



**League of Women Voters of Delaware County  
Education Fund**

# **A GUIDE TO DELAWARE COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

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## ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political membership organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.

Through our voter service and citizen education activities we build citizen participation in the democratic process and study key community issues at the national, state and local levels.

As part of our mission, local chapters of the League of Women Voters periodically conduct studies to learn more about local government in the area where they work. These studies seek answers to the following:

- What does local government do?
- what can we expect from the people we elect to carry out the duties and responsibilities of local government?
- How can we effectively impact government actions?

Through this publication we are sharing the results of our study of Delaware County Government for the benefit of the broader public.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Research -Nancy Philippi

League of Women Voters of Delaware County Education Fund

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## INTRODUCTION

### An Overview of Local Government in Pennsylvania

Local government in Pennsylvania is more complex than in many other states. To understand the role of county government in Pennsylvania it helps to know how counties fit in with the overall role of local government statewide.

The map of Pennsylvania is divided into 67 counties. Each of these counties has a government center called a county seat which usually contains the administrative offices, a meeting place for its legislative body and a courthouse. Each county is further subdivided into smaller governmental units which are either cities, boroughs or townships. There is a total of 2,562 of these in Pennsylvania. Each has a government center which houses administrative offices and a meeting place for its legislative body which can be either a council or a commission. These legislative bodies typically deal with familiar quality of life issues like trash collection, sewage disposal, street paving and plowing, parks and other public spaces, planning and zoning, building codes, fire and police protection, and libraries.

In Pennsylvania counties, cities, boroughs and townships are all defined as municipalities. For clarity, cities, boroughs and townships are sometimes collectively called "towns." There are no independent cities or unincorporated territory within Pennsylvania. Every Pennsylvania resident lives in both a county and a town.

Adding to the complexity are "census designated places," many of which have their own postal address separate from the municipalities in which they are located. This can cause confusion. Examples in Delaware County are Folsom, which is part of Ridley Township, Wallingford, which is in Nether Providence Township and Bryn Mawr, which spreads across Radnor and Haverford Townships in Delaware County and Lower Merion Township in Montgomery County.

Provision of elementary and secondary public education is assigned to school districts. Some are independent of and often overlap or combine the boundaries of municipalities. Their legislative bodies or board of school directors have independent decision making and taxing authority.

Most Pennsylvania counties are governed by a board consisting of three elected members called commissioners. Two commissioners must be of the political party which gets the highest number of votes in the last election, the majority party. The third must be of a party different from the majority, the minority party. This is accomplished by a system called limited voting in which each party can only nominate two candidates to run in the general election and voters can only cast ballots for two candidates. The three candidates who get the most votes are elected. One of the three commissioners is the chair. Counties also have additional independently elected officers including a sheriff, district attorney, prothonotary, clerk of the courts, registrar of wills, recorder of deeds, and two jury commissioners. Smaller counties may combine the functions of some of these offices. Exceptions to this system are Philadelphia which functions as a city and county combined, and counties, including Delaware County, which have adopted an optional form of government of government called home rule.

Counties are important because their geographic size enables them to better cope with functions that are broader in scope than can be effectively handled by the smaller governmental units (towns).

Justice related activities. Each county has one or more Court of Common Pleas judges who are elected to sit on the bench and hear criminal and civil court cases and Magisterial district judges who do criminal bookings and small claims such as traffic tickets. Counties support the courts with corrections and criminal justice programs such as a county prison, juvenile detention center, probation and criminal investigation units.

Community Development and Environmental Planning. Counties are responsible for comprehensive land use planning, storm water management planning, and planning for the proper disposal of solid waste. They may play a role in locating a new factory and creating jobs, planning for new transportation infrastructure including road and bridges.

Public Health and Safety. Counties provide 911 emergency communications services including coordination of emergency responses by local police, fire and emergency medical services. They also operate emergency management agencies, responsible for the creation and implementation of plans to respond to and recover from emergencies such as storms, floods, explosions or other disasters. They also plan for what to do if hazardous materials are spilled or released into the environment.

Some counties, like Philadelphia, Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Montgomery, and Erie Counties have their own health departments. The balance of Pennsylvania counties work in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Health Department on medical issues.

In Pennsylvania, county sheriffs serve process (deliver documents to a defendant or person involved in a court case), provide transport of prisoners, and may provide security at county properties. Unlike other states, they do not perform traditional police functions.

Human Services. Counties are required to provide protective services for children and youth; mental health and intellectual disability programs; drug and alcohol awareness programs; and services for the aging. A large part of the funding for these programs comes from grants from the state and the federal government.

Elections. Counties oversee all elections. They keep a registry of voters, purchase and maintain voting equipment, train and pay poll workers, decide the location of polling places and make sure they are accessible to everyone who wants to vote.

Real Estate Tax Assessment. To fund these programs, counties rely heavily on taxes based on the value of real estate in the community. Real estate includes the buildings and land of homes and businesses. Cities, townships, borough and school districts also use this information to set their real estate tax information.

Some other functions that Pennsylvania's counties may perform include public mass transportation, public library and community college support and regional planning

Counties differ in how they provide these services. This Guide describes how these functions are carried out by Delaware County Government.

## DELAWARE COUNTY HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The area which is now Delaware County was originally part of Chester County. On September 26, 1789 the Pennsylvania General Assembly authorized splitting off 191 square miles to create the new county.

Delaware County’s seat of government was originally located in the city of Chester, which had been the seat of Chester County. In 1847 the voters authorized moving the seat to its current more central location in Media. The Government Center houses the courts and the county administrative offices.

In 1953, the Pennsylvania state government passed a law establishing nine county subgroupings by population size called “classes”, for the purpose of legislating and regulating county affairs. Delaware County is one of three Pennsylvania counties meeting the requirement to be classified as a Second-Class A (2A) county.

There are 49 towns in Delaware County: one city, 27 boroughs and 21 townships.

Delaware County ranks among the 67 Pennsylvania counties, as

- The third smallest in area
- The fifth largest in population
- The fourth highest in per capita income
- The second highest in population density

### Demographic Makeup

- The 2010 population was 558,726
- The 2017 average per capita income was \$34,857
- The 2017 school enrollment was 74,649
- The 2017 unemployment rate was 4.5%

#### Race:

- African American 21.2 %
- Hispanic or Latino 3.5 %
- White 68.6 %
- Other 6.7%

#### Education

- High school graduate or higher 91.9% (86.3 in US)
- Bachelor's degree or higher 35.5% (29.3 in US)

#### Income Level

- Median household income (in 2014) \$64,174 (\$53,482 in US)
- Persons in poverty, 10.80% (12.70% in US)

#### Age

- Persons under five (July 1, 2016) 6.00% (6.20% IN US)
- Persons under 18 23.20% (22.80% IN US)
- Persons 65 and over 15.60% (15.20% in US)

The address of Delaware County Government is:

County Government Center  
201 West Front Street, Media, PA,  
19063-2708

610-891-4000  
[www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov)

Delaware County was named for the Delaware River, which forms its eastern border. The river was named after Lord De La Warr, the title of Thomas West, a British politician.

West was appointed governor and captain general of the troubled Colony of Virginia to replace the ailing Captain John Smith. In 1610 he sailed to Jamestown with men and supplies and arrived just in time to save the colony from abandonment.

### MAJOR EMPLOYERS

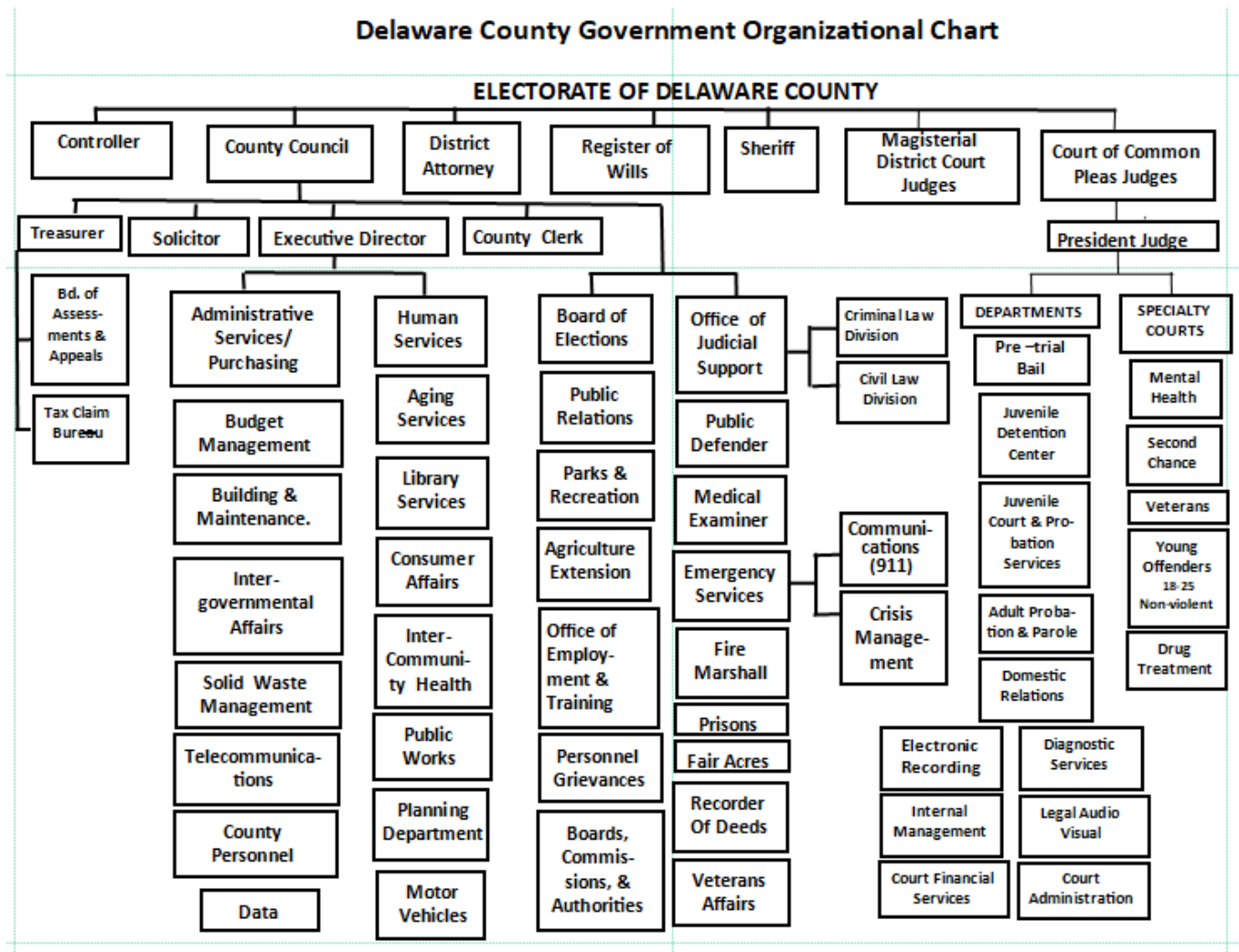
1. Crozer-Keystone Health System
2. Boeing Co.
3. Wawa Inc.
4. Delaware County
5. UPS, Villanova University
6. SAP
7. Upper Darby School District
8. Main Line Health Systems
9. Harrah’s Casino
10. Widener University

