

PROBATE COURT OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO
ANTHONY J. RUSSO, PRESIDING JUDGE
LAURA J. GALLAGHER, JUDGE

E-FILE GUIDELINES - ADOPTIONS

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GUIDELINES FOR ADOPTION OF A MINOR CHILD

WHAT TO SUBMIT BY E-FILE

Required Documents to E-File (MUST BE TYPED)

- Petition for Adoption of Minor ([Form 18.0](#)) – with attached Cover Page as first page. Include full names for all parties on Application. Application must be ink-signed or E-signed by Petitioner.
- Certified copy of Adoptee's birth certificate
- [Supplemental Adoption Information sheet](#)

See page 4 for case setup in the E-File Gateway.

Payment

- A filing fee of \$175.00 plus \$4.95 (credit card transaction fee) is due at the time of submission. Credit or debit card used must be in the name of the E-File Petitioner or their attorney of record. **Third-party payments will not be accepted. Cards will not be charged for pending nor rejected filings.**
- *Step-Parent Adoption** requires additional \$150.00 fee for a Home Study paid by phone or mail or in person.

WHAT TO SUBMIT BY MAIL (AFTER CASE IS ASSIGNED TO A JUDGE)

Additional Documents to Mail to Court

Agency Adoptions – See list of required documents on page 5-7

Independent Adoptions – See list of required documents on page 8-10

Step-Parent Adoptions – See list of required documents on page 11-13

Additional payment of \$150.00 required for a Home-Study: If paid by check or money order: include case number on the check Memo line, make payable to Cuyahoga County Probate Court and mail to the Probate Court Clerk's Office, Room 119, 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113.

If paid by phone with credit or debit card: call the Clerk's Office at (216) 443-8785.

Cases assigned to [Judge Laura J. Gallagher](#)

Mail to:

[Cuyahoga County Probate Court](#)
[c/o Edward Klatka, Bailiff, Room 219](#)
[1 Lakeside Avenue West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113](#)

Cases assigned to [Judge Anthony J. Russo](#)

Mail to:

[Cuyahoga County Probate Court](#)
[c/o Melissa Cummings, Room 211](#)
[1 Lakeside Avenue West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113](#)

A hearing on the petition will not be set until all documents are received at Court.

Filing Status for E-Filed Petition and Notification of Hearing

- If the filing is accepted, you will receive notification of your case number and a receipt by email.
- If the filing is not accepted, you will receive notification of the reason for rejection by email.
- When a hearing is scheduled, you will receive a Notice of Hearing by regular mail or email.

Rejected filings may be corrected and resubmitted within 72 hours. After 72 hours, you must begin a new submission.

A hearing on the petition will not be set until all documents are received at Court.

Hearing Information

Petitioner(s) and Minor Adoptee must be available for interviews prior to the date of the hearing. If Petitioner is married, his/her spouse must also be available for interviews and must appear at the hearing.

On the date set for hearing, Petitioner(s) and Minor Adoptee must appear in Court. In some instances, the hearing officer may make alternate arrangements (telephonic, Zoom, etc.) for the hearing and will give advance notice and instruction.

For questions about the E-Filing submission process, please call the E-File Help Desk at (216) 443-8948. Court staff are prohibited from giving legal advice to prospective petitioners.

Subsequent Fees Paid in Person at Court

The Court accepts cash, money order, cashier's check, MasterCard, Visa, Discover and American Express credit or debit cards. There is a convenience fee to use a credit or debit card. Fees should be paid in advance by regular mail to the Clerk's Office, Rm. 119, by phone to the Clerk's Office at (216) 443-8785, or during scheduled visits to Court coordinated with Court social workers assigned to your case.

- Home Study fee - \$150.00 per family* (required for all Step-Parent Adoption petitions)
- Criminal Record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86. Completed at the Probate Court at the time of the family office interview with your Court-appointed social worker. Payment 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.

Document Preparation and Signatures

Forms downloaded from the Court's web pages are fillable PDFs and **MUST be typed** complete with signatures. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.

Signatures on forms and pleadings may be submitted in the following ways:

- 1) As an ink signature, the signed document then converted to a scanned PDF copy, or
- 2) As an **E-Signature**, formatted by typing **/S/** in front of the typed name on signature lines, or
- 3) As an electronically signed or captured signature using software with audit tracking capability (e.g., DocuSign).

Note: The audit track is not required with submission for forms or pleadings but must be presented if requested by a hearing officer reviewing the document.

E-File Setup to Submit Petition for Adoption of Minor

1. AFTER LOGIN: Select **File a New Case** from the blue E-Filing tab

Select ADOPTION

Select Type of Filing (AGENCY, INDEPENDENT, STEP-PARENT)

Case Title: type the full name of the minor AFTER the adoption

[Click **Save and Proceed** to advance each screen]

2. ADD CASE PARTIES

Party Role information must match the information on the *Petition*.

Enter full names for all parties without abbreviations or initials.

