

PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

Family Law in Pike County

A plain-English map to divorce, dissolution, custody, support, protection orders, and adoption in Pike County: which court handles your issue, where to file, what it costs, and when to ask for help.

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- 01** Find the right Pike County court — and the right building — before you fill out a single form.

 - 02** Tell dissolution, divorce, juvenile custody, and adoption apart.

 - 03** See the exact forms, fees, and filing steps that trip people up in Waverly — and the items you'll need to confirm with the court.

 - 04** Pick a next step that fits your situation, budget, and timeline.

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START HERE

Use this guide like a map, not a law textbook.

Family-law problems get easier the moment you can name the court, the paperwork, and your next decision. Pike County has no separate divorce court, and its family-law courts sit in two different buildings — so step one is knowing which is yours.

01

Married, or ending a marriage?

Divorce, dissolution, legal separation, annulment, and protection orders are the Common Pleas Court, General Division (Judge Rob Junk), at the courthouse on East Second Street.

02

Parents who were never married?

Custody, parenting time, parentage, and support for unmarried parents are the Juvenile & Probate Court (Judge Paul Price), at the Government Center.

03

Adopting a stepchild or relative?

Adoption is also the Juvenile & Probate Court (Judge Price), which has the only authority to finalize adoptions in Pike County.

READ THIS FIRST

This guide is information, not legal advice.

It explains how things generally work in Pike County, but it can't account for the facts of your situation. 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 case, talk with a licensed Ohio attorney.

PIKE COUNTY COURTS

No separate divorce court, and two buildings.

Pike County family law is split between two Common Pleas courts in different buildings in Waverly. There's no standalone domestic-relations court; the trick is matching your case to the right division.

YOUR MATTER	COURT	WHERE / CONTACT
Divorce, dissolution, legal separation, annulment, protection orders	Common Pleas, General Division Judge Junk	100 E. Second St. Clerk (740) 947-2212
Custody, parenting time, parentage, and support for unmarried parents; non-parent custody	Juvenile & Probate Court Judge Price	230 Waverly Plaza #600 (740) 947-5914
Abuse, neglect, or dependency (children services) cases	Juvenile & Probate Court Judge Price	230 Waverly Plaza #600 (740) 947-5914
Stepparent and kinship adoption	Juvenile & Probate Court Judge Price	230 Waverly Plaza #600 (740) 947-2560

HOW THE COURTS WORK

One judge runs both juvenile and probate matters.

Pike County has no separate domestic-relations court — divorce is heard by the General Division (Judge Junk), whose Domestic Assignment Commissioner schedules divorce, custody, and protection-order cases. A separate combined Juvenile & Probate Court (Judge Price, who serves as both judge and clerk) handles the rest.

PLAN AHEAD ON THIS ONE

Divorce filing fees aren't posted online.

The General Division doesn't publish its divorce, dissolution, or post-decree filing deposits on its website. Call the Clerk of Courts at (740) 947-2212 for the current amount before you file — and ask whether any local cover sheet is required. A fee waiver is available if you can't pay.

PIKE COUNTY COURTS

Child support, child safety, and filing notes.

A few things to know before you file, plus the numbers that matter most for children.

MONEY FOR THE KIDS

Child support — Pike County CSEA

Child-support enforcement runs through Pike County Job & Family Services, not the court; confirm the current CSEA phone with the agency. The statewide calculator estimates the guideline number, and a Title IV-D application is part of any case with children.

IF A CHILD MAY BE UNSAFE

Reporting abuse or neglect

The Ohio 24-hour hotline is 1-855-642-4453 (1-855-O-H-CHILD), which routes to Pike County Children Services. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

HOW PIKE COUNTY TAKES FILINGS

Two buildings, and e-filing on the probate side.

Divorce and dissolution are filed with the Clerk of Courts at the courthouse (100 E. Second St.). Juvenile and adoption matters are at the Government Center (230 Waverly Plaza, Suite 600), open 8:30–4:00 (closed 12–1); the Probate Court accepts e-filing through Henschen, and Juvenile takes online payments.

Divorce / dissolution	confirm with Clerk
Juvenile new case	\$128
Adoption court costs	\$150
Fee too high?	fee-waiver forms available

PART ONE

Domestic Relations: the married-couple court.