## THE STRUCTURE OF DELAWARE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Like most Pennsylvania counties today, Delaware County was originally governed by three commissioners. Additional elected county officers were comptroller, district attorney, public defender, treasurer, sheriff, registers of wills, recorder of deeds, prothonotary, and clerk of court.

In May 1975, effective January 5, 1976, voters approved a Home Rule Charter for Delaware County, the first Pennsylvania county to do so and one of seven counties in the state currently having Home Rule Charters (Alleghany, Lackawanna, Erie, Lehigh, Luzerne and Northampton are the others). Adoption of the Home Rule Charter resulted in the expansion and strengthening of powers of general county government. The Charter can be accessed at [www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov).

Under the Home Rule Charter, the County is governed by a five-member County Council. Members serve in both a legislative and executive capacity. In addition to Council, voters also elect a Comptroller, District Attorney, Registrar of Wills and a Sheriff. Voters also elect Common Pleas Court Judges and Magisterial District Court Judges who are part of the statewide unified judicial system.



## County Council Meetings

The Council holds regularly scheduled meetings which usually take place in the Council Meeting Room on the first floor of the Government Center. The council holds a “work session” to discuss the agenda for the legislative session taking place the following day. Both meetings are open to the public. The schedule of these meetings and exceptions to the regular meeting times and places are noted on the county website [www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov). Video tapes of the council meetings and minutes of both the agenda and the council meetings are available on the same website.

## Appointments of the County Council

- The Board of Elections, consisting of two members of the party of the majority and one member of the minority party, which oversees elector registration and the conduct of elections. The Charter requires that the minority party member be appointed from a list of three nominees submitted by the county chairman of the party receiving the second ranking total vote cast in the most recent municipal election.
- County Clerk (formerly the chief clerk)
- Coroner (Medical Examiner), who must be a licensed physician
- Recorder of deeds
- Two Jury Commissioners, one from each major political party, who are responsible for administering the jury system. They serve for four-year terms
- Treasurer, who is responsible for real property tax assessments, the levy of the County personal property taxes, the Seated Lands and the Tax Liens program.
- Legal Staff, consisting of the County Solicitor and Assistant Solicitors, who must be practicing Pennsylvania lawyers. They serve as lawyers to all County offices and departments, except the Controller and District Attorney who appoint their own attorneys.
- Office of Public Defender, who must be a practicing Pennsylvania lawyer and who appoints assistants who are also lawyers. They serve as lawyers for people charged with a crime who cannot pay for their services.
- Office of Judicial Support provides **services** as the **Clerk of the Courts** or the **Prothonotary**. Serves the Civil and Criminal divisions of the courts.
- Court House Police which maintain the security of the Government Center complex.
- Permanent and temporary boards, commissions and authorities.
- Executive Director manages and directs the county’s departments, agencies, services, programs and projects. The county departments reporting to the executive director are spelled out below.

## The Executive Director

The Executive Director is responsible for administrative and financial supervision of the following departments with the approval by the council of their budgets and appointment of their heads.

- Purchasing, handling the procurement of all county goods and services.
- Personnel, acting as a centralized point of interviewing, screening, testing and referral for all persons seeking employment with county government. The department coordinates and oversees the hiring, training, assignment, re-assignment, rotation, performance evaluation and discharges of all personnel in positions covered by merit procedures.
- Administrative Services, serving as a central source for data processing, management, phone, mail and file services to the entire county government.
- Human Resources, an umbrella agency coordinating child care, mental health, mental retardation and other related programs.
- Public Works, responsible for repairs and maintenance of buildings and facilities in the Court House complex, along with county bridges, the county garage motor pool, incinerator operations, and programs of soil and water conservation and snow removal.



- Intercommunity Health Coordination, running the County Health Coordination Program, the delivery of emergency health services, mosquito and rodent control, and the County Medical Dispensary.
- Intergovernmental Affairs, responsible for coordination of grant and subsidy programs managed by the state and federal governments.
- Budget Management, covering all budgets approved by the Council.
- Public Relations, handling all county public relations.
- Senior Citizens' affairs, running programs related to aging.
- Consumer Affairs, providing consumer protection services including periodic inspection of weights and measures.
- The Planning Department assists municipalities with sound planning practices including review of development proposals.

### County Clerk

Most official business of the County Council is channeled through the County Clerk

- Records, certifies and implements action of County Council.
- Processes County Councils appointments of individuals to boards and commissions.
- Notifies successful and unsuccessful bidders on County contracts and maintains files on such contracts.
- Gives public notice of all meetings of County Council and prepares the agenda and keeps minutes for the meetings.
- Maintains all the records of County Government, such as ordinances, agreements, and other pertinent legal documents.
- Receives and responds to Open Records/Right to Know requests.

### BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND AUTHORITIES

The County Council is authorized to establish and/or abolish boards, commissions and authorities to further their agenda. The following boards are made permanent in the Home Rule Charter:

- The Board of Personnel Grievances and Performance Review, consisting of three members appointed for two year terms, provides procedures for the resolution of personnel grievances and conducts performance audits at least once every four years in all of county government.
- The Board of Tax Assessment Appeals, consisting of three members appointed for two year terms, hears and adjudicates taxpayer real property assessment appeals.
- The Board of Institution Management manages all lands, buildings, staff, and other resources.

Other major Commissions, and Boards currently established by the Delaware County Council include the following:

- The Planning Commission, a nine-member advisory board appointed for four-year terms.
- The five-member Board of Prison Inspectors, responsible for appointing the Superintendent of the George W. Hill Correctional Facility (the county jail) at 500 Cheney Road in Thornbury Township. Two board members are appointed by the Council and three members by the Board of Judges
- The Park Board, an advisory body to County Council on long-range park policy, serves as a liaison between the Department of Parks and Recreation and local municipalities and school districts. The Park Board is composed of 11 members, one from each of six planning districts, and five at large to serve for such terms as Council shall determine. It periodically inspects the parks and makes suggestions on maintenance and capital improvements in park property and makes recommendations to the Council on open space and park planning, acquisition, and development.
- The Board of Merit Review consisting of the Council Chairman, the Executive Director, Department of County Personnel Head, the County Clerk and representation from the Board of Personnel Grievances and Performance Review. It is convened to deal with questions of the adequacy of employee qualifications.
- The Delaware County Women's Commission established in 1985 by the County Council, serves as advocate for the women of Delaware County.

- The Drug & Alcohol Advisory Council.
- The Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board.

Other county boards and commissions include:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau              | • Health Advisory Board                      |
| • Community Transit Board of Directors                   | • Heritage Commission                        |
| • Conservation District Board                            | • Hero Scholarship Board                     |
| • County Office of Services for the Aging Advisory Board | • Library Board                              |
| • Family Law Advisory Council                            | • Retirement Board                           |
| • Fire & Life Safety                                     | • Workforce Development Board                |
|  | • Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals |

### Authorities

An authority is a special kind of local unit set up to perform a specific service. The following four Authorities are considered to be component units of county government, which has significant operational or financial responsibility for them, yet they are legally separate from it. Its members are appointed wholly or in part by County Council which can impose its will on its decisions.

