A WHITE PAPER FOR OHIO PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

Ohio Personal Injury In 2026

What Ohio Verdict Data Reveals About
Winning Bigger PI Cases in 2026

Introduction

Ohio's personal injury landscape is shifting in ways that will separate high-performing firms from average ones for years to come. Proposed legislation is poised to raise non-economic damage caps by as much as 45 percent. Courts across Franklin, Cuyahoga, Lucas, and Hamilton counties are producing larger verdicts. And the complexity of building and litigating a PI case has never been greater.

At the same time, AI has arrived in legal practice in a form that is genuinely useful. Firms that understand both the legal shifts and the tools now available to them are positioned to capture significantly more value from the cases already in their pipeline. This paper covers what every Ohio PI attorney needs to know about the state of the law, what verdict data actually says about where value is created and lost, and how AI is changing the way leading firms work.

The Legislative Moment

Several concurrent developments are reshaping Ohio PI practice. They point in a single direction: the documentation burden is rising, the potential recovery ceiling is rising, and the firms that prepare now will benefit from both.

House Bill 447: Raising the Cap

Ohio's current non-economic damage cap under R.C. 2315.18 sits at approximately $250,000 per plaintiff. House Bill 447 proposes to raise the per-plaintiff cap to approximately $415,000 to $580,000, lift the per-occurrence cap to approximately $830,000, and index both figures to the Consumer Price Index going forward.[1][2]

A higher cap does not automatically produce a higher recovery. It creates room for firms that have already invested in comprehensive non-economic damage documentation to push further. Non-economic damages require narrative: documented impact on daily life, relationships, and future quality of life. Building that narrative requires intentional effort at intake, not a sprint during trial preparation.

Constitutional Challenges to the Cap

Ohio courts have shown increasing willingness to scrutinize whether caps are constitutionally applied in catastrophic injury cases, particularly where applying the cap would produce a manifestly disproportionate outcome.[3][4] Catastrophic cases should always include a cap-challenge analysis, and that analysis must be grounded in a thorough record.

SB 131, SB 63, and R.C. 2323.43

Senate Bill 131 clarifies auto compensation to emphasize maximizing total recovery across all channels, including UM/UIM coverage that is frequently missed at intake.[7] Senate Bill 63 imposes stricter documentary requirements for asbestos and toxic tort claims, creating dismissal exposure for non-compliance.[8] Medical malpractice caps under R.C. 2323.43 face similar constitutional scrutiny, with courts showing greater appetite for exception-finding in well-documented severe-outcome cases.[5][6]

Every one of these developments rewards firms that document comprehensively, analyze carefully, and invest early. That is precisely where AI creates the most leverage.

Ohio Verdict Data: Where Value Is Actually Created

The Ohio verdict distribution is highly skewed, and understanding that skew should change how every firm thinks about its caseload.

Average Ohio PI verdict: approximately $303,955. Median Ohio PI verdict: approximately $13,000.[9]

The $290,000 gap between average and median reflects systematic differences in how a small number of cases are built. Recent landmark results illustrate what is possible when preparation matches potential.

- Handa v. Nelson, Franklin County: $20.7 million. Catastrophic injury, comprehensive life-care planning.
- Terry v. Lindell, Lucas County: $10 million. Medical malpractice; economic damages anchored the recovery.
- Di v. Cleveland Clinic, Cuyahoga County: $7.7 million. Strong economic narrative overcame a contested liability dispute.
- Stamper v. Draznik, Hamilton County: $1.2 million. Timely documentation and expert preparation were decisive.
- Maron case, Lake County: $910,000. Significant value is achievable outside major metro markets.

These cases have something in common beyond the size of the injury. In each, the investment in documentation and economic development allowed the severity to translate into full recoverable damages. That investment begins at intake, not at trial preparation.

Mid-market Ohio counties including Lake, Stark, Montgomery, and Lorain are competitive venues where well-prepared cases regularly exceed $500,000. Location is not destiny. Preparation is.

How AI Addresses the Ohio Opportunity

The legislative shifts and verdict data above create a clear set of requirements for Ohio PI firms that want to compete at the top of the market. AI addresses each of them directly.

Non-Economic Documentation Under HB 447

Capturing the expanded ceiling that HB 447 creates requires building a non-economic damage narrative grounded in the record. Supio's medical record analysis surfaces the specific entries in a client's records that speak to daily function, pain levels, activity limitations, and quality of life, making non-economic documentation a standard deliverable on every case rather than a special effort reserved for the highest-value files.

Cap-Challenge Analysis Under R.C. 2315.18

Supio's makes it easy to run analysis for injuries in every case that may trigger exception arguments under the cap statutes. In a high-volume practice, that analysis running on every file means no cap-challenge candidate is missed because an attorney ran out of time to dig into the records.

Compensation Mapping and Compliance

AI-assisted intake processes ensure UM/UIM opportunities required by SB 131 are captured from the start. For toxic tort matters under SB 63, Supio helps detect missing bills or records before a deficiency becomes a procedural problem.

Speed as a Negotiating Tool

Defense teams use delay as leverage. Firms using AI to process records, build chronologies, and draft demands faster are able to move cases at their own pace.

> *"Cases that traditionally progressed at the defense's pace now moved at the firm's choosing. It sends a pretty clear message to defense teams and insurance companies: you're going to have to deal with this a lot faster than you thought."*
>
> **— Jay Stefani, Managing Partner, Levinson and Stefani [11]**

Intake: Where AI Creates the Most Leverage

Every opportunity above depends on what happens in the first 30 days. AI brings the full record into the intake decision. Supio's analysis surfaces permanent impairment markers, occupational impact signals, and liability complexity flags before the first real strategy conversation happens. The intake decision goes from a judgment call based on incomplete information to a recommendation grounded in what is actually in the file.

> *"Understanding the medicine and being able to ask questions and get that information without having to go to Google is huge. Having it right there next to the medical records is key to being a better lawyer for my clients."*
>
> **— Brian Galligan, President and Owner, Galligan Law [12]**

The Bottom Line for Ohio Firms in 2026

Ohio's PI market is structurally different from what it was five years ago. The potential recovery ceiling is rising. The constitutional arguments available to plaintiffs are expanding. The documentation requirements are increasing. And the AI tools needed to meet those requirements are available now.

The average Ohio PI verdict does not have to be your firm's average. Closing that gap requires doing something systematically different at intake and throughout case development. The law is creating the opportunity. AI is making it operationally achievable.

To see how Supio works with Ohio PI case types

supio.com | Book a demo today

[1] Ohio HB 447 Analysis, JD Supra [2] HB 447 Bill Text, Ohio Legislature [3] R.C. 2315.18, Ohio Revised Code [4] FMG Law: Is Ohio's Catastrophic Injury Limit Constitutional? [5] R.C. 2323.43, Ohio Revised Code [6] Reminger Co.: Medical Malpractice Cap Analysis [7] Ohio SB 131, LegiScan [8] Ohio SB 63, Secretary of State [9] Ohio Average PI Verdict Data, Lawsuit Information Center [10] Supio Platform [11] Levinson and Stefani Case Study, Supio [12] Galligan Law Case Study, Supio