

PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

Family Law in Wyandot County

A plain-English map for divorce, dissolution, custody, support, and adoption in Upper Sandusky and across Wyandot County: which court to use, what to file, what it costs, and when to get help.

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- 01** Wyandot County has one judge for every family court. See how that shapes your case.

 - 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 Wyandot County.

01

Which court handles this?

In Wyandot County, the General Division of Common Pleas hears divorce and dissolution. Juvenile handles custody and support for parents who were never married. Probate handles adoption. One judge presides over all three.

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 Wyandot 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.

BEFORE YOU FILE

Courts can reject filings over small technical problems. Check the current deposit, the required forms, and copy counts. Pro se filers in Wyandot cannot e-file, so plan to file on paper at the counter.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Four parts: Domestic Relations (divorce and dissolution), Juvenile Court (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. Wyandot County is unusual in two ways: it has no stand-alone divorce court, and a single judge hears every division. Start with the relationship, and with the decision you need a judge to make.

MARRIED OR FORMERLY MARRIED

General Division

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

WHERE

Clerk of Courts, Room 31,
109 S. Sandusky Ave.

PARENTS NEVER MARRIED

Juvenile Division

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

WHERE

Juvenile Court, Room 33, 3rd
Floor.

ADOPTION

Probate Division

Stepparent, kinship, and adult adoption, plus name changes tied to adoption.

WHERE

Probate Court, Room 23, 2nd
Floor.

One judge, one courthouse

All three divisions sit in the same building at 109 South Sandusky Avenue in Upper Sandusky. Hon. Douglas D. Rowland is the single Common Pleas judge over all of them. But each division uses different forms and deposits, and keeps its own office and clerk. Filing in the wrong one costs time and money.

PART ONE

The General Division is the divorce and dissolution court.

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

WHERE YOU FILE	FILING DEPOSIT	HEARING WINDOW	RESIDENCY
Clerk's Legal Division	\$350 flat	30–90 days	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. Add child support if you have children.

Dissolution is built on agreement.

Both spouses file together. They ask the court to approve a signed Separation Agreement. The court holds a short 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

Wyandot charges a flat \$350 deposit for a divorce or dissolution. There is no separate amount for cases with children. That is unusual for Ohio. The deposit goes toward your real costs. The balance is billed or refunded at the end. Service by posting adds \$275 if your spouse cannot be found.

DISSOLUTION

The dissolution packet, step by step.

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

FILE THE AFFIDAVITS AT THE SAME TIME

In Wyandot, both spouses must file their financial affidavits with the petition, not later (Local Rule 4.1). Assemble the whole packet before you go to the Clerk. Notarize the Separation Agreement before you fill out the affidavits.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Petition for Dissolution (SF 17) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Opens the joint case; both spouses sign
Separation Agreement (SF 19) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Your signed terms; notarize this first
Decree of Dissolution (SF 18) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	The judgment entry the court signs
Affidavit 1 — Income & Expenses https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Each spouse files one; due at filing
Affidavit 2 — Property & Debt https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Each spouse files one; due at filing
Parenting Plan (SF 20 or SF 21) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required when you have minor children
Case Designation Sheet https://wyandotcountyclerk.org/pdf/caseDesignationSheet-20250731.pdf	Clerk of Courts (PDF)	Cover sheet for every new filing

WITH CHILDREN**More affidavits apply**

Add Affidavit 3 (Parenting Proceeding), Affidavit 4 (Health Insurance), a parenting plan, a child support worksheet, and the IV-D application. Both parents take the parenting class.

WATCH THE INACTIVITY CLOCK

If nothing happens for 60 days, the court sends a notice. If no final hearing is requested within 30 more days, the case can be dismissed (Local Rule 4.1). Calendar your hearing request right away.

DIVORCE

Filing a divorce when you do not agree.

Divorce is filed with the Clerk's Legal Division on paper. Wyandot uses the Ohio Supreme Court standard forms, plus a local cover sheet. The required affidavits go in with the Complaint.

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint for Divorce (SF 6 or SF 7) https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Starts the lawsuit; SF 7 if you have children
Affidavit 1 — Income & Expenses https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Notarized; filed with the Complaint
Affidavit 2 — Property & Debt https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Notarized; filed with the Complaint
Affidavit 3 — Parenting Proceeding https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; lists where the kids lived
Affidavit 4 — Health Insurance https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domestic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1	Ohio Supreme Court forms	With children; notarized
Case Designation Sheet https://wyandotcountyclerk.org/pdf/caseDesignationSheet-20250731.pdf	Clerk of Courts (PDF)	Required cover sheet for new filings

If you cannot find your spouse
 When you cannot find the other spouse, Wyandot serves by posting. Notices go up at the Courthouse, the Mohawk Community Library, and the Dorcas Carey Public Library for six weeks, plus ordinary mail. The deposit adds \$275.