- The Delaware County Solid Waste Authority (DCSWA) provides almost entirely for waste disposal for county residents. The county's trash is incinerated to produce electricity. A member of County Council sits on the board.
- Delaware County Regional Water Quality Control Authority (DELCORA) provides for wastewater collection and treatment for residential and commercial facilities in Delaware and Chester Counties. It is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors appointed by County Council. Operations are funded from customer revenues, capital borrowing, contributions from developers, Federal and State grants and loans.
- The Economic Development Oversight Board (EDOB), a seven-member Board, serves as the overall management entity for all economic and industrial development entities in the County. Its purpose is to encourage economic development in Delaware County by facilitating the retention of existing business, the formation of new business and the vitality of all business within the County of Delaware.
- The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Delaware (RDA) acts as the vehicle for condemnation and development within the County.
- The Delaware County Chester Waterfront Industrial Development Authority (IDA) was formed for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, financing, improving and maintaining industrial and commercial development projects and public facilities in certain geographic regions within the City of Chester.

The following organizations are related to Delaware County, which appoints a majority of their governing boards in most instances:

- Community Transit of Delaware County, Inc., a private, nonprofit transportation company certified by the PA Public Utility Commission to provide demand responsive service to the general public. It provides thousands of trips every weekday to Delaware County residents of all ages for any purpose on an advance reservation, first come first served basis.
- Community Action Agency of Delaware County Delaware County, established in 1979 to fight the "renewed war on poverty", is designated County's Anti-Poverty Agency. CAADC is a private non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation managed by a 21-member Board of Directors that equally represent the public, private, and client sectors.
- Central Delaware County Authority was established by municipalities located in the south-central part of Delaware County to protect the public health and the environment by transporting wastewater out of the watershed for proper treatment and disposal. The Authority is currently made up of the following twelve

municipalities. Edgemont Township, Ridley, Marple, Newtown, Nether Providence, Prospect Park, Upper Providence and Springfield Townships, and Ridley Park, Rutledge and Swarthmore Boroughs.

- Delaware County Housing Authority is organized under the Pennsylvania Housing Authorities Law to purchase, acquire, construct, manage and operate low income and elderly housing projects under the auspices of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Appointments to the Board are made at the discretion of County Council.

The County is also involved in the following:

- The Delaware Valley Regional Finance Authority (DVRFA) created in 1985 by Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties to provide funding for capital projects of local government units and municipal authorities in Pennsylvania.
- The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) operates regional train, trolley and bus lines in Chester, Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery counties and Philadelphia.
- SEPTA Citizens Advisory Committee
- The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the nine-county region in two states: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer in New Jersey. Responsibilities include transportation, land use and environmental planning.
- Delaware River Port Authority serves as steward of four bridges that cross the Delaware River between Pennsylvania and New Jersey: the Ben Franklin, Walt Whitman, Commodore Barry and Betsy Ross Bridges. Through its Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO), the DRPA also operates a transit line between Camden County, New Jersey and Center City Philadelphia.

A complete list of Boards and Commissions can be accessed on the county website  
**For descriptions go to the A to Z dropdown menu at**  
[www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov).

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The major sources of income to support the functions of county government are:

- Real estate property taxes
- Federal and state grants
- Fees and other earnings by county departments.

Major Expenditures

- Social Welfare
- Administration of Justice

Delaware County publishes three financial documents in the course of a year: a Budget, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Single Audit Report. All three are necessary to an understanding of the county's finances.

### The Budget

The budget document consists of two parts. The General Fund Budget financed by real estate taxes, department earnings and some federal and state grants, and an additional document financed entirely by anticipated federal and state grants to support social welfare activities. The Department of Budget Management, reporting to the Executive Director, is responsible for preparing an annual General Fund budget, which is approved by the County Council for the next fiscal (calendar) year.

The budget for the 2019 General Fund was as follows:

REVENUES (in 000's)		
Real Estate Taxes	\$171,263	51%
Federal Grants	16,779	5%
State Grants	77,227	23%
Department Earnings	32,592	9%
Other	35,947	12%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$335,331</b>	<b>100%</b>
EXPENSES (in 000's)		
Social Welfare	\$84,046	23.7%
Administration of Justice	147,540	41.6
Transportation	8,560	2.4
Parks	1,804	.5
Registration & Elections	1,884	.5
Tax Administration	2,630	.7
Financial Management	2,029	.6
General Government	20,379	5.7
Miscellaneous	2,034	.6
Other Subsidies	1,875	.5
Other Expenditures	700	.2
Debt Service	29,396	8.3
Employee Fringe Benefits	46,500	13.1
Insurance	5,500	1.5
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>354.877</b>	<b>99.9</b>

The budget document is presented to County Council by November 1<sup>st</sup> and is approved by them no less than ten days prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>. It is subject to public hearings.

When General Fund Revenue is combined with anticipated additional anticipated state and federal grants, the budget document shows overall county revenue for 2019 to be \$643 million with close to 61% going to Social Welfare Services.

Therefore, while the largest share of General Fund expenditures go to the administration of justice followed by social welfare, combining the General Fund Budget and the supplemental federal and state grant budget shows social welfare makes up the largest share of the county budget overall. A major share is passed though the county to hundreds of providers with which it has contracts.

The amounts shown in the 2019 Budget for Social Welfare reflects only the portion to be borne by the County General Fund. The County anticipates that in addition \$307,856,000 will be received from Federal or State Grants to be distributed as follows (in 000's):

Children and Youth Services	\$37,609	Early Intervention	\$5,288
Mental Health	33,978	Drug and Alcohol	4,563
Intellectual Disabilities	13,519	Drug and Alcohol	5,661
Behavioral Health Managed Care	132,812	Services for the Aging	14,552
Early Learning Resources Center	49,496	Other Grants	14,941

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Within six months of the end of the calendar year the Controller prepares a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) which includes an audit by an independent public auditor. In this report Delaware County financial statements are organized into three groups:

- Government-wide financial statements
- Fund financial statements
- Notes to the financial statements

Government-wide financial statements separate the government functions from the business function of the county. These statements include the four authorities which are legally separate from the county and which are known as "component units": the Solid Waste Authority, the Economic Development Authority, the Waterfront Industrial Development Authority

Fair Acres Geriatric Home is Delaware County's only business function. It showed an approximate \$6 million net loss in 2017.

and the Redevelopment Authority. In 2017 these four authorities showed an overall \$8.5 million loss, primarily in the Solid Waste Authority:

(In \$000's)	<u>Solid Waste</u>	<u>ED0B</u>	<u>WIDA</u>	<u>RDA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Revenues	\$36,046	\$599	\$ -	\$6,856	\$43,502
Expenditures	\$43,338	\$691	\$979	\$7,029	\$52,037

Fund financial statements in Delaware County are divided into three categories: governmental, proprietary and fiduciary funds.

The county maintains ten governmental funds, only three of which are substantial; the General Fund, the Health and Human Services Fund and the Capital Projects Fund. The seven smaller funds, lumped into the "other" category, are the Library Fund, 911 Fund, Office of Workforce Development, Liquid Fuels Fund, COSA Fund, CDBG/Rehab Fund and Marcellus Shale Fund. In 2017, these funds performed as follows:

	<u>General</u>	<u>Health &amp; Human Services</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	<u>Other</u>
Revenue	\$240,476,402	\$268,202,995	\$ 884,561	\$52,964,565
Expenditures	\$221,603,745	\$275,125,987	\$10,049,184	\$58,532,699

The total 2017 revenues from these funds was \$562, 528, 523; expenditures were \$565,311,615 leaving a deficit of \$2,783,092. The General Fund has a healthy surplus. The deficits were in the other three categories.

The Proprietary Funds are Enterprise Funds and Internal Funds.

The Fiduciary Funds are the Pension Trust Fund and the DeShong Trust Fund.

### The Single Audit Report

There is also a third financial document completed by September of each year, the Single Audit Report, which contains financial information for the state- and federally-funded grants for the prior calendar year. This third document constitutes a compendium of grant monies separately audited by different public accounting firms.

Note that this document must reconcile the calendar year under which the county operates with the fiscal years under which the state (July 1-June 30) and federal (October 1 – September 30) governments operate.

### Real Estate Tax Assessment

Owners of commercial and residential properties pay taxes to the county and the local municipality and school district in which their property is located. The amount of this tax is based on the taxable assessed value of their property. The county is responsible for the assessments which are then used by all three taxing authorities to determine their tax rate. The tax rate is expressed in mills.

Real estate taxes make up roughly half the General Fund income. To determine the tax rate the county needs to meet its expenses the total required revenues is divided by the assessed valuation of the entire county. The tax for each property is calculated by multiplying the assessed taxable property value by the mill rate and dividing the sum by 1000. The mill rate for Delaware county in 2018 was 5.60. So, the owner of a property with an assessed value of \$100,000 would get a bill from the county for \$560. The assessment status of any property can be found on the county website.

In March 2017 the county was ordered by the Court to conduct a countywide property tax reassessment to become effective for the 2021 tax year.

Each taxing authority determines the mill rate needed to finance its operations. The Delaware County Tax Rate Table (Appendix I) compares the tax rate for the county, and each local municipality and school district. It shows that by far the largest share of local property taxes goes to fund the public schools.

## County Treasurer

County taxes are collected by the County Treasurer who also oversees the Board of Assessment Appeals which hears appeals to individual property tax assessments and the Tax Claims Bureau which oversees collection of unpaid taxes. In addition, the treasurer's office:

- Issues Dog/Hunting and /fishing/Boat Licenses
- Issues Amusement Permits (Small Games of Chance activities are allowed if permitted by the local municipality.)
- Collects Election Petition Fees

## **THE CONTROLLER**

The Controller oversees and controls the expenditure of county funds. Once the Budget Director has certified that there are funds available within the applicable Department budget of the General Fund to cover a proposed expenditure, the Controller encumbers the funds and writes the checks. The Controller is also expected to subject most county agencies to pre-audits and post-audits.

