



## 2017 Annual Report

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## ABOUT US...



The Warren County Drug Task Force is a multi-jurisdictional unit specializing in the investigation of drug trafficking, prescription drug diversion, money laundering and other drug related crimes. Our area of operation is all of Warren County and the City of Wilmington in Clinton County.

The Warren County Drug Task Force continues to be an initiative of the Ohio HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area), based in Cleveland, Ohio. The HIDTA program provides assistance to local, state and federal law enforcement agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug trafficking regions of the nation. HIDTA assistance is granted through the Executive Office of the President of the United States, Office of Drug Control Policy.



As a result of this program, the Warren County Drug Task Force includes multiple local, state and federal law enforcement agencies combining resources and working together toward a common goal which allows us to operate more efficiently. The HIDTA program allows us to target larger criminal organizations, some stretching to our southern-most borders of the United States and beyond. This collaboration of resources results in a better coordinated effort to address all levels of drug trafficking and abuse with a concentrated effort toward mid to upper level offenders.

The Warren County Drug Task Force provides specialized drug enforcement services including a team of detectives & agents with advanced training in the area of covert law enforcement operations. This team uses a variety of techniques and tactics to target those involved in drug trafficking activities in our community. Also serving our jurisdiction is a fulltime detective specializing in the investigation of prescription drug diversion crimes. This area of investigation remains a priority as the abuse of opiate pain medications and heroin use has never been more obvious.

We continue our highway interdiction efforts with the assistance of our Ohio State Highway Patrol partners who provide a full-time uniform interdiction team with canines to our task force. Working with this team is a deputy sheriff and canine from the Warren County Sheriff's Office. This highly trained team aggressively patrols the roadways of Warren County and southwest Ohio focusing on bulk shipments of illegal drugs in transit from various source cities across the United States.



Enforcement and Investigative Operations are supported by a Criminal Intelligence Analyst provided by the Ohio National Guard, Counterdrug Unit and an Investigative Assistant from the Warren County Sheriff's Office. These support personnel provide ongoing assistance to investigators and are valued members of our unit.

## POLICY BOARD

The Warren County Drug Task Force is governed by a controlling authority known as the Policy Board. The Policy Board consists of the Warren County Sheriff, Warren and Clinton County Prosecutor's, Clearcreek Township Police Department, Franklin Police Department, Hamilton Township Police Department, Lebanon Police Department, Loveland Police Department, Maineville Police Department, Mason Police Department, Monroe Police Department, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), Springboro Police Department, Waynesville Police Department and the Wilmington Police Department.

Our Policy Board establishes the policies of the Drug Task Force and conducts monthly meetings throughout the year. The Drug Task Force Commander reports directly to the Policy Board and ensures the board remains fully briefed on all Drug Task Force activities.

## DRUG TASK FORCE PERSONNEL

The Warren County Drug Task Force could not operate without the dedicated men and women assigned to our unit. We currently have a staff of 21 law enforcement and support personnel provided by the Warren County Sheriff's Office, Warren County Prosecutor's Office, Springboro Police Department, Lebanon Police Department, Franklin Police Department, Wilmington Police Department, Monroe Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP), and the Ohio National Guard, Counterdrug Unit.

We are fortunate to have such a diverse and talented team of law enforcement professionals working to reduce the supply of illegal drugs in our jurisdiction. These dedicated men and women are committed to improving the quality of life in our communities and are proud to serve the citizens of Warren County and the City of Wilmington in Clinton County.

We would like to thank these agencies for their continued support and for providing these specially trained, dedicated and professional individuals.

## DRUG TASK FORCE FUNDING

Most personnel assigned to the Drug Task Force are fully funded by their home agencies. Because of the unique structure of our unit, some personnel as well as all operating expenses are funded by other means such as grants and governmental entity contributions. The long-term sustainability of our task force remains challenging however the commitment from our local communities and the Warren County Commissioners remain strong.

Annual contributions are requested based upon one dollar per person using the most recent Census numbers. Without these additional funding sources, our Drug Task Force would be unable to safely and

effectively operate. The assignment of full time personnel and the financial contributions from our communities send a clear message of commitment to the mission of the Warren County Drug Task Force.

