



ZACH KLEIN

COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

eNewsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4

From the Desk of City Attorney Zach Klein

In last month's e-newsletter, we provided an update on the status of our ongoing legal effort in partnership with the Ohio Attorney General's office to Save the Columbus Crew. Since then, there obviously have been some [new developments](#). We're encouraged by this progress and look forward to continuing conversations with Major League Soccer and investors that could resolve this litigation. We're grateful for the passionate fans of the #SaveTheCrew movement and the support of the Columbus community.

October was Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is observed annually across the country, and our office made it a special point of emphasis by joining the nationwide campaign to bring focus on domestic violence in our own community. Domestic violence is an issue that we take very seriously. Our Domestic Violence & Stalking Unit has been widely recognized for their innovation and dedication to helping protect victims. The numbers are stark: 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of some form of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime. We know that each victim of domestic violence needs different kinds of help. Moving from victim to survivor is a journey, not an event. While we hope you and your loved ones never need our services, we want you to know that we're here to help if you do and encourage you to read this month's article on our DVSU team and [watch this video](#).

Also in this issue, you can read about our office working with city and county officials to win nearly \$3 million in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Justice to help expand our local fight against the opioid epidemic. Securing these new federal funds will help us expand urgently needed intervention programs and provide critical resources to those who are on the frontlines fighting the opioid battle every day. I especially want to thank our staff and partners in county government and Mayor Ginther's administration for working diligently with us to obtain these coveted grants.

While our ultimate goal is to reduce the supply and demand for illicit drugs by supporting treatment and intervention, we'll also continue to hold bad actors accountable. We have updates for you on the fifth crime-plagued carryout and 16th drug house we've shut down through civil litigation so far this year.

Sincerely,

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This is an e-publication of:

Columbus City Attorney

Zach Klein

77 North Front Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Phone 614.645.7385

Fax 614.645.6949

www.columbuscityattorney.org



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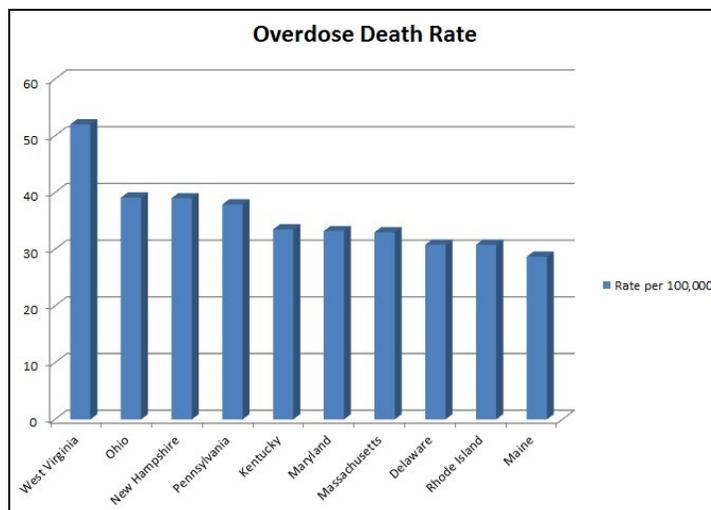
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Expanding the Fight

Last month, the City Attorney's office secured three highly competitive federal grants that totaled \$2.8 million in new funding for much needed opioid intervention programs. The funds—which were awarded through the [U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance](#)—will be used to enhance, expand, and evaluate programs administered by the Columbus Division of Fire, Columbus Public Health (CPH), and various Franklin County agencies.

Columbus has been hit particularly hard by the opioid crisis, as the rate of overdose deaths in Ohio, and especially Franklin County, are some of the highest in the nation. While Columbus already provides many life-saving programs to help addicts and overdose patients, the new federal funds will provide the opportunity to expand and improve these services. The awards also will enable the City Attorney's office to work with an outside evaluator to benchmark and track the impact of the funded



programs on recidivism rates and the outcomes of drug treatment programs.

The first of the City Attorney's grant awards will provide \$799,105 to enhance and evaluate the Rapid Response Emergency Addiction and Crisis Team (RREACT) program, operated by the Columbus Division of Fire and the non-profit substance abuse/mental health provider [Southeast, Inc.](#) When first responders are dispatched to the scene of an overdose, they administer naloxone. When individuals are revived, they are offered transport to a clinical facility with staff trained in working with overdose patients. At the clinical facility, overdose patients are paired with a member of the Southeast RREACT support team for connection to treatment, counseling and case management. Unfortunately, the number of non-fatal overdose patients who refuse transport is increasing dramatically and the new federal funding will be used to hire a project manager, fund a case manager and provide "wraparound service coordination" and trauma counseling for children and families impacted by overdose.

The second grant will provide \$999,146 to Columbus Public Health (CPH) to help integrate public safety and coroner data with health surveillance information to create a comprehensive, interactive opioid data tool that will be used by epidemiologists and other experts. The funding also will allow CPH to partner with an external researcher to assist in identifying problem areas and potential new intervention strategies.

The City Attorney's third grant of \$899,602 will help expand the MAT + Link program, a collaboration between the municipal and county court systems, county sheriff, judges and Southeast, Inc. The funding will help agencies that work directly with individuals who receive treatment in jail and court to develop follow-up plans and connect them to community-based behavioral health providers for recovery support services and continued drug treatment.

