



The Delaware County Digest

Your source for the latest news from Delaware County | September 4, 2026

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PhilaPort Cruise Terminal Opens in Tinicum Township, Expected to Bring \$300 Million in Annual Economic Activity to Region

Last week, Council Chair Richard Womack joined local leaders, PhilaPort officials, and regional partners to cut the ribbon on the PhilaPort Cruise Terminal in Tinicum Township. The port, which was built thanks to a \$66 million investment from Norwegian Cruise Line, is expected to **generate \$300 million in annual regional activity and employ 2,200 local residents**.

“Thanks to this project, Delco will now be a destination for hundreds of thousands of families each year from across the Eastern Seaboard to start and end the vacations they look forward to all year,” said Delaware County Council Chair Richard Womack.



This will serve as the first dedicated cruise port in the Greater Philadelphia region in more than 15 years, taking residents to Bermuda, the Caribbean, the Bahamas, Canada, New England, and other destinations along the Atlantic Coast.

A 2024 study shows that the port will **generate well over \$1 million in additional tax receipts for Delaware County each year**, allowing the County to invest this money into improving the lives of Delco residents for years to come. The cruise terminal is also anticipated to have a **positive impact of over \$100 million on wages for residents**, providing a steady source of

income for those who call our region home. The benefits of the cruise terminal extend to local hotels restaurants, hotels, transportation providers, and vendors that provision the ships.

The cruise terminal serves as a shining example of the importance of regional collaboration on economic development, with Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker and other elected officials from across the region joining Council Chair Womack at the ribbon cutting.

This project would not have been possible without the contributions of union labor, who were instrumental in the construction and continued work necessary to sustain operations at the port.

“I’m proud of the enormous growth our region is seeing lately and of the union labor that powered this project,” said Council Chair Womack. “I’m even prouder to lead a Council that recognizes the importance of being a good neighbor in that growth.”

For more information about the new cruise terminal, visit philaport.com/cruise.



ChristianaCare and Delaware County Celebrate Construction Milestone for Springfield Neighborhood Hospital with Beam Signing Ceremony



Last week, Delaware County Council member Dr. Monica Taylor was on hand to celebrate a construction milestone for ChristianaCare’s Springfield neighborhood hospital, marking the completion of the structural phase of construction.

The hospital, which is **set to open in the fall of 2027**, represents yet another step forward for healthcare in Delaware County after private equity-backed Prospect

Medical Holdings turned their back on Delco and closed the Crozer Hospital system last year.

“We are witnessing the start of something important and the delivery of something urgent: a future for healthcare in Delaware County better than what we are leaving behind,” said Delaware County Council member Dr. Monica Taylor.

Located at 351 North State Road, the **20,000-square-foot** hospital will be **open 24/7 with a full-service emergency department** equipped to treat common medical emergencies like falls, injuries, heart attacks, and strokes. The facility will also have a **10-bed inpatient unit** for patients who require inpatient care, observation, or testing. The second floor will offer a range of **outpatient services tailored to community needs**, including primary care, specialty care, and other clinical services.

Designed to meet the evolving demands of the Delaware County community, the Springfield campus will make it easier for residents to access timely, coordinated care in a setting that is convenient and patient centered.

The Springfield campus joins the ChristianaCare neighborhood hospital in Aston, which opened in May of this year and will have the same amenities as the Springfield location. The emergency department and 10-bed inpatient unit will be supplemented by the second floor Health Center, which is opening in October.

Delaware County Council worked alongside ChristianaCare, local business leaders, elected officials, and the community to identify Aston and Springfield as the ideal locations for these new campuses. Many of these stakeholders joined Dr. Taylor at last week’s event, which included reflections from stakeholders and updates on construction.

“Building one hospital is hard enough,” said Dr. Taylor. “But building a second requires a commitment to place and people that others have sorely lacked. Today’s beam signing is a new reminder that we have another non-profit healthcare provider we can trust.”

Since the closure of the Crozer system, Delaware County has been fighting to reopen the shuttered hospitals, allow residents to access medical records, and regain access to the healthcare they are entitled to. For updates on the status of Crozer facilities, visit delcopa.gov/health/prospect-medical-bankruptcy-update.

For more information about healthcare in Delaware County, please call the Delaware County Health Department’s Wellness Line at **484-276-2100**.

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Delaware County Public Defender Updates Council on Remarkable Recent Progress Made by Office



At Wednesday’s Council meeting, Delaware County Chief Public Defender Taylor Dunn shared an update on the impressive recent progress made by his office, showing how they are consistently delivering for Delco residents.

The office, which is made up of 50 attorneys and 28 support staff, works every day to provide and promote quality legal representation for indigent Delaware County residents facing the loss of their rights, liberty, and dignity.

