

Marion County

Impact of the 2012-13 state budget (HB 153)

Ohio's budget for 2012 and 2013 cut local government aid by a billion dollars. This means cuts in services we depend on, from road repair and emergency services to crossing guards, seniors' transportation and child protective services. What are the implications for Marion County?

The state cut the Local Government Fund to the county, forcing Marion County to make cuts to jurisdictions within the county. The state also cut direct funding to municipalities, and slashed reimbursements for taxes it had eliminated, taxes that businesses and utilities had paid to local governments. School districts and the public library fund were also cut. Losses in calendar years 2012 and 2013, compared to 2010 and 2011, include, among others:

- Public Library Fund -\$124.0 thousand
- Schools -\$9.1 million
- County operations (including LGF for townships) -\$2.3 million
- Marion City -\$2 million
- First Consolidated Fire District -\$75.0 thousand

Loss to health and human service levies

- County mental health/ Developmental disabilities -\$467.0 thousand
- County children services -\$204.0 thousand

Notes and Quotes

"I'm also a member of the community here, and feel that a strong community makes a safe community. When I have to release those who shouldn't be released, and haven't earned the right to be released, it is discomfoting to me" – Multi-County Correctional Facility Administrator Dale Osborn. From "Budget Cuts Means Local Inmates Might Be Released Early," nbc4i.com, January 17, 2012. <http://bit.ly/z8F61r>.

"If we don't have money to treat people, we're going to continue running in circles" – Jody Demohodgins, director of the Crawford-Marion County Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services. From "Counties lack funds to treat addiction," *Columbus Dispatch*, September 5, 2012, <http://bit.ly/IZDueT>.

Key findings

- Marion County, its jurisdictions, schools, services and levies, lost \$13.2 million in the current state budget.
- Human services lose \$672 thousand.
- County lacks funds to treat addiction \$6 million was cut from budget.
- Budget cuts causing county jail to release inmates early.

"I'm down to my last dime. I'm not ready to sell all the cruisers and the helicopters yet." – Marion County Sheriff Tim Bailey. "Sheriff pleased with results after ditching choppers," *Marietta Times*, June 2, 2012. <http://bit.ly/L7cm21>.

Media reports highlighted 19 job cuts in Marion County: 7 correctional employees, 12 deputies. Service cuts included: county building closing early, addiction treatment. "Budget Cuts Causing County Building, Office Closings," *Marion Online*, December 22, 2011, <http://bit.ly/MU2dGU>, and "Counties lack funds to treat addiction," *Columbus Dispatch*, May 9, 2012, <http://bit.ly/IZDueT>.

Marion City Auditor Kelly Carr explained how state cuts impacted personnel: they laid off 16 police officers and the fire department made concessions. The streets and sanitation department were cut and maintaining/paving roads was a struggle. They had no civilians in dispatch; they were using officers instead. Also, the mayor and city auditor give money back to the city each paycheck. From phone conversation, Kelly Carr, June 26, 2012.

Jennifer Johnson, director of Ohio Family and Children First Council, explained that the general consensus: things would be getting worse. Mental health had been cut severely in the county, especially services for newborn to age three. Truancy mediation was been cut as well. From phone conversation, Jennifer Johnson, June 26, 2012.

NOTES: The current state budget cuts the **Local Government Fund** to counties, municipalities and townships by 25 percent in the first year and by 50 percent in the second year. This 77-year old state revenue sharing program has, for generations, been essential to helping Ohio communities fund schools, provide services, and lift people out of poverty. The current state budget also phases out most of the **tangible personal property tax** and **public utility property tax reimbursements**, which were promised to local governments when the state cut taxes in recent years. These are not the only losses to local governments because of this budget. There are others in specific programs. Here we detail some of the bigger shifts. Change in revenues shown here include:

- **Local Government Fund "County Undivided Fund,"** which counties share with their cities, townships and villages. We show how much less money the counties are receiving under the current 2-year state budget (for 2012 and 2013) compared to the two years under the prior state budget (which was for 2010 and 2011). Here the funds are shown on a calendar year basis because that is how the tax department forecasts and records their distribution to local governments, and it is how local governments budget;
- **Local Government "Municipal Direct" allocation** from the Local Government Fund that the state gives directly to municipalities with an income tax, and;
- **Property tax reimbursements** promised to local governments during tax reductions enacted earlier in the decade.

The figures for changes in funding levels are based on data provided by and spreadsheets online at the Ohio Department of Taxation for local government funds and tax reimbursement distributions.

