

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Ottawa County**  
*Where You Belong<sup>®</sup>*

## Office of the Prosecuting Attorney

Submitted by:  
Ronald J. Frantz  
Ottawa County Prosecuting Attorney

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2019 **Felony Caseload** decreased significantly (11.3%) over the 2018 level (1,264 cases in 2019, compared to 1,426 cases in 2018). Major felony crime categories showing significant increases during 2019 were Weapons Offenses (up 21.4%, 85 cases) and Breaking and Entering (up 15.5%, 97 cases). Significant decreases were seen in Criminal Sexual Conduct (down 18.3%, 58 cases), Robbery (down 31.3%, 11 cases), Felony Drunk Driving (down 14.0%, 80 cases), and Drug Offenses (down 76.5%, 272 cases). Our **Felony Child Support Enforcement Program** activity dropped 59.5% (30 cases).

The total **Misdemeanor Caseload** decreased by 15.6% in 2019 (5,346 cases). **Juvenile Crime**, as represented by petitions filed by our office, decreased by 13.4% (621 delinquency petitions). **Total Criminal Caseload** (combined felony, misdemeanor, and juvenile statistics) decreased by 14.7% (7,231 cases in 2019). The dramatic decrease in Drug Offenses accounts for much of the declines in all crime levels (Felonies, Misdemeanors, and Juvenile Petitions) and is largely due to the legalization of marijuana possession and use.

In 2019 there were six **Homicides** charged by my office. These cases include a high-visibility pending Manslaughter charge against a Georgetown Township father for the death of his autistic 16-year-old son. There are three pending Murder cases and another Manslaughter case awaiting disposition. We also successfully prosecuted a Delivery of Drugs Causing Death case in Grand Haven. **Gang Violence and Organized Gang Activity** had been less visible within our community until, in February 2019, a 14-year-old reputed gang member was shot to death by a rival gang member within the Hampton Inn in Holland Township. The shooter was convicted of First Degree Murder and Gang Affiliation.

Our **Domestic Violence Caseload** increased slightly in 2019 (up 2.0%, 613 cases). Domestic Violence levels spiked in 2018 and continue at a high level despite the ongoing efforts of the Lakeshore Alliance Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and other groups which actively promote prevention and offer improvements in serving Domestic Violence victims and offenders. Our court-based Domestic Violence offender treatment initiative also seeks to reduce recidivism and better serve victims through the court process.

Our District and Circuit **Drug/Sobriety Courts** continue to accept drug and/or alcohol dependent offenders using a treatment court model. Holland also has a **Mental Health Court**, also using the treatment court concept, to address the needs of offenders suffering from mental disorders. The prosecutor is a part of each team, selecting offenders for the programs and monitoring their success.

The **Children's Advocacy Center** has been providing age-appropriate services for sexually abused children for the last twenty three years. This nationally accredited center conducted 478 forensic interviews of children suspected of being sexual assault victims in 2019 (as compare to 502 interviews in 2018). The Center continues to handle near record levels of referrals.

Despite the concerning trends outlined above, we continue to enjoy a relatively low crime rate and benefit from a well-functioning criminal justice system.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ronald J. Frantz, Prosecuting Attorney

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Ottawa County Prosecutor's Office is to preserve and improve the quality of life for Ottawa County residents by promoting lawful conduct and enhancing safety and security through diligent efforts to detect, investigate, and prosecute criminal offenses in Ottawa County.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROSECUTOR

The prosecuting attorney is the chief law enforcement officer for Ottawa County. The Office was created by the Michigan Constitution. The responsibilities and authority of the Prosecutor are established by common law, statute, court rule, and appellate case law. In recent years changing attitudes in the courts and state legislature have significantly altered the traditional role of the Prosecutor. While adult and juvenile criminal matters still represent the major portion of the prosecution effort, a growing list of additional responsibilities has placed larger demands on prosecution resources. Nevertheless, we provide all mandated services, maximizing our efficiency by offering specialty services to crime victims and law enforcement. These specialties include the Family Court Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, Victim's Rights Unit, an Appellate Specialist, and a Law Enforcement Training Assistant.

Additional duties of the Prosecutor include serving as the chairman of the Community Corrections Advisory Board. The Prosecutor also serves on the boards or oversight committees of the Children's Advocacy Center, West Michigan Enforcement Team, Lakeshore Alliance Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Ottawa Area Law Enforcement Leadership Committee, Human Services Council of Ottawa County, U. S. Department of Justice Project Safe Neighborhoods Program, Child Death Review Team, and the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**Ronald J. Frantz ..... Prosecuting Attorney**

Lee Fisher .....Chief Assistant Prosecutor

Gregory J. Babbitt .....Senior Attorney, Appeals Division

Sarah Matwiejczyk .....Senior Attorney, Training Division

Amy Chidester and Elizabeth Kuechenmeister .....Office Managers

## ATTORNEY STAFF

**GREGORY J. BABBITT**, Grand Valley State University, B.S.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 38 years of prosecution experience.

**SHAWNA BAUM**, Hope College, B.A.; Valparaiso University School of Law, J.D.; 1 year of prosecution experience and 12 years' experience in Child Neglect and Abuse.

**JUANITA F. BOCANEGRA**, Grand Valley State University, B.A.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 8 years of prosecution experience and 3 years civil experience.

**LEE F. FISHER**, Western Michigan University, B.S.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 30 years of prosecution experience.

**RONALD J. FRANTZ**, Kalamazoo College, B.A.; Case Western Reserve University School of Law, J.D.; 42 years of prosecution experience.

**JOELLEN HAAS**, Indiana University, B.A.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 16 years of prosecution experience.

**MEGHAN HURLEY**, University of Buffalo, B.S.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 11 years of prosecution experience.

