

PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

Family Law in Champaign County

A plain-English map for divorce, dissolution, custody, support, and adoption in Urbana and across Champaign County: how the Family Court is set up, what to file, what it costs, and when to get help.

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- 01 See how Champaign County runs one Family Court for all of family law.

 - 02 Know the difference between dissolution, divorce, juvenile custody, and probate adoption.

 - 03 Find the right form, the deposit, and the local rules that trip people up.

 - 04 Pick a next step that fits your budget, your timeline, and how much conflict there is.

START HERE

Use this guide like a map, not a rulebook.

Family law gets easier once you name a few things: the court, the path, the paperwork, and your next step. This guide is built on those questions for Champaign County.

01

Which side of the court?

Champaign County has one Family Court with three sides. The Domestic Relations side hears divorce and dissolution. The Juvenile side handles custody for unmarried parents. The Probate side handles adoption.

02

Do we agree, or is there a fight?

Agreement changes everything. Dissolution and uncontested filings run on signed paperwork. If someone disagrees, misses deadlines, or safety is a worry, plan for a more protective path.

03

What should I gather first?

Gather any current orders and your income records. Add insurance details, the kids' birth certificates, school and parenting-time notes, and a short list of what you want the court to decide.

THIS GUIDE IS INFORMATION, NOT LEGAL ADVICE

It explains how things usually work in Champaign County. It cannot cover the facts of your case. Reading it, downloading it, or contacting Gavvl Law does not make you a client. Only a signed engagement agreement does that. For advice about your own case, talk with a licensed Ohio attorney.

ONE COURT, ONE ADDRESS

All three sides of the Family Court sit at 200 North Main Street in Urbana. Online case access is through the court's eServices site. Check the deposit and forms before you file.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Four parts: Domestic Relations (divorce and dissolution), Juvenile (unmarried parents), Probate (adoption), and how Gavvl can help. The full contents are on the next page.

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QUESTION ONE

Which side of the Family Court handles your case?

Champaign County is unusual. One Family Court handles divorce, juvenile custody, and adoption, all in one place. Start with the relationship, and with what you need a judge to decide.

MARRIED OR FORMERLY MARRIED

Domestic Relations side

Divorce, dissolution, legal separation, annulment, spousal support, and dividing property and debt.

WHO HEARS IT

Judges Gilbert and Reisinger.

PARENTS NEVER MARRIED

Juvenile side

Custody, parenting time, parentage, and child support for unmarried parents. Also abuse, neglect, and dependency.

WHO HEARS IT

The same two Family Court judges.

ADOPTION

Probate side

Stepparent, kinship, and adult adoption, plus name changes and guardianships.

WHO HEARS IT

The Family Court, Probate side.

One court, three sides

The Champaign County Family Court runs the Domestic Relations, Juvenile, and Probate sides from 200 North Main Street, 3rd floor, in Urbana. Judges Brett Gilbert and Lori Reisinger preside. Each side still uses its own forms and fees, so file on the right side for your case.

PART ONE

The Domestic Relations side ends marriages.

If you are married, ending the marriage runs through the Domestic Relations side of the Family Court. The first real question is simple: can both spouses sign a full agreement?

WHERE YOU FILE	DIVORCE	DISSOLUTION	RESIDENCY
Family Court Clerk	\$450	\$350	6 months in Ohio

QUICK PATHFINDER

Do you agree on everything?

If yes, dissolution may fit, and it costs less. If no, divorce is the safer or required path. Agreement means more than wanting the case over. It means signed terms on property, debt, support, and parenting.

Dissolution is built on agreement.

Both spouses file together. They ask the court to approve a signed Separation Agreement. The court holds a hearing 30 to 90 days later. Both spouses must appear and confirm the agreement.

Divorce is a lawsuit.

One spouse files against the other. Use it when you do not yet agree. Use it when you cannot find your spouse, or when you need the court to decide something.

