

PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

Family Law in Columbiana County

A plain-English map for divorce, dissolution, custody, support, and adoption in Lisbon and across Columbiana County. Learn which court handles your case, what to file, what it costs, and when to get help.

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- 01** See how Columbiana County handles family law across the Common Pleas Court.

 - 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 Columbiana County.

01

Which court handles this?

Married couples file divorce or dissolution in the Common Pleas Court. Unmarried parents file custody in the Juvenile Court. Adoptions go to the Probate Court. One judge leads both Juvenile and Probate.

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 Columbiana 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.

NO FAX FILING

Columbiana County does not accept fax filings. Divorce and dissolution can be filed in person, by mail, or through e-filing for registered users. Juvenile cases are filed in person or by mail only.

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 court is actually handling your case?

One family can touch more than one court. In Columbiana County they are parts of the Common Pleas Court in Lisbon. Start with the relationship, and with what you need a judge to decide.

MARRIED OR FORMERLY MARRIED

Common Pleas Court

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

WHERE

105 S. Market St., Lisbon.
(330) 424-7777.

PARENTS NEVER MARRIED

Juvenile Court

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

WHO HEARS IT

Judge Thomas M. Baronzzi.

ADOPTION

Probate Court

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

WHO HEARS IT

Judge Baronzzi, same as Juvenile.

Common Pleas, plus one combined division

Divorce and dissolution are heard in the Common Pleas Court, with magistrates handling much of the work. Unmarried-parent custody and adoption both run through one combined Probate and Juvenile Division under Judge Baronzzi. File with the right one for your case.

PART ONE

Divorce and dissolution run through the Common Pleas Court.

If you are married, ending the marriage runs through the Common Pleas Court. The first real question is simple: can both spouses sign a full agreement?

DIVORCE OR DISSOLUTION	POST-DECREE MOTION	WHERE YOU FILE	RESIDENCY
\$300	\$100	Common Pleas Clerk	6 months in Ohio

QUICK PATHFINDER

Do you agree on everything?

If yes, dissolution may fit. 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. The deposit is the same either way.

Dissolution is built on agreement.

Both spouses file together as co-petitioners. 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.

ONE FLAT DEPOSIT

A divorce or dissolution costs \$300 to file, with or without children. There is no higher fee for cases with children, though those cases need extra forms. One spouse must have lived in Ohio six months. You can file a dissolution directly, with no pre-filing approval.

DISSOLUTION

The dissolution packet, step by step.

Dissolution uses the Ohio Supreme Court forms plus a few local ones. Sign the Separation Agreement in front of a notary first. Then build the rest of the packet around it.

FILE DIRECTLY, THEN ATTEND THE HEARING

You can file a dissolution petition directly with the Common Pleas Clerk — no pre-filing court approval is needed. The hearing is 30 to 90 days out, and both spouses must appear and affirm they still want the dissolution on the agreed terms.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Petition for Dissolution https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Both spouses sign; opens the joint case
Separation Agreement https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Your signed terms; notarize this first
Financial Affidavit https://ccclerk.org/	Columbiana DR forms	Typed; each spouse's income and property
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; the UCCJEA affidavit
Parenting plan + IV-D application https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Columbiana DR forms	With children; the plan and support setup
Case Designation Sheet + Decree https://ccclerk.org/	Columbiana DR forms	Local cover sheet and the proposed judgment

GOOD TO KNOW**No required class here**

Many counties make divorcing parents take a class. Columbiana County does not require one in every case. A judge or magistrate can order a parenting class case by case if it would help.

MEDIATION

The court offers mediation to help settle parenting issues. It is never used for a domestic violence case or to decide a protection order, and an indigent party is not ordered to pay for it.

DIVORCE

Filing a divorce when you do not agree.

Divorce is filed with the Common Pleas Clerk of Courts. Columbiana uses the Ohio Supreme Court forms plus local affidavits, and a temporary order takes effect quickly.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Divorce https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Starts the lawsuit; with or without children
Financial Affidavit https://ccclerk.org/	Columbiana DR forms	Typed; your income and property
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; the UCCJEA affidavit
Proposed temporary order https://ccclerk.org/	Columbiana DR forms	The magistrate's temporary order to approve
Case Designation Sheet — DR https://ccclerk.org/	Columbiana DR forms	Local cover sheet filed with the case

A temporary order at filing

At filing, you submit a proposed temporary order for a magistrate to approve. It restrains both spouses from harassing each other and from hiding or selling marital assets while the case runs.

SUPPORT STARTS FAST

Temporary child support generally starts the first Friday after the complaint is filed. If incomes are not yet known, standard weekly amounts apply, paid through the state.

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 a parenting schedule.

Support the first Friday after filing

A Columbia feature worth knowing: temporary child support generally begins the first Friday after the complaint is filed. If incomes are not yet known, standard amounts apply — \$50, \$90, or \$125 a week for one, two, or three-plus children.

Who the children stay with

To keep things stable, temporary parenting usually stays with the parent who has the children at filing, and the other parent gets the county's standard companionship schedule, unless the court orders otherwise.

