

Stark County Job & Family Services

221 3rd Street S.E., Canton, OH 44702

Deborah Forkas, M.Ed Executive Director

Human Services · Children Services · Child Support



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stark County Job and Family Services (SCJFS) Children Services division has moved operations several blocks south from the Renkert Building in downtown to the newly renovated Cornerstone building at 402 2nd St SE. Cornerstone officially opened for business Monday, Oct. 24th, and on Tues., Nov.1st, Children Services' employees joined County Commissioners Janet Weir Creighton, Richard Regula and David Bridenstine in celebration of the move.

Built in 1920, the 36,000 sq. ft., three-story building was purchased by the Commissioners in October 2015 for \$445,000 through online auction. Commissioner Richard Regula, who noted the building had last been sold for \$3,299,000 in 2007, said the purchase was "one of the Commissioners' best in Stark County history." The Commissioners made the purchase as part of the county's relocation of county government offices to buildings the county owns, rather than rents.

Following the purchase, Commissioners hired Ray Roofing to do \$183,000 in repairs. In May 2016, Commissioners awarded a \$2.3 million contract to Jeffrey Carr Construction to gut, renovate and remodel the building's interior.

SCJFS Executive Director Deborah Forkas thanked the Commissioners, County Administrator Brant Luther, architect Matt Sutter of SoL Harris/Day architecture for all of their work on behalf of the agency. She added, "It is a wonderful privilege to provide such a welcoming and safe environment for the children and families we serve."

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Staff also shared their appreciation of the beautiful and safe environment Cornerstone provides.

The Children Services Division serves the county's children at risk of abuse or neglect, and their families. The division is legally mandated to receive and respond to child abuse, neglect and dependency reports, as well as providing intervention to at-risk children. The division also takes reports of suspected abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of adults 60 and older. In addition, Children Services recruits and trains foster and adoptive families, prepares children for adoption, arranges for post-adoption services to families, and provides independent living skills for older teens.

SCJFS will host a Cornerstone open house for the community in late November or early December.

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