THE DEPOSITS

A divorce, annulment, or legal separation costs \$450. A dissolution costs \$350. If you start a dissolution but stop agreeing, you can convert it to a divorce for \$100. The deposit goes toward your real costs, and the balance is billed or refunded at the end.

DISSOLUTION

The dissolution packet, step by step.

Dissolution uses Champaign County's own forms, which follow the Ohio Supreme Court format. Sign the Separation Agreement in front of a notary first. Then build the rest of the packet around it.

BOTH OF YOU MUST SHOW UP

A dissolution is fully agreed. You file together, and the court sets a hearing 30 to 90 days out. Both spouses must appear and affirm the agreement. Print the personal-identifier cover sheet single-sided, as the court requires.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Petition for Dissolution https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Both spouses sign; opens the joint case
Separation Agreement https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Your signed terms; notarize this first
Affidavit of Income and Expenses https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Each spouse files one
Affidavit of Property https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Lists what you own and owe
Parenting plan + support worksheet https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	With children; the plan and support math
Judgment Entry of Dissolution https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	The decree the court signs

WITH CHILDREN

What the entry must say

If you have children, the dissolution entry must set both a child support amount and a cash-medical amount, even if zero, with a guideline worksheet attached. Any difference from the guideline has to be explained.

ON PARENTING CLASSES

Champaign County has not published a required parenting class for every case. A judge may order one in a particular case. Ask the Clerk at (937) 484-1027 whether your case will need one.

DIVORCE

Filing a divorce when you do not agree.

Divorce is filed at the Family Court, on the Domestic Relations side. Champaign uses its own forms, which match the Ohio Supreme Court format. The financial and parenting affidavits go in with the Complaint.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Divorce https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Starts the lawsuit; with or without children
Affidavit of Income and Expenses https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Notarized; filed with the Complaint
Affidavit of Property https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Lists what you own and owe
Parenting affidavits https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	With children; parenting and insurance
Motion for Temporary Orders https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	File if you want orders during the case

Want orders during the case?

You can ask for temporary support or a parenting schedule while the divorce is pending. You file the Motion and Affidavit for Temporary Orders with your financial affidavits. See the next page for how it works.

ONE COURT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Because Champaign runs one Family Court, your divorce, any related juvenile matter, and a later adoption all live in the same court. That can make it easier to keep your case organized.

TEMPORARY ORDERS

Getting orders while the case runs.

A divorce can take months. Temporary orders set the rules in the meantime — things like temporary support or who stays in the home.

How you ask

You file the Motion and Affidavit for Temporary Orders along with your income and expense affidavit. The other party can file a counter-affidavit. The court can issue orders based on the affidavits, and it may set a hearing.

Confirm the timing

Champaign County does not publish a fixed deadline for the other party to respond, or a set hearing window. Confirm the current timing with the Clerk at (937) 484-1027 so you know what to expect.

IF YOU NEED PROTECTION RIGHT AWAY

A temporary order is not the fast path for an emergency. For immediate protection from violence or threats, file a protection order and ask for a same-day ex parte hearing. File as early in the day as you can; petitions filed after 3 p.m. are heard the next business day. If anyone is in danger right now, call 911.

CHILDREN

Custody, parenting time, and child support in a divorce.

Ohio uses specific words for custody. Champaign County also has a default parenting-time schedule for when parents cannot agree.

SOLE CUSTODY

Residential parent and legal custodian

One parent is the residential parent and legal custodian. The other parent usually has parenting time. Ohio does not use the words “full” or “primary” custody.

SHARED PARENTING

A shared parenting plan

Both parents share rights and duties under a written plan. Shared parenting is not the same as equal time. The schedule is whatever the plan or order says.

The standard schedule

If parents cannot agree, the court's Standard Order of Parenting Time sets a baseline: alternate weekends, a weeknight visit on the off weeks, split holidays, and four weeks each in the summer. Parents can agree to something else instead.