“Overall, the Delaware County Public Defender’s Office is healthy, strong, and engaged,” said Delaware County Chief Public Defender Taylor Dunn. “A strong public defender’s office means a safer, healthier, more resilient Delaware County.”

They defend client partners across:

- 26 Magisterial District Courts
- 8 Courts of Common Pleas
- Juvenile Court
- Appeals in the Supreme, Superior, and Commonwealth Courts
- Bench warrant hearings
- Probation and parole hearings (county and state)
- Domestic relations contempt hearings (civil)
- Protection From Abuse hearings (civil)

The Public Defender’s office has roughly **7,000 cases open at a time**, with **5,884 new cases opened in 2025**. On the criminal side, the PD’s office maintains **70% of all criminal legal cases in Delaware County**. Monthly, they average 370 new client cases opened, 1,450 clients engaged across the Court of Common Pleas and Magisterial District Courts, 150 people walking through the front door of their office, and a staggering **10,000 phone calls made and received** (300+ per day).

But Dunn emphasized how in recent years the office has been **providing more holistic support, working to divert client partners from the system and helping them stay out of the system entirely**. This includes diversion courts like Mental Health, Treatment, and Veterans Court, along with programs like New Leash on Life, Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative opioid diversion, the Delaware County Misdemeanor Diversion Program, and the Accelerated Rehabilitation Disposition for first-time offenders.

The office has also provided robust social service support, including drug and alcohol treatment, mental health support, crisis support, housing, job training, transportation, expungements, and more. They have adopted new approaches to helping clients, founding a Harm Reduction Unit and working alongside Partners for Justice and the Delco Service Team to serve hundreds of clients and solicit food/clothing donations to help clients in need. The office has also stepped up to host expungement clinics in partnership with State Reps. Joanna McClinton and Leanne Krueger in lieu of federal funding for these events.

“For our clients, their legal case may not even be in the top ten issues in their life,” said Dunn. “If they don’t show up to court, we can’t resolve the case, and they end up in George W. Hill. So, with Council’s support, we have increased our support for the whole person.”

Per month, the Public Defender’s has engaged 500 clients with Diversion and Reentry, 60 clients with the Mental Health Unit, and made 100 social service referrals, showing how their work goes beyond what happens in the courtroom.

Dunn discussed that, in the last 10 years, his office has been instrumental in **reducing the population at George W. Hill Correctional Facility by over 50% (from 2,083 to 966), the number of children in custody by over 90% (from 814 to 66), and the number of crimes committed in Delaware County by 35%.**

“We’re incarcerating less human beings and crime is down,” said Dunn. “I don’t think those numbers could be any better for us as an office and as a county.”

The Public Defender’s Office has also put an emphasis on retention and recruitment of staff at a time when PD offices across the state are losing 40% of new hires within 5 years. Supported by a positive office culture, a passionate group of lawyers and staff, and the opportunity for training and growth within the office, the Delaware County Public Defender’s Office has an **82% retention rate for new staff**. This avoids the expensive and time-consuming task of training new lawyers, which also provides less consistency for clients.

The lawyer team is currently fully staffed, with four new lawyers starting in mid-September. The office has seen multiple applicants for every job from law schools across the country and is remarkably already interviewing for their 2027 class of lawyers before the 2026 class has even started, showing how the Delaware County Public Defender’s Office is a premier destination for prospective employees.

The office has also worked hard to strengthen partnerships with county departments like DCHD and Workforce Development and statewide organizations like the Public Defender Association of Pennsylvania.

“The improvement over the last eight years has been stunning,” said Delaware County Council member Elaine Paul Schaefer. “The transformation in the Public Defender’s office is one of the things I am most proud of when I look back on my time on Council because it has such a meaningful impact on our community.”

To learn more about the Delaware County Public Defender’s Office, visit delcopa.gov/delco-defenders.

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Delaware County Council Chair Richard Womack Tours Ruth Bennett Community Farm in Chester

Last week, Delaware County Council Chair Richard Womack toured the Ruth Bennett Community Farm (RBCF) in Chester alongside Chester Township Council Chair Calvin Bernard and Council member Grace Bell. The visit gave Chair Womack and other local partners an inside look into how the farm has grown to be a staple of the Delaware County community.



"I was honored to get a behind the scenes look at this farm that supports the Chester community and improves food security in our area," said Womack. "The opportunity Ruth Bennett Community Farm provides for residents to enjoy healthy, local food harvested by their neighbors is a great example of what makes Delaware County the best community in the world to live."

Ruth Bennett Community Farm, which is located on two acres of land at the Ruth L. Bennett Community Homes, is committed to providing Delaware County and Chester residents with **increased access to pesticide-free and nutrient-dense produce**. To fulfill this mission, they hold free biweekly produce distributions with vegetables

grown at the farm along with additional produce and eggs they purchase.

