

PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

Family Law in Miami County

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

-
- 01** See how Miami County handles family law across its courts.

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

 - 03** Find the right local form, the deposit, and the 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 Miami 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 Miami 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.

DIVORCE FILINGS ARE E-FILED NOW

Miami County requires e-filing for domestic relations cases as of June 2026. Protection orders and a few other filings are still on paper. The e-file system collects the deposit when you submit.

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, the seminar, and child support.	10
Spousal support, property, and other paths.	11
Changing or enforcing a Miami County order.	12
Mediation, GALs, and the seminar.	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 Miami County.	18
Important disclosures.	19

QUESTION ONE

Which court is actually handling your case?

One family can touch more than one court. In Miami County, divorce sits downtown in Troy and the juvenile work is at a separate building. 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

Judges Jeannine Pratt & Stacy Wall.

PARENTS NEVER MARRIED

Juvenile Court

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

WHERE

2040 N. County Rd 25-A.
(937) 440-5970.

ADOPTION

Probate Court

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

WHO HEARS IT

Judge Scott Altenburger.

Three courts, two buildings

Divorce and dissolution are heard in the Common Pleas Court at 215 W. Main Street, before Judges Pratt and Wall. The Probate Court is in the same building, and the Juvenile Court is at 2040 North County Road 25-A. Judge Altenburger leads both Juvenile and Probate.

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?

FILING	WHERE YOU FILE	PARENT CLASS	RESIDENCY
E-file required	Clerk of Courts	Required	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.

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.

CONFIRM THE DEPOSIT WITH THE CLERK

Miami County collects the divorce and dissolution deposit through its e-file system rather than posting a flat amount, so confirm the current deposit with the Clerk of Courts at (937) 440-6046. You can ask the court to waive it if you cannot afford it. One spouse must have lived in Ohio six months.

DISSOLUTION

The dissolution packet, step by step.

Dissolution uses Miami County's own local forms, posted by case type. 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 the required Appendix A packet. The hearing is held 30 to 90 days later, and both spouses must appear. With children, finish the parenting seminar first.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Petition for Dissolution (Form 17) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Form17_Petition_for_Dissolution_With_At_Least_One_Minor_Child.pdf	Miami DR forms	Both spouses sign; opens the joint case
Separation Agreement (Form 19) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Form19_separation_aggreement_At_least_one_minor_child.pdf	Miami DR forms	Your signed terms; notarize this first
Shared Parenting Plan (Form 20) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/SHARED-PARENTING-PLAN-FORM-20_202106131021541827.pdf	Miami DR forms	With children; the parenting plan
IV-D Application https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/IV-D-Application-Form-NEW_201305201158232808.pdf	Miami DR forms	With children; required before support
Decree of Dissolution (Form 18) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Form18_Judgment_Entry_Decree_of_Dissolution.pdf	Miami DR forms	The judgment the court signs

REQUIRED**The parenting seminar**

With children, both parents complete Helping Children Succeed After Divorce before the decree is filed. It is held on Wednesday mornings and lasts about two and a half hours. You are scheduled at the start of the case.

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 e-filed with the Clerk of Courts. Miami County posts its own forms by case type, and there are two complaint forms depending on whether you have children.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint, no children (Form 6) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Form6_Complaint-for-Divorce-Legal-Separation-or-Annulment.pdf	Miami DR forms	Divorce, legal separation, or annulment
Complaint, with children (Form 7) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Form7_Complaint_for_Divorce_Legal_Separation_Custody_and_or_Child_Support.pdf	Miami DR forms	Divorce with custody and/or support
Affidavit 5 (Temporary Orders) https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Affidavit5-Motion-and-Affidavit-or-Counter-Affidavit-for-Temporary-Orders-Without-Oral-Hearing.pdf	Miami DR forms	File if you want orders during the case
Standard Parenting Time Order https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/L.R.-8.021-MAY-2019.W-FINALpdf-1.pdf	Miami DR forms	The default schedule, under 90 miles apart
All DR forms by case type https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/domestic-relations-forms/	Miami DR forms index	The county's full forms library

Two parenting-time schedules

Miami County publishes a Standard Parenting Time Order for parents who live under 90 miles apart, and a separate one for parents over 90 miles apart. The court uses the right one as a default when parents do not agree.

COPIES AND THE CHECKLIST

Bring the original plus four copies when there are children, or three copies when there are none. Every filing also needs the Appendix A checklist, or the Clerk will reject it.

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 Affidavit 5, the motion and affidavit for temporary orders without an oral hearing, with a proposed Magistrate's Order. If you do not submit the proposed order, the court dismisses the motion. The magistrate then sets temporary custody and support.