The Controller's office prepares the financial data which is audited by the County Auditors in the annual Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) which, according to the Charter, is published one month after the end of the fiscal year. The Controller's office currently manages a Hotline which allows confidential reporting regarding any fraud, waste or abuse having to do with Delaware County assets.

The Controller is a member of and serves as secretary to the Retirement Board. The Retirement Board holds regular public meetings and its minutes are published on the Controller's website. It consists of three members of the County Council, the Treasurer (Board treasurer), and the Controller (Board secretary). Meetings are attended by the board solicitor as well as pension consultants.

The Controller appoints his/her own solicitor.

## **SOCIAL WELFARE AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Pennsylvania counties structure their human services agencies in different ways. Delaware County's 1976 Home Rule Charter established the Department of Human Services as an umbrella agency. The Department is comprised of the following major offices:

- Behavioral Health (Mental Health MH)
- Children & Youth Services (CYS)
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD)
- Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)
- Early Intervention (EI)

The only welfare services which are not included in this department and which report directly to the Council and the Executive Director are the County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) and the Fair Acres Geriatric Center.

### The Office of Behavioral Health

BH services is divided into three divisions:

- **Mental Health:** This division contracts with agencies who provide an array of services and resources which include Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Outpatient Treatment, Case Management, Housing, Acute Inpatient Treatment, Crisis, and Peer Support services. They also provide In-house services, contracted services and intersystem collaboration. It has Crisis Centers in Crozer and Mercy Fitzgerald Hospitals and a 24-hour mobile unit. An Advisory Council on Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities meets monthly at the Delaware County Intermediate Unit in Morton.
- **Drug and Alcohol:** This division contracts with agencies that provide an array of services and resources that include detox, inpatient rehab for adolescents and adults who qualify, methadone maintenance, Vivitrol,

recovery housing, certified recovery services, halfway houses, and outpatient levels of care and case management. An Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol meets monthly in the Government Center in Media.

- Adult and Family services: This division has six main service areas: Homeless Continuum of Care, HIV/AIDS housing and services; Emergency Food Assistance (food pantries), Medical Assistance Transportation (MATP), Family Centers, and other Human Service Supports. These programs and services are delivered by a pool of provider agencies. It coordinates with the Homeless Services Coalition, serving about 300 persons yearly.

#### The Office of Children and Youth Services (CYS)

CYS has a staff of approximately 220 which investigates all allegations of child abuse and neglect and provides a wide range of services to abused and neglected children from birth to age 18 and their families, as well as to adolescents who are at severe risk due to their behavior or that of their parent. Two regional offices, in Eddystone and Upper Darby, serve children according to their school district. Their services include the following:

- Adoption Services
- Child Sexual Abuse Center
- Child Welfare Day Care
- Community Education
- Emergency Services
- Emergency Shelter Care
- Family Support Services
- Foster Care and Kinship Care Services
- Independent Living for Transition-Age Youth
- Information and Referral
- In-Home Protective Services
- Intake Evaluations
- Residential Placement
- Supervised Independent Living

#### The Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD)

OIDD provides a wide array of services to adults of any income level, provided both in the community and out-of-home. Services include Supports Coordination, Family Support Services (FSS), Supported Employment, day and prevocational services (Community Participation Supports), community and large congregate residential care, Lifesharing, Participant Driven Services (PDS), and Behavior Support Families. People are also linked to advocates, special needs units, the local Health Care Quality Unit (Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care – PCHC), housing, and other services. Many providers also serve people who have Autism.

#### The Office of Early Intervention

This office provides services to infants/toddlers (from birth to three years old) and their families from all income levels, when children are experiencing a developmental delay or have a diagnosis that results in developmental delay. Most referrals are from doctors. An individualized family service plan (IFSP) is developed that outlines the family's concerns, priorities, and child's interests and activities. Supports and resources are then identified to assist the family in enhancing their child's learning and development.

#### The Early Learning Resource Center

This office (formerly the Office of Child Care Information Services) provides subsidized day care to families whose eligibility is based on income level and number of children.

#### COUNTY SERVICES FOR THE AGING (COSA)

COSA is responsible for planning, coordinating and administering programs and services for County residents 60 years and older with special emphasis on those who are frail, living alone and are functionally disabled or otherwise in social or economic need. COSA is also eligible to receive federal and state funds to provide services including nursing home eligibility, legal services, home health care, adult day care and personal care services.

COSA is authorized by the Older Adults Protective Services Act to investigate reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment of persons age 60 and over.

## FAIR ACRES GERIATRIC CENTER

Fair Acres is Delaware County's only business activity. It began as the county's "Poor House" in 1857 on a farm by that name in Lima. Although it has expanded its services and clientele since then, it has continued to provide a safety net for geriatric patients who cannot afford private nursing facilities.

Fair Acres consists of 18 buildings located on 210 acres, including five resident buildings that can accommodate almost 1000 residents (the single high-rise, Building Eight, can accommodate over 500). The campus itself is the location of several unrelated offices: library services, the morgue and record storage are located there, along with a Crozer geriatric/psychiatric 20-bed facility into which Fair Acres sometimes transfers residents.

In addition to providing nursing home services, Fair Acres is also a rehabilitation facility, and provides short term rehab services. Among the services which it provides to residents are

- Special events such as a "senior ball" and trips to sporting events
- Wireless internet access and cyber cafes in buildings Seven and Eight
- A cafeteria for residents and visitors
- Resident councils in each resident building
- Subscription to telephone & cable TV service
- Beauty and barber shops and a gift shop
- Free self-service washers and dryers, and an available laundry service

Of the three categories of patient care, Fair Acres provides Intermediate Care and Skilled Care, but not the least demanding, Assisted Living. Approximately 80% of the population in the facility is in Intermediate Care, where patients are not able to live alone but can perform many functions independently, with the remainder in the neediest Skilled Care category. Doctors often make the referrals and Medicaid patients must be certified for admission by the Medicaid administration. Wings and floors are separated according to the specialized condition of the residents.

A medical director (MD) oversees treatment by doctors from a private medical firm.

The geriatric facility is approved for operation by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, is certified for participation in the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and is a member of the Pennsylvania Association of County Affiliated Homes. It serves as a geriatric training site for nursing schools in the area.

Fair Acres is regulated by the state Department of Health, which requires, as a minimum, 2.77 nursing employees (RNs or CNAs) per patient day. The facility maintains roughly 900 nursing employees.

Although the 2018 budget lists the center expenses as \$80,537,000, over one fifth of the county's total General Budget, the same budget document projects over \$72 million in Fair Acres revenues, reducing the county contribution to a much smaller amount. The bulk of those revenues is federal Medicaid payments, since roughly 97% of the residents are Medicaid recipients. There are a small number of patients whose Medicare and private insurance payments make contributions to Fair Acres revenues, along with other business centers such as the Cafeteria.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

Delaware County does not have its own public health department. The Delaware County State Health Center is a part of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of Community Health Systems which provides for the implementation of core public health. The center operates under the direction of the Southeast District Office in Reading to engage in community health assessment and quality assurance activities and to provide other public health services, including community outreach programs to promote healthy behaviors.



Direct services of the center include:

- Free sexually transmitted disease (STD) site (no appointment necessary)
- STD testing every Wednesday 9AM-12PM and 1PM-4:30PM
- Free tuberculosis disease clinic (By appointment only)
- Free or low cost childhood Immunizations
- Provides immunizations at no cost for people who do not have health insurance.

Delaware County State Health Center  
151 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chester, Pa 19013  
610.447.3250

The Department of Intercommunity Health Coordination acts as a referral and resource center regarding public health issues for the County.

The 2018 Health Advisory Board included the following:

- Director, Delaware County Intercommunity Health Coordination
- Delaware County Senior Medical Advisor
- Delaware County Intercommunity Health Coordination
- Delaware County Medical Examiner,
- Executive Director Delaware County Medical Society
- President, Springfield Hospital, Vice President, Crozer-Keystone Health System
- President, Riddle Hospital
- Director, Community Health Services , Riddle Hospital
- Chief Medical Officer, Mercy Health System
- Delaware County MDs

West Nile Virus Mosquito Surveillance and Control is a Penn State Extension program contracted through the Office of Intercommunity health and funded through a PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) grant. Mosquitos are trapped and tested for the presence of the virus. In recent years Delaware County has had one of the highest levels of viral activity in the state. When the virus is found, control measures are implemented to reduce health risks to county residents.

### Animal Control

County Government does not have a system for handling sick and stray animals. This is largely the responsibility of each town which engage the services of a private contractor. The county has explored alternate ways to handle this problem. The county does issue dog licenses through the Treasurers office.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

### Comprehensive Plan

Delaware County 2035, the Comprehensive Plan for Delaware County, provides a policy framework for land use decisions in the County. It consists of a central, Land Use Policy Framework Plan and a number of related, interconnected, but more detailed component plans.

### **Component Plans**

- Land Use Policy Framework
- Open Space and Recreation
- Economic Development
- Historic Preservation
- Housing

### Conservation District

The Delaware County Conservation District, housed at Rose Tree Park, is a subdivision of State Government, but a service of county government. The district is guided by a board of volunteer directors appointed by County Council. The

District evaluates problems, implements programs and advocates for effect solutions dealing with natural resource protection and conservation.