[Click **Save Party** for each added role]

The following roles are REQUIRED for an Adoption petition:

Case Party Role on Web	Petition Fields (Form 18.0)
Adoptee (type full name of minor AFTER adoption)	Minor to be adopted
Petitioner 1 (E-File user responsible for payment)	Petitioner
Petitioner 2 (if applicable - Independent or Agency adoptions)	Petitioner
*Do NOT add biological parents of the minor as Petitioner(s)	

3. ADD DOCUMENTS

- Upload the **Petition for Adoption of Minor (Form 18.0)** – Upload with attached Cover Page as first page. Petition must be ink-signed or signed with E-Signature.
- Upload a certified copy of Adoptee’s birth certificate.
(Use code “Copy of Birth Certificate”)
**Not required for Agency Adoptions*
- Upload the [Supplemental Adoption Information sheet](#).
(Use code “Supplemental Adoption Information sheet”)

4. FILING REVIEW: Review your data and documents for accuracy. [EDIT](#) for corrections.

5. PAYMENT: Add Credit or Debit Card billing information:

Submit the filing for payment on behalf of PETITIONER 1.

*Your credit/debit card will be charged only AFTER your E-Filing has been accepted.
The name on the credit/debit card **MUST** match the Registered E-File Account Name.
Third party payments will **NOT** be accepted without prior arrangement with E-File staff.*

Print a copy of the **Filing Confirmation** submission for your records.

Bring ALL original documents listed above to your hearing.

Additional Documents to Mail After Your Petition Is Filed

Agency Adoption of Minor

The following list of additional documents should be sent by regular US or Certified mail to the office of the Judge assigned to your case. **These items must be filed within 14 days of your Petition filing.** Specified documents can be found on [Adoption forms menu online](#).

Documents in gray fields 1-13 = Required.

All other documents required if applicable to your petition.

<p>Cases assigned to Judge Laura J. Gallagher</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Edward Klatka, Bailiff, Room 219 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, OH 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-7554 Email: eklatka@cuyahogacounty.us</p>	<p>Cases assigned to Judge Anthony J. Russo</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Melissa Cummings, Room 211 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, OH 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-8974 Email: mcummings@cuyahogacounty.us</p>
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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO BE MAILED

1.	Ohio Department of Health and Vital Statistics Certificate of Adoption (HEA2757). (MUST BE TYPED)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<p>Consent to the Adoption by any parties authorized to consent.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Criminal Record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86, dated within 18 months of filing of the Petition. Records must be reflective of petitioner’s current status.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Medical report on child using form provided by court.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Completed medical report on adopting parents using form provided by court including a statement regarding the petitioner’s suitability for adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Documentation regarding the basis of Petitioner’s proof of income and/or disability income.	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.	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 the Judge assigned to your case.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Proof of relationship of child to the petitioners. Certified copy of judgment entry granting custody or guardianship.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Copy of most recent IRS 1040 tax return filed. Must copy both sides of return and all schedules.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Financial Statement (ODHS 1681) .	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Results Notice from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System Alleged Perpetrator Search (SACWIS). Link to Request Form, here.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Completed Ohio Law and Adoption Materials packet (Form JFS 1693)	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Permanent Surrender of Child, if applicable to agency (Form JFS 1666)	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	For children born on or after January 1, 1997, documentation showing a search of the Putative Father Registry has been completed. (Form JFS 1695)	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Affidavit/Request for Service by Publication, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	If child is in counseling/therapy, a current letter from treating professional regarding the adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	A certified copy of marriage certificate at time of filing if petitioners are married.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	CSEA/Bureau of Support statement regarding child support of potential adoptee, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Proof of support of any minor child(ren) from previous marriages/relationships, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	Proof of death if either birth parent is deceased. (Certified copy of death certificate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	Certified copy of death certificate for any previous spouse of the petitioner(s), if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	Certified copies of all divorce decree(s) of birth parents, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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<p>24. 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. Petitioner's Account (Form 18.9 front and reverse).</p> <p>Preliminary Accounting - submitted upon filing of Petition for Adoption.</p> <p>Final Accounting - must be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to hearing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Independent Adoption of Minor

The following list of additional documents should be sent by regular US or Certified mail to the office of the Judge assigned to your case. **These items must be filed within 14 days of your Petition filing.** Specified documents can be found on [Adoption forms menu online](#).

Documents in gray fields 1-12 = Required.

All other documents required if applicable to your petition.

<p>Cases assigned to Judge Laura J. Gallagher</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Edward Klatka, Bailiff, Room 219 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-7554 Email: eklatka@cuyahogacounty.us</p>	<p>Cases assigned to Judge Anthony J. Russo</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Melissa Cummings, Room 211 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-8974 Email: mcummings@cuyahogacounty.us</p>
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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO BE MAILED

