

Stark County Bar Association Resumes Driving License Clinics

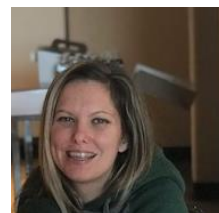


The Stark County Bar Association has been part of the statewide effort to ensure that a larger percentage of drivers on our roads have a valid driving license and carry insurance.¹ In 2019, we started a VALID Clinic to help people whose licenses have been suspended navigate the path to regaining their driving privileges. On October 29, the Pro Bono Committee

sponsored the first post-pandemic clinic.

The clinic was held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in downtown Canton, on Saturday morning, October 29. Over seventy (70) people attended in person, and several additional consultations were done by telephone. The following people volunteered their time to make the clinic possible:

Attorneys: **Kallen Boyer, Mike Bogdan, David Butz, Andrew Byler, Amanda Connelly, John Maxwell, Bill Dowling, Ashley R. Hall, Ben Horvath, Harry McKeen, Ken Mirkin, Ed Murray, Kyle Rea, Sara Strattan, John Tucker, Marcus Wainwright, Charlie Wilson and Scott Zurakowski.**



Paralegals: **Sandra Dunbar, Julie Harter, Katie Hickman, Cheena Jackson, Samantha Slutz, and Terryann Thompson.**



The VALID Clinic model has been well established and operates successfully in many other Ohio counties. At the clinics, participants have their driving records printed out from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) web site. Participants then met with volunteers to review and interpret their driving records. Volunteers explain the steps necessary for the person to regain his or her driving privileges depending on the type of suspension (court ordered, failure to pay child support, lack of

¹ **15,000 Drivers in 3-County Area Have Suspended Licenses**, Zach Tuggle, Mansfield News Journal. May 23, 2022. This article reports on unlicensed drivers in Ashland, Crawford, and Richland Counties. It also contains an interactive map showing data compiled from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Ohio Department of Highway Safety. Stark County has 300,985 residents over the age of 16. 9.4% of those residents, 28,279 people, are driving without a license.



insurance when involved in an accident, etc.). Specific information is provided about where to go and what to expect at the Alliance, Akron, Barberton, Canton, Massillon, and Stow Municipal Courts. Locations and contact information for deputy registrars, approved remedial driving programs, and testing sites are also given out. In addition, participants are also counseled concerning the BMV Amnesty Program under which they may be eligible for a reduction in fees owed to the

BMV.

Volunteers received free training at a CLE provided by the SCBA on Wednesday, October 19. **Judge Todd McKenney** of the Barberton Municipal Court, and **Darlene Jones**, from the Bureau of Motor vehicles provided the substantive training, and **Dottie Callander**, **Denise Fishel**, **Magistrate Andrea Scassa**, and **Sharon Ackerman**, explained procedures in the **Alliance, Canton, and Massillon Municipal Courts**.



Krugliak, Griffiths, Wilkins and Dougherty, donated supplies for the clinic, contributed marketing efforts, and recruited many of their staff members to volunteer. In addition, the following organizations were extremely helpful in making the clinic a success by informing their clients and patients of the opportunity:

Access Health Stark County, Community Legal Aid Services, Inc., Stark County Community Action Agency, and the Stark County Honor Court.



Participants were asked to complete evaluations, and sixty-five (65) of the participants did so. They overwhelmingly reported that the clinic was helpful. Among the many positive comments were:

- *I got hope of getting drivers license back.*
- *You are all amazing. Thank you.*
- *Really needed to get info.*

- *This is great for people.*
- *I thank you all and I think you all doing a good job.
God bless you.*

The Pro Bono Committee is planning to do its next clinic in the spring of 2023. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact David Butz at 330.497.0700 or dbutz@kwgd.com.