**JACOB JENISON**, Central Michigan University, B.S.; Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D.; 6 years of prosecution experience.

**PAUL KRAUS**, Drake University, B.A. & B.S.E.; The University of Iowa, J.D.; 14 years of prosecution experience.

**SARAH F. MATWIEJCZYK**, Michigan State University, James Madison College, B.A.; Michigan State University – Detroit College of Law, J.D.; 18 years of prosecution experience.

**TYLER MESMAN**, Grand Valley State University, B.A.; Valparaiso University, J.D.; 4 years of prosecution experience.

**JOHN R. SCHEUERLE**, Michigan State University, B.A.; Detroit College of Law, J.D.; 20 years of prosecution experience.

**JAY TUBERGEN**, Grand Valley State University, B.S.; Michigan State University – College of Law, J.D.; 8 years of prosecution experience.

**CARA WILKINSON**, Albion College, B.A.; Wayne State University, J.D.; 11 years of prosecution experience.

## SUPPORT STAFF

### CRIMINAL DIVISION

Teresa Brolick ..... Legal Clerk  
Lauren Harry ..... Legal Assistant II  
Soonja Hixon ..... Legal Assistant II  
Mallory Jewell ..... Legal Assistant III  
Kurt Kreuzer ..... Legal Assistant II  
Brittany Lund ..... Legal Assistant III  
Amy McSpadden ..... Legal Assistant I  
Gabriela Ryan ..... Legal Assistant II

### FAMILY COURT DIVISION

#### **Juvenile & Probate Court**

Jennifer Rasch ..... Legal Assistant II

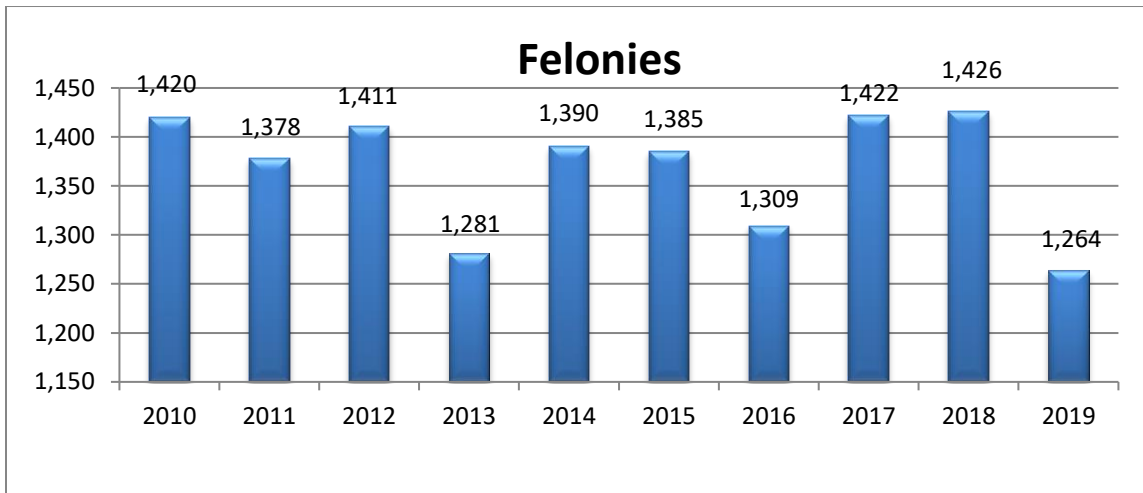
### VICTIM ASSISTANCE UNIT

Ashlie Boerma ..... Victim Advocate  
Joan Grillo ..... Senior Victim Advocate  
Jacquelyn Hilgeman ..... Victim Advocate  
Amber Schuster ..... Victim Rights Assistant

