

MAYOR'S COURTS ARE LOCAL COURTS THAT HEAR TRAFFIC AND OTHER MINOR OFFENSES.



THERE ARE NEARLY 300 MAYOR'S COURTS IN OHIO.

IN 2016, 1 OUT OF 6 TRAFFIC TICKETS ISSUED IN OHIO WERE ISSUED IN MUNICIPALITIES WITH A MAYOR'S COURT.

THE PROBLEMS WITH MAYOR'S COURTS

1. LACK TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

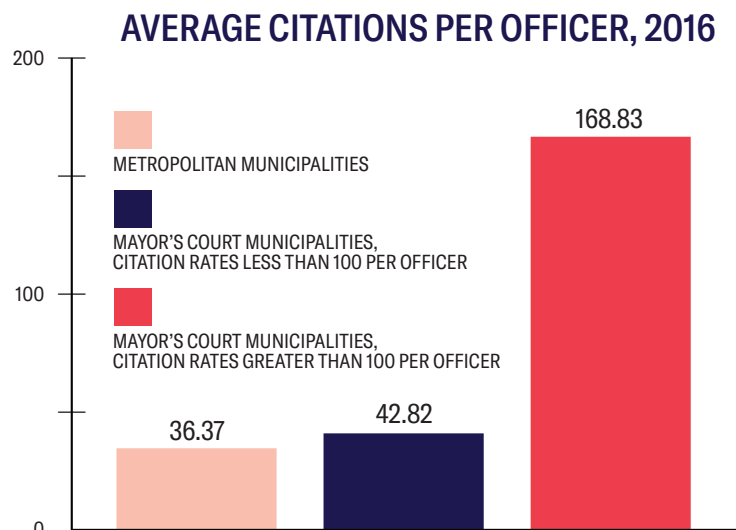
- There are no transcripts or recordings of mayor's court proceedings. This means it is almost impossible to hold the mayors and magistrates who adjudicate in mayor's courts accountable for what they say or do in court.
- There is limited oversight of mayor's courts by the legislature or state judiciary. This makes it difficult to discipline problematic mayor's courts.

2. PRIORITIZE REVENUE OVER JUSTICE

Revenue-oriented mayor's courts issue arrest warrants and driver's license forfeitures for minor traffic violations to coerce people into paying fines, regardless of whether someone is able to pay.

In 2016, 51 mayor's courts had police officers that issued an average of 168 citations each. This was over four times the average citation rate of police officers in Ohio's largest cities.

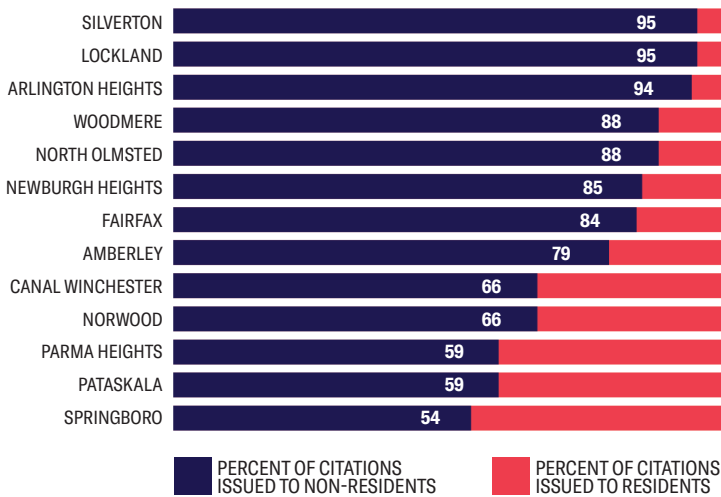
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|---|-------|
| MAYOR'S COURTS WITH HIGH NUMBER OF LICENSE FORFEITURES, 2016 | |
| HANGING ROCK | 587 |
| BRATENAHL | 472 |
| MAYOR'S COURTS WITH HIGH NUMBER OF ARREST WARRANTS, 2016: | |
| READING | 1,710 |
| LOCKLAND | 1,688 |



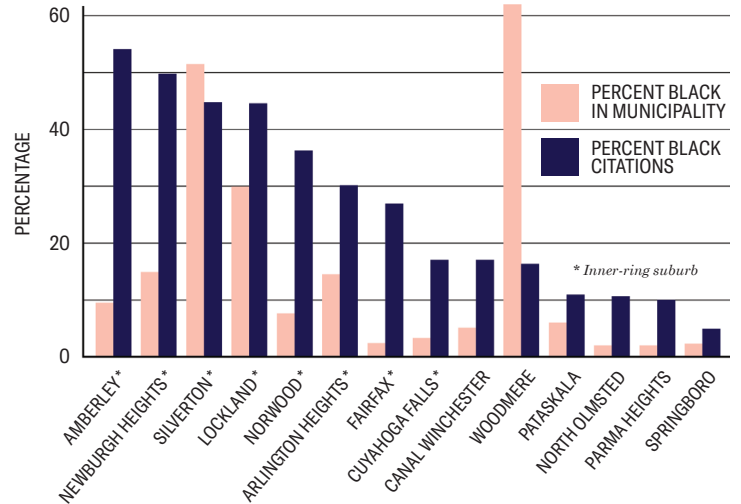
3. LACK OF FAIRNESS

- Mayors are responsible for balancing the municipal budget and can use mayor’s courts to generate revenue for their municipality.
- Mayors and magistrates who oversee cases only need three to six hours of annual training. Mayors do not need a law degree to hear cases in mayor’s courts.
- In municipalities with a profit-oriented mayor’s court, most citations are issued to non-residents.
- Some mayor’s courts in inner-ring suburbs issue a disproportionately high number of citations to Black drivers.

WHO GETS CITATIONS?



DRIVING WHILE BLACK



THE SOLUTIONS

1. RESTORE STATE FUNDING TO MUNICIPALITIES.

The pressure to collect revenue through court fines and fees undermines the fair operation of courts.

2. ELIMINATE MAYOR’S COURTS IN CUYAHOGA, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, AND SUMMIT COUNTIES.

The majority of profit-oriented and racially-inequitable mayor’s courts are located in these counties. Mayor’s courts are less centrally-located and therefore more burdensome to travel to than municipal courts in these metropolitan counties.

3. INCREASE EDUCATION AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MAYOR’S COURTS.

Thorough training and clear guidelines for court conduct will help mayor’s courts function fairly.

4. EXPAND OVERSIGHT OF MAYOR’S COURTS.

Comprehensive record-keeping and reporting requirements will hold court officials accountable for court conduct.

5. ABOLISH DRIVER’S LICENSE SUSPENSIONS FOR ANY REASON NOT RELATED TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

Taking away people’s driver’s licenses because they cannot pay their court-imposed debts unfairly punishes poorer people and makes it harder for people to get and hold jobs, support themselves, and meet their financial obligations.