Restraining orders

A temporary restraining order is a separate motion, backed by an affidavit sworn to absolutely. If it has merit, the judge or magistrate can grant it the same day, and the Clerk serves a copy on the other spouse.

IF YOU DISAGREE, AND EMERGENCIES

A party who disagrees with a temporary order can request a hearing as the rule provides; confirm the exact time limit with the court. If a child is in immediate danger, contact law enforcement and Children's Services. If anyone is in danger now, call 911.

CHILDREN

Custody, the seminar, and child support.

Ohio uses specific words for custody. Miami County requires a parenting seminar 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 parenting seminar

Helping Children Succeed After Divorce is required for parents in a divorce, dissolution, or paternity case with children under 18. Finish it within 45 days of service, or before a dissolution decree. Skipping it can hold up your case.

CHILD SUPPORT RUNS THROUGH THE CSEA

The Miami County child support agency handles support. Support is set under Ohio's guidelines, collected by income withholding, and paid through the state. There is no agency filing fee.

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, using Form 6 or Form 7. 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, filed on paper here rather than e-filed. 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 Miami County order.

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

Modifying an order

To change custody, parenting time, or support, you file a post-decree motion with the updated affidavits the county provides for post-decree cases. Support changes can also start through the county child support agency.

Enforcing an order

If the other parent ignores an order, you can file a Motion for Contempt, Form 24, with the Show Cause Order, Form 25. The court can order compliance and, in some cases, award attorney fees.

USE THE POST-DECREE FORMS

Miami County posts separate post-decree versions of the income, parenting, and health-insurance affidavits. Using the right versions keeps your motion from being delayed or rejected.

HELP ALONG THE WAY

Mediation, GALs, and the seminar.

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

Mediation

The court can refer parents to mediation to help them reach an agreement on parenting and other issues. It 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 parenting seminar

Helping Children Succeed After Divorce is a short Wednesday morning class that teaches parents how to lower conflict and protect their children during a case.

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 Miami 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 can order someone to stay away. It can also set temporary custody and support. Your safety drives the timeline.

FILING FEE	HOW TO FILE	EX PARTE ORDER	FINAL ORDER
\$0 to petitioner	Paper	Same day	Up to 5 years

How it works here
 A protection order against a family or household member is filed on paper with the Clerk of Courts 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.

Forms and a key difference
 Use the statewide protection-order forms. 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.

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 Altenburger.

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 Custody (Juv. Form 16) <small>https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/forms-center/</small>	Miami Forms Center	Sets parentage, custody, parenting time
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit <small>https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/forms-center/</small>	Miami Forms Center	Required with a custody filing
Caretaker Authorization Affidavit <small>https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/forms-center/</small>	Miami Forms Center	Short-term care by a relative
Grandparent Power of Attorney <small>https://www.miamicountyohio.gov/forms-center/</small>	Miami Forms Center	Limited to grandparents

A PER-CHILD FEE

A paternity, custody, or visitation filing costs \$135 per child, due at filing. The Juvenile Court is at 2040 North County Road 25-A, (937) 440-5970. 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. The court can appoint a guardian ad litem to speak for the child. To report concerns, call the Children's Services Board or the hotline at 1-855-642-4453. For danger, call 911.

KINSHIP CAREGIVERS HAVE OPTIONS

A relative caring for a child can use a Caretaker Authorization Affidavit or a Grandparent Power of Attorney, both in the county Forms Center, for short-term needs like school and medical care, without a full custody case.

PART THREE

Adoption is handled by the Probate Court.

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

THE DEPOSIT, AND A NICE TOUCH

A stepparent or grandparent adoption deposit is \$300, plus \$165 for each additional child. Filed at 215 W. Main Street, (937) 440-6050. Families are even allowed to photograph the adoption hearing without asking first.

1

File the petition in Probate

File the Ohio Petition for Adoption of a Minor, on the Supreme Court forms the Probate Court accepts. Add the child's birth certificate, and a marriage certificate for a stepparent.

2

Address consent

The child's parents 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, it signs a final decree of adoption. A new birth record follows.

PART FOUR

How Gavvl Law can help in Miami 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

This guide explains how things generally work in Miami 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 Miami 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

Gavvl Law attorneys are licensed to practice law in Ohio. This guide describes Ohio law and Miami County procedure only. Advertising material. Gavvl Law LLC, 1677 Old Henderson Road, Columbus, Ohio 43220. Attorney responsible for content: Stephanie Green, Esq., Managing Partner. Privacy: gavvl.com/privacy-policy.