CHILD SUPPORT RUNS THROUGH THE CSEA

The Champaign County child support agency handles support. Reach it at (937) 484-1500. Support is collected by income withholding, and paid through the state, not directly between parents.

THE REST OF A DIVORCE

Spousal support, property, and other paths.

Beyond custody and child support, a divorce sorts out spousal support and divides what you own and owe.

Spousal support

The court can order one spouse to support the other for a set time. Ohio weighs income, the length of the marriage, health, and other factors. There is no fixed formula.

Property and debt

Ohio divides marital property and debt fairly. Fair does not always mean a 50-50 split. Property you brought into the marriage may count as separate.

Legal separation and annulment

Both are filed on the Domestic Relations side. The deposit is the same \$450 as a divorce. Annulment is rare and has narrow grounds.

A note on contested property

If a divorce becomes contested, the court will not pick through and divide your personal belongings for you. The local rules even allow a coin-flip selection at a final hearing in contested cases. Agreeing on the smaller items ahead of time saves time and stress.

AFTER THE DECREE

Changing or enforcing a Champaign County order.

Life changes after a case ends. To bring a new issue back to the court, you reopen the case that issued your decree.

REOPEN THE CASE**\$250**

To bring an issue not currently before the court

COUNTERCLAIM**\$100**

The other spouse's own claim in a divorce

CONVERT TO DIVORCE**\$100**

When a dissolution stops being fully agreed

Modifying and enforcing

To change custody or support, or to enforce an order, you reopen your original case. The deposit is \$250. Support changes can also start through the child support agency at (937) 484-1500.

MOVING WITH THE CHILDREN

The Standard Order says neither parent may permanently move the child out of the court's reach without first getting a hearing to adjust parenting time. Plan ahead and follow Ohio's relocation notice rules.

HELP ALONG THE WAY

Mediation, GALs, and parenting time.

Champaign County offers ways to settle disputes. It also offers ways to give the court good information about the children.

Mediation

The court can send a parenting dispute to mediation to help parents reach an agreement. Mediation is never used for a domestic violence case or to decide a protection order.

Guardians ad litem

The court can appoint a guardian ad litem to look into the children's needs and speak to their best interests in a contested case.

The standard schedule

The court's Standard Order of Parenting Time gives parents a clear default schedule to build from. It covers weekends, weeknights, holidays, and summer time.

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

Two minutes to a clear next step.

Gavvl's Find My Service quiz gives you a recommendation and your payment options. Or talk with our team about full or limited-scope help in Champaign County.

Find My Service · gavvl.com/find-my-service

Get started · gavvl.com/start

Call · (844) 694-2885

Email · support@gavvl.com

PROTECTION ORDERS

When safety comes first.

A domestic violence civil protection order (DVCPO) can order someone to stay away. It can also set temporary custody and possession of the home. Your safety drives the timeline.

FILING FEE	FILE EARLY	EX PARTE ORDER	FINAL ORDER
\$0 to petitioner	Before 3 p.m.	Same day	Up to 5 years

How it works here
 Protection order petitions are filed at the Family Court on the Domestic Relations side, under R.C. 3113.31. There is no fee. A deputy clerk can swear you in on the petition. File as early in the day as you can for a same-day ex parte hearing.

The timing rule
 If you file after 3 p.m., the ex parte hearing is held as soon as possible the next business day. A full hearing follows so both sides can be heard. A final order can last up to five years.

IF YOU ARE IN DANGER NOW
 If you or your children are in danger right now, call 911. A protection order is a civil court process, not an emergency response.

PART TWO

The Juvenile side is for parents who were never married.

Were the parents never married? Then custody, parenting time, and child support are decided on the Juvenile side of the Family Court.

Parentage comes first

In Ohio, the mother of a child born outside marriage is the only legal custodian until a court says otherwise. So a father usually has to prove he is the father first. You can do that by a signed form, through the child support agency, or by a court case.