ASKING A SPOUSE TO LEAVE THE HOME

The court will order a spouse out of the marital home right away only in an unusual and extreme emergency, on a supporting affidavit, and it sets a hearing within 14 days. If you or your children are in danger right now, call 911.

CHILDREN

Custody, parenting time, and child support.

Ohio uses specific words for custody. Columbiana County uses a uniform companionship schedule and handles support through the county agency.

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 companionship schedule

When parents cannot agree, the court applies its Uniform Local Companionship Plan as the default parenting-time schedule. Parents are free to agree on their own plan instead, which the court will usually approve.

CHILD SUPPORT RUNS THROUGH THE CSEA

The Columbiana County child support agency handles support. Reach it at (330) 424-1479. Support is set under Ohio's guidelines, collected by income withholding, and paid through the state.

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 in the Common Pleas Court for the same \$300 deposit. Legal separation sets terms without ending the marriage. Annulment is rare and has narrow grounds.

A note on dividing retirement

If a divorce divides a pension or retirement account, it takes a separate order called a QDRO, which costs \$60 to file here. Getting the wording right matters, and a mistake can cost real money later, so many people use a lawyer for this step.

AFTER THE DECREE

Changing or enforcing a Columbiana County order.

Life changes after a case ends. Post-decree motions stay in the same Common Pleas case that issued your decree.

POST-DECREE MOTION**\$100**

To modify or enforce an order after the decree

FILE A QDRO**\$60**

To split a retirement account after the decree

SERVICE BY PUBLICATION**\$650**

When the other party cannot be found

Modifying and enforcing

To change custody or support, or to enforce an order, you file a post-decree motion for \$100. Support changes can also start through the county agency at (330) 424-1479.

TEMPORARY-MATTER MOTIONS MOVE FIRST

If you file a motion about a temporary matter during a case, the court gives it priority on the hearing schedule. A change to temporary support can even be made back-dated to when the temporary order was filed.

HELP ALONG THE WAY

Mediation, GALs, and parenting classes.

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

Mediation

The court offers mediation to help parents reach an agreement. It is never used for a domestic violence case or to decide a protection order, and an indigent party is not ordered to pay for it.

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.

Parenting classes

There is no class required in every case. A judge or magistrate can order one case by case. If ordered, you arrange and pay for it, then file your certificate.

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 Columbiana 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 support. Your safety drives the timeline.

FILING FEE	WHERE	EX PARTE ORDER	FULL HEARING
\$0 to petitioner	Common Pleas Clerk	Same day	About 7–10 days

How it works here

A protection order is filed on the domestic relations side of the Common Pleas Court under R.C. 3113.31. There is no fee, and the clerks can help you fill out the petition. The court can issue a same-day ex parte order if there is immediate danger.

After you file

The Sheriff serves the order and enters it into the law enforcement databases. A full hearing follows, usually within about 7 to 10 days, where both sides are 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 Court is for parents who were never married.

Were the parents never married? Then custody, parenting time, and child support are decided in the Juvenile Court, before Judge Baronzzi.

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/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Uniform Form 23	Sets parentage, custody, parenting time
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required with a custody filing
Child support worksheet https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required when support is at issue
Application for Child Support https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Juvenile Court or CSEA	Sets up the support case with the agency

A PER-CHILD FEE, FILED ON PAPER

The Juvenile Court charges a flat fee of \$120 for the first child and \$75 for each additional child. The Juvenile side has no e-filing — file in person or by mail with original signatures. The Juvenile Center is at 260 W. Lincoln Way, (330) 424-4071.

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 in the existing case, on paper. The per-child fee applies. Support changes can also start through the agency at (330) 424-1479.

Abuse, neglect, and dependency

These CPS cases are heard in the Juvenile Court. The court can appoint a guardian ad litem to speak for the child. To report concerns, call the county hotline at (330) 420-6600. For immediate danger, call 911.

A NOTE ON PARENTING CLASSES HERE TOO

In a juvenile custody or parentage case, the court may order a parenting class case by case. If ordered and not completed, the court can withhold companionship time until you file the certificate.

PART THREE

Adoption is handled by the Probate Court.

Stepparent and kinship adoptions go to the Probate Court, before Judge Baronzzi, who also leads the Juvenile Court. Here is the basic shape.

A \$200 DEPOSIT AND A COURT ASSESSOR

An adoption deposit is \$200 per child, filed on the Probate side at 105 S. Market Street, (330) 424-9516. The court appoints an assessor who does a home visit and interviews before the hearing, so plan for that step.

1

File the petition in Probate

File the Ohio Petition for Adoption of a Minor. Add the child's birth certificate. For a stepparent, add the marriage certificate too. The court has a checklist for each adoption type.

2

Address consent

The other parent usually must consent, signed no more than 90 days before filing. A court can excuse consent in some cases, such as a year of no contact or support. A child 12 or older also consents.

3

Complete the home study

The court's assessor completes a home study and medical and social histories. A stepparent case can be simpler. Plan for a home visit and interviews.

4

Attend the hearing

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

PART FOUR

How Gavvl Law can help in Columbiana 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 15, 2026 from official court sources. Court fees, forms, and procedures change. Always confirm current fees and requirements with the Columbiana County courts 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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