

The Pickaway County Auditor's Office Policy Regarding Office Access under Sub. Am. H.B. 197

Banking, transfers, and title research have been deemed essential business by the Ohio Department of Health Order and requirements for access to necessary records maintained by County Auditors, Recorders, and Map Rooms were passed by the Ohio General Assembly and signed into law on March 27, 2020.

H.B 197 in Section 21(A) requires the offices of county recorders, auditors, title offices of clerks of courts, and county map offices to “remain open and operational in order to allow land professionals physical access to the office **as necessary to search records that are not otherwise available online, digital, or by some other means.**” (emphasis added, See page 337 of the bill as enrolled.) Access may be limited and include “requirements and restrictions in the interest of public health.” Finally, the section requires: “All essential services to effectuate property transfer shall remain open and available with all offices.”

This guidance is in response to this new provision and we therefore ask for everyone's cooperation during this emergency.

The Pickaway County Auditor's Office continues to conduct essential business including transfer & conveyance, fiscal functions, payroll, and other duties to support the businesses and residents of Pickaway County. All services to continue the process of property transfers are occurring. However, in order to protect my staff and attempt to follow state and federal guidelines to slow the progress of COVID-19, my office has been closed to the public since Monday, March 23, 2020.

Business can still be conducted by mail, by email or online where possible, and through drop boxes outside the Pickaway County Auditor's Office at 207 South Court Street, Circleville, Ohio 43113

Land title professionals or others with a need to search records should:

- Access records online as much as possible. Access to the office will not be given for records that are available online.
- If a record or search cannot be conducted online you must contact the Auditor's office at 740-474-4765 or email at mbetz@pickawaycountyohio.gov to discuss other options.
- If the records cannot be made accessible without physical access, such access will be given by appointment to avoid any large groups or other impediments to safe distancing.