



Hancock County Auditor's Office Policy Regarding Office Access under Sub. Am. H.B. 197.

Banking, transfers, and title research have been deemed essential business by the Ohio Department of Health Order and requirements for access to necessary records maintained by County Auditors, Recorders, and Map Rooms were passed by the Ohio General Assembly and signed into law on March 27, 2020.

H.B. 197 in Section 21(A) requires the offices of County Auditors, Recorders, Title Offices of Clerks of Courts, and County Map Offices to “remain open and operational in order to allow land professionals physical access to the office as necessary to search records that are not otherwise available online, digital, or by some other means.” (Emphasis added, See page 337 of the bill as enrolled.) Access may be limited and include “requirements and restrictions in the interest of public health.” Finally, the section requires: “All essential services to effectuate property transfer shall remain open and available with all offices.”

This guidance is in response to this new provision. We note, that given the physical structure and stairs/elevator of the County Courthouse it can be difficult to maintain social distancing. We therefore ask for everyone's cooperation during this emergency.

- The Hancock County Auditor's Office continues to conduct essential business including transfer & conveyance, fiscal functions, and other duties to support the business and residents of Hancock County. All services to effectuate property transfer are occurring.
- There is limited physical access to our offices by the public in compliance with the Ohio Department of Health stay-at-home order, and the determination of the Auditor to close the Auditor offices as much as possible.
- Business can still be conducted by mail, by email or online where possible, and through drop boxes in the security entrance of the Hancock County Courthouse at 300 S. Main St.
- Land title professionals or others with a need to search records should:
 - Access records online as much as possible. Access to the office will not be given for records that are available online.
 - If a record or search cannot be conducted online, you must contact the Auditor's office Real Estate counter at 419-424-7015 or email hanauda@co.hancock.oh.us to determine if there is a digital or alternative means for you to receive the relevant records.
 - If the records cannot be made accessible without physical access, such access will be given by appointment to avoid any large groups or other impediments to safe distancing.