

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING AN APPLICATION TO DETERMINE CUSTODY

If this is a new case, you will be filing an Application to Determine Custody. If there is an existing paternity or support case, and there is not a custody order in the existing case, then the Application to Determine Custody shall be filed in that case. Please confirm that you are not using the case number for a matter that has been previously dismissed.

If you are requesting the Court to issue any Temporary Orders regarding the Custody or Care of the child(ren) listed, you must file a Motion for Temporary Custody/Orders pursuant to Ohio Juvenile Rule 13 along with the application. The Court will then review your filing and schedule the matter for hearing accordingly.

A Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) Affidavit must be completed and submitted at the time of the filing of the Application to Determine Custody. The affidavit must be answered completely and accurately and must be notarized. When you have a document notarized it is under oath and you are attesting the information you provided is true and accurate.

If you are alleging that your or your child's health, safety, or liberty would be jeopardized by disclosing identifying information, and you make this allegation under oath, the information provided in these forms will not be disclosed to the other party or the public. If you believe that your address should remain confidential, please check the appropriate box on the UCCJEA Affidavit. However, the Court may order the disclosure to be made after a hearing in which the Court takes into consideration the health, safety, and liberty of you and your child and determine that the disclosure is in the interest of justice.

All application filing packets must include the following:

1. An Application to Determine Custody, filled out completely;
2. A copy of the UCCJEA Affidavit;
3. You must be prepared to pay the filing fee which is \$150.00 per child. Fees must be paid by cash, check, money order or credit card. Checks and money orders are to be made payable to the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. There is a 2.5% non-refundable convenience fee when using a credit card.
4. Proof of paternity of each child. Proof can include a marriage license, the establishment document through the Cuyahoga Job and Family Services-Office of Child Support Services, a copy of the court order establishing paternity or the Paternity Acknowledgment registry number. The Paternity Acknowledgment number can be obtained by calling the Central Paternity Registry at 1-888-810-6446;

5. A copy of each child's birth certificate;
6. Custody Intake form;
7. Completed Instructions for Service form. If a parent cannot be located, Service by Publication is required at a cost of \$35.00 per publication;

Take this packet to the Pro Se Center on the second floor of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center, for review of the packet. The Pro Se Center has walk in hours on Monday through Thursday 9am–1pm and 2pm-4pm, and on Friday 9am-1pm (no afternoon hours). The phone number for Pro Se is (216) 443-3149.

After the packet is reviewed you must make at least one copy to keep for yourself. File the original in the Clerk's Office on the second floor of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center. The Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center is located at 9300 Quincy Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44106.

Each of the above referenced forms are available in the Juvenile Court's Clerk of Courts Office or on the Juvenile Court's home page at www.juvenile.cuyahogacounty.us.

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