### DOMESTIC ASSAULT UNIT

Jennifer Gustafson..... Violence Intervention Officer

## CRIMINAL CASELOAD

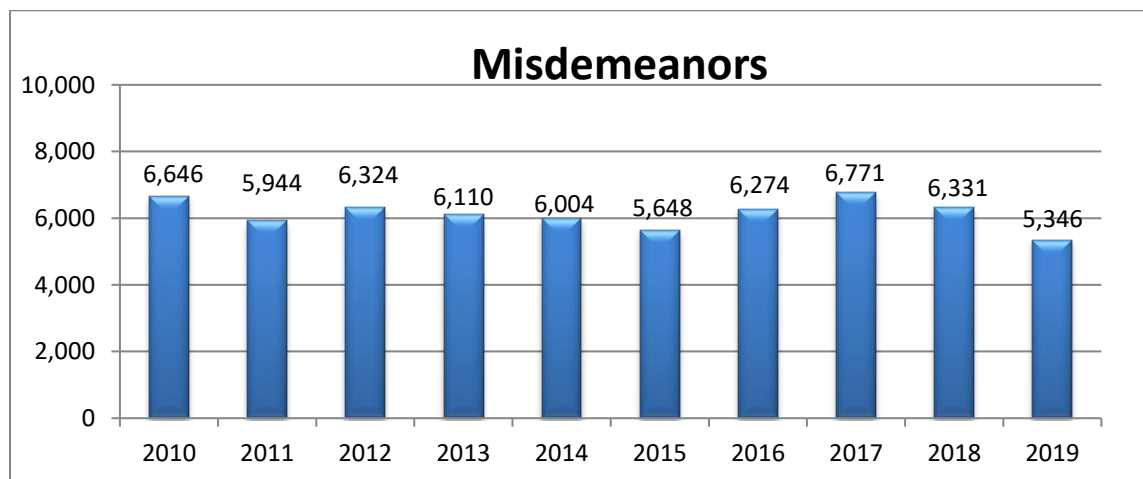


**Adult Felony Cases:**

**2018: 1,426**

**2019: 1,264**

**11.3% decrease**

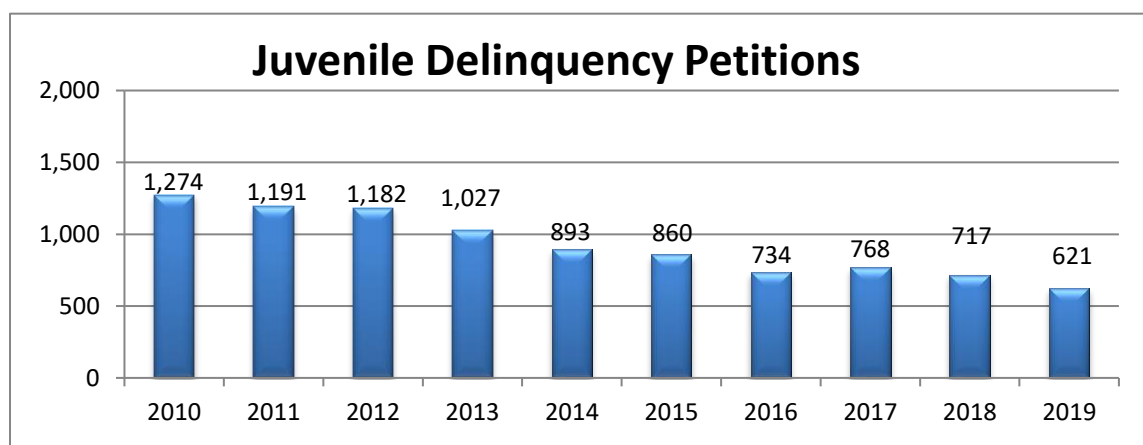


**Adult Misdemeanors:**

**2018: 6,331**

**2019: 5,346**

**15.6% decrease**



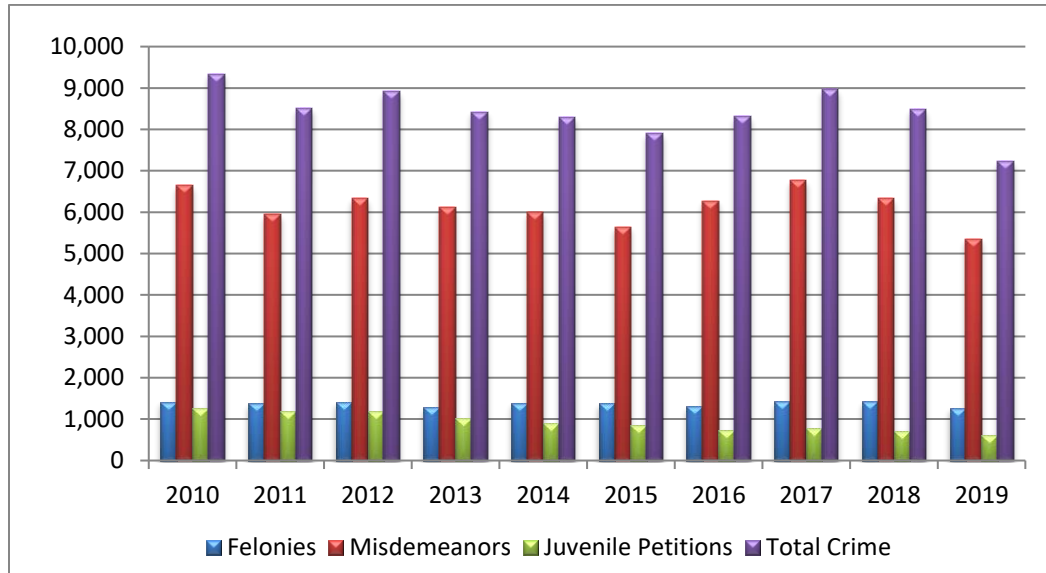
**Juvenile Delinquency:**

**2018: 717**

**2019: 621**

**13.4% decrease**

## TOTAL CRIME STATISTICS

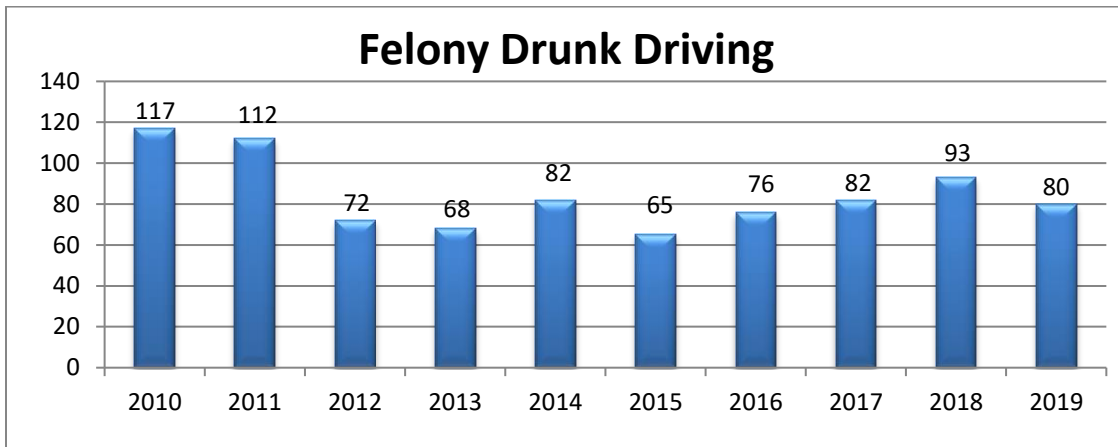