### Delco Green Ways

This is a grant program to help local municipalities achieve open space and recreation goals locally and throughout the county.

### Water and Wastewater Management

The county is not directly involved in drinking water, wastewater and stormwater management except as addressed through its Natural Resource Protection and Land Use policies as outlined in the Delaware County 2035 Comprehensive Plan. These functions are carried out in various ways by local municipalities. Individual property owners and developers may handle them onsite with wells and septic tanks. Many get their water from Aqua Pa. Some municipalities formed joint municipal authorities to manage these functions.

- The Chester Water Authority provides clean drinking water from Octoraro Creek to the City of Chester and 13 other communities in Western Delaware County including Chester Township, Trainer, Marcus Hook, Lower Chichester, Upper Chichester, Upland, Parkside, Brookhaven, Aston, Bethel, Concord, Chadds Ford, Thornbury, Chester Heights, Middletown, and Nether Providence. It also supplies water to towns in Chester County. It is governed by a nine-member board of directors, three appointed by Chester, three by Delaware County Council and three by Chester County.
- The Delaware County Regional Water Quality Authority (DELCORA), handles wastewater and stormwater treatment for 42 municipalities in Delaware and Chester Counties. Its Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant is located in the City of Chester. Its Board of Directors is appointed by County Council. For more information go to [www.delcora.org](http://www.delcora.org).

### Solid Waste Disposal

The Delaware County Solid Waste Authority provides for disposal of municipal and commercial trash. The Authority is responsible for:

- Issuance of permits for all commercial and residential vehicles to dispose of trash at the Transfer Stations;
- Monitoring of trash at the Transfer Stations and enforcement of County ordinances dealing with refuse collection, permitting, and disposal;
- Planning, developing, designing, and administering - in cooperation with other appropriate departments and agencies of government - the expansion and modification of facilities for which the Solid Waste Authority is responsible;
- Advising County Council on matters pertaining to the responsibilities of the Authority;
- Providing management through inspection, coordination, and approval of payments for the transferal of trash materials;
- Obtaining and administering state funding available for the enhancement of recycling and other programs for which the Authority is responsible.
- The Delaware County Solid Waste Authority also manages the operation of a leaf composting farm located on the grounds of Transfer Station #1, Chester Township.

The county's trash is recycled into energy (electricity) at a trash to steam plant located in the city of Chester. The byproduct (ash) is used to cover the county landfill located in Berks County and the landfill owned by Waste Management, Inc. in Fairless Hills, Bucks County.

Individual municipalities operate curbside recycling programs. Glass, aluminum, bimetallic cans and plastic bottles are collected in County maintained Igloo containers throughout the County. The county sponsors Household Hazardous Waste collections

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Emergency Services Center. This office is responsible for the entire county's Enhanced 911 system which annually handles more than a million requests for police, fire and emergency ambulance services, coordinating the efforts of 65 fire departments, 42 police departments and 31 emergency medical providers throughout Delaware County.

### Fire Marshal

Fire prevention education is part of Fire Department operations under the authority of the Delaware County Fire Marshal. Fire prevention involves the enforcement of the Delaware County and Pennsylvania Fire Code and is closely associated with the building code and building permitting process. The Fire Marshal is involved in the plan review process for new construction or renovation projects and is responsible for ensuring that Fire Code requirements are met before signing off on design plans. Other common fire prevention efforts include educational programs in Delaware County schools, public information campaigns, smoke detector distribution programs, and outreach at public events. The Delaware County Fire Marshal also investigates structure fires to determine their causes.

### Fire Departments in Delaware County

Delaware County Fire Departments may be staffed with paid professional firefighters, volunteers, or a combination of the two. Professional Fire Services in Pennsylvania are organized around a central command with response units, known as fire companies, geographically dispersed throughout Delaware County. Delaware County Volunteer Fire Departments are organized with a similar structure or as independent Delaware County Fire departments and districts with their own fire company.

### The Medical Examiner

The Medical Examiner investigates all unnatural deaths (not purely from natural causes) in Delaware County and natural deaths where there is no treating doctor or which occur suddenly outside a medical institution; determines the cause and manner of death; and issues death certificates.

## **OTHER SERVICES**

### Housing and Urban Development

The Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) is responsible for the planning, administration and oversight of three federal programs.

- The Community Development Block Grant Programs helps communities provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities for low and moderate-income persons.
- The Home Investment Partnerships and Emergency Service operates to expand the supply of decent and affordable house for low and very low-income persons.'
- The Blighted Property Demolition Fund is available to local municipalities for the demotion of blighted properties.

The OHCD partners with the Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania to provide education, outreach and technical assistance to a range of stakeholders regarding fair housing issues.

## Electricity and Public Transit

PECO Energy is the sole electric utility provider in the county and operates under the oversight of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is the sole provider of rail and bus public transit in the county.

## Parks and Recreation

The Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department offers the following facilities and programs.

### Programs

- Scenic nature trails
- Picnic facilities
- Playing fields
- 9-hole golf course
- Members only dog park
- Cross country running
- Community garden plots
- Outdoor summer concert series
- Senior Recreation Center
- Senior Games

### Parks

- Clayton Park and Golf Course
- Glen Providence Park
- Kent Park
- Rose Tree Park
- Smedley Park
- Upland and Redwood Center

## Library Services

Delaware County Libraries (DCL) is comprised of 26 member libraries. Its goal is to optimize library service to the citizens of Delaware County through cooperative efforts. All member libraries remain independent and set their own policies and procedures.

### DCL Services include:

- interlibrary loan and van delivery among all libraries
- 2.1 million print and online materials
- Preschool outreach including story-times, DPW-credited training, theme kits and more
- Coordinated programs for children and young adults
- A centralized collection of puppets, big books, and theme kits for educators
- Outreach programs and services to older adults

The DCL Board of Directors is appointed by County Council. The Administrative Headquarters is a department of county government.

# JUSTICE

## DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The District Attorney is the chief prosecutor for Delaware County. The District Attorney investigates alleged crimes in cooperation with law enforcement, and files criminal charges or brings evidence before a Grand Jury. A criminal case usually gets started with a police arrest report. The prosecutor then decides what criminal charges to file, if any.

The District Attorney oversees a Chief Deputy District Attorney and three Deputy District Attorneys who are responsible for three divisions: the Law Division, the Trial Division and the Special Victims and Violence Division.

A Heroin Task Force was created in 2012 to reduce the demand for heroin and illegally used prescription drugs; to educate citizens about the resources available to prevent and treat addiction; and to reduce drug-related crime in the community through public education and law enforcement. The Task Force is chaired by the District Attorney and in 2018 was composed of individuals holding a number of county positions as well as representatives from public organizations.

### Magisterial District Courts:

The Magisterial District Court is the first level of judicial authority in Pennsylvania and is the court where most people experience the judicial system for the first time. Magisterial District Judges handle all traffic cases, other minor criminal cases and civil cases involving lesser amounts of money. District Judges also set bail and conduct preliminary hearings in misdemeanor and felony criminal cases to determine if the cases should be dismissed or transferred to the Court of Common Pleas for further proceedings. Magisterial Court decisions may also be appealed to the Court of Common Pleas.

Thirty-two of Pennsylvania's approximately 550 Magisterial District Courts are located in Delaware County, each presided over by a magisterial judge elected to serve for a six-year term. Magisterial judges do not have to be lawyers but are required to take one week of training before assuming office and 32 hours of additional continuing education each year. Non-lawyers, in addition, must attend and pass a four-week training course. The Administrative Office for Magisterial District Judges is responsible for supervising the operations of the Magisterial District Courts and their staffs.

A table showing which magisterial district court serves which municipalities or sections of municipalities is in Appendix II.

### The Court of Common Pleas

The Courts of Common Pleas are the general trial courts of Pennsylvania which are organized into 60 judicial districts. Most districts follow the geographic boundaries of counties, but seven of the districts are comprised of two counties.

The Court of Common Pleas of the 32nd Judicial District which operates in Delaware County, is responsible for appeals from the magisterial courts, appeals not exclusively assigned to another court and matters involving children and families. It covers 12 departments, including the Juvenile Detention Home, the Juvenile Court, Adult Probation and Parole Services, Treatment Court (established in 2008), Veterans Courts (2011), Mental Health Court (2014), the pre-trial Bail Department, and the Community Corrections Program

There are 21 official judgeships in Delaware County, making up the Board of Judges. The President Judge is elected by the sitting judges to serve for five years. Judges serve for terms of ten years; after serving one term, their election consists of *voting for or against* their retainment. The retirement age for judges is 70 but they may be asked to stay on as Senior Judges. They are elected during Municipal Elections, in the odd numbered years.

The Court Administrator's Office is primarily responsible for the administration of the Criminal, Civil, Municipal Law and Family Law sections of the Court. The Office is also responsible for the day-to-day operations of the trial jury system and Arbitration Program.

Adult Probation and Parole Services (APPS) supervises, counsels and refers to treatment those individuals sentenced to county probation, parole, or to the Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) Program. The primary duty and responsibility of APPS is to monitor offenders. The Office of Adult Probation and Parole Services operates the Drug Treatment Court, the Veterans Court and the Mental Health Court.

The Delaware County Juvenile Court is the judicial agency responsible for determining questions of fact and law in cases where children between the ages of ten and 18, are charged with violations of the Criminal Code. It has regional offices in Media, Chester, Upper Darby and Sharon Hill and a strong partnership with many of the local school districts.