If you are married and ending it, the General Division handles your case — filed with the Clerk of Courts at the courthouse. It also issues protection orders. This part walks through each path in the order most people meet them.

COURT	JUDGE	WHERE	FILE WITH
General Division	Rob Junk	100 E. Second St.	Clerk of Courts

A SCHEDULING NOTE THAT HELPS

A Domestic Assignment Commissioner handles your dates.

The General Division staffs a Domestic Assignment Commissioner specifically for divorce, child-custody, and protection-order scheduling. When you have a question about a hearing date in a married-couple case, that's who the Clerk's office will point you to, at (740) 947-2212.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Dissolution: the fully agreed way to end a marriage.

A dissolution is the no-fault path for couples who agree on everything. You both sign a full agreement, file a joint petition, and appear together at a short hearing. No one is served, and there are no fault grounds to prove.

COURT	FILING FEE	HEARING WINDOW	SERVICE
General Division	confirm with Clerk	30–90 days	None — joint filing

This path may fit if...

- You both agree the marriage should end.
- Property, debt, support, and parenting are already settled in writing.
- You will both sign the paperwork and attend the final hearing.

Watch the agreement, not just the forms.
 A clean-looking packet can still cause years of trouble if retirement, taxes, the house, debt, insurance, or parenting terms are vague. The court can approve terms that are clear enough to enforce, even when they are not good terms for you.

Core filing	Petition for Dissolution (SCOO SF 17)
Agreement	Separation Agreement (SF 19)
Decree	Decree of Dissolution (SF 18)
If minor children	Parenting plan + support figures
Final step	Hearing where you both confirm the deal

THE STATUTORY TIMELINE
Hearing 30 to 90 days after filing.
 Ohio law sets the dissolution hearing not less than 30 nor more than 90 days after filing. Both spouses attend and affirm the agreement is fair and voluntary; ask the Clerk how Pike County schedules the date.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Divorce: are you starting it, or responding to it?

Divorce does not always mean a trial. It means one spouse files, the other is served, and the court sets a structure. Your very first move depends on which side of that you are on.

A

You are starting the divorce

You must have lived in Ohio at least six months. You prepare the Complaint for Divorce on the Ohio Supreme Court forms, with the income and property affidavits (and parenting affidavit and plan if you have children), and file with the Clerk of Courts.

B

You were served with divorce papers

Read the first page for your answer deadline. You generally have 28 days from service to file an Answer (and a Counterclaim if you want your own requests). Missing it can let the case proceed without your input.

COURT	RESIDENCY	ANSWER DEADLINE	FILING FEE
General Division	6 months in Ohio	28 days	confirm with Clerk

TWO WORDS PEOPLE MIX UP

“Uncontested” divorce is not a dissolution.

An uncontested divorce is still a divorce one spouse files — it just proceeds default-style because the other spouse can't be found or won't take part, with service by posting or publication. A dissolution is a fully agreed joint filing with no one served. If you and your spouse agree on everything, a dissolution is usually the simpler route.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

What do I fill out, and where do I get it?

The General Division doesn't post its own divorce packet, so Pike County filers use the Ohio Supreme Court Uniform Domestic Relations forms. Confirm any local cover sheet with the Clerk.

FORM (TAP TO OPEN)	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Divorce With Children (SF 7) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/JCS/CFC/DRForms/Form7.pdf	Ohio Supreme Court (Uniform DR form)	The pleading that starts a divorce involving minor children
<p>△ Heads up: There's a without-children version (SF 6) and matching answer, counterclaim, and decree forms in the statewide set.</p>		
Affidavit 1 — Basic Information, Income and Expenses https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/JCS/CFC/DRForms/Affidavit1.pdf	Ohio Supreme Court (Uniform DR form)	Your finances; filed with the complaint
Affidavit 2 — Property and Debt https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/JCS/CFC/DRForms/Affidavit2.pdf	Ohio Supreme Court (Uniform DR form)	Your property and debts; filed with the complaint
Civil Fee Waiver Affidavit and Order https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/docs/JCS/courtSvcs/justiceAccess/resources/CivilFeeWaiver.pdf	Ohio Supreme Court	Ask the court to waive the filing deposit if you can't pay
All Ohio Uniform Domestic Relations Forms https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court (forms index)	Complaints, answers, dissolution petition, parenting plans, decrees
<p>△ Heads up: Confirm the current filing deposit and any local cover sheet with the Clerk of Courts, (740) 947-2212.</p>		

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

What does a Pike County divorce look like?