Finally, the evaluation component of the federal funds will provide city officials with the opportunity to talk with participants to learn more about the true barriers to treatment and what factors are most effective in encouraging individuals to enter and adhere to treatment programs.



Wearing Purple

Last month, visitors to the courthouse and the City Attorney's office may have noticed plenty of purple ribbons, purple ties and other purple attire. It was part of the annual observance of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, as well as the [Take A Stand](#) campaign that helps bring attention to the issue of domestic violence throughout the year.

The Columbus City Attorney's office has a [Domestic Violence & Stalking Unit](#) dedicated to providing services to victims of misdemeanor domestic violence and stalking crimes year-round. City Attorney Klein also helped lead the way in passing tough new gun laws that prohibit domestic violence abusers from owning or possessing weapons, and expanded the definition of domestic violence to include intimate partners.



[Click to watch the video](#) about our Domestic Violence & Stalking Unit, filmed last month to recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

That's important because 10 million people a year in the United States are physically abused by an intimate partner. Nationwide, 20,000 calls are placed every single day to domestic violence hotlines. Right here in Columbus, the City Attorney's office prosecutes close to 5000 domestic violence cases a year and serves more than 5500 victims annually. We work hard to try to hold abusers accountable and help victims start healing.

Our advocates, prosecutors and investigators work closely with victims from the beginning to the end of the cases: they attempt to make contact with every victim before each court date to touch base and answer any questions, escort them to every court hearing, and offer assistance with obtaining criminal protection orders. Our team provides advocacy, safety planning, and referral information every step of the way.

We have a total of two lead advocates and 14 full-time victim advocates, including two Spanish-speaking and one Nepali-speaking advocate. We also have a full-time cyber-crime investigator and a grant-funded anti-stalking advocate who work with victims experiencing repeated unwanted and distressing contact. While most domestic violence charges in Columbus are filed by the Division of Police, victims sometimes come to the prosecutor's office to have their complaints evaluated for charges. This is where they will first come into contact with advocates in the Prosecution Intake section.

The DVSU team also includes five specialized prosecutors who handle all of our domestic violence related cases. They are specially trained to deal with the most-involved, high risk cases that may include children, elderly or pregnant victims, repeat offenders, weapons used or brandished, and severe injuries. The unit also houses representatives from local partners like [CHOICES](#), [Franklin County Children Services](#), [Capital University Law School's Family Advocacy Clinic](#), and many others.

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Columbus City Attorney
 Zach Klein
 77 North Front Street
 Columbus, Ohio 43215
 Phone 614.645.7385
 Fax 614.645.6949
www.columbuscityattorney.org

Community Action

A troubled far east side carryout described as a “one-stop shop” for crack cocaine, prostitution, and underage alcohol sales was shut down last month after the City Attorney's office secured an emergency restraining order against the business. It's the fifth crime-plagued carryout that City Attorney Klein has shut down this year through public nuisance lawsuits filed in the Franklin County Environmental Court.

Beechwood Market, located just minutes away from the Livingston Avenue Branch Library and Barnett Rec Center, had prompted more than 150 police runs since 2016 for drug dealing, violent assault, armed robbery, and prostitution. It also was under covert police surveillance following



community complaints about illegal narcotics activity. The city's complaint described the market as part of a “hub of criminal activity,” and sat directly across the street from *Lounge 13*, a [violence-plagued nightclub that the city shut down last year](#). The market owner also was cited for violating city building and zoning codes after converting the property from a bar to a retail carryout without proper zoning clearance and ran further afoul of city code by also adding a drive-thru without proper approval. The full story can be found [here](#).

Days after shutting down Beechwood Market, City Attorney Klein announced that the City of Columbus secured an emergency court order to immediately vacate and shutter a west side



property that was used for dealing drugs since at least mid-2017, prompting 35 police runs for incidents ranging from narcotics complaints, burglary and weapons violations to grand theft auto and domestic violence. It became the 16th drug house the city has shut down this year, nine of which have been on the west side.

According to court documents, narcotics detectives conducted several covert purchases of crack cocaine and heroin at the premises, leading to a raid this past May. Along with seizing drugs and cash, officers arrested three individuals, two for parole violations and illegally carrying concealed weapons, and one for felony possession of crack cocaine. One week later, police responded to a robbery at the premises and encountered two female victims who told officers that their drug dealer pulled a machete on them and robbed them in retaliation after they had stolen \$50 worth of drugs from him earlier. Two days after that incident, police responded to a call of a suspect trying to break into the premises and arrested a man who had gained entry through a window.

In mid-August, an attorney representing the property owner informed detectives that the tenant of the property “was successfully evicted from the [p]remises.” However, police conducted two more covert purchases of crack cocaine from the house a few weeks ago, leading to another raid. Officers seized three glock handguns, ammunition, and over \$6000 in cash, heroin, cocaine and pills. The property is now under court order and will remain boarded up.



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City Attorney Klein was honored to provide introductory remarks at one of the legal workshops at the **2018 Ohio Attorney General's Law Enforcement Conference**, where two of our attorneys, Chief Police Legal Advisor Jeff Furbee and Zone Initiative Section Chief Steve Dunbar, taught a seminar on search and seizure laws. The overall theme of this year's conference was *Protecting Ohio Together*.



Our **Domestic Violence and Stalking Unit** is pictured here wearing purple ribbons to help recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

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