The funding sources for the Drug Task Force include the Ohio HIDTA program, the Justice Assistance Grant, the Drug Law Enforcement Grant as well as annual contributions from the Warren County Commissioners. During 2017, we received financial contributions from the communities listed below:

- Board of County Commissioners
- Butlerville
- Carlisle
- Clearcreek Township
- Corwin
- Deerfield Township
- Franklin Township
- Hamilton Township
- Harveysburg
- Maineville
- Mason
- Massie Township
- Pleasant Plain
- South Lebanon
- Turtlecreek Township
- Union Township
- Washington Township
- Wayne Township
- Waynesville

We would like to thank each community listed above for their financial support in 2017. The Warren County Drug Task Force remains committed to providing specialized drug enforcement services to the communities we serve. This continued collaboration remains essential to our existence and is sincerely appreciated.

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS



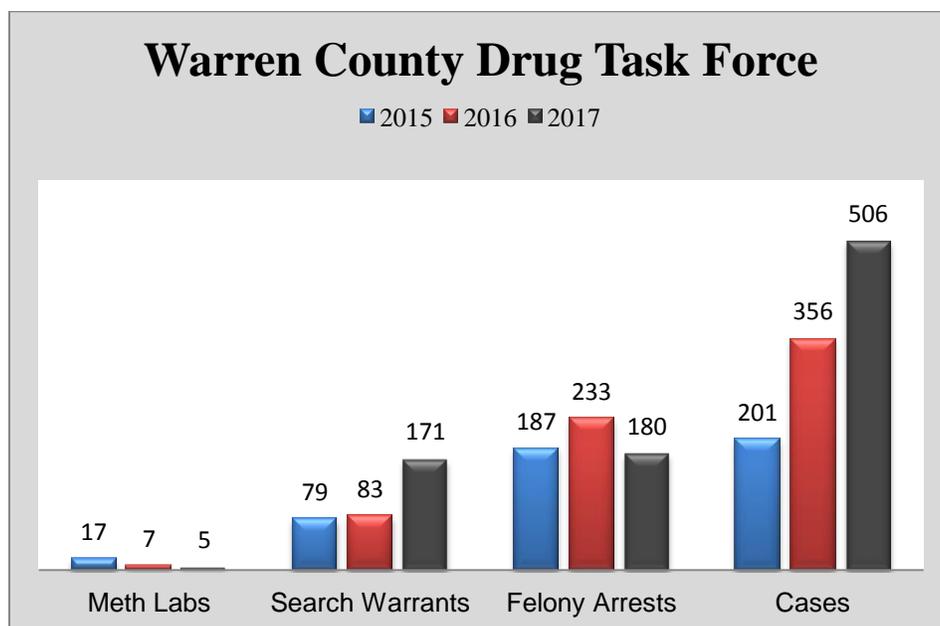
The Warren County Drug Task Force remains the only unit within our jurisdiction conducting specialized drug investigations on a fulltime basis. Our investigations target all levels of drug trafficking with an emphasis on felony crimes, from the lowest level felonies to long-term federal conspiracy cases. The drug trafficking activities occurring in our jurisdiction remain much different than the open-air trafficking common in larger metropolitan areas. These factors contribute to the

difficulty and length of time of these investigations. Our detectives and investigators work tirelessly to prepare the best possible cases for a successful prosecution.

We continue to focus on all drug trafficking activities with a concentrated effort on the heroin/fentanyl epidemic. The devastation of this problem continued to worsen during 2017 as fentanyl remained readily available throughout our jurisdiction. The trafficking and abuse of legal and illegal opiates during 2017 resulted in the continued loss of life and worsening addictions throughout our community and the State of Ohio. The availability of crystal methamphetamine has also increased during 2017 making this another serious drug of concern. Current seizure and intelligence data clearly indicate that crystal methamphetamine will remain readily available in 2018.

The investigation of drug trafficking becomes more complex and difficult with each passing year. Unfortunately, those involved in this illegal activity continue to learn the tactics and techniques commonly utilized by law enforcement making it a never-ending challenge to pursue them. Specialized enforcement efforts remain critical as drug traffickers prey upon our addicted population and directly impact the quality of life in our communities.

During 2017, combined investigations & interdiction operations resulted in **506** criminal cases. Drug Task Force detectives conducted **346** of those cases utilizing various specialized techniques and common covert tactics for drug enforcement. Our uniform interdiction staff produced **160** criminal cases and conducted **2,696** vehicle traffic stops. These combined investigations resulted in **180** felony arrests and **160** misdemeanor arrests. Many of these investigations will remain active through 2018. During 2017, combined enforcement efforts resulted in **171** search warrants, **5** methamphetamine laboratories and the seizure of **71** firearms.