**Total Crime (combined):    2018: 8,474                    2019: 7,231                    14.7% decrease**

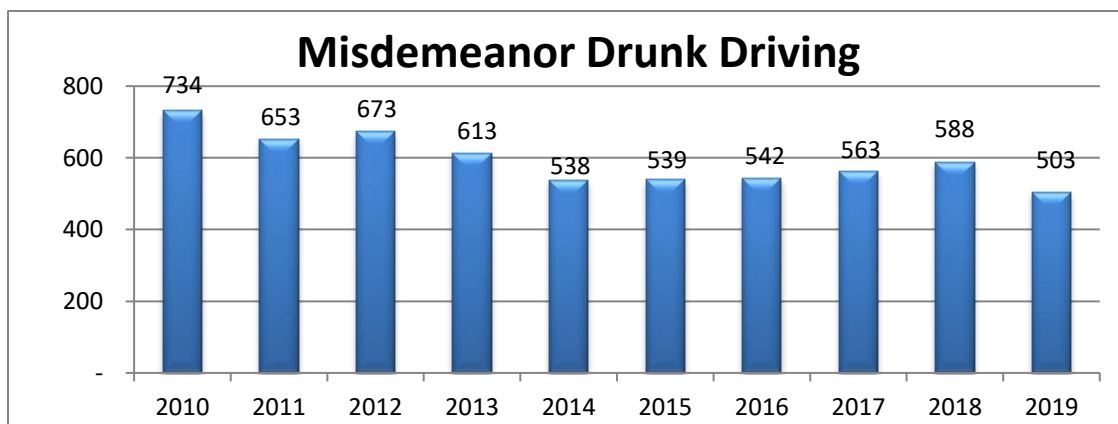


## CRIME CATEGORIES

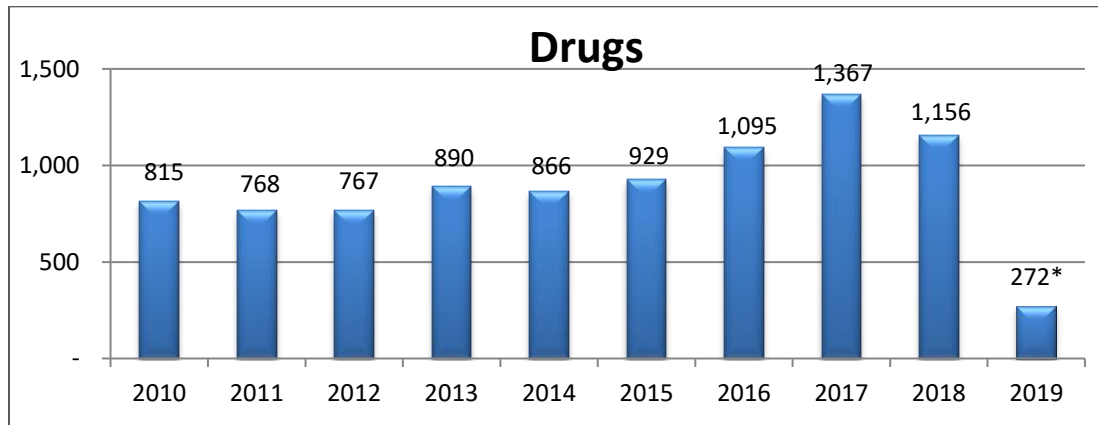
All categories reported for adult crime data only.



**Felony Drunk Driving:** 2018: 93 2019: 80 14.0% decrease



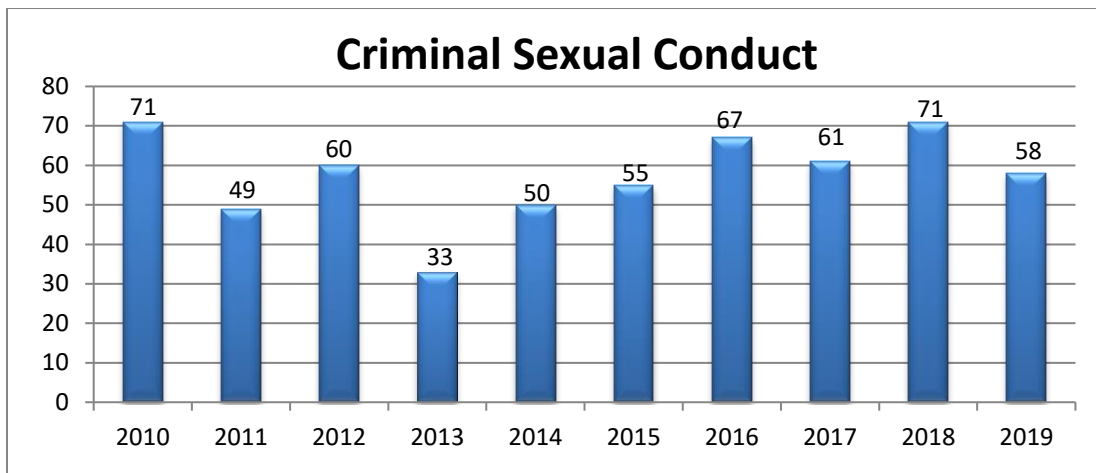
**Misdemeanor Drunk Driving:** 2018: 588 2019: 503 14.5% decrease