Most divorces settle. The steps below are the path the court sets in motion once you file, whether or not you ever reach a trial.

WHEN DIVORCE IS THE RIGHT TOOL

You need a deadline, a temporary order, information, or a judge's decision.

Divorce is often the necessary path when a spouse won't sign, money is unclear, parenting time is disputed, or someone needs the court to act before everything is settled.

Residency	6 months in Ohio
Answer deadline	28 days after service
Parenting class	confirm with the Clerk
Filing fee	confirm with the Clerk

1

Confirm residency, then file and pay. Confirm the six-month Ohio residency, file the complaint and affidavits with the Clerk, and pay the deposit (confirm the amount), or request a fee waiver.

2

Serve your spouse
Usually by certified mail; by sheriff or process server if needed; or by posting or publication if your spouse can't be found (the default-style path).

3

Temporary orders, if you need them
Either spouse can ask for temporary custody, support, or use of the home while the case is pending, using the temporary-orders motion and affidavit.

4

Parenting class, if ordered
With children, confirm with the Clerk whether the court orders a parenting class, which provider is approved, and the deadline (it isn't posted online).

5

Settle or go to hearing
If contested: pretrials, possible mediation, then trial before the judge or magistrate. If default-style: a short hearing on your evidence. The judge signs the decree.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Legal separation and annulment: the other two doors.

Not every case is a divorce. Two less-common paths solve different problems, and both are filed in the General Division through the Clerk of Courts.

Legal separation (R.C. 3105.17)

A court divides property, sets support, and orders parenting — but you stay legally married. People choose it for religious, insurance, or personal reasons. It mirrors a divorce in structure, and you don't have to meet the six-month divorce residency rule (confirm venue with the Clerk). It can later lead to a divorce or dissolution.

Annulment (R.C. 3105.31)

A court declares a marriage was never valid on a specific ground — such as bigamy, being underage, fraud, force, incapacity, or non-consummation. A short marriage is not, by itself, a ground; annulments are usually attorney-drafted because the proof is technical.

DON'T CONFUSE TWO SIMILAR TERMS

“Legal separation” is a status; a “Separation Agreement” is a document.

Legal separation is a court case that leaves you married. A Separation Agreement is the signed settlement used in a dissolution and in agreed cases. The General Division doesn't post legal-separation or annulment packets — confirm the right form and the deposit with the Clerk.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Temporary orders and emergencies while you wait.

A case can take months. Temporary orders set the rules for support, the home, and the children in the meantime, and an emergency order can act fast when a child is at risk.

Temporary orders

In a pending divorce, dissolution, or separation case, ask the court for temporary custody, parenting time, child support, spousal support, or use of the home. The Ohio Affidavit 5 supports a request decided without an oral hearing; the court issues orders that last until the final decree replaces them.

Temporary is not final.

A temporary order holds things steady while the case is pending. The final decree controls long-term custody and support.

WHEN A CHILD IS IN DANGER

Ex parte orders act fast.

If a child faces immediate risk, ask for an ex parte temporary order — decided without the other side present first. It can issue the same or next business day on a sufficient affidavit, with a prompt follow-up hearing.

No marriage case? Different door.

If the parents were never married, an emergency custody request belongs in Juvenile Court; if the danger is family violence, a protection order may fit (next pages).

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Objections and appeals: review, not a redo.

If a magistrate decides part of your case, or a judge enters a final order you disagree with, there are short deadlines to ask for review. Missing them usually ends the issue.

FIRST LEVEL

Objecting to a magistrate's decision

The General Division can refer matters to a magistrate. You generally have 14 days to file written objections under Civ.R. 53; if you object to the facts, you must order a transcript. The judge then reviews the magistrate's decision — it is not a fresh trial.

Then: appeal to the Court of Appeals

To appeal a final judgment, you generally have 30 days to file a notice of appeal (App.R. 4). An appeal reviews the record for legal error; you do not get to re-argue the facts or add new evidence.

Deadlines run from the entry.