The Juvenile Detention Center, located on Route 352 in Lima, is a division of the Court Services Department, governed by the Board of Judges under the direction of the President Judge.

#### Office of Judicial Support

The Office of Judicial Support provides a Court Clerk for each sitting judge and handles other matters pertaining directly to the courts. Notaries must register their signatures in this office. The office also issues passports.

The office has additional Criminal and Civil Divisions.

- The Criminal Division is responsible for case files in all criminal cases processed from the Magisterial District Justices. In addition, the division handles the posting of bail, the return of bail, summary appeals and appeals to the statewide appellate courts.
- The Civil Division handles all civil cases which involve suits by individuals and unincorporated and incorporated business. Liens against properties and judgment on individual are also filed and maintained in this office.

#### Public Defender

The Public Defender's Office provides legal assistance to persons who are accused of a crime and who cannot afford the expense of presenting a defense. In addition, the Office represents young people who appear in the Juvenile Court of Delaware County and clients charged with contempt in Family Court.

#### Prisons

The George W. Hill Correctional Facility (GWHCF) located in Thornbury Township, provides short-term incarceration of pre-trial detainees, persons serving a county sentence of two years less one day or a state sentence of five years less one day. The average length of stay in GWHCF is 55 days for men, 60 days for women. Most offenders receive their first exposure to prison in this county jail. The capacity of GWHCF is approximately 1,900, 300 of which are usually women.

The County owns the prison, but operation is contracted to The GEO Group, Inc. a private, for-profit corporation headquartered in Florida. The Delaware County contract with GEO was renewed for a period of nine years at the end of 2018. The contract allows the Prison Board to terminate said contract at any time, giving six months advance notice.

Under the current GEO contract, the daily operations of the prison are the responsibility of a Warden, Assistant Warden, Deputy Warden, Chief of Security, Medical Person and Health Services Administrator and their staff. The population basis of the contract is 1883 inmates. When the prison population falls below that number, GEO reimburses the county

at \$13/day. When the number is exceeded the county pays GEO the same amount. There are also penalties for GEO if they do not live up to the staffing commitments in the contract.

The annual budget of the prison is primarily the contract with GEO. In 2018 the prison budget was \$50,000,000 and the GEO contract was for \$48,900,000. The remainder covered the Superintendent and his three-member staff, plus utilities.

George W. Hill, for whom the prison is named, was originally a Springfield Township policeman who rose to become the first Warden of the new county jail when it opened in 1998.

The Superintendent of Prisons is responsible to the Prison Board for the performance of GEO in its operation of the prison. The five Prison Board members are chosen by the County (two) and the Board of Judges (three).

## **THE REGISTER OF WILLS**

The Register of Wills' principal duty is the probate (proving as valid) of wills and the acceptance for filing of all documents necessary to complete the administration of a deceased person's estate. If a person dies without a will (i.e., intestate), the Register may appoint an administrator of the estate. If aspects of a will are contested, he/she serves as judge and issues a verdict. If his/her verdict is contested, the matter is forwarded to the Orphans' Court for adjudication.

An Orphans' Court was an organization established in the Chesapeake Bay American colonies during colonization. The major goal of the organization was to protect orphaned children and their right to their deceased family member's estate from claims and against abuses by stepparents and others.

Today, in Pennsylvania, probate courts are still called Orphans' Courts. The Register of Wills serves as the Clerk of the Orphans' Court. The office continues to represent orphans and to handle cases when a minor is the plaintiff and assigns guardianships as might be requested by individuals, County Office of Services to the Aging, hospitals, etc.

The Register is the State's authorized agent for the collection of inheritance taxes and issues all marriage licenses for Delaware County.

## **SHERIFF**

The Sheriff's primary responsibilities are to the courts, providing courtroom security, prisoner transportation, and service of civil and real estate process, as well as the service of court warrants. The official duties of the department are

- To provide security and protection for the Court of Common Pleas
- To provide security and protection for the Juvenile Court
- To provide court room security and prisoner transportation
- To serve and enforce all orders of the Court of Common Pleas

The Sheriff also:

- Issues Firearms and Precious Metals licenses
- Conducts Real Estate (Sheriff) Sales

## Constables

Pennsylvania Constables are sworn law enforcement officers who serve six-year terms. They are elected at the municipal level in boroughs, townships and city wards, except for Philadelphia, but they are an arm of the executive branch of state government and are answerable to the governor.

Their sole duty is maintaining order at election polls and ensuring that no qualified elector is obstructed from voting. However, they are authorized to perform judicial services for the judicial branch primarily the magisterial district court system. Powers include:

- Authority to serve process for judicial system, including serving summons, subpoenas, orders, judgement levies and making arrests by warrant anywhere in the Commonwealth,
- Make arrests without warrant for breaches of the peace committed in their presence.
- They may direct traffic, and seize registration plates and cards on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
- They may also seize and process any dog which is found running at large, and humanely kill any dog at

Constables or their deputies, as other law-enforcement officers, are exempt from the requirement of a license to carry a concealed firearm. However, a Constable or Deputy Constable is prohibited from carrying a firearm while performing judicial duties without valid certification.

## **EDUCATION**

Responsibility for public primary and secondary education in Delaware County is the fifteen Public School Districts serving the following municipalities:

<u>School District</u>	<u>Municipalities Served</u>
Radnor Township	Radnor Township
Haverford Township	Haverford Township
Upper Darby	Upper Darby Township; Millbourne and Clifton Heights Boroughs
William Penn	Aldan, Colwyn, Darby, East Lansdowne, Lansdowne and Yeadon Boroughs
Southeast Delco	Collingdale, Folcroft and Sharon Hill Boroughs; Darby Township
Interboro	Glenolden, Norwood and Prospect Park Boroughs; Tinicum Township
Ridley	Eddystone and Ridley Park Boroughs; Ridley Township
Springfield	Morton Borough; Springfield Township
Marple Newtown	Marple and Newtown Townships
Rose Tree Media	Edgemont, Middletown and Upper Providence Townships
Wallingford- Swarthmore	Rose Valley, Rutledge and Swarthmore Boroughs; Nether Providence Township
Chester Upland	Chester City; Chester Township; Upland Borough
Chichester	Lower Chichester and Upper Chichester Townships; Marcus Hook and Trainer Boroughs
Penn-Delco	Aston Township; Brookhaven and Parkside Boroughs
Garnet Valley	Bethel and Concord Townships; Chester Heights Borough

In addition, two school districts located in Chester County (West Chester Area and Unionville-Chadds Ford) serve students in sections of Delaware County.

Each school district has an elected Board of Directors which determines policy and school tax rate for that district.

The Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU) is one of 29 regional educational agencies established in 1970 by the Pennsylvania’s State Legislature. It provides services in seven areas: curriculum development and instructional improvement; educational planning services; instructional materials services (technology); continuing professional development; pupil personnel services; management services; and state and federal agency liaison services. Today DCIU provides more than \$125 million worth of services through the management of 60 programs in the county.



## VOTING AND ELECTIONS

### Election Calendar

Voting in Pennsylvania takes place twice each calendar year. The first is a Primary, held in the Spring, mainly to determine the political party nominees who will be on the ballot for the Election. The second, held in November, is the Election.

Only the Democratic and Republican parties can have candidates on the ballot in Primaries. Primaries are “closed” so only voters registered Democrat or Republican can participate and they can only vote for candidates on the ballot in the party in which they are registered. If a question is put on the primary ballot for a voter referendum, such as authorization to sell liquor, then all registered voters can vote on the ballot question. Independent and minor party candidates can petition to be on the General Election Ballot. All registered voters can vote in the Election which is held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday after the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in November and can vote for any candidate regardless of party.

In even-numbered years a General Election is held to elect a Governor, Lt. Governor, other statewide officials, State Representatives and State Senators. There are also elections for President, Members of Congress and U.S. Senators. Every four years, in the year when the Governor is elected, the Primary is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in May. In the alternate, years when the President is on the ballot, the Primary is held earlier, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of April.

In odd-numbered years a Municipal Election is held, mainly for local and county offices. In Delaware County there are elections for the following:

- Two Member of County Council, Sheriff, Registrar of Wills and Controller or (in staggered years) three Member of County Council and the District Attorney;
- Judges for Statewide Appellate Courts, the Court of Common Pleas, and Magisterial District Court; Members of local school boards
- Judges of Election and a Majority and Minority inspector of election in each election (voting) district.
- Election of the governing bodies of local municipalities (towns).

Municipal Primaries are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in May.

### The Delaware County Bureau of Elections

The Delaware County electoral process is the general responsibility of the three-member Board of Elections appointed by County Council. The Bureau of Elections, located in the Government Center, administers the conduct of elections. It prepares machine ballots, programs voting machines, processes and issues absentee ballots, oversees district election (poll) workers, and maintains county and local candidate filings for elected offices. In addition, the office also maintains records of the county election results, campaign finance filings, polling places and district election workers.

Voters can register, check registration status and find their polling place at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com).

The Bureau of Elections and the Voter Registration Office are located at the Delaware County Government Center 201 W. Front Street, Media, PA 19063

### Registering to Vote

Voter registration is administered by the Voter Registration Office which is separate from the Bureau of Elections. It is located on the ground floor of the Government Center Building.

Voter registration applications can be mailed or delivered by hand. They must be received by the Voter Registration Office at least 30 days before a Primary or Election.