The farm is led by Natania Schaumburg, the Farm Manager, and Malik Savage, who serves as Grounds Manager. Savage led the tour and spoke with leaders afterward about the farm's growing impact on the Chester community.

Each year, RBCF hires Delco teens to work at the farm to assist in food harvesting and distribution, participating in organic farming workshops and community food security, while also honing valuable skills like teamwork, written/verbal communication, time management, and community building.

Ruth Bennett Community Farm is named in honor of Ruth L. Bennett, who moved to Chester from Alabama in 1914 during the Great Migration, when thousands of Black southerners migrated to Chester. Bennett dedicated her life to supporting these migrants, many of which were women with no place to stay. Bennett founded numerous organizations to support these women and was the inaugural president of the NAACP's Chester chapter.

For more information about RBCF, please visit ruthbennettcommunityfarm.org.

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A Message from Delaware County Domestic Relations Reflecting on Child Support Awareness Month



This year's Child Support Awareness Month was incredibly special for our office and, without question, has been our best Child Support Awareness Month to date. What began as an opportunity to bring attention to the importance of child support became something much bigger. It gave our office an opportunity to come together, give back to our community, learn from our community partners, and recognize the important work we do every day on behalf of children and families.

One of the most meaningful accomplishments of the month was our collection of more than 450 donations for CASA. Employees and community partners came together to donate items to support children and families served by Court Appointed Special Advocates. 450+ donations is an incredible accomplishment, but the number

itself is only part of the story. Each donation represented someone taking the time to think about a child and contribute something that could make that child's life a little easier.

Our Lunch and Learn with the Sheriff's Office was another highlight of the month. We were honored to welcome Sheriff Siddiq Kamara and his staff whose leadership and participation helped make the event especially meaningful. Our staff received important information about workplace safety, safe entry and exit procedures, being aware of clients and visitors, and recognizing how stress, trauma, and mental health challenges can affect individuals who come into our office.

But the conversation did not stop with safety.

The Sheriff's Office also provided us with valuable resources that we can share with the families we serve, including information about domestic violence shelters, food banks, mental health hotlines, and other resources available throughout our county. That information is especially meaningful because the families who come through our doors may be facing challenges that go far beyond child support.

And that is something we want people to understand about our work. Child support is about much more than a payment. It is about children having their needs met. It is about helping parents fulfill their responsibilities. It is about creating realistic and sustainable support arrangements. It is about helping families navigate difficult circumstances while ensuring that the focus remains where it belongs — on the well-being of the child.

Every day, our staff works with parents, attorneys, children, and families from all walks of life. We listen. We calculate. We negotiate. We establish orders. We enforce orders. We answer questions. We connect people with resources. We work through difficult situations and, sometimes, difficult conversations.

And we do it because the work matters.

There is a great deal that happens behind the scenes that the public may never see. The phone calls, conferences, paperwork, calculations, research, problem-solving, court preparation, community partnerships, and countless conversations all have one common purpose: helping children and families.

This month gave us the chance to step away from the everyday demands of our jobs and really recognize the people doing this work. Our office is filled with individuals who care about what they do and understand that every case represents a child and a family.

That realization made this year's Child Support Awareness Month especially meaningful. We learned. We connected. We gave back. We built partnerships. We became more aware of the resources available in our community. And we were reminded of the difference our work can make.



Our Director, Patricia Coacher, expressed her appreciation, saying:

"Your dedication strengthens our mission and makes a measurable difference for the families we support. Thank you for setting such a high standard of excellence. The entire building resilience, teamwork, and commitment continue to inspire me. I'm proud to work alongside each of you, and I deeply appreciate everything you do."

Reading these words from our Director made Child Support Awareness Month even more meaningful. Knowing that she recognizes our dedication, cares about the work we do, and appreciates the effort each team member contributes made the month feel especially personal

and rewarding. Her support reminded us that our work is seen, valued, and important—not only to the families we serve, but also to the leadership of our office.

More than 450 donations for CASA. Valuable community resources for our clients. A meaningful partnership with our Sheriff's Office. Important conversations about safety, trauma, mental health, and serving our families.

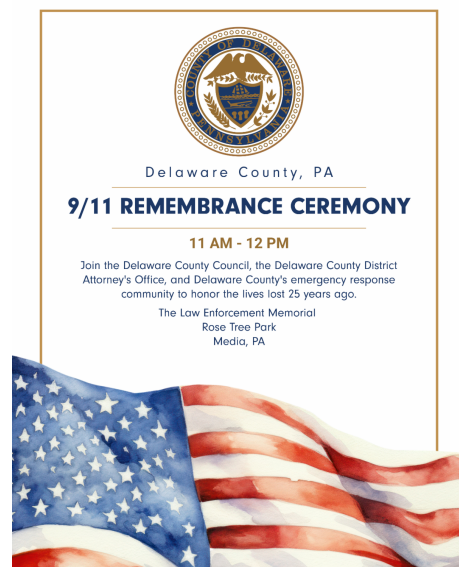
But perhaps the greatest takeaway is simply this:

We matter because the work we do matters. Our job may sometimes be difficult and stressful, but it is also incredibly rewarding. At the end of the day, our work helps put food on tables, provides support for children, helps parents meet their responsibilities, and gives families an opportunity to move forward.

