

## PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

# Family Law in Meigs County

A plain-English map for divorce, dissolution, custody, support, and adoption in Pomeroy and across Meigs 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 Meigs County handles family law across the Common Pleas Court.

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

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

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

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## 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 Meigs 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 Meigs 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.

### SOME ORDERS START THE DAY YOU FILE

In a divorce here, temporary custody and restraining orders can take effect the moment you file, while other temporary orders start 14 days after the other side is served. More on that inside.

### 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.

**INSIDE THIS GUIDE**

Use this guide like a map, not a rulebook.	2
Which court is actually handling your case?	4
Divorce and dissolution run through the Common Pleas Court.	5
The dissolution packet, step by step.	6
Filing a divorce when you do not agree.	8
Getting orders while the case runs.	9
Custody, parenting time, and child support.	10
Spousal support, property, and other paths.	11
Changing or enforcing a Meigs County order.	12
Mediation, GALs, and parenting time.	13
When safety comes first.	14
The Juvenile Court is for parents who were never married.	15
Filing for custody as an unmarried parent	15
Changing orders and CPS cases.	16
Adoption is handled by the Probate Court.	17
How Gavvl Law can help in Meigs County.	18
Important disclosures.	19

## QUESTION ONE

# Which court is actually handling your case?

One family can touch more than one court. In Meigs County they are parts of the Common Pleas Court in Pomeroy. 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.

**WHO HEARS IT**

Judge Linda R. Warner. (740) 992-6419.

**PARENTS NEVER MARRIED**

## Juvenile Court

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

**WHO HEARS IT**

Judge L. Scott Powell.

**ADOPTION**

## Probate Court

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

**WHO HEARS IT**

Judge Powell, same as Juvenile.

### One Common Pleas Court, three roles

Divorce and dissolution are heard in the General Division before Judge Warner, and filed through the Clerk of Courts. Unmarried-parent custody and adoption both run through the combined Probate and Juvenile Court under Judge Powell. 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?

ALL DR FILINGS	REOPEN	WHERE YOU FILE	RESIDENCY
\$500	\$300	Clerk of Courts	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.

## THE DEPOSIT

A divorce, dissolution, legal separation, or annulment each costs \$500 to file, as does a new parenting case for married but separated parents. You can ask the court to waive the deposit if you cannot afford it. One spouse must have lived in Ohio six months.

## 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 JOINTLY, THEN ATTEND THE HEARING

Both spouses file the joint petition with the signed Separation Agreement and pay the \$500 deposit. The hearing is held 30 to 90 days later, and both spouses must appear and confirm they still agree.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
<a href="#">Petition for Dissolution</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Both spouses sign; opens the joint case
<a href="#">Separation Agreement</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Your signed terms; notarize this first
<a href="#">Income &amp; Expenses (Form 24.02 A-1)</a> <a href="https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/">https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/</a>	Meigs DR forms	Each spouse's finances
<a href="#">Parenting plan</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; shared or sole plan
<a href="#">Child support worksheet (Form 24.02 C)</a> <a href="https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/">https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/</a>	Meigs DR forms	With children; the support math
<a href="#">Child Custody Affidavit (Form 24.02 E)</a> <a href="https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/">https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/</a>	Meigs DR forms	With children; the custody affidavit

**GOOD TO KNOW****Is a class required?**

The Meigs County rules do not name a mandatory parenting class the way some larger counties do. A judge can still order parenting education in a case, so confirm the current requirement with the court.

**IF YOU STOP AGREEING**

A dissolution only works if both spouses agree all the way through the hearing. If you cannot agree, either spouse can convert the case to a divorce so the court can decide the open issues.

## DIVORCE

# Filing a divorce when you do not agree.

Divorce is filed with the Common Pleas Clerk of Courts. Meigs uses the Ohio Supreme Court forms plus a few local ones, and some orders start the day you file.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
<a href="#">Complaint for Divorce</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Starts the lawsuit; with or without children
<a href="#">Income &amp; Expenses (Form 24.02 A-1)</a> <a href="https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/">https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/</a>	Meigs DR forms	Your financial picture
<a href="#">Parenting Proceeding Affidavit</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; the UCCJEA affidavit
<a href="#">Child support worksheet (Form 24.02 C)</a> <a href="https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/">https://meigscommonpleascourt.com/</a>	Meigs DR forms	With children; the support math
<a href="#">Motion for Temporary Orders</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	File if you want orders during the case

## Restraining orders are mutual

When the court issues a restraining order in a divorce, it binds both spouses. The court will, on request, order both sides not to commit violence or get rid of assets while the case is pending.

## WHEN ORDERS TAKE EFFECT

Temporary custody and restraining orders can take effect the moment you file. Other temporary orders take effect 14 days after the other side is served. Each order says which parts start right away.

## 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.

## How you ask

You file a motion with a sworn affidavit showing why you need the order. The court can grant temporary custody, support, and orders restraining violence or the disposal of assets, sometimes the same day you file.

## When they start, how to object

Temporary custody and restraining orders start immediately on filing. Other temporary orders start 14 days after service. To object, you file a motion and counter-affidavit within 14 days.

## A COUPLE OF LIMITS

If both spouses already have lawyers, the court will not issue an order without notice to the other side. If your situation involves a child's immediate danger, call 911 and Children's Services; emergency child cases are handled in the Juvenile Court.