Many Drug Task Force investigations are a direct result of drug tips received from our community. Some significant Drug Task Force investigations occurring this year are listed below:

Crystal Methamphetamine Conspiracy: The Warren County Drug Task Force, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) collaborated to target a large methamphetamine trafficking organization located in the Dayton area. This investigation culminated in the fall of 2017 after beginning in early 2016. The identification and investigation of this criminal organization was the result of a multi-year joint investigative effort by detectives and agents involving multiple undercover purchases of crystal methamphetamine.



This organization was responsible for supplying kilogram quantities of crystal methamphetamine throughout southwest Ohio and supplying multiple mid-level traffickers throughout **northern Warren County** and the **City of Wilmington**. Five

search warrants were executed during this investigation resulting in the seizure of over 10 ounces of methamphetamine, 1500 fentanyl tablets, two ounces of carfentanil, two ounces of cocaine and two ounces of a heroin/fentanyl mix. Also seized during this investigation were 23 firearms.

These types of investigations are complex, manpower intensive and require the use of many specialized covert investigative techniques. These long-term cases impact the availability of illegal drugs throughout all of our jurisdictions and beyond. The task force concept of sharing resources and working together across jurisdictional boundaries is essential to target this level of criminal enterprise. This organization was dismantled after the initial indictment of 14 defendants by a federal grand jury with up to 10 additional defendants pending indictment at a later date.

Multi-State Prescription Drug Diversion: The diversion and abuse of prescription drugs remain a significant problem throughout our jurisdiction, the State of Ohio and across the United States. The Warren County Drug Task Force is fortunate to have a detective specializing in diversion related crimes to investigate and pursue both individuals and organizations involved in this illegal activity.

During 2017, the Warren County Drug Task Force conducted a year-long investigation involving an organization operating throughout the State of Ohio and eventually into surrounding states that was responsible for passing stolen and forged prescriptions of Promethazine with codeine. This investigation involved many months of collaborating with local law enforcement from within our jurisdiction, to include the Ohio State Highway Patrol and



ultimately with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to target this criminal enterprise operating from Columbus, Ohio. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF) would ultimately join this investigation as this criminal enterprise was suspected of conducting armed robberies of several pharmacies in the greater Columbus area.

This criminal enterprise had passed fraudulent prescriptions in various areas within our jurisdiction to include **Lebanon, Mason, Monroe, Springboro and Wilmington**. Exhaustive amounts of surveillance, interviews, data and trend analysis and other specialized investigative techniques were utilized to target this group. Many members of this organization have been charged through state court throughout our jurisdiction and in various jurisdictions across the state with additional federal grand jury processes pending.

Multi-County Heroin/Fentanyl Investigation: The Warren County Drug Task Force and the Brown County Drug & Major Crimes Task Force joined forces to investigate heroin trafficking involving our combined jurisdictions. During this investigation, a local couple residing in the **Hamilton Township** area were identified as mid-level heroin traffickers operating throughout southwest Ohio. This investigation would determine their Hamilton Township home was utilized as their primary residence where they packaged bulk amounts of heroin/fentanyl into smaller street level quantities for distribution.



As a result of this investigation, the Warren County Tactical Response Unit was utilized to execute a search warrant at their residence. During the execution of the warrant, the suspects attempted to destroy evidence resulting in a significant amount of heroin/fentanyl to become airborne creating a serious life-threatening atmosphere during entry. This circumstance reinforced our ongoing commitment to training and maintaining specialized equipment necessary to safely handle these types of scenes.

Seized during this investigation were 4 firearms and 2+ ounces of heroin/fentanyl. This couple was ultimately prosecuted for multiple counts of drug trafficking, tampering with evidence, possession of drugs and engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity.

Cocaine Investigation: During the early months of 2017, an upper level source of supply was identified and found to be responsible for the distribution of large quantities of cocaine into **Warren County** and throughout southwest Ohio. After several weeks of intense investigative effort and creative undercover schemes, detectives coordinated the delivery of one and a half kilograms of cocaine into the **Turtlecreek Township/Monroe** area of Warren County where one individual was ultimately taken into custody. At the time of arrest, this individual was in possession of a firearm, multiple cellular phones and a large sum of cash.



Further investigation revealed that this individual was transporting bulk amounts of drugs directly from Mexico into **Warren County** and southwest Ohio. Intelligence data also confirmed direct communication between this individual and multiple sources of supply in Mexico. This operation involved the support of our uniform interdiction troopers from the Ohio State Highway Patrol as well as our full investigative team of detectives and agents assigned to the drug task force.

