17.26. The bill prohibits the Access to Justice Foundation from distributing funds to Legal Aid if Legal Aid provides services to anyone "unlawfully present in the United States."
- [HB 701](#) (Rep. Williams) **CQEs for Juveniles**, introduced 2.17.26. The bill allows a 17-year-old child who has previously been found delinquent to apply for and obtain a certificate of qualification for employment from a juvenile court. As long as the child is no longer under the jurisdiction of the court in the delinquency matter, the CQE is to be issued.
- [HB 703](#) (Rep. Williams) **Surety Bail Bond Agents**, introduced 2.17.26. The bill permits the surrender of a defendant by a surety bail bond agent.
- [HB 705](#) (Rep. Williams) **Alford Pleas**, introduced 2.17.26. The bill prohibits a sentencing court from imposing, as a condition of community control, a requirement that the offender admit guilt if the offender was found guilty after entering an Alford plea.
- Applications are still available from for BCI Grants for [electronic reporting](#), [disposition recovery](#), and [LiveScan fingerprint devices](#). Applications will be reviewed as they are received, and funding awards will be determined every 90 days, until the grant funds are exhausted.
- In *State ex rel. Cincinnati Enquirer v. Baker Ross*, (Slip Opinion No. 2026-Ohio-510), decided on 2.17.26, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled against media restrictions in FirstEnergy executives' trial.
- **Did you know?** The Ohio Judicial Conference updates the [Exemptions to Garnishment](#) every three years, per the Ohio Revised Code. They are then also published in the [Register of Ohio](#). The OJC last updated these figures in 2025. If your court provides forms for order of garnishment, please make sure you have the most updated monetary amounts.

For a complete list of bills & the latest Enactment News, please visit the [OJC website](#).



[Marta Mudri](#)

Legislative Counsel
Civil Law; Specialty Courts; Community Corrections



[Shawn Welch](#)

Deputy Legislative Counsel
Probate Law; Domestic Relations Law; Juvenile Law



[Josh Williams](#)

Deputy Legislative Counsel
Criminal Law; Traffic Law; Appellate Law



[Justin Long](#)

Legislative Services Specialist; *Public Confidence & Outreach*