The clock starts when the decision or judgment is filed. If you think something went wrong, move quickly — these windows do not pause while you decide.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Protection orders when you are not safe.

A Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order (R.C. 3113.31) is a civil order that can require a family or household member to stay away, leave a shared home, and stop contact, and can set temporary custody and support terms. There is never a filing fee.

How it works

File a petition on the Ohio Supreme Court protection-order forms in the General Division (through the Clerk of Courts); the Domestic Assignment Commissioner schedules these. The court can issue a temporary ex parte order the same day if you are in danger; a full hearing follows, generally within about 7 to 10 days, and a final order can last up to five years and be renewed.

A protection order stands on its own.

It is separate from any divorce or custody case, though it can include temporary parenting and support terms. A dating-violence order is available for a dating partner; for someone who is not a family, household, or dating partner, ask the Clerk about a civil stalking protection order.

IT COSTS NOTHING

No fee to file or serve.

By law the court cannot charge a petitioner for filing, issuing, registering, or serving a protection order, or for certified copies. Law enforcement serves the order.

Filing fee	none, ever
Ex parte order	often the same day
Full hearing	about 7–10 days
Final order	up to 5 years, renewable

FORM (TAP TO OPEN)	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
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[Ohio protection-order forms \(petition, ex parte and full order\)](#)

<https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/protection-order/2>

Ohio Supreme Court (protection-order forms)

Asks the court to order a family or household member to stay away

△ Heads up: No filing fee for the petitioner. Ask the Clerk for the current petition packet, or use the statewide forms.

NOT SURE WHICH PATH IS YOURS?

Take the 2-minute quiz — it routes you to the right starting point.

Dissolution, divorce, a custody case, or just a consult? Gavvl's Find My Service quiz gives a personalized recommendation in about two minutes. [Take the quiz](https://gavvl.com/find-my-service) (https://gavvl.com/find-my-service) · Call (844) 694-2885.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Dividing property, and protecting your case.

Ohio divides marital property and debt equitably — fairly, which is not always equally. A few day-to-day habits protect you while any of the paths above plays out.

Marital vs. separate

Marital property and debt is generally what was acquired during the marriage; separate property includes pre-marriage assets, gifts, and inheritances kept separate. Timing and tracing matter. Retirement accounts are often divided by a special order (a QDRO or DOPO).

Do

- Keep communication in writing, and save it.
- Gather financial records — the affidavits ask for a lot.
- Put the children's needs first, and your own second.

Don't

- Don't post about your case or your spouse online.
- Don't use the children as messengers.
- Don't move money or cancel insurance once a case is filed.

PART TWO

Juvenile: when parents were never married.

Custody, parenting time, parentage, and support for unmarried parents are decided by the Juvenile & Probate Court (Judge Price), at the Government Center — not the divorce court at the courthouse.

COURT	JUDGE	WHERE	NEW CASE
Juvenile & Probate	Paul Price	230 Waverly Plaza	\$128

WHY A SEPARATE COURT

Unmarried-parent custody is a Juvenile matter.

By Ohio law (R.C. 2151.23), custody, parenting time, and support for children of unmarried parents are decided in the Juvenile Court. A father generally establishes parentage first, then the court allocates custody and sets support. Custody for married or formerly married parents is decided in the divorce case instead. A nice touch: Pike's Juvenile Court publishes its own fillable forms.

JUVENILE

Unmarried parents: paternity first, then custody.

This is the most common Juvenile family-law case. It happens in two steps, and a \$128 filing fee opens the case.

Step one: establish parentage

Parentage is the legal parent-child link (R.C. 3111). It can be set by a signed Acknowledgment of Paternity, by a child-support-agency administrative order with genetic testing, or by a juvenile-court parentage case. Establishing parentage opens support — it does not by itself decide custody.

Step two: ask for custody

Once parentage is set, a parent asks the court to allocate parental rights as sole custody (one residential parent and legal custodian) or shared parenting (both parents under a plan), to set parenting time, and to order support. Ohio has no “primary” or “joint” custody.

USE THE COUNTY'S OWN FORM

Pike publishes a combined parentage-and-custody complaint.