The Warren County Drug Task Force continues to utilize all available resources from our member law enforcement agencies to target this level of drug trafficker. This continued collaboration remains the most effective way to impact the availability of illegal drugs throughout our jurisdiction.

Methamphetamine Trafficking: Mid-level methamphetamine trafficking is a consistent problem throughout our jurisdiction. During 2017, the Warren County Drug Task Force identified two individuals from Butler County who were responsible for supplying significant quantities of methamphetamine into the **City of Franklin, Franklin Township** and **Carlisle** areas of Warren County.



After a lengthy investigation, these individuals were taken into custody during the sale of approximately one ounce of methamphetamine to undercover detectives. The arrest of these individuals temporarily impacted the availability of methamphetamine in that region of our county.

Crystal methamphetamine continues to be readily available throughout our jurisdiction and southwest Ohio. A review of 2017 seizure data and current trend analysis indicate this pattern will continue through 2018.

Prescription Drug Diversion/Medical Professional: A significant and disturbing investigation occurred during 2017 involving the passing of fraudulent prescriptions and the diverting of pain medications by a registered nurse. The investigation determined that this individual was previously employed and involved with direct patient care at various medical facilities in Warren, Montgomery and Clinton Counties.



The defendant nurse admitted to tampering and substituting patient pain medications and self-administering these medications to sustain a debilitating addiction. After stealing the pain medications of patients, this nurse would covertly

inject them into her own arms and hands. Other admissions included her personal use of up to 80 tablets of Oxycodone in less than a two-day period.

Unfortunately, medical professionals are not immune from addiction and this is another example of the devastation of drug addiction and the innocent people harmed as a result. This investigation is one of many cases handled by our drug diversion detective throughout the year. This case and others like it support the ongoing need for our specialized drug diversion detective as these investigations require a unique and specialized skill set to ensure successful prosecution.

Methamphetamine, Firearms and Cash: During the summer of 2017, the Warren County Drug Task Force conducted an investigation into drug trafficking at a local hotel in the **City of Wilmington**. This joint investigation with the Wilmington Police Department identified multiple individuals from Highland County involved in trafficking crystal methamphetamine.



It was determined that these individuals were also being investigated by law enforcement agencies in Highland County for similar crimes of drug trafficking. Multiple search warrants and consent searches were conducted resulting in the seizure of two stolen firearms, cash and approximately 19 ounces of crystal methamphetamine. The suspects in this case admitted they were responsible for the distribution of approximately 2 kilograms of crystal methamphetamine throughout our jurisdiction each week.

These types of drug traffickers are commonly located throughout our jurisdiction as they move from hotel to hotel. The transient lifestyle of drug traffickers make hotels a popular location to conduct their illegal activities.

The Warren County Drug Task Force conducted numerous hotel/motel operations during 2017. Our enforcement and interdiction operations targeted many jurisdictions along I-71 and I-75 to include **Deerfield Township, Mason, Monroe, Middletown, Franklin** and **Springboro**. These investigations are only possible with the uniform support we receive from our member agencies.

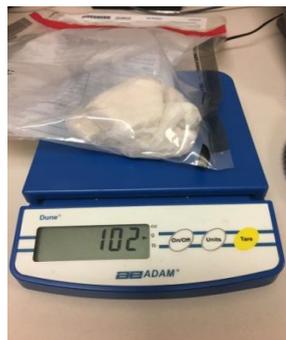
Overdose Death Investigation: The Warren County Drug Task Force, Warren County Sheriff's Office and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) conducted a joint investigation involving the overdose death of an individual occurring in **Deerfield Township**. It was quickly determined on scene that a self-administered dose of fentanyl/carfentanil likely caused the death of this individual. Further processing of the scene, witness interviews and



other analysis provided valuable information leading detectives to the Cincinnati area source of supply for the drugs causing this death.

Undercover detectives established communication with the Cincinnati drug trafficker and ultimately arranged a meeting with this person in **Warren County** for the purpose of buying additional drugs. The suspect was taken into custody with additional drugs in their possession. Further investigation confirmed that the Cincinnati drug trafficker obtained their drugs from a source of supply in the Dayton area confirming this well-known distribution nexus and the critical impact it has on our jurisdiction.

