

Legislative News: Two-Week Review



October 5, 2026

In Case You Missed It:

[*New Rape Investigation Panel Formed to Study Challenges in Meeting Requirements Created by 135 HB 33, 9.30.26*](#)

[*Study Committee to Evaluate the Placement of Delinquent Children in Residential Facilities heard 3 hours of testimony from witnesses, including Judge David Hejmanowski, 9.21.26*](#)

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.

- **[HB 519](#)** (Rep. White) **Criminal Tools and Gas Tax Relief**, signed by the Governor, 10.1.26. The bill specifies that possession or control of an "electronic device or tool" under circumstances indicating an intent to commit a "theft offense" that involves a motor vehicle constitutes prima-facie evidence of a criminal purpose. Under continuing law, the general penalty for possessing criminal tools is an M1. If the circumstances indicate that the substance, device, instrument, or article involved in the offense was intended for use in the commission of a felony, possessing criminal tools is F5. If the circumstances indicate that an electronic device or tool was involved in the offense, the bill increases the penalty to an F4. The bill was amended to include the 90-day gas tax holiday, which has an emergency clause and will go into effect immediately upon the signature of the Governor; the criminal law portion of the bill will go into effect 90 days later.
 - **[HB 1013](#)** (Rep. Newman) **Child Custody Restrictions**, introduced 9.23.26. The bill prohibits a juvenile court or domestic relations court from awarding custody of a child to a non-parent when the child's parents are married to each other and maintaining a family unit. The bill also limits who may file a complaint alleging abuse, neglect, or dependency to only a public children services agency or a private child placing agency.
 - **Save the Date:** the Supreme Court's [Specialized Dockets Conference](#) takes place on 10.14.26 at the Ohio Union in Columbus. The conference is free and has been accredited for CLE, CEU, and COB hours. Registration is open now, for both in-person and virtual attendance.
 - **Save the Date:** on 11.6.26, the University of Cincinnati is hosting a day-long CLE (approved in Ohio for six hours, 1.25 professional conduct), which is designed for judges, defense attorneys and prosecutors to obtain cutting-edge information relevant to their work. Registration for "[Modern Trends in Forensic Science, AI, and Evidence](#)" is open now.
 - **Save the Date:** the **Ohio Forensic Mental Health Conference** takes place 11.13.26 at the Ohioan in Lewis Center. This year's theme is "AI and Complex Forensic Mental Health Systems: Navigating the New Frontier" and 5.5 hours of CLE have been approved. View the full agenda and register [here](#).
 - **Save the Date:** the Supreme Court's Annual [Veterans Summit](#) takes place on 11.19.26 at Villa Milano in Columbus. The conference, titled "Lean Forward: Helping Through Healing," can be attended in-person or virtually and 5.75 hours of CLE have been requested. Register through [OhioCourtEDU](#).
 - The **Capital Case Attorney Fee Council** has conducted their annual review of the compensation rate for attorneys who represent indigent defendants, pursuant to RC 120.33(D), and the Council has changed the [rate for capital representation](#) to \$165/hour effective 11.29.26
- For a complete list of bills & the latest Enactment News, please visit the [OJC website](#).**



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