

**REGISTER OF WILLS
CLERK OF ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF YORK COUNTY
YORK COUNTY JUDICIAL CENTER**

BRYAN K. TATE
Register of Wills
Clerk of Orphans' Court

MACGREGOR J. BRILLHART, ESQ.
Solicitor



ARA KIMBERLY McPHERSON
Chief Deputy
Register of Wills

BECKY K. FOUST
Chief Deputy
Clerk of Orphans' Court Division

January 28, 2022

TO: Honorable Julie Wheeler, President Commissioner
Honorable Doug Hoke, Vice-President Commissioner
Honorable Ron Smith, Commissioner
Mark Derr, Chief Clerk

FROM: Bryan K. Tate, Register of Wills & Clerk of Orphans' Court

RE: York County Register of Wills & Clerk of Orphans' Court 2021 Annual Report

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bryan K. Tate".

The Register's/Clerk's office financials for 2021 reflect a year of collections for the York County General Fund and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with increases in all areas, the highest collections in the history of this office. With the additional challenges placed on the office by the PA Supreme Court and the Administration Office of PA Courts (AOPC) Guardianship Tracking System (GTS) and the Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System, the staff continued to operate all the requirements with fidelity.

In addition, the office team diligently implemented improvements on technology upgrades and process modernization introduced in 2020, recalibrating all department systems due to the Coronavirus pandemic, including virtual processes for Will Probate and Estate Administration and issuing Marriage Licenses. Virtual processes are seamless and convenient for constituents to accomplish totally online thanks to Credit/Debit cards added as a payment method in 2020.

The department continued its outstanding professional working relationships with Orphans' Court Judges Vedder and M. Menges, Family and Juvenile Administrative Judge Marceca-Strong and Dependency Judges Platts, Prendergast, and C. Menges.

Acting as Agent for the Commonwealth of PA, Department of Revenue, Inheritance Tax Division, the Register collected \$44,996,659.27 in Inheritance Tax payments, a nearly 70% increase over 2020 receipts, and the highest Inheritance Tax collection year on record in York County. Over the past 20 years, York County Estates remitted PA Inheritance Tax totaling \$499,600,053.69. As Agent for the Department of Revenue, Inheritance Tax Division, the Commonwealth reimbursed the county through the Register's Office \$244,633.88, an increase of \$95,431.73 over the 2020 commission. Inheritance Tax commission is calculated by the PA Department of Revenue on IH Tax collected by the Register: first \$200,000 – 4.25%, next \$800,000 – 1.75%, and all commissions in excess of \$1 million – 0.5%.

The office departmental budget (salary and office expenses – no staff fringe benefits) for 2021 was \$535,590.00. As of this writing, the department expenditures for 2021 totaled \$507,759.37 – \$27,830.63 under budget. For the past 22 years, the department has been \$282,024.05 under budget.

Total fees collected in 2021 by the department and remitted to the York County General Fund totaled: Register of Wills \$1,184,554.38 and Orphans’ Court \$411,058.52 totaling \$1,595,612.90, an increase of \$505,987.75 over 2020. This total represents fees for filing documents, IH Tax commission, Act 34, Act 24 and automation fees.

Below are totals for office functions for 2020 compared to 2019:

Function	2021	2020
Wills & Estates	3,056	1,977
Will Hearings	9	2
Termination of Parental Rights	174	243
Adoptions	217	160
Petition for Appt of Guardianship of Minor	22	22
Petition for Appt of Guardianship of Incapacitated	141 (54 Emergency)	192 (55 Emergency)
Marriage Licenses	2,777	2,466

The Commonwealth of PA received its portion of the fees collected by the office totaling: Register of Wills - \$78,849.75 and Orphans’ Court - \$75,925.75 totaling \$154,775.25, an increase of \$25,030.75 over 2020.

The webpages for the Register and Clerk have been continually updated with current information from the PA Supreme Court and the Administration Office of PA Courts (AOPC) so users have the latest guidance for processing filings in the offices as well as updated virtual processes for Will Probates & Estate Administration and Marriage License application. The Register/Clerk case management system continues to be open on the internet to provide access to all public documents that constituents may search, view and print online without having to visit the Judicial Center. Adoption records and closed Orphans’ Court files remain sealed.

A spreadsheet of 2021 and 2020 department accomplishments is attached for your perusal and comparison against the 2000-2019 department accomplishments on the opposite side.

Special appreciation is given to the hardworking team in the Register/Clerk’s Office:

Chief Deputy Register Kim McPherson

Chief Deputy Clerk Becky Foust

Register of Wills Staff:

Orphans Court Staff:

Kris Stambaugh

Melodie Robinson

Danika Sellers

Barb Conaway

Britney Yeager

Kathy Guth

Lucrecia Ferreyra

Solicitor MacGregor J. Brillhart, Esq.

Attachment

cc: President Judge Maria Musti Cook

Judge Todd R. Platts

Judge Clyde W. Vedder

Judge N. Christopher Menges

Judge Matthew D. Menges

Judge Kathleen J. Prendergast

Judge Andrea Marceca Strong

Paul Crouse, Court Administrator