Filing for custody as an unmarried parent

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Parentage and Custody https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Uniform Form 23	Sets parentage, custody, parenting time
Affidavit of Custody https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Required local affidavit with a custody filing
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required with a custody filing
Application for Child Support Services https://www.ccfamct.us	Champaign Family Court	Sets up the support case with the agency

COSTS AND A FEE TIP

A custody, parentage, or support case costs \$250 to file on the Juvenile side. A helpful rule: if all the children have the same mother and father and you file at the same time, you pay just one filing fee for all of them.

AFTER A JUVENILE ORDER

Changing orders and CPS cases.

Juvenile orders can change as children grow. Some cases move fast.

Modifying a juvenile order

To change custody, parenting time, or support, you file a motion on the Juvenile side. A motion for shared parenting or a contempt motion costs \$250. Support changes can also start through the agency at (937) 484-1500.

Abuse, neglect, and dependency

These CPS cases are heard on the Juvenile side. To report concerns about a child's safety, call (937) 484-1500 during the day, or county dispatch at (937) 653-3409 after hours. For immediate danger, call 911.

A SCHEDULING TIP

Initial custody filings must include an Affidavit of Custody and must list any existing support order, with a copy attached. Having those ready when you file keeps your case from stalling at the start.

PART THREE

Adoption is handled on the Probate side.

Stepparent and kinship adoptions go to the Probate side of the Family Court. Here is the basic shape and cost.

ADOPTION

\$200

The base filing fee for an adoption

EACH ADDITIONAL CHILD

+\$125

Added for each extra child in the petition

NAME CHANGE

\$125

Often done alongside an adoption

1

File the petition in Probate

File the Petition for Adoption of a Minor with the child's birth certificate and, for a stepparent, the marriage certificate. Print the forms single-sided, as the court requires.

2

Address consent

The other parent's consent is usually needed, and so is the child's if they are 12 or older. The court can waive a parent's consent for a year of no contact or support.

3

Complete the home study

Ohio adoption law usually calls for a home study. A stepparent case can have lighter requirements. Confirm what your case needs with the Probate clerk.

4

Attend the hearing

If the court says yes, it signs a final decree of adoption. A new birth record can follow.

PART FOUR

How Gavvl Law can help in Champaign County.

Gavvl is a modern Ohio family-law firm serving all 88 counties. We pair skilled lawyers with easy-to-use tech and clear pricing. You choose how much help you need.

FULL REPRESENTATION

An attorney handles the whole case

From the first consult through final orders: strategy, every filing, all court dates, and negotiating. Best for contested, complex, or high-conflict cases. Billed as a retainer plus hourly fees.

LIMITED-SCOPE (FLAT FEE)

Hire us for specific tasks

Pay a flat fee per service — drafting and filing, one hearing, advice, or document review. Best for uncontested cases and tighter budgets. Not built for high-conflict cases that need steady advocacy.

Ways to pay

Your options depend on the service model. Limited-scope work has the widest range: pay in full, Affirm, Klarna, or PayPal Pay Later. Gavvl Direct is an in-house plan with no credit check. Financed amounts carry 19% annual interest, compounded monthly. We work out your exact payment when you enroll.

START IN TWO MINUTES

Take the Find My Service quiz at gavvl.com/find-my-service. You get a recommendation and your payment options. Or call (844) 694-2885. Consultations are low-cost.

BEFORE YOU GO

Important disclosures.

Please read these notes about how to use this guide.

INFORMATION, NOT LEGAL ADVICE

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FEES AND PROCEDURES CHANGE

The court information in this guide was verified as of June 12, 2026 from official court sources. Court fees, forms, and procedures change. Always confirm current fees and requirements with the Champaign County Family Court before you file.

AWARDS AND REVIEWS

Any awards, ratings, and reviews reflect the experiences of other clients and the opinions of rating organizations. They are not a guarantee or prediction of the outcome of your case. Every case is different.

JURISDICTION AND RESPONSIBILITY

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