



# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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## Bill Analysis

Nicholas A. Keller

### **S.B. 141**

132nd General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

Sen. Hite

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#### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Effective January 1, 2019, abolishes the Paulding County County Court and its part-time judgeship and creates in Paulding the Paulding County Municipal Court with one full-time judge and with jurisdiction within Paulding County.
- Specifies that the judge of the Paulding County Municipal Court initially will be elected in 2018 and nominated only by petition.
- Provides that the Clerk of Courts of Paulding County is the Clerk of the Paulding County Municipal Court.
- Requires the Paulding County Prosecuting Attorney to prosecute in the Paulding County Municipal Court all violations of state law arising in Paulding County.
- Authorizes the Paulding County Prosecuting Attorney to enter into an agreement with any municipal corporation in Paulding County by which the Prosecuting Attorney prosecutes all cases brought in the Paulding County Municipal Court for violations of the municipal corporation's ordinances or for offenses other than violations of state law occurring within the municipal corporation.
- Includes transition provisions upon the abolition of the Paulding County County Court and the establishment of the Paulding County Municipal Court.

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## CONTENT AND OPERATION

### Paulding County Municipal Court

#### Creation, judge, jurisdiction, and operation

Under the current County Courts Law, the Paulding County County Court has one part-time judge most recently elected in 2012.<sup>1</sup>

The bill abolishes the Paulding County County Court and creates the Paulding County Municipal Court to be established in Paulding beginning January 1, 2019. In the Paulding County Municipal Court, one full-time judge will be elected in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

Under the bill, beginning January 1, 2019, the Paulding County Municipal Court has jurisdiction within Paulding County and is included within the definition of "county-operated municipal court." In the Paulding County Municipal Court, the judge will be nominated only by petition that must be signed by at least 50 electors of the territory of the Court and conform to the provisions of law pertaining to the nomination of municipal court judges.<sup>3</sup>

#### Clerk of courts and assistant clerks

Under the bill, the Clerk of Courts of Paulding County is the Clerk of the Paulding County Municipal Court and may appoint a chief deputy clerk for each branch office that is established by a municipal court pursuant to continuing law, and assistant clerks as the judge of the Court determines are necessary, all of whom will receive the compensation that the Court's legislative authority prescribes.<sup>4</sup> Continuing law defines "legislative authority" regarding a county-operated municipal court as the board of county commissioners of the county in which the court is located.<sup>5</sup>

The Clerk of Courts of Paulding County, acting as the Clerk of the Paulding County Municipal Court and assuming the duties of that office, will receive compensation payable from the Paulding County Treasury in semi-monthly installments at  $\frac{1}{4}$  the rate that is prescribed for the clerk of courts of common pleas as determined in accordance with the county's population and the rates set forth in the

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 1907.11(A) and R.C. 1907.13, not in the bill.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 1901.01(A), 1901.02(A)(32), 1901.08, and 1907.11(A).

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 1901.02(B), 1901.03(F), and 1901.07(C)(6).

<sup>4</sup> R.C. 1901.31(A)(2)(c).

<sup>5</sup> R.C. 1901.03(B).



continuing laws setting the salary schedules for clerks of courts of common pleas and the salary increases for county elected officials.<sup>6</sup> The continuing law on group health care coverage for clerks, deputy clerks, and their spouses and dependents will not apply to the Clerk of the Paulding County Municipal Court if health care coverage is provided to the Clerk by virtue of the Clerk's employment as the Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas of Paulding County.<sup>7</sup>

### **Criminal prosecutions**

Under the bill, the Paulding County Prosecuting Attorney must prosecute in the Paulding County Municipal Court all violations of state law arising in Paulding County, and may enter into an agreement with any municipal corporation in the county pursuant to which the Prosecuting Attorney prosecutes all cases brought before the Paulding County Municipal Court for violations of the ordinances of the municipal corporation or for criminal offenses other than violations of state law occurring within the municipal corporation. For prosecuting these cases under such an agreement, the Prosecuting Attorney and the municipal corporation may agree upon a fee to be paid by the municipal corporation, which fee must be paid into the Paulding County Treasury, to be used to cover the expenses of the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney.<sup>8</sup>

### **Transition provisions and effective date**

The bill provides that effective January 1, 2019, the Paulding County County Court is abolished. All causes, judgments, executions, and other proceedings pending in that Court at the close of business on December 31, 2018, must be transferred to and proceed in the Paulding County Municipal Court on January 1, 2019, as if originally instituted in the Paulding County Municipal Court. Parties to those causes, judgments, executions, and proceedings may make any amendments to their pleadings that are required to conform them to the rules of the Paulding County Municipal Court. The Clerk of the Paulding County County Court or other custodian must transfer to the Paulding County Municipal Court all pleadings, orders, entries, dockets, bonds, papers, records, books, exhibits, files, moneys, property, and persons that belong to, are in the possession of, or are subject to the jurisdiction of the Paulding County County Court, or any officer of that Court, that pertain to those causes, judgments, executions, and proceedings at the close of business on December 31, 2018. All employees of the Paulding County County Court must be transferred to and become employees of the

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<sup>6</sup> R.C. 1901.31(A)(2)(c).

<sup>7</sup> R.C. 1901.312(D).

<sup>8</sup> R.C. 1901.34(B) and (D).



Paulding County Municipal Court on January 1, 2019. Effective on that date, the part-time judgeship in the Paulding County County Court is abolished.<sup>9</sup>

The bill provides that the Revised Code sections pertaining to the creation of the Paulding County Municipal Court,<sup>10</sup> as amended by the act and as described above, take effect January 1, 2019.<sup>11</sup>

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## HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	05-02-17

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<sup>9</sup> Section 3.

<sup>10</sup> R.C. 1901.01, 1901.02, 1901.03, 1901.31, 1901.312, 1901.34, and 1907.11.

<sup>11</sup> Section 4.

