

## Legislative News: Two-Week Review



October 28, 2024

### In Case You Missed It:

[OSU's Drug Enforcement & Policy Center has Launched an Opportunity Portal to Help People Statewide Seal Criminal Records](#)

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

- **HB 677** (Rep. Roemer) **Escaped Convict Alert**, introduced 10.16.24. The bill creates an escaped convict alert program intended to aid in locating any person who was charged with, indicted for, convicted of or pleaded guilty to a felony offense who has escaped from a jail, workhouse, or correctional institution while incarcerated for or awaiting adjudication of that felony offense.
- **HB 678** (Rep. Fischer) **Companion Animal Cruelty**, introduced 10.16.24. The bill clarifies that any dog or cat is considered a companion animal for purposes of the laws governing companion animal cruelty, regardless of whether the dog or cat is kept or cared for or under physical control of a person. A companion animal can be any cat or any dog, or an animal that is kept in a residential building, but the current language including animals in pet stores is removed from R.C. 959.131.
- On 10.22.24, the Ohio Supreme Court decided [State ex rel. Cincinnati Enquirer v. Bloom \(Slip Opinion No. 2024-Ohio-5029\)](#), which interprets the Open Courts Provision of the Ohio Constitution to prohibit blanket **mandatory sealing of juvenile delinquency records** because of the lack of individualized determination balancing the interests of the state against the interests of the juvenile. R.C. 2151.356 – which mandates sealing of such records – is unconstitutional.
- On 10.23.24, the Ohio Supreme Court decided [State v. Kyles \(Slip Opinion No. 2024-Ohio-5038\)](#), which interprets R.C. 959.131 to define “**companion animal**” as any dog or cat, not just pets and including strays.
- [Attorney General Opinion 2024-005](#) responds to questions regarding current law and “**squatting.**” Under current law, conduct commonly known as “squatting” would constitute criminal trespass (or something more serious) and a law enforcement officer may enter onto a property and make an arrest for criminal trespass.
- Public comment is currently open for [proposed changes](#) to the Rules of Superintendence, which change a variety of **probate forms**. Any comments should be submitted in writing before 11.18.24, to [ruleamendments@sc.ohio.gov](mailto:ruleamendments@sc.ohio.gov).
- [Issue 1](#) on the November ballot would change the Ohio Constitution to create an Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission in place of the current Redistricting Commission. The commissioners will be chosen by a bipartisan screening panel (along with a search firm); **the panel is to be comprised of 4 retired judges**. The application process and qualifications are outlined in the amendment language, as is the work of the panel.
- **Save the Date:** The Ohio Council of County Officials (OCCO) is hosting a legislative reception on 11.12.24 from 5 to 7 p.m. for **county elected officials**, legislators, and statewide office holders. All county elected officials are invited and encouraged to participate. [Register](#) to attend and please let [Justin.Long@sc.ohio.gov](mailto:Justin.Long@sc.ohio.gov) at the OJC know if you plan to attend.

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