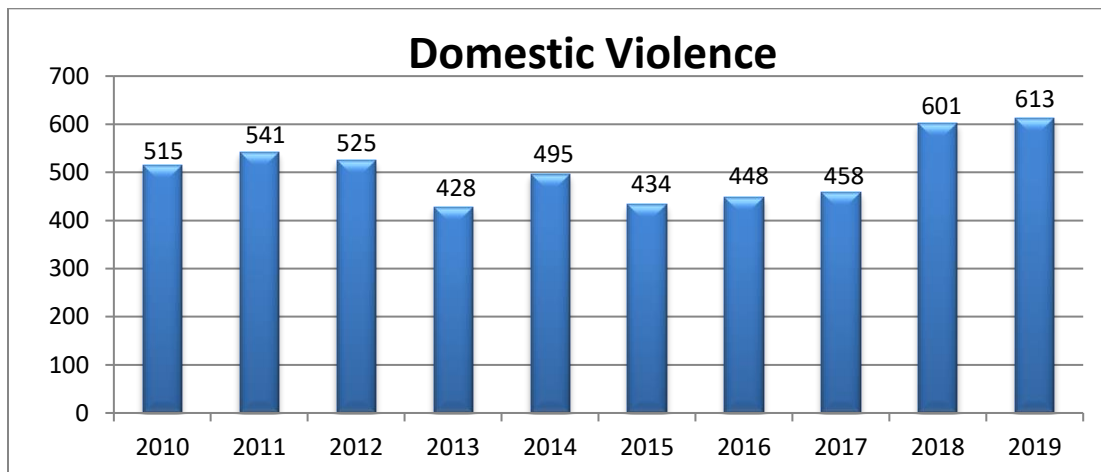
**Drug Cases:** 2018: 1,156 2019: 272 76.5% decrease

\*Marijuana was legalized in Michigan in November 2018.

