

News Release



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TAP IN CENTER TO ASSIST RESIDENTS WITH NON-VIOLENT MISDEMEANOR WARRANTS

Franklin County and the City of Columbus, in partnership with local government officials, are launching the Tap in Center, a new initiative designed to assist residents with outstanding low-level, non-violent misdemeanor warrants. This collaborative effort aims to enhance public safety and promote smart justice practices that prevent unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system. The Tap in Center provides a restorative environment for individuals with warrants, often due to missed court appearances or unpaid fines and is positioned to help address the more than 55,000 outstanding misdemeanor warrants in the Franklin County Municipal Court. By facilitating the recall and rescheduling of cases, the Center helps individuals resolve their legal issues without the need for arrest, offering an affordable and effective alternative to traditional court processes.

"Reducing recidivism and finding solutions for justice-involved residents has long been a priority for Franklin County," said Board President Kevin L. Boyce. "My colleagues and I are committed to exploring innovative ways to address community challenges, and the Tap in Center is a perfect example of how we can support residents who may not even realize they have an outstanding court order on their record."

The Franklin County Commissioners' Office of Justice Policy and Programs, which oversees criminal justice services and manages federal and state justice grants, is coordinating the Tap in Center. The initiative is funded by a Justice Assistance Grant, which supports other smart justice programs across Franklin County, like the BRIDGE respite housing program and the Healing Broken Circles fatherhood initiative.

"When I learned about the Tap In Center when I visited St. Louis County I just knew this was something we needed here in Franklin County! The Tap In Center is an opportunity for our neighbors with warrants to come out from the shadows of our community and utilize a pathway to resolve their legal issues without fear" said Commissioner Crawley. "We want our neighbors to know about and utilize this resource proactively so they can thrive in our community. Additionally, providing accessible avenues for our neighbors to engage with the legal system ensures justice and fairness."

Held monthly at various public libraries throughout Franklin County, the Tap in Center leverages the welcoming and accessible nature of these community hubs to provide free legal services to those in need. Partnering with public libraries helps create a supportive environment that reduces the anxiety often associated with legal proceedings, offering individuals a space where they can seek assistance without the intimidation of a traditional court setting. This approach not only increases access to justice but also supports the broader goal of fostering a more equitable legal system. In addition to addressing legal matters, on-site service providers, including Child Support Enforcement, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and Job and Family Services, connect residents to additional supportive resources.

“The Tap in Center is a crucial resource for individuals with low-level, non-violent warrants,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “With over 55,000 outstanding misdemeanor warrants in our county, this initiative provides a compassionate pathway to resolve legal issues, opening doors to employment, education, and housing opportunities. It empowers individuals to make positive contributions to our community.”

The Tap in Center reflects Franklin County’s ongoing commitment to community welfare, safety, and restorative justice. The next Tap in Center sessions will be held on Tuesday, November 19, and Tuesday, December 17, from 3:00-7:00 p.m. at the Whitehall Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, 4445 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43213.

Services are available by appointment only. Residents can contact the Tap in Center hotline at 614-525-4488 to schedule an appointment or visit the [Tap in Center Website](#) for more information. For residents unsure about their eligibility or seeking other types of legal assistance, the Franklin County Public Defender’s Office can be reached at 614-525-3194.