The Juvenile Court's own Complaint for Parentage, Allocation of Parental Rights and Parenting Time covers all of it, filed with the UCCJEA affidavit and a request for service. Many matters are heard by a magistrate. Private custody and support cases are not confidential.

JUVENILE

Forms for an unmarried-parent case.

Pike County's Juvenile Court posts its own fillable custody and support forms — use these rather than the generic statewide forms.

FORM (TAP TO OPEN)	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Parentage, Allocation & Parenting Time http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/pdf/complaintCustody-20210715.pdf	Pike County Juvenile Court	Establishes parentage and asks the court to allocate custody and time
Motion to Establish Support http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/pdf/SU3.0%20-%20Motion%20to%20Establish%20Support.pdf	Pike County Juvenile Court	Asks the court to set a child-support order
Child Support Computation Worksheet https://ohiochildsupportcalculator.ohio.gov/home.html	Ohio child-support calculator	Builds the guideline support number
All Pike County Juvenile Court forms http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/juvForms.php	Pike County Juvenile Court	Custody, support, contempt, and caretaker forms in one place

△ Heads up: A \$128 deposit opens or reopens a case; financial-disclosure / indigency forms are available if you can't pay.

JUVENILE

Parenting time and grandparent companionship.

“Parenting time” is the schedule a parent has with a child. “Companionship” is the separate, narrower time a grandparent or relative may be granted. Pike County publishes its own parenting-time schedule.

The county's parenting-time schedule

The Juvenile Court publishes a Parenting Time Schedule and applies a local rule on reasonable visitation (Juvenile Rule 11). Unless parents agree otherwise, that schedule is the starting point the court uses to set a parent's time; you can download it from the court's forms page.

A boundary worth knowing.

Parenting time for married or divorcing parents is set in the divorce case (General Division), not the Juvenile Court.

Grandparent and relative companionship

Non-parents do not have automatic rights. A grandparent or relative may seek companionship in qualifying situations — for example, when the parents are unmarried or a parent has died (R.C. 3109.11, 3109.12). The court weighs the child's best interest and a fit parent's wishes.

IF YOU MOVE

File a relocation notice.

A residential parent who intends to move files a notice of intent to relocate (R.C. 3109.051(G)); the other parent can object and ask the court to revisit parenting time.

JUVENILE

When a grandparent or relative is raising the child.

A relative or other suitable adult can ask the Juvenile Court for legal custody of a child when neither parent can appropriately care for them (R.C. 2151.23). It gives day-to-day custody while parents keep certain rights. It is not adoption.

A HIGHER BAR THAN PARENT-VS-PARENT**The 'unsuitability' standard.**

When a non-parent seeks custody against a parent, best interest alone is not enough. The non-parent must generally show the parents are unsuitable — abandonment, an agreement to give up custody, or that parental custody would harm the child — before the court awards legal custody to the non-parent.

Custody is not adoption.

Legal custody leaves parents with residual rights (including parenting time and the duty to support) and can be changed later. Adoption permanently ends parental rights and goes through the Probate side.

Short-of-court tools

For a temporary, cooperative arrangement, Pike County publishes its own Grandparent Power of Attorney and Caretaker Authorization Affidavit (R.C. 3109.65) forms. They let a relative handle school and medical decisions without a custody case — but they are limited and are not a custody order.

THE FORMS ARE ONLINE**Download them from the Juvenile page.**

Both the Grandparent POA and the Caretaker Authorization Affidavit, with their revocation forms, are on the Pike County Juvenile Court forms page.

JUVENILE

Child support, and changing a Juvenile order.

Ohio builds child support from both parents' incomes, and a Juvenile order can be changed when life changes. Modifications stay in the Juvenile case that made the original order.

How support is built

Ohio uses an income-shares model: both parents' incomes, work-related child care, health-insurance cost, and the number of children go into a statewide worksheet. About 90 or more overnights a year can adjust the number. Support runs through the county CSEA.

RUN YOUR OWN NUMBERS FIRST

Estimate before you negotiate.

Gavvl Law has a free Ohio child-support estimator you can use before any filing or hearing: gavvl.com/child-support-calculator

(<https://gavvl.com/child-support-calculator>).

Changing an order

Custody changes need a real change in circumstances plus the child's best interest (R.C. 3109.04(E)); parenting-time changes use the best-interest standard; support changes on a qualifying change such as the roughly 10% threshold (R.C. 3119.79). Pike publishes its own modification and contempt forms, including a separate set for support.