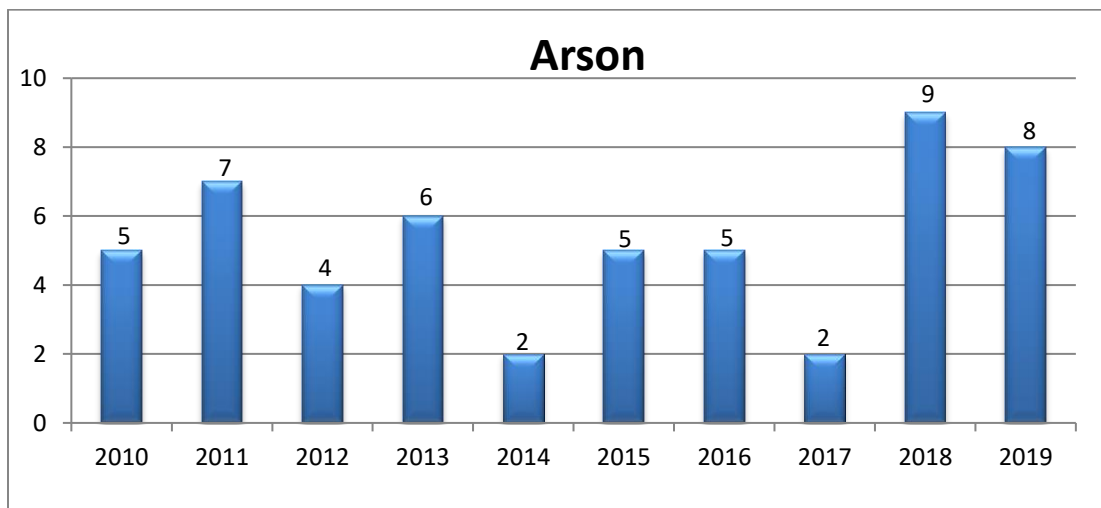
## CRIME CATEGORIES CONTINUED



**Criminal Sexual Conduct:**      **2018: 71**      **2019: 58**      18.3% decrease

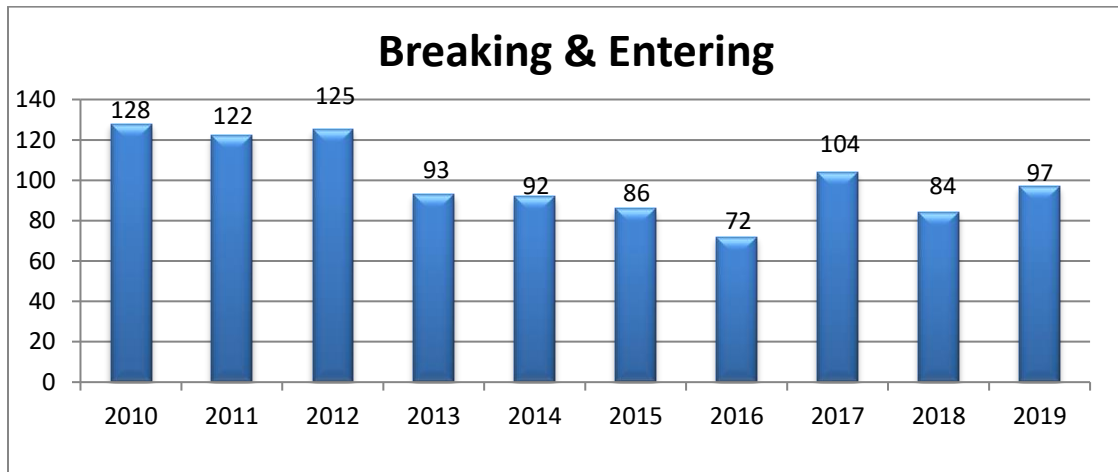


**Domestic Violence:**      **2018: 601**      **2019: 613**      2.0% increase

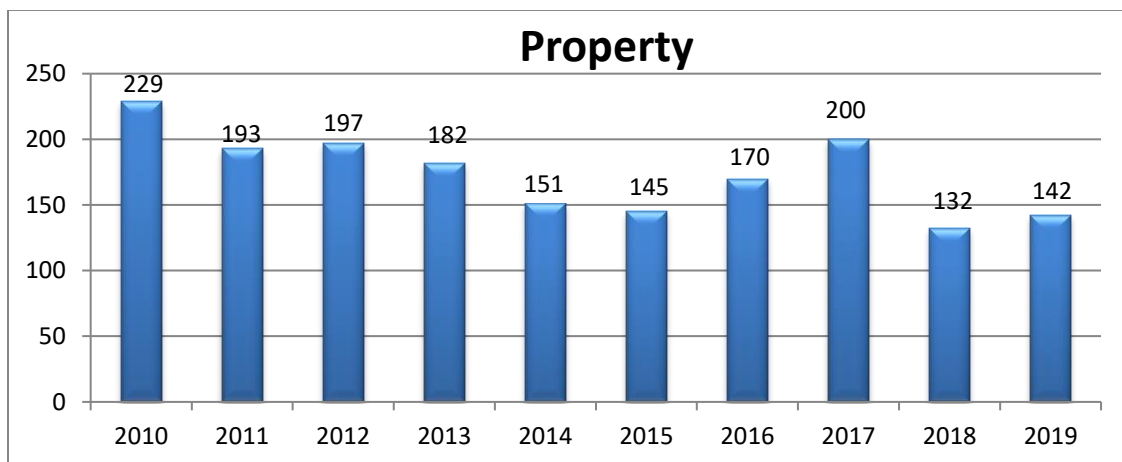


