

**Ohio Library Council  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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ITEM NO.: **5.H.1**

MEETING DATE: **Sept. 17, 2021**

SUBJECT: **Government and Legal  
Services Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Jay Smith**

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**REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

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PLF

State revenues continue to exceed expectations. According to the Office of Budget and Management (OBM), the state's August 2021 General Revenue Fund (GRF) tax receipts came in \$15.4 million or 0.7% above estimate. They are continuing to watch sales tax collections and the Delta variant's impact on consumer confidence.

The Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT) posted the September 2021 Public Library Fund (PLF) distribution of \$40,572,952 — which is \$8.25 million (+ 25.52%) above ODT's original estimate that was issued in July 2020. The PLF Calendar Year (CY) 2021 year-to-date total is \$348,875,667.

A look at the PLF distribution for the past three years and a link to an Excel spreadsheet listing each county's distribution total for September 2021 can be found on the [OLC website](#).

CY 2021 PLF Cash Flow Estimates Updated by OLC

With the help of OLC's consultant Dr. Howard Fleeter, we updated the county-by-county Public Library Fund (PLF) estimates for the remainder of Calendar Year (CY) 2021. The updated spreadsheet takes the Ohio Department of Taxation's June 2021 spreadsheet and does the following:

- Replaces the July and August estimated PLF amounts for each county with the July and August actual distributions.
- Recomputes the September – December PLF amounts at 1.7% instead of 1.66%.

The Tax Department's estimate for CY21 was \$454.3 million. The July and August actuals add \$5.2 million to the Tax Department's CY21 estimate. Raising the September – December figures to 1.7% adds \$3.6 million and brings the revised CY 2021 total estimate to \$463.1 million.

ODT Issues Initial CY 2022 PLF Certification

ODT posted its initial county-by-county certifications for the Public Library Fund (PLF) for calendar year (CY) 2022. Each county's estimated entitlement is available on the [ODT website](#).

Please read the PLF Estimated Entitlement information for your county carefully. The CY22 entitlement estimates are based on the PLF percentage being set at 1.70% of the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF) for fiscal year (FY) 2022 and FY23. ODT's initial statewide

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PLF distribution estimate for CY22 is \$443,118,408. As required by law, these estimates will be updated again in December 2021.

### Fall Legislative Session

The legislature will be returning to the statehouse in September following a short summer recess after passing the State Biennial Budget in June. Some of the issues likely to be discussed this fall include vaccine and mask mandates, election security and reform, and redistricting.

### House Bill (HB) 248

HB 248 is legislation that would prohibit vaccine mandates by public and private employers. Recently, the Ohio House Health Committee convened a hearing on the bill and heard from many passionate witnesses. Proponents are asking for personal freedom and the ability to make their own choices when it comes to taking the vaccine while opponents are claiming this will hamper efforts to control and or respond to infectious diseases. Both the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Business Roundtable have suggested the legislation will have a negative impact on the business community if passed by the legislature. It's uncertain at this point whether HB 248 will continue to move forward in the legislative process.

### Election Reform

Election security and reform continue to be hot topics in the Ohio legislature. One bill to keep an eye on is HB 294, sponsored by Representatives Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) and Sharon Ray (R-Wadsworth). HB 294 seeks to make several changes including expanding voter access by automated voter registration through the BMV in addition to the elimination of early voting on the Monday before Election Day. The bill would move the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot from three days before the election to ten days before the election. Ballot drop boxes would only be allowed on the premises of the county board of elections office and be limited to the ten days before the election. HB 294 is currently under consideration in the House Government Oversight Committee.

### Redistricting

The Ohio Redistricting Commission is currently tasked with the responsibility of drawing state legislative districts, the Ohio General Assembly is responsible for drawing new lines for congressional districts with an anticipated vote on these new lines by Sept. 30. The proposed maps will need the support of 60% of the lawmakers in each chamber including half of the democrats. If this happens, the lines will be set for the next 10 years. If this doesn't happen, the proposed map will move to the seven-member Redistricting Commission including the governor, auditor, secretary of state and four legislators (two republican and two democrat). The commission will then have until Oct. 31 to seek consensus amongst four of its members, including two democrats. If the commission does not come to a consensus by this deadline, the legislature will have another opportunity to draw the new districts by Nov. 30. Should this final attempt fail to gain a 60% approval including one-third of democrats, the republican majority can create a congressional map that will last four years.