

CLE



A'ishah Rogers' teenage son was shot in the leg by a Cuyahoga County sheriff's deputy after a car chase in October 2024. GUS CHAN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Greater Transparency From Sheriff's Department on Shooting Footage

In the wake of a joint [The Marshall Project - Cleveland and News 5 Cleveland investigation](#) in February, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department finally released footage of a deputy's shooting of a teenager, nearly four months after the fact. The department also [changed its policy on publicly releasing body cam footage](#).

We knew footage from the October incident existed, but the sheriff's department refused to share it. Working side-by-side with News 5 Cleveland, we kept asking for months. And just hours before we were going to publish our investigation into their refusal to release the video, they sent us the footage. We worked to immediately rewrite our story, knowing that our reporting had prompted greater transparency and accountability.

Unlike the Cleveland police, the sheriff's department did not have a policy on releasing bodycam video of shootings. But now that's changed. Later in February, the department quietly updated its policy to allow the release of body cam footage within seven days.

"There's a reason we partner with The Marshall Project - Cleveland. They do good work. We do good work. And when we work together, we get results."

NEWS 5 CLEVELAND EMAIL NEWSLETTER



The Marshall Project tracks the impact of our journalism on policymakers, advocates and other media. This report highlights some key examples.

MISCONDUCT COUNTS

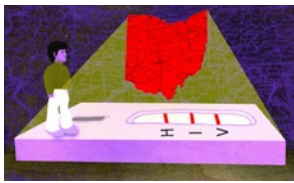


Judge Leslie Ann Celebrezze of the Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations Court. GUS CHAN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Cuyahoga County Judge Leslie Ann Celebrezze is [now under federal investigation](#) after our reporting on how she steered lucrative divorce cases to a friend working as a receiver for the court. According to a federal grand jury subpoena sent in February to the Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations Court, federal investigators are looking into Celebrezze and her ties to court-appointed receiver Mark Dottore, going back 17 years. The Marshall Project - Cleveland [first surfaced Celebrezze's relationship with Dottore](#) in June 2023. The story originated from a tip we received, and as a result of our reporting, the judge has been removed from the divorce case that sparked the inquiry. She is also facing [multiple misconduct charges](#) from the Ohio Disciplinary Counsel.



DECRIMINALIZING HIV



CANDICE EVERS FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

In March 2024, we partnered with The Buckeye Flame to report on how Ohio is one of 34 states that still [criminalizes HIV](#), with many of the laws now decades-old, since they were established at the height of HIV and AIDS. A bipartisan coalition in the state legislature introduced two bills in April 2024 seeking to repeal most of the HIV criminalization laws we wrote about.

SUPPORTING REENTRY

After we reported on Cuyahoga County's lack of reentry services, county jail officials [are finalizing a program](#) to help people meet basic needs upon being released from jail. In November 2024, jail officials announced a reentry program to give people access to resources about housing, employment, health care and other essential services. The changes came one year after [The Marshall Project - Cleveland detailed](#) how few of these services were provided to newly released prisoners.

LACKING OVERSIGHT



ILLUSTRATION BY RICARDO SANTOS FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT. PHOTOS BY NATE SMALLWOOD AND GUS CHAN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

The operator of a local youth care center had its contract terminated after we surfaced social media posts advocating for abuse. In August 2024, [The Marshall Project - Cleveland](#) found that the private youth care centers receiving kids from the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court lack oversight. They had not helped improve outcomes for kids, or reduced the number of kids in detention centers. We found social media posts from one youth care center's operator, boasting that "one lick from that cord" could set kids straight. Court officials terminated that operator's contract a day later.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY THE MARSHALL PROJECT; PHOTO BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Ohio [passed legislation to end debt-based suspensions](#) to help drivers get their licenses back after we reported on the staggering number of new suspensions issued in a single year. Near the end of December 2024, the Ohio legislature passed House Bill 29, and the state joined several of its neighbors in eliminating the practice in recent years. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Ohioans could soon be able to get back on the road legally. The legislation followed a [Marshall Project - Cleveland and WEWS News 5 investigation](#) that found the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles issued nearly 200,000 new license suspensions in 2022 for debt-related reasons such as failing to pay court fines or missing child support payments.

The judges you elect have real power in Cleveland.

How well do you know them?

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN G

WHO'S TO JUDGE

Launching in March 2024 — and updated for the general election — was our [“Get to Know Your Judges”](#) guide for Cleveland and Cuyahoga County. This project came out of our research showing that many voters in Cuyahoga County skip voting in judicial races, often saying they can't get reliable information to decide which candidate to pick.

Built in partnership with Signal Cleveland and Cleveland Documenters, people in the community who were paid to contribute information, this guide included basic information about each candidate's background, financial disclosures, party affiliation, and answers to survey questions developed with the community.

We also worked with local media partners to make the guide embeddable onto their sites, like [News 5 Cleveland](#) and [Signal Cleveland](#). Our local outreach manager also connected with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, food pantries, and other community institutions to distribute postcards introducing the guide.

Voter participation in judicial elections was higher in 2024 than previous election cycles going back at least a decade. We can't say for certain that our judge guide caused that change, but we did fill an information gap at a time when voters are more interested in judicial races.