**Arson:**      **2018: 9**      **2019: 8**      11.1% decrease

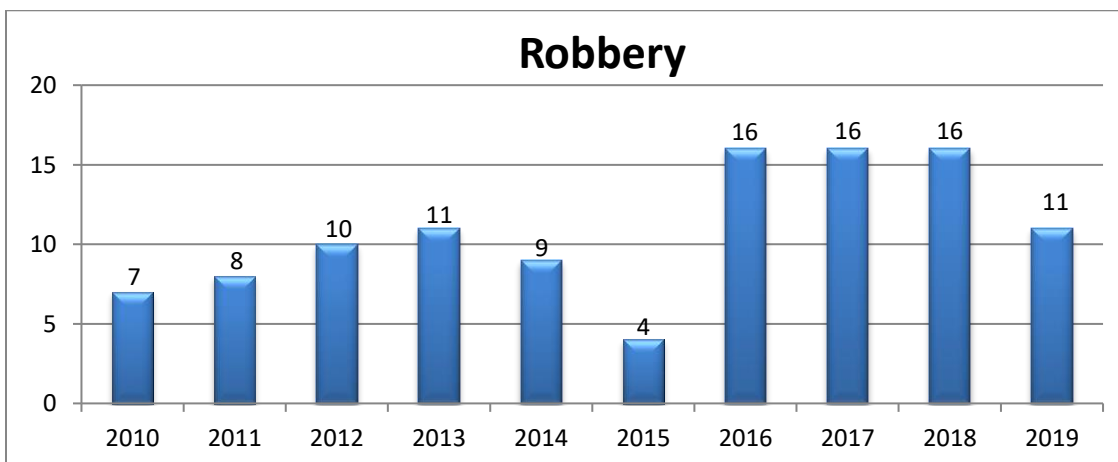
## CRIME CATEGORIES CONTINUED



**Breaking & Entering:** 2018: 84 2019: 97 15.5% increase

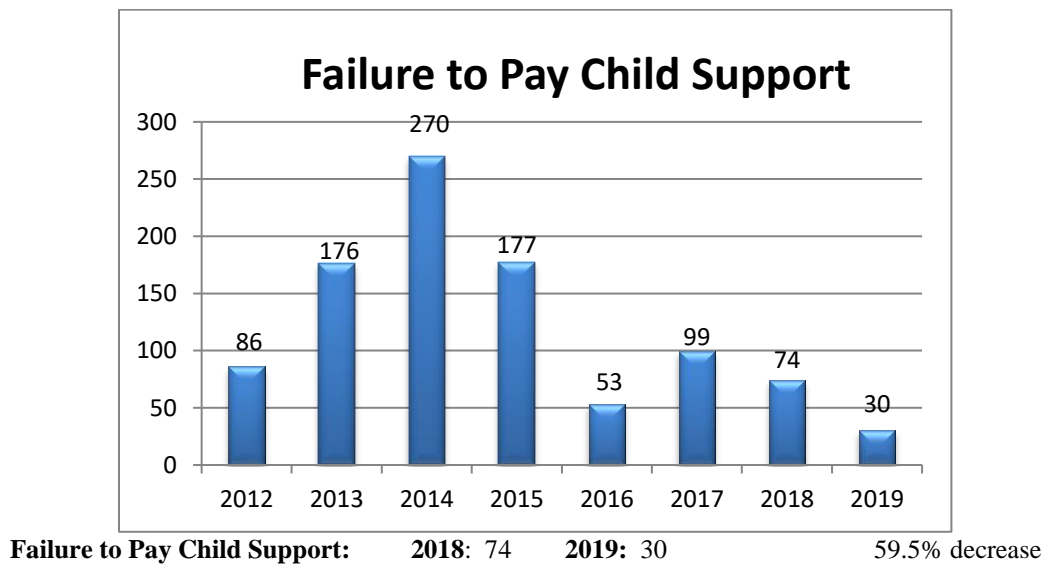
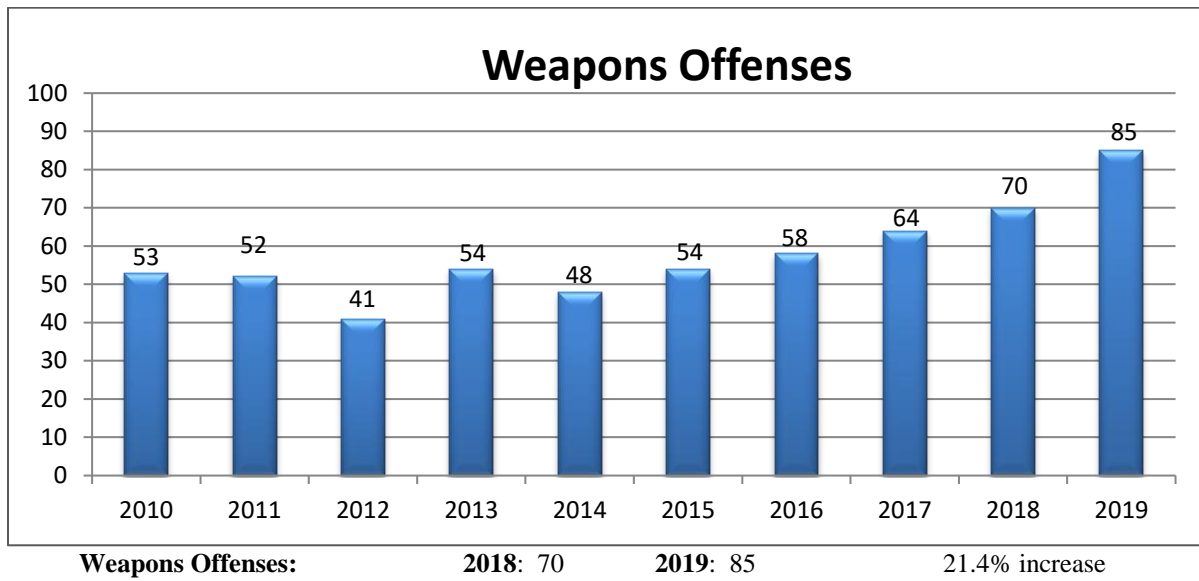