Fentanyl/Carfentanil Investigation: An investigation began in late 2017 involving two individuals residing in the **Wayne Township** area of Warren County. These individuals were reportedly involved in the armed robbery and home invasion of other drug traffickers in the Dayton area and were reportedly armed and violent. These individuals were also involved in the trafficking of fentanyl and carfentanil from their Wayne Township residence.



Detectives from the Warren County Drug Task Force were successful at identifying these individuals and ultimately utilized specialized investigative tactics to purchase drugs from these individuals at their Warren County residence. The Warren County Tactical Response Unit was utilized to execute a search warrant at this residence where both individuals were taken into custody without further incident. Seized from this residence was over 3 ½ ounces of fentanyl and significant evidence of drug trafficking.

International Cocaine Investigation: During the fall of 2017, the Warren County Drug Task Force participated in the investigation of a cocaine trafficking organization operating throughout southwest Ohio. This investigation was led by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Dayton Resident Office, with significant assistance provided by our Drug Task Force.

This case involved several months of intense investigative activity by multiple law enforcement agencies as members of this criminal organization operated across the United States and throughout the State of Ohio. Undercover agents ultimately negotiated and coordinated a direct shipment of 30 kilograms of cocaine from Mexico to **Warren County** with delivery occurring in the **South Lebanon** area. One individual was arrested upon delivery of the cocaine in a public and commonly used parking lot. The agreed upon payment for this shipment was \$900,000.00 cash.



This investigation is another positive example of utilizing the task force concept to maximize resources and target drug trafficking organizations operating within our jurisdiction.

Local Methamphetamine Trafficking: The Warren County Drug Task Force received information during late 2017 of significant activity in the **Lebanon** area involving methamphetamine trafficking. The information indicated excessive vehicle and pedestrian traffic to and from a local residence along with other suspicious activity consistent with drug trafficking activities.



This investigation quickly evolved and detectives were successful with conducting an undercover purchase of methamphetamine from the suspect residence. Information developed during the operation confirmed multiple armed individuals inside the home requiring the assistance of the Warren County Tactical Response Unit to execute a search warrant.

Multiple individuals were located inside the residence along with 2 ½ ounces of methamphetamine, a ½ pound of marijuana and 7 firearms. This was another dangerous scenario and example of the potential for violence associated with drug trafficking.

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK

The Warren County Drug Task Force continues to collaborate with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to encourage all citizens to properly dispose of unwanted prescription medications. The correlation between prescription drug abuse and heroin abuse remain obvious as many people who abuse heroin report the misuse of prescription pain medications before starting to use heroin. We will continue to promote this valuable program as we encourage our community to help stop addiction before it starts.

The Warren County Drug Task Force and many local law enforcement agencies participated in two national drug take-back events during 2017. Both events were a tremendous success and resulted in 1,120 pounds of prescription drugs being turned in for proper destruction.

Many jurisdictions throughout Warren County offer 24/7 access to drug take-back boxes allowing citizens to dispose of prescription medication throughout the year at their convenience. To find the closest drug drop box please visit [www.rxdrugdropbox.org](http://www.rxdrugdropbox.org)

## EDUCATION & PREVENTION

We continue to support and participate in drug education & prevention efforts throughout our combined jurisdictions. The Drug Task Force recognizes that drug education for our community,

especially our youth is extremely important. We are committed to this ongoing process of stopping addiction before it starts and realize that aggressive enforcement efforts alone remain insufficient.

We utilize various community events and activities as opportunities to meet with our community as we spread our message of being drug free and making good decisions. In 2017, the Drug Task Force attended many activities such as National Night Out in **Clearcreek Township** and the **City of Lebanon** as well as several "Touch a Truck" events in **Deerfield & Hamilton Townships**. We visited many other jurisdictions this year participating in parades and other public settings to engage with our community.

The Warren County Drug Task Force continues to collaborate with the Warren County Educational Services Center and all DARE programs throughout the county. We continue to update our web page with current educational information for parents, teachers and students. Please visit our web page at [www.wcdtf.org](http://www.wcdtf.org)

## THANK YOU!

The Warren County Drug Task Force recognizes that in order to be truly successful in our endeavors, the support and assistance of the general public, our local governmental entities and the Warren County Commissioners is essential. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to serving you in 2018.

Please continue to report drug tips to the Drug Task Force or to your local law enforcement agency. No one can identify suspicious activity in our neighborhoods better than those who live there. Please contact us by email at [drugtips@wcdtf.org](mailto:drugtips@wcdtf.org) or call our office at 513-336-0070.