Anyone who has been a U.S. Citizen for at least a month, a resident of PA and their election district for 30 days and will be 18 by the day of the next election can apply to register to vote. Qualified citizens and those who need to update their registration status (for example: change of address, name, or political party) can register at the Voter Registration Office and all State and Federal agencies including the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (e.g. when applying for or

renewing driver's licenses). Alternatively, mail-in registration applications are available at municipal government buildings, libraries, and at State Wine & Spirit Stores.

### Prison Voting

Persons who are in prison or jail because of a felony conviction and won't be released before a primary or election cannot vote. However, those in prison or jail for other reasons may be able to vote absentee. They must be registered and then must send an absentee ballot application to the county board of elections.

### First Time Voters

Persons voting in Pennsylvania for the first time or voting at a polling place for the first time must show proof of identification. Approved forms of photo identification include:

- PA driver's license or PennDOT ID card
- ID issued by any Commonwealth agency
- ID issued by the U.S. Government
- U.S. passport
- U.S. Armed Forces ID
- Student ID
- Employee ID

Those not having a photo ID can use a non-photo identification that includes their name and address.

- Confirmation issued by the County Voter Registration Office
- Non-photo ID issued by the Commonwealth
- Non-photo ID issued by the U.S. Government
- Firearm permit
- Current utility bill
- Current paycheck
- Government check

### Voting by Absentee Ballot

If a person cannot vote at their polling place in person on election day, they can vote by absentee ballot. An absentee ballot is a paper ballot sent registered voters by mail. The absentee ballot must then be filled out and returned, either by mail or by hand delivering it to the Delaware County Bureau of Elections. It must be received by the Bureau of Elections by 5 PM on the Friday before the election. Pennsylvania State law prohibits anyone other than the voter from hand delivering their voted absentee ballot, except for those with disabilities.

To vote by absentee ballot it is first necessary to obtain an absentee ballot application. A separate application must be made for each election. The last day to apply for an absentee ballot is the last Tuesday prior to Election Day. Absentee Ballot Applications for registered voters of Delaware County are available upon request (written or oral) at the Bureau of Elections or at the places that distribute voter registration forms or online at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com). Voters can also go in person to the Bureau and both obtain and cast a ballot on the same visit.

To apply for an absentee ballot, voters must provide a driver's license number if they have one, or the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number. If they have neither, they must submit a copy of an acceptable photo ID. This information can be provided to County Election Bureau over the phone, by email, or mail.

Registered voters who may vote by absentee ballot include:

- A person whose work or vacation take them away from the municipality where they live.
- Those with a physical disability or illness that prevents them from going to the polling place.
- Members of the military
- A person who will not go to a polling place on Election Day because of the observance of a religious holiday.
- A county employee who expects that their Election Day duties relating to the conduct of the election will prevent them from voting.

## Emergency Absentee Ballots

In emergency situations (such as an unexpected illness or disability), voters can request an Emergency Absentee Ballot. The deadline to submit an Emergency Absentee Ballot Application to the County Election Office is 5 pm on the Friday before Election Day. This application must be notarized.

Those with emergencies that arise after 5 pm on the Friday before Election Day, may still be able to vote. The deadline to submit a last-minute Emergency Absentee Ballot application is no later than 8 pm on Election Day. Registered voters can get a last-minute Emergency Absentee Ballot if:

- They have an emergency after 5 pm on the Friday before Election Day.
- They find out after 5 pm on the Friday before Election Day that you must be absent from the municipality where you live on Election Day. Acceptable reasons include business, duties, or occupation.

For information on applying for and casting an emergency absentee ballot go to <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-by-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>

## **VOTING IN PERSON ON PRIMARY OR ELECTION DAY**

Those voting for the first time or for the first time in that polling place must bring valid ID.

## **OUTSIDE THE POLLS**

Electioneering outside the polling place is permitted but signs and campaign workers must remain ten feet from the entrance to the polling place. Aggressive behavior of any sort is prohibited.

Uniformed or plain-clothes police officers must remain 100 feet or more from the entrance of a polling place. Exception are:

- When an officer is personally voting;
- When the polling place is located in a building that also houses a police station;
- When police offices are summoned to preserve the peace.

## **INSIDE THE POLLS**

Each polling place, known as an election district, is overseen by a District Election Board consisting of a Judge of Elections, and a Majority Inspector and Minority Inspector who must each be of different parties. These officials are elected in a municipal election every four years by the voters in that Election District. The next election will be in 2021. Each voter can vote for the judge and one inspector. Each inspector can appoint one clerk. Poll workers verify and sign in voters, record the names of voters, and show them to a place where they can mark their ballots and cast their votes.

### The Judge of Elections

- assigns the various election administration tasks to members of the Board of Election.
- is the officer in charge of the polling place and enforces the rules for the conduct of election at the polling place, e.g., who is permitted within the polling place, the number of voters permitted inside, etc.
- is responsible for keeping order in the polling place and may call upon various law enforcement authorities for assistance to that end.

The only people allowed in a polling place are the elections officials listed above, those in the process of voting, persons lawfully assisting someone to vote, and poll watchers.

Poll Watchers. Poll watchers are registered voters in the county who have been appointed by a party or candidate to observe at the precinct. One poll watcher per party and one poll watcher per candidate may be inside at any given time. Watchers must remain at least 6 feet away from the area where voting is occurring.

In some circumstances there might also be Overseers and/or Constables for the purpose of preserving the peace. (Other officials may be summoned by the local elections officials as needed.

Election officials, poll watchers and overseers must not carry or wear partisan material inside the polling place.

Voters can wear campaign clothing and bring campaign material into the polling place but must not campaign while inside. Any campaign material left inside must be removed.

## **VOTER RIGHTS**

A person must be allowed to vote if his or her name appears on the poll book. A person who shows up at a polling place and is not on the books or whose right to vote at that location is challenged must be allowed to cast a provisional ballot. If the voter is later determined to be eligible the ballot is counted.

Voters who are lawfully in the polling place, local election officials, poll watchers and overseers may challenge a voter's right to vote. Such challenges are limited to identity and residence i.e. that the voter is not the persons they say they are or that the voter does not live in the voting precinct. A voter's eligibility to register to vote is not a permissible challenge at the polls.

The Judge of Elections determines whether challenges to the identity or residency of voters are made in good faith. If the identity and residency of the voter is established to the Judge of Election's satisfaction, the voter may be permitted to vote normally. If the Judge of Election cannot determine in good faith the residency or identity of the voter, the voter shall be permitted to bring another voter from the precinct to sign an affidavit vouching for the challenged voter's identity or residence. Once that procedure is followed, the voter must be permitted to vote normally. A challenged voter who is unable or unwilling to find a witness to vouch for him or her must be given a provisional ballot.

Routine challenges based on race or ethnicity or other protected traits are unlawful. It is unlawful to challenge every African-American, every Latinx, every student, etc. who appears to vote.

## **HOW TO IMPACT COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

### **INFORM YOURSELF**

The county website [www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov) has extensive information about public officials, county departments, boards and commissions and more. The A TO Z dropdown menu is especially useful.

### **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

Code of Ethics. All persons in County service are bound by the following Code of Ethics for County government officers and employees:

- Uphold the Constitution, laws, and legal regulations of the United States, and of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as well as the provisions of the Hone Rules Charter, and never be a party to their evasion.
- Seek to employ more efficient and economical ways of accomplishing necessary tasks and functions.

- Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone whether for remuneration or not, and never accept for oneself or anyone else favors or benefits under circumstances which may be construed by reasonable persons as conflicting with the honest performance of County duties.
- Engage in no business with the County, either directly or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the honest performance of official duties.
- Never use information obtained confidentially in the performance of official duties as a means for making private profit.
- Expose corruption wherever discovered.
- Uphold these principles recognizing that County office is a public trust.
- Enter into no private agreements which could in any way be construed to be adverse to the public interests.

The Pa Sunshine Law requires agencies to deliberate and take official action on agency business in an open and public meeting. It requires that meetings have prior notice, and that the public can attend, participate, and comment before an agency that takes official action. Closed meeting, called executive session are allowed in some circumstances but all voting must take place in public.

For information about the PA Sunshine and Open Records Laws go to PA Office of Open Records  
<https://www.openrecords.p>

The PA Open Records Law requires public access to records maintained by the county, regardless of physical form, upon written request. There are some exceptions. For more information on Delaware County open records policy go to <https://www.delcopa.gov/departments/pdfs/openrecords/ORPolicy.pdf>. Open Records requests are administered by the County Clerk.

## GET INVOLVED

- Inform yourself about the candidates before every election and be sure to vote
- If you want to vote in the Primaries, be sure you are registered as a Republican or Democrat (you can confirm or change your registration status at any time at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com) )
- Attend meetings or watch videos of meetings of the County Council and attend the meetings of other boards and commissions. The County Council meeting calendar, minutes and videos are posted on the county website.
- Get to know officials and their interests. Biographies are usually available online. County Council members may choose to focus their attention on two or three major areas of concern in county government.
- Write letters and emails and make phone calls to elected officials. For email addresses and phone numbers of County Council members go to [www.delcopa.gov](http://www.delcopa.gov) and click on Elected Officials.
- Meet with officials in person but don't go alone. Bring along two or three other people (but not a crowd) who share your views and rehearse your message in advance. Bring materials with your message to leave behind. Be sure to follow up with a thank you note.
- Run for office. For information on how to run for local public office contact the Delaware County Bureau of Elections or a political party chairperson.
- Organize. Join an organization or create one focused on your issue.
- Always be polite.