**Property:** 2018: 132 2019: 142 7.6% increase



**Robbery:** 2018: 16 2019: 11 31.3% decrease

## CRIME CATEGORIES CONTINUED

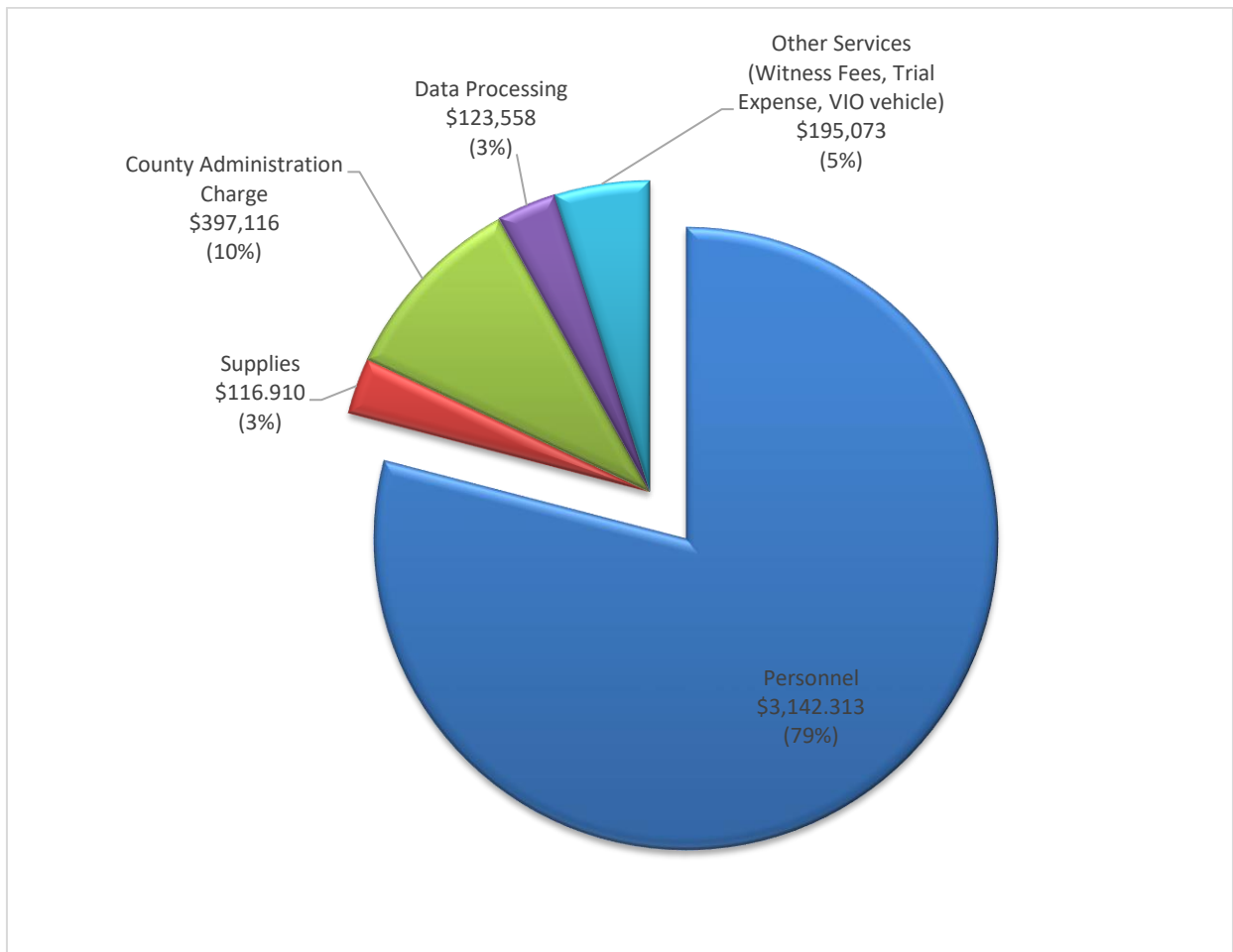


## ADDITIONAL STATISTICS

Category	2018	2019	% Change:
<b>Criminal Division:</b>			
Felony Trials			
Jury:	9	17	88.9%
Non-Jury:	2	1	(50%)
Misdemeanor Trials			
Jury:	17	24	41.2%
Non-Jury:	16	14	(12.5%)
Civil Infraction Non-Jury Trials	445	778	74.8%
<b>Family Division:</b>			
Abuse/Neglect			
Jury:	1	0	(100%)
Non-Jury:	23	29	26.1%
<b>Appeals Filed:</b>	10	11	10%
<b>Applications for Leave to Appeal:</b>	30	46	53.3%
<b>Appeals Pending Decision:</b>	11	21	90.9%
<b>Parole Reviews:</b>	74	91	23.0%
<b>Child Abuse &amp; Neglect Cases:</b>	78	76	(2.6%)
<b>Crime Victim's Rights</b>			
Felony	924	801	(13.3%)
Misdemeanor	930	948	1.9%
Juvenile	297	336	13.1%
<b>Extraditions (Governor's Warrants):</b>	1	2	100%
<b>Contested Mental Hearings &amp; Guardianship Hearings:</b>	30	30	NC
<b>Civil Infractions:</b>	8,024	10,227	27.5%
<b>Violation of Personal Protection Order Hearings:</b>	14	36	157.1%
<b>Requests for Warrant Authorization (Returned for more investigation or denied):</b>	2,690	2,753	2.3%

# BUDGET

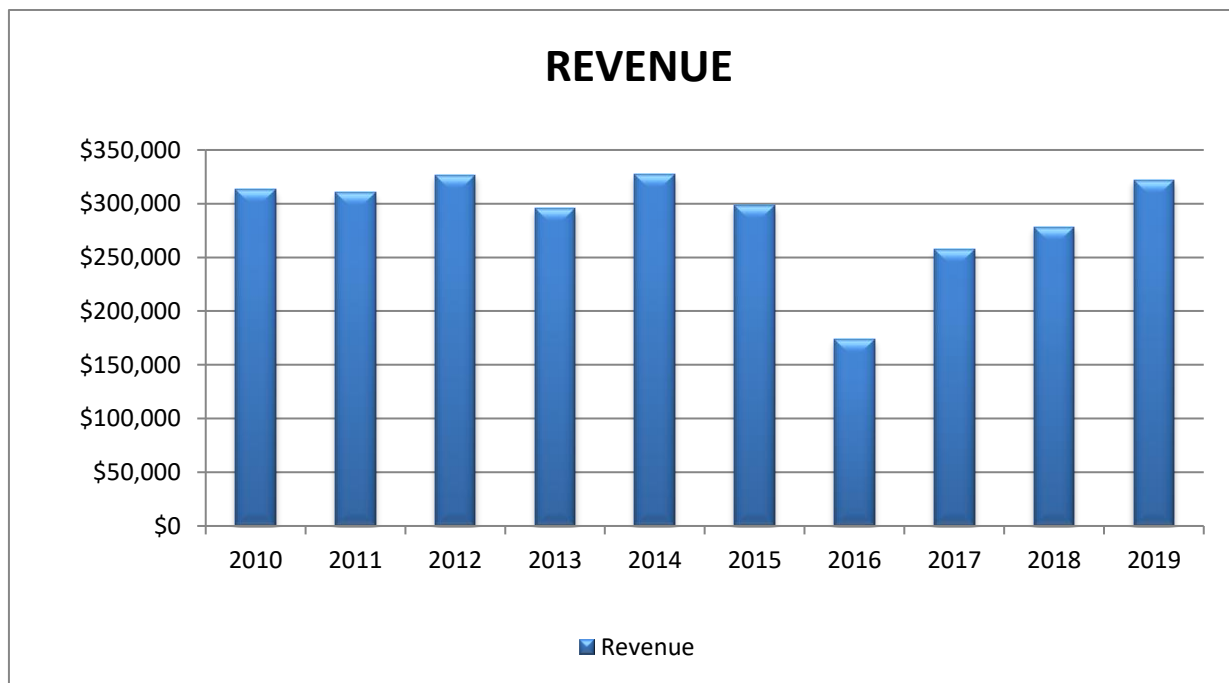
## Annual Expenses 2019



<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>% change</b>
Annual total:	\$3,832,395	\$3,974,970	3.72%

## REVENUE

The Prosecutor's office revenue consists of state funding via grants, contracts, and cost reimbursement. Services include Crime Victim's Rights, legal services provided to the Department of Human Service in child abuse and neglect matters, food stamp fraud prosecution, driver's license hearings for the Secretary of State, and legal services for Allegan County cases pending in the 58<sup>th</sup> District Court in Holland (venue: Holland City, Allegan County). The County also bills offenders convicted of Operating While Intoxicated and other specified offenses for reimbursement of prosecution costs pursuant to county ordinance.



<b>Revenue:</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>% change</b>
Annual total:	\$278,555.23	\$323,801.27	16.2%

<u>Prosecutor Revenue:</u>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Crime Victim's Rights	\$175,060.00	\$223,613.13
DHS Contract	67,582.98	55,979.20
OWI Reimbursement	33,300.26	40,054.44
Allegan Reimbursement	499.50	1,643.25
Driver License Hearings	1040.00	520.00
Food Stamp Fraud	802.49	191.25
Miscellaneous	<u>270.00</u>	<u>1800.00</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$278,555.23</b>	<b>\$323,801.27</b>

**The activities and programs of this department are brought to you by  
the members of the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners.**

District 1	Francisco C. Garcia
District 2	Joe Baumann
District 3	Doug R. Zylstra
District 4	Allen Dannenberg
District 5	Randall J. Meppelink
District 6	Kyle J. Terpstra
District 7	James Holtvluwer
District 8	Greg J. DeJong
District 9	Philip D. Kuyers
District 10	Roger A. Bergman
District 11	Matthew Fenske