

PROBATE COURT OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO

ANTHONY J. RUSSO, Presiding Judge

LAURA J. GALLAGHER, Judge

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURT IN INDEPENDENT ADOPTIONS

probate.cuyahogacounty.us

PLEASE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AT TIME OF FILING THE PETITION FOR ADOPTION:

1. **One (1) typed and signed copy of the Petition for Adoption, including cover pages.** All forms must be complete with middle names included for all parties involved in the adoption.
2. **Certified copy of the adoptee(s) birth certificate.**
3. **Consent to the Adoption** by any parties authorized to consent.
4. **In cases where the birth parent(s) wish to execute a Consent to Adoption, birth parent(s) must contact the court to meet with a certified assessor prior to execution of the Consent to Adoption. Please have birth parent call (216) 443-8988 or (216) 443-8989 to make an appointment.**
5. **For children born on or after January 1, 1997, documentation showing a search of the Putative Father Registry has been completed. (Form JFS 1695).**
6. **Affidavit for Service by Publication, if applicable.**
7. **Criminal Record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86. This is to be done at the court at the time of family office interview with social worker. Payment will be required at the time of the interview.**
 - A. **Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) – \$22.00 per person.** This search is necessary for all petitioners and any adults in the home of the petitioners. At the time of fingerprinting, petitioner must provide a valid driver's license or State Identification card.
 - B. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) - \$24.00 per person.** This search is necessary for any petitioners who have lived outside of the State of Ohio in the last five (5) years. Fingerprint card must be completed.
8. **Medical report on child using form provided by court.**
9. **If child is in counseling/therapy, a current letter from treating professional regarding the adoption.**
10. **Completed medical report on adopting parents using form provided by court including a statement regarding the petitioner's suitability for adoption.**
11. **Documentation regarding the basis of petitioner's proof of income and/or disability income.**
12. **Petitioners must have a letter from their respective employer(s), and four (4) letters of character reference from other individuals with personal knowledge of the petitioner(s). All letters should be addressed to:**

**Judges of the Probate Court
Probate Court of Cuyahoga County
1 Lakeside Avenue, West
Cleveland, OH 44113.**
- A certified copy of marriage certificate at time of filing, if petitioners are married.**
13. **Certified copies of all divorce decrees of both adopting petitioners, if either or both have been previously married. This will become part of the Court's permanent record.**

14. **CSEA/Bureau of Support statement regarding child support of potential adoptee**, if applicable.
15. **Proof of support of any minor child(ren) from previous marriages/relationships**, if applicable.
16. **Proof of death if either birth parent is deceased**. Certified copy of death certificate.
17. **Certified copy of death certificate for any previous spouse of the petitioner(s)**, if applicable.
18. **Certified copies of all divorce decree(s) of birth parents, if applicable**.
19. **Proof of relationship of child to the petitioners**. Certified copy of judgment entry granting custody or guardianship.
20. **Copy of most recent IRS 1040 tax return filed**. Must copy both sides of return and all schedules.
21. **Financial Statement (ODHS 1681)**.
22. **Results Notice from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System Alleged Perpetrator Search (SACWIS)**.
23. A full accounting of all disbursements of anything of value paid, or agreed to be paid by or on behalf of the petitioners in connection with the adoption.
Preliminary Accounting Form - submitted upon filing of Petition for Adoption
Final Accounting Form - must be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to hearing.
24. All documents must be submitted at the time of filing of the Petition.
25. Petitioner, and spouse, must be available for interviews and for a home visit prior to the date of the hearing.
26. **On the date set for hearing, both petitioner(s) and child(ren) must appear in Court**.
27. **Supplemental Information Sheet**, which must be typed.

At time of filing the petition, petitioner(s) will pay court costs.

All costs must be paid by cash, money order or credit card (additional fee applies to credit card transactions) made payable to Cuyahoga County Probate Court.

The following fees apply:

Court Costs	\$175.00
Home Study	\$150.00
Service by Publication	\$40.00 (if applicable)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL (216) 443-8988 or (216) 443-8989

Please be advised that the court staff is prohibited from giving legal advice to prospective petitioners.