## CHILDREN

# Custody, parenting time, and child support.

Ohio uses specific words for custody. Meigs County leans on a standard visitation 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 standard schedule

When parents cannot agree, the court uses its Standard Visitation Schedule as the default. It asks parents to keep conflict low and stay flexible as the child grows. Parents can agree to their own plan instead.

**CHILD SUPPORT RUNS THROUGH THE CSEA**

The Meigs County child support agency handles support, with no filing fee. 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 \$500 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 usually takes a separate order to split it with the plan. 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 Meigs County order.

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

**REOPEN A CASE****\$300**

The deposit for a post-decree motion

**CROSS-CLAIM IN A DIVORCE****\$250**

The other spouse's own claim

**CROSS-CLAIM IN A PARENTING CASE****\$150**

The other party's own claim

**Modifying and enforcing**

To change custody or support, or to enforce an order, you file a motion to reopen the case for a \$300 deposit. Support changes can also start through the county child support agency.

**IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD THE DEPOSIT**

You can file a poverty affidavit asking the court to waive prepayment of the deposit. Bring honest income and expense details so the court can decide.

## HELP ALONG THE WAY

# Mediation, GALs, and parenting time.

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

## Mediation

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

## Guardians ad litem

In a private custody or parenting case, the court can appoint a guardian ad litem, with a \$1,500 deposit at the time the motion is filed, to speak to the children's best interests.

## Standard Visitation Schedule

The court's schedule sets a default for parenting time when parents do not agree, and asks them to keep conflict low and support the child's bond with both parents.

## 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 Meigs County.

Find My Service · [gavvl.com/find-my-service](https://gavvl.com/find-my-service)

Get started · [gavvl.com/start](https://gavvl.com/start)

Call · (844) 694-2885

Email · [support@gavvl.com](mailto:support@gavvl.com)

PROTECTION ORDERS

# When safety comes first.

A domestic violence civil protection order can order someone to stay away. It can also set temporary custody and support. Your safety drives the timeline.

FILING FEE	FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD	SOMEONE ELSE	FINAL ORDER
\$0 to petitioner	DVCPO	Stalking order	Up to 5 years

**How it works here**  
 A protection order against a family or household member is filed with the Common Pleas Clerk under R.C. 3113.31, with no fee or bond. The court can issue a same-day ex parte order, then hold a full hearing in about 7 to 10 court days.

**Help and a key difference**  
 For someone who is not a family or household member, a stalking order is used instead. The statewide domestic violence hotline is 1-800-799-7233, and Meigs County Victim's Assistance is at (740) 992-1720.

**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. A final order can last up to five years.

## 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 Powell.

## 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
<a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">Complaint for Parentage and Custody</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Meigs Juvenile Court	Sets parentage, custody, parenting time
<a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">Parenting Proceeding Affidavit</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required with a custody filing
<a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">Child support worksheet</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required when support is at issue
<a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">Application for Child Support</a> <a href="https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1">https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</a>	Juvenile Court or CSEA	Sets up the support case with the agency

### THE DEPOSITS

A custody, visitation, or paternity filing costs \$125, and a new juvenile action carries a \$124 security deposit. The Probate and Juvenile Court is at 112 East Memorial Drive, (740) 992-6205. There is no fee for a child support agency case.

## 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. Support changes can also start through the county child support agency, which charges no filing fee.

## Abuse, neglect, and dependency

These CPS cases are heard in the Juvenile Court, with no deposit to file. The court can appoint a guardian ad litem to speak for the child. To report concerns, call the hotline at 1-855-642-4453, or 911 for danger.

## A NOTE ON RECORDINGS

The Juvenile Court charges a \$25 audio-recording fee per hearing, added to court costs unless waived. Ask the court how to request a recording or a transcript if you need one for an appeal.

## PART THREE

# Adoption is handled by the Probate Court.

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

## CONFIRM THE ADOPTION DEPOSIT

The Probate rules list an adoption deposit but tell filers to call the deputy clerk for the current amount, so confirm it at (740) 992-6205. For reference, a name change is \$225 and a petition to release adoption information is \$50.

1

### File the petition in Probate

File the Ohio Petition for Adoption of a Minor, plus the county's New Case Information Statement. Add the child's birth certificate, and a marriage certificate for a stepparent.

2

### Address consent

Each living birth parent usually must consent. A court can excuse consent in some cases, such as a year of no contact or support without good reason. A child 12 or older also consents.

3

### Complete the home study

Depending on the type of adoption, an assessment or home study may be required. A stepparent adoption is often streamlined. The court sets what your case needs.

4

### Attend the hearing

If the court finds the adoption is in the child's best interest, Judge Powell signs a final decree of adoption. A new birth record can follow.

## PART FOUR

# How Gavvl Law can help in Meigs 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](https://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**

This guide explains how things generally work in Meigs County, but it cannot account for the facts of your case. Reading it, downloading it, or contacting Gavvl Law does not make you a client or create an attorney-client relationship. Only a signed engagement agreement does that. For advice about your own situation, talk with a licensed Ohio attorney.

**FEES AND PROCEDURES CHANGE**

The court information in this guide was verified as of June 16, 2026 from official court sources. Court fees, forms, and procedures change. Always confirm current fees and requirements with the Meigs 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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