RESTRAINING ORDERS START ON SERVICE
 In a divorce, mutual restraining orders take effect when your spouse is served (Local Rule 24.1). Neither spouse may sell off property, cancel insurance, or take the children out of the court's reach.

TEMPORARY ORDERS

Getting orders while the case runs.

A divorce can take months. Temporary orders set the rules in the meantime — things like temporary support or who stays in the home. Wyandot keeps ordinary disputes out of the emergency lane.

How it works here

Local Rule 24 covers emergency motions. An ex parte request must be backed by affidavits and limited to a true emergency. No spouse can be removed from the home without a hearing unless the court finds an emergency.

Before any temporary order exists

Neither parent may change the children's home, school district, or court jurisdiction. The exception is real danger — domestic violence, child abuse, or an immediate risk to health and welfare.

CONFIRM WITH THE COURT

We could not verify a set deadline to respond to a temporary-orders request. A 45-day hearing window appeared in a rules summary, but it could not be confirmed against the filed rule. There is also no posted local motion template. Ask the Clerk of Courts at (419) 294-1432 how temporary and emergency motions are scheduled, and what deposit applies. If you need protection from domestic violence right now, see the protection-order section.

CHILDREN

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

Ohio uses specific words for custody. The right words help you read the forms and talk to the court.

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 class is required

In any case with minor children, both parents must take Children in Between Online. It runs about 4 hours and costs \$45.95 per person, plus optional add-ons. File your certificate before the final hearing. Register at online.divorce-education.com.

STANDARD PARENTING TIME

When parents cannot agree, Local Rule 25 sets the schedule: alternate weekends Friday 6 p.m. to Sunday 6 p.m., a holiday rotation, split Christmas, and four summer weeks with vacation notice by April 1.

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 General Division. Annulment has limited grounds under R.C. 3105.31 and is rarely the right tool.

CONFIRM THE DEPOSIT

The Costs and Deposits schedule has a single Domestic Relations line at \$350. It does not break out legal separation or annulment. Ask the Clerk's Legal Division at (419) 294-1432 whether these take the \$350 DR deposit or the \$300 civil deposit, and which forms to use for an annulment.

AFTER THE DECREE

Changing or enforcing a Wyandot County order.

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

MODIFY OR ENFORCE AN ORDER**\$50**

Motion to modify or for contempt in an existing open case

RE-OPEN A CLOSED CASE**\$300**

Past court costs must be paid first

SERVICE BY PUBLICATION**\$275**

By posting at the Courthouse and two libraries for six weeks

Contempt and enforcement

Is an order not being followed? A contempt motion must state the exact problem, set a hearing, and carry the required warning language. Show-cause motions are generally heard within 30 days (Local Rule 24.2).

Support reviews

A support deviation needs written findings. The court may set a review hearing one year out and ask for receipts (Local Rule 26). The child support agency can also start a review.

MOVING, AND OUT-OF-STATE ORDERS

The standard parenting-time order bars removing the children from Ohio without a modified order. There is no posted procedure for registering an out-of-state custody or support order. Ask the Clerk of Courts how registration works and what deposit applies.

HELP ALONG THE WAY

Mediation, home investigations, and GALs.

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

Mediation

The court can send a case to mediation, usually to the court mediator (Local Rule 16). Mediation is not used to decide a protection order. Attendance is required unless the court excuses you.

Home investigations

The court can order a home investigation on a parent's motion or its own (Local Rule 29). The deposit is \$175. A written report usually follows within about two weeks.

Guardians ad litem

A guardian ad litem speaks to the children's best interests (Local Rule 28). The deposit is \$1,000 for a non-CASA GAL. The report is available to review before the final hearing.

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 Wyandot 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	EX PARTE HEARING	WHERE	FORMS
\$0 to petitioner	By 3 p.m. same day	Common Pleas, Room 31	Ohio standard set

How it works here

DVCPO petitions are filed with the Clerk of Courts for the General Division. Under Local Rule 23, a timely ex parte petition is heard by 3 p.m. the same day, or the next court day. A full hearing with notice to the other side follows. Protection orders cannot be e-filed by anyone.

A guided way to prepare the forms

Wyandot County refers people to LegalAtoms, linked right on the Clerk's homepage. It asks plain-language questions, prepares the official forms, and can connect you with a victim advocate. Find it at legalatoms.com/wyandot.

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

Juvenile Court is for parents who were never married.