[www.Vote411](http://www.Vote411) is a nonpartisan voter information site sponsored by the League of Women Voters. Enter your address to get information on who and what will be on the ballot where you vote.

Delaware County  
2018 Tax Rate Table

School District	MUNICIPALITY	2018 County	2018 Transfers	2018-2019 School	All Additions TOTAL	2018 %	
William Penn	01 ALDAN	PAALN	5.6040	8.1300	46.0000	59.7340	
Penn Delco	02 ASTON	ENAH	5.6040	4.7000	28.8971	39.2011	1%
Garnet Valley	03 BETHEL	EMBY	5.6040	1.8650	32.8592	40.3282	
Unionville/Chadds Ford	04 CHADDS FORD	EVY	5.6040	0.8820	25.1500	31.6360	
Penn Delco	05 BROOKHAVEN	EMBY	5.6040	4.3500	28.8971	38.8511	1%
Garnet Valley	06 CHESTER HEIGHTS	LSA	5.6040	0.9800	32.4876	39.0716	
Chester/Upland	07 CHESTER TWP	EMBY	5.6040	11.0000	26.9543	43.5583	1%
Chi Chester	08 CHICHESTER, LOWER	VALT	5.6040	7.2000	39.8561	52.6601	1%
Chi Chester	09 CHICHESTER, UPPER	VALT	5.6040	5.1000	39.8561	50.5601	1%
Upper Darby	10 CLIFTON HEIGHTS	EMBY	5.6040	14.5010	37.1395	57.2445	
South East Delco	11 COLLINGDALE	PAALN	5.6040	12.7370	43.0752	61.4162	
William Penn	12 COLWYN	VALT	5.6040	25.2000	46.0000	76.8040	
Garnet Valley	13 CONCORD	LSA	5.6040	0.9810	32.4876	39.0726	
William Penn	14 DARBY BORO	VOON	5.6040	18.4920	46.0000	70.0960	1%
South East Delco	15 DARBY TWP	VALT	5.6040	12.4350	43.0752	61.1142	
Upper Darby	16 DARBY, UPPER	EMBY	5.6040	20.9500	37.1395	63.6935	
William Penn	17 EAST LANSDOWNE	VALT	5.6040	13.3000	46.0000	64.9040	
Ridley	18 EDDYSTONE	OHIO	5.6040	9.1500	40.7300	55.4840	1%
Rose Tree Media	19 EDMONT	VALT	5.6040	0.9111	25.6888	32.2039	
South East Delco	20 FOLCROFT	EMBY	5.6040	7.6000	43.0752	56.2792	1%
Interboro	21 GLENOLDEN	OHIO	5.6040	8.9000	37.1008	51.6048	
Haverford	22 HAVERFORD	VALT	5.6040	8.1850	31.7991	45.5881	
William Penn	23 LANSDOWNE	VALT	5.6040	12.7654	46.0000	64.3694	
Chi Chester	24 MARCUS HOOK	EMBY	5.6040	12.3500	39.8561	57.8101	1%
Marple Newtown	25 MARPLE	EMBY	5.6040	4.4800	18.4885	28.5725	
Rose Tree Media	26 MEDIA	EMBA	5.6040	3.0000	25.6888	34.2928	1%
Rose Tree Media	27 MIDDLETOWN	EMBY	5.6040	1.5000	25.6888	32.7928	
Upper Darby	28 MILLBOURNE	VALT	5.6040	24.2650	37.1395	67.0085	1%
Springfield	29 MORTON	OHIO	5.6040	11.4670	32.9796	50.0506	
Marple Newtown	30 NEWTOWN	PAALN	5.6040	3.0460	18.4885	27.1385	
Interboro	31 NORWOOD	OHIO	5.6040	12.4000	37.1008	55.1048	
Penn Delco	32 PARKSIDE	EMBY	5.6040	11.5000	28.8971	46.0011	0.50%
Interboro	33 PROSPECT PARK	PAALN	5.6040	9.6200	37.1008	52.3248	
Wallingford/Swarthmore	34 PROVIDENCE, NETHER	VALT	5.6040	5.4170	45.3025	56.3235	
Rose Tree Media	35 PROVIDENCE, UPPER	EMBY	5.6040	4.0700	25.6888	35.3628	
Radnor	36 RADNOR	OHIO	5.6040	3.9228	24.1867	33.7135	
Ridley	37 RIDLEY PARK	OHIO	5.6040	8.1400	40.7300	54.4740	
Ridley	38 RIDLEY TWP	OHIO	5.6040	9.2660	40.7300	55.6000	
Wallingford/Swarthmore	39 ROSE VALLEY	EMBY	5.6040	2.0400	45.3025	52.9465	
Wallingford/Swarthmore	40 RUTLEDGE	LSA	5.6040	5.7100	45.7380	57.0520	
South East Delco	41 SHARON HILL	PAALN	5.6040	7.7500	43.0752	56.4292	1%
Springfield	42 SPRINGFIELD	EMBY	5.6040	5.8100	32.9796	44.3936	
Wallingford/Swarthmore	43 SWARTHMORE	LSA	5.6040	5.6730	45.7380	57.0150	
West Chester	44 THORNBURY	OHIO	5.6040	0.0000	16.0761	21.6801	1%
Interboro	45 TINCUM	OHIO	5.6040	4.4000	37.1008	47.1048	1%
Chi Chester	46 TRAINER	EMBY	5.6040	14.7500	39.8561	60.2101	1%
Chester/Upland	47 UPLAND	EMBY	5.6040	2.0000	26.9543	34.5583	1%
William Penn	48 YEADON	EMBA	5.6040	9.8900	46.0000	61.4940	1%
Chester/Upland	49 CHESTER CITY	EMBY	5.6040	diff. Bases	diff. Bases	not additive	1%

APPENDIX I

For information purposes only.  
Please call taxing authorities to confirm.

## APPENDIX II

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Magisterial District Court</b>	<b>Ward (Precincts)</b>
Aldan Borough	32-2-52	
Aston Township	32-2-38	
Bethel Township	32-2-49	
Brookhaven Borough	32-2-39	
Chadds Ford Township	32-2-49	
Chester, City of	32-1-20	Wards 1 ,2
Chester, City of	32-1-21	Wards 3-7
Chester, City of	32-1-22	Wards 8-11
Chester Heights Borough	32-2-48	
Chester Township	32-2-39	
Clifton Heights Borough	32-2-52	
Collingdale Borough	32-1-23	
Colwyn Borough	32-2-37	
Concord Township	32-2-49	
Darby Borough	32-2-37	
Darby Township	32-2-40	
East Lansdowne Borough	32-2-47	
Eddystone Borough	32-1-31	
Edgmont Township	32-2-48	
Folcroft Borough	32-2-40	
Glenolden Borough	32-2-42	
Haverford Township	32-1-25	Wards 1, 2, 7
Haverford Township	32-2-53	Wards 3-6, 8
Haverford Township	32-1-24	Ward 9
Lansdowne Borough	32-2-47	
Lower Chichester Township	32-1-36	
Marcus Hook Borough	32-1-36	
Marple Township	32-1-24	Wards 1, 3, 4
Marple Township	32-1-27	Wards 2, 5-7
Media Borough	32-1-28	
Middletown Township	32-2-48	
Millbourne Borough	32-1-33	
Morton Borough	32-1-32	
Nether Providence Township	32-1-28	Wards 2-4, 6, 7
Nether Providence Township	32-1-30	Wards 1, 5
Newtown Township	32-2-43	
Norwood Borough	32-2-42	
Parkside Borough	32-2-39	
Prospect Park Borough	32-2-44	
Radnor Township	32-2-43	Wards 1-3, 6
Radnor Township	32-1-27	Wards 4, 5, 7
Ridley Township	32-1-31	Wards 1, 4, 6, 9
Ridley Township	32-1-30	Wards 2, 3, 5, 7, 8
Ridley Park Borough	32-2-44	
Rose Valley Borough	32-2-46	
Rutledge Borough	32-1-31	
Sharon Hill Borough	32-2-37	

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Magisterial District Court</b>	<b>Ward (Precincts)</b>
Springfield Township	32-2-54	Ward 1; Ward 2 (1,3); Ward 5, Ward 6
Springfield Township	32-1-32	Ward 2 (2); Ward 3, 4, 7
Swarthmore Borough	32-1-28	
Thornbury Township	32-2-49	
Tinicum Township	32-2-44	
Trainer Borough	32-1-36	
Upland Borough	32-2-39	
Upper Chichester Township	32-1-36	Ward 1, 2, 5
Upper Chichester Township	32-2-38	Ward 3, 4
Upper Darby Township	32-1-34	Ward 1 (1-3, 8); Ward 3 (2, 4, 6-10); Ward 4 (1, 4);
Upper Darby Township	32-2-52	Ward 2
Upper Darby Township	32-1-35	Ward 1 (4-7, 9); Ward 3 (1, 3, 5, 11); Ward 4 (2, 3, 5-11); Ward 5 (3, 8)
Upper Darby Township	32-1-33	Ward 5 (1, 7, 10); Ward 6 (1-4, 10, 12); Ward 7 (2-5, 8, 10)
Upper Darby Township	32-2-51	Ward 5 (2, 4-6, 9); Ward 6 (5-9, 11); Ward 7 (1, 6, 7, 9, 11)
Upper Providence Township	32-2-46	
Yeadon Borough	32-2-47	