That is what Child Support Awareness Month made us all stop and appreciate. It reminded us that behind every case number is a child. Behind every order is a family. And behind every case is a team of people working every day to make a difference.

We are incredibly proud of what our office accomplished this year, and we are even more proud of the people who made it happen.

Take Part, Spread the Word, Stay Connected



Delaware County to Host September 11th Day of Remembrance Ceremony at Rose Tree Park on 25th Anniversary of Attacks

Delaware County's annual September 11th Day of Remembrance Ceremony will be held on **Friday, September 11 at 11 AM at Rose Tree Park in Media** to honor the 25th anniversary of the attacks. The County will honor the nearly 3,000 lives lost on September 11, 2001, and pay tribute to Delaware County's first responders who have died in the line of duty. Speakers will include Delaware County Council Chair Richard Womack, Delaware County District Attorney Tanner Rouse, Members of the Delco Delegation in the Pennsylvania Legislature. For more information, visit delcopa.gov.



Delaware County Government Offices to be Closed Monday, September 7 in Observance of Labor Day

All Delaware County government offices will be closed on Monday, September 7 in observance of Labor Day. The County will resume normal operations on Tuesday, September 8 at 8:30 AM. For more information, visit delcopa.gov.

State Sen. Tim Kearney and State Reps. Heather Boyd and Gina Curry to host Delaware County Senior Expo Thursday, September 10 in Drexel Hill



Residents are invited to attend the Delaware County Senior Expo on **Thursday, September 10 from 9 AM to noon** at the Drexelbrook Events Center (**4700 Drexelbrook Drive, Drexel Hill, PA 19026**). The Expo, which is hosted by State Sen. Tim Kearney and State Reps. Heather Boyd and Gina Curry, will have health screenings, interactive activities, giveaways, live music, raffle prizes, refreshments, and more. This is a great opportunity for residents and their families to connect directly with providers, ask questions, and discover new services and supports. Several Delaware County departments will be participating, where they will be helping residents learn about county services, programs, and opportunities that support healthy, active, and engaged lives for Delco seniors. For more information, call Sen. Kearney's

office at **610-544-6120**.



Delaware County Libraries Hosting Read at Rose Tree Event Thursday, September 24

Delaware County Libraries is hosting their annual Read at Rose Tree event on **Thursday, September 24 from 5:30 to 6:30 PM** at the amphitheater at Rose Tree Park (**1671 N. Providence Road, Media, PA 19063**) as part of Library Card Signup Month. Residents are invited to bring lawn chairs, a blanket, a book, and a picnic dinner and read aloud with your family or silently with friends. Library card

signups will be available, as well as a pop-up library and prize raffles. For more information, visit delcolibraries.org.



DCHD to Host Rally for Recovery on Thursday, September 24 in Essington

The Delaware County Health Department is hosting a Rally for Recovery on **Thursday, September 24 from 5 to 7 PM** at Governor Printz Park (**W. 2nd St. & Taylor Ave., Essington, PA 19029**). This will be a family-friendly event to celebrate individuals in recovery and share hope with communities still struggling. Residents at every stage of recovery are encouraged to attend and enjoy music, food trucks, speakers, face painting, and access to recovery resources. For more information, visit delcopa.gov/health. Interested residents can RSVP using DCHD's Facebook **post** about the event.

Signups for Delco 10 Miler Remain Open!

Residents are encouraged to sign up for the 2nd Annual Delco 10 Miler, scheduled for **Sunday, October 4**. Like last year, the race will begin at Rose Tree Park in Media and end at Subaru Park in Chester with a celebration at Union Yards. Organizers have already seen over 1,750 runners sign up and have fewer than 750 spots left, so residents are encouraged to sign up ASAP.



Please note that there is a 13:30 per mile pace requirement. If you aren't interested in running, please consider signing up to volunteer. For more information, visit delco10miler.com.



Human Services to Host Annual Adult Systems Training the Week of October 5

The Delaware County Department of Human Services is hosting their annual Adult Systems Training from **Monday, October 5 to Friday, October 9**. This will include presentations on services for Mental Health, Adult & Family Services, Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, Drug & Alcohol, and Advocacy & Community Supports. **Registration will close on Wednesday, September 30**. To learn more, visit delcopa.gov/human-services.



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