Were the parents never married to each other? Then custody, parenting time, parentage, and child support are decided in the Juvenile Division.

Parentage usually comes first

In Ohio, an unmarried mother is the sole legal custodian until a court orders otherwise (R.C. 3109.042). So an unmarried father usually needs both established parentage and a custody or parenting-time order. The Juvenile Court handles both.

Filing for custody as an unmarried parent

FORM	WHERE TO GET IT	WHAT IT'S FOR
Complaint / parentage filing <small>https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</small>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Establishes parentage, custody, or support
Parenting Proceeding Affidavit <small>https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</small>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Notarized; lists where the children lived
Health Insurance Affidavit <small>https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</small>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Notarized
Child Support Worksheet <small>https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/forms/all-forms/domes-tic-relations-and-juvenile-standardized/1</small>	Ohio Supreme Court forms	Required when support is at issue

BRING WITH YOU

Bring the children's birth certificates when you file. The Juvenile deposit for a new civil case is \$300. Service by publication is only \$75 here — far less than the \$275 charged in Common Pleas. The Juvenile Court is at Room 33, (419) 294-2545. Clerks cannot give legal advice.

PARENTING TIME

The county's standard parenting-time schedule.

When parents cannot agree, Local Rule 25 sets the schedule. The same standard order applies in divorce, paternity, and juvenile cases.

WEEKENDS

Alternate Fri–Sun

The basic schedule is alternate weekends, Friday 6 p.m. to Sunday 6 p.m. Parents can always agree to more time than the schedule gives.

HOLIDAYS

Six, alternating

Six holidays rotate by odd and even year. Christmas splits into two segments that alternate yearly. Mother's Day and Father's Day go with the honored parent.

SUMMER

Four weeks

Each parent gets four weeks of summer parenting time. Vacation notice is due by April 1. The children may not leave Ohio without a modified order.

Companionship for grandparents

Grandparents and certain relatives can ask for court-ordered time under Ohio law. A new case has a \$300 deposit; a motion in an open case is \$50. The court may require the parenting class.

Day-to-day details

The order also covers birthdays, transportation, make-up time for illness, and sharing contact information. Parents must exchange current addresses and phone numbers.

AFTER A JUVENILE ORDER

Changing orders, emergencies, and CPS cases.

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

MODIFY OR ENFORCE AN ORDER**\$50**

Motion in an existing open case

NEW COMPANIONSHIP CASE**\$300**

Or \$50 for a motion in an open case

SERVICE BY PUBLICATION**\$75**

Much lower than the Common Pleas rate

Continuing jurisdiction

If a divorce decree already set custody, later changes stay in that Domestic Relations case. A brand-new unmarried-parent case starts in Juvenile. Knowing which one applies saves a misfiled motion.

Abuse, neglect, and dependency

These CPS cases are heard in the Juvenile Division. The court appoints a guardian ad litem for the children. Low-income parents may ask for an appointed lawyer.

CONFIRM WITH THE COURT

The Juvenile rules do not say whether a magistrate hears parenting dockets. There is also no posted way to register an out-of-state order. Ask the Juvenile Court at (419) 294-2545 about both before you file.

PART THREE

Adoption is handled by the Probate Division.

Stepparent and kinship adoptions are filed in the Probate Division. They go before Judge Douglas D. Rowland — the same judge who hears the Juvenile and General Divisions.

ADOPTION**\$200**

The standard deposit for an adoption petition

FOREIGN ADOPTION**\$101**

For an adoption finalized in another country

APPLICATION FOR PLACEMENT**\$150**

Change of name tied to adoption is \$125

1**File the petition with the Probate Division**

The Probate Court is at Room 23, 2nd Floor, (419) 294-2302. It closes for lunch from noon to 1 p.m. Use the Ohio Supreme Court adoption forms. Probate staff cannot give legal advice.

2**Address consent**

A stepparent adoption usually needs the other legal parent's consent. The court can find that consent is not required (R.C. 3107.07). This is the part that most often needs a lawyer.

3**Complete any required assessment**

The court may ask for a home study or report. It depends on the type of adoption.

4**Attend the hearing**

If the court approves, it issues a final decree of adoption. A new birth record can follow.

THE TUMBLE-STYLE PRINTING TRAP

Wyandot's Probate Court requires the Supreme Court forms to be printed tumble-style — two-sided and flipped on the short edge (Probate Rule 17.1). Single-sided copies are returned unfiled. File everything in duplicate. This trips up DIY filers more than any other local rule.

PART FOUR

How Gavvl Law can help in Wyandot 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 10, 2026 from official court sources. Court fees, forms, and procedures change. Always confirm current fees and requirements with the Wyandot County Clerk of 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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