Reopening a case.

A \$128 deposit applies to file in or reopen an existing Juvenile case; confirm any motion-specific cost with the court.

JUVENILE

When Children Services is involved.

When a child may be abused, neglected, or dependent, Pike County Children Services investigates and, if needed, files a case in the Juvenile Court. These cases are confidential, and the process protects the child while working toward a safe, permanent home.

The stages, in plain order

1. A report comes in; the agency screens and investigates.
2. If a child is removed, a shelter-care hearing happens promptly.
3. Adjudication: the court decides if the child is abused, neglected, or dependent.
4. Disposition: the court sets placement (which can be a relative) and a case plan.
5. Reviews and a permanency plan follow until there is a lasting outcome.

You may have a lawyer; the child has a GAL.

Parents have the right to counsel, appointed if you can't afford one, and a Guardian ad Litem represents the child. Abuse, neglect, and dependency cases are confidential.

REPORT FIRST IF A CHILD IS AT RISK

Who to call.

Ohio 24-hour hotline: 1-855-642-4453, which routes to Pike County Children Services.
Emergency: 911.

THESE CASES ARE HARD – YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE THEM ALONE

Support exists for the difficult parts.

If there is violence, instability, or a child-welfare case in the mix, the court appoints counsel for those who qualify, protection orders cost nothing to file, and the resources on the disclosures page are there for a reason.

PART THREE

Probate: stepparent and kinship adoption.

Adoption permanently makes an adult the legal parent of a child. In Pike County the Probate Court — the same combined court as Juvenile, under Judge Price — has the only authority to finalize adoptions.

COURT	JUDGE	COURT COSTS	PHONE
Probate Court	Paul Price	\$150	(740) 947-2560

TWO TRUTHS ABOUT ADOPTION

It is permanent, and it is not the same as custody.

Custody arranges care and can be changed; adoption permanently ends one legal parent relationship and creates another. In a stepparent adoption, the child becomes the stepparent's legal child. A home study is required for minor adoptions (some stepparent cases are exempt from parts of it), and adoption files and hearings are confidential.

PROBATE

What a Pike County adoption involves.

The Probate Court publishes its own adoption instruction packets and forms. The most common family adoptions are stepparent and kinship, and the central question is usually consent.

THE USUAL STICKING POINT

Consent is the heart of most cases.

Many stepparent adoptions turn on whether the other parent's consent is required. The failure-to-support-or-communicate exception is fact-specific — this is where early legal advice matters most.

A PIKE COUNTY RULE

Counsel is generally expected.

The Probate Court generally expects adoption parties to have a lawyer and appoints counsel for indigent parties in certain matters (Local Rule 8.2). If you proceed without one, you must sign the Self-Representation Acknowledgement (Local Rule 75.1).

1**Pick the right packet, and file**

The court posts separate instruction sets for a stepparent/foster petition and an independent/grandparent petition. File the Petition for Adoption of a Minor (form 18.0) with the home-study materials and consents; the Probate Court accepts e-filing through Henschen.

2**Consent or its exceptions**

File each living parent's Consent to Adoption (form 18.3). If a parent's consent is claimed not to be required — for example, failure to support or communicate under R.C. 3107.07 — the court decides that and may enter a finding that consent is not required (form 18.4).

3**Home study / assessment**

A home study is required for minor adoptions; some stepparent cases are exempt from parts of it. Home-study fees apply to all minor adoptions and vary by assessor — confirm the amount with the court.

4**Hearing**

The court sets a hearing and notice; an absent parent may be served by publication. Adoption hearings and records are confidential.

5**Decree and new birth record**

The court issues an interlocutory order and/or a final decree of adoption, and a Certificate of Adoption goes to Vital Statistics for the new birth record.

FORM (TAP TO OPEN)	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complete Petition for Adoption of a Minor packet http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/pdf/PacketAdoptionMinor-20250319.pdf	Pike County Probate Court	The county's full adoption packet with instructions
Petition for Adoption of a Minor (form 18.0) http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/pdf/18.0-20250319.pdf	Pike County Probate Court	The petition that starts the adoption
Home Study Requirements http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/pdf/homeStudyReq.pdf	Pike County Probate Court	What the required home study covers
All Pike County adoption forms http://www.pikecountypjcourt.com/prbFormsAdoption.php	Pike County Probate Court	Consents, notices, decrees, and instructions in one place

△ Heads up: Court costs are \$150; home-study fees are additional and vary by assessor. Financial-disclosure (fee-waiver) forms are available.

THINKING ABOUT AN ADOPTION OR A CUSTODY CHANGE?

Talk it through before you file.

Adoption and custody cases turn on consent, notice, and timing — the kinds of details where early advice saves months. Gavvl's quiz points you to the right service in about two minutes. [Take the quiz](#)

(<https://gavvl.com/find-my-service>) · Call (844) 694-2885.

PART FOUR

How Gavvl Law can help.

This guide gave you the map. If you'd like a hand from here, here is what working with Gavvl looks like — and the two ways we usually help.

Limited-scope (flat fee)

You handle parts of your own case and hire us for specific tasks at a flat, agreed price — reviewing a Separation Agreement, preparing a filing packet, coaching you for a hearing, or drafting a parenting plan. Predictable cost, right-sized help.

Full representation

We handle the whole matter — strategy, filings, temporary orders, negotiation, and hearings — on a retainer plus hourly basis. Best when a case is contested, complex, or moving fast and you want someone carrying it.

Divorce & dissolution

Strategy, settlement terms, filing packets, temporary orders, and final hearings.

Custody & parenting

Unmarried-parent and married cases, shared parenting plans, schedules, and modifications.

Child support

Calculations, income documentation, deviations, modifications, and enforcement.

Adoption

Stepparent and kinship adoption planning, consent review, and packet preparation.

PART FOUR

Ways to pay, and how to start.

The options depend on the service model, because Ohio trust-accounting rules treat retainers differently from flat fees. Exact amounts are calculated when you enroll.

RETAINER + HOURLY**Full representation**

Pay in full by secure card (Confido Legal). Affirm financing is available — monthly payments with a soft credit check that doesn't affect your score.

FLAT FEE**Limited-scope**

Pay in full by card (Confido Legal). Affirm, Klarna, or PayPal Pay Later. Or Gavvl Direct — our in-house plan with no credit check.

NO CREDIT CHECK**Gavvl Direct**

Start with 60% down and finance the rest, or finance the full fee once 60% is paid. Schedules of 18 weekly, 8 bi-weekly, or 4 monthly payments. The financed amount carries 19% annual interest, compounded monthly.

NOT SURE WHICH PATH FITS?

The 2-minute quiz gives a personalized recommendation.

Find My Service asks a few questions and suggests a service and financing option. [Take the quiz](#)

(<https://gavvl.com/find-my-service>) · [Start here](#) (<https://gavvl.com/start>) · (844) 694-2885 · support@gavvl.com.

Consultations are low-cost.

WHY FAMILIES CHOOSE GAVVL

A 4.8+ average across 90+ verified Google reviews, recognized by Best Lawyers as a “Firm to Watch” (2026), with 50+ years of combined family-law experience across all 88 Ohio counties. (See the disclosures page — awards and ratings are not a prediction about your case.)

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

The fine print, in plain English.

Please read this before relying on anything in this guide.

Information, not legal advice.

This guide explains how things generally work in Pike County, but it can't account for your situation. Reading or contacting Gavvl Law does not create an attorney-client relationship — only a signed engagement agreement does. For advice about your case, talk with a licensed Ohio attorney.

About awards and reviews.

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

Fees and procedures change.

Court fees and procedures change, and a few Pike County items (the divorce fees, the parenting class) aren't posted online. Verified as of June 15, 2026 from official court sources; always confirm current fees with the relevant court before filing.

Jurisdiction and responsibility.

Gavvl Law attorneys are licensed to practice law in Ohio. This guide describes Ohio law and Pike County procedure only. Advertising material, Gavvl Law LLC. Attorney responsible for this content: Stephanie Green, Esq., Managing Partner. Privacy policy:

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READY WHEN YOU ARE .

Take the 2-minute quiz or talk with our team.

We'll help you find the right court and the level of help that fits.

(844) 694-2885

support@gavvl.com

gavvl.com/find-my-service

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