1.	Ohio Department of Health and Vital Statistics Certificate of Adoption (HEA2757). (MUST BE TYPED)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Consent to the Adoption by any parties authorized to consent. <i>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.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<p>Criminal Record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86. This is to be done at the Probate Court at the time of family office interview with social worker. Payment will be required at the time of the interview.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">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.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">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.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Medical report on child using form provided by court.	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.	Completed medical report on adopting parents using form provided by court including a statement regarding the petitioner's suitability for adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Documentation regarding the basis of Petitioner's proof of income and/or disability income.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	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 the Judge assigned to your case.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Proof of relationship of child to the petitioners. Certified copy of judgment entry granting custody or guardianship.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Copy of most recent IRS 1040 tax return filed. Must copy both sides of return and all schedules.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Financial Statement (ODHS 1681) .	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Results Notice from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System Alleged Perpetrator Search (SACWIS). Link to Request Form, here.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Permanent Surrender of Child, if applicable (Form JFS 1666)	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	For children born on or after January 1, 1997, documentation showing a search of the Putative Father Registry has been completed. (Form JFS 1695)	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Affidavit/Request for Service by Publication, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	If child is in counseling/therapy, a current letter from treating professional regarding the adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	A certified copy of marriage certificate at time of filing if petitioners are married.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	CSEA/Bureau of Support statement regarding child support of potential adoptee, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	Proof of support of any minor child(ren) from previous marriages/relationships, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Proof of death if either birth parent is deceased. (Certified copy of death certificate)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued on next page

21.	Certified copy of death certificate for any previous spouse of the petitioner(s), if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	Certified copies of all divorce decree(s) of birth parents, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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. Petitioner's Account (Form 18.9 front and reverse).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preliminary Accounting - submitted upon filing of Petition for Adoption. Final Accounting - must be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to hearing.		

Step-Parent Adoption of Minor

Additional payment of \$150.00 required for a Home-Study after case number is assigned:

If paid by check or money order: include case number on the check Memo line, make payable to Cuyahoga County Probate Court and mail to the Probate Court Clerk’s Office, Room 119, 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113.

If paid by phone with credit or debit card: call the Clerk’s Office at (216) 443-8785.

The following list of additional documents should be sent by regular US or Certified mail to the office of the Judge assigned to your case. These items must be filed within 14 days of your Petition filing. Specified documents can be found on [Adoption forms menu online](#).

Documents in gray fields 1-11 = Required.

All other documents required if applicable to your petition.

<p>Cases assigned to Judge Laura J. Gallagher</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Edward Klatka, Bailiff, Room 219 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-7554 Email: eklatka@cuyahogacounty.us</p>	<p>Cases assigned to Judge Anthony J. Russo</p> <p>Mail to: Cuyahoga County Probate Court c/o Melissa Cummings, Room 211 1 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone: (216) 443-8974 Email: mcummings@cuyahogacounty.us</p>
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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO BE MAILED

1.	Ohio Department of Health and Vital Statistics Certificate of Adoption (HEA2757). (MUST BE TYPED)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Consent to the Adoption by any parties authorized to consent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Criminal Record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86. This is to be done at the Probate Court at the time of family office interview with social worker. Payment will be required at the time of the interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>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.</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>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.</i></p>	

4.	Medical report on child using form provided by court.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Completed medical report on adopting parents using form provided by court including a statement regarding the petitioner's suitability for adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Documentation regarding the basis of Petitioner's proof of income and/or disability income.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	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 the Judge assigned to your case:	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Proof of relationship of child to the petitioners. Certified copy of judgment entry granting custody or guardianship.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Copy of most recent IRS 1040 tax return filed. Must copy both sides of return and all schedules.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Financial Statement (ODHS 1681) .	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Results Notice from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System Alleged Perpetrator Search (SACWIS). Link to Request Form, here.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	For children born on or after January 1, 1997, documentation showing a search of the Putative Father Registry has been completed. (Form JFS 1695)	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Affidavit/Request for Service by Publication, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	If child is in counseling/therapy, a current letter from treating professional regarding the adoption.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	A certified copy of marriage certificate.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	CSEA/Bureau of Support statement regarding child support of potential adoptee, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Proof of support of any minor child(ren) from previous marriages/relationships, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	Proof of death if either birth parent is deceased. (Certified copy of death certificate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Certified copy of death certificate for any previous spouse of the petitioner(s), if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued on next page

21.	Certified copies of all divorce decree(s) of birth parents, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	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. Petitioner's Account (Form 18.9 front and reverse).	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Preliminary Accounting - submitted upon filing of Petition for Adoption.	
	Final Accounting - must be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to hearing.	

GUIDELINES FOR ADOPTION OF AN ADULT

WHAT TO SUBMIT BY E-FILE

STEP 1 – Required Documents to E-File (MUST BE TYPED)

- Petition for Adoption of Adult ([Form 19.0](#)) – with attached Cover Page as first page. Include full names for all parties on Application. Application must be ink-signed or E-signed by Petitioner.
- Certified copy of Adult Adoptee’s birth certificate
- Consent to Adoption completed with **ink signature** by Adult Adoptee ([Form 18.3](#))
- [Supplemental Adoption Information sheet](#)

See page 16 for case setup in the E-File Gateway.

Payment

- A filing fee of \$175.00 plus \$4.95 (credit card transaction fee) is due at the time of submission. Credit or debit card used must be in the name of the E-File Petitioner or their attorney of record. **Third-party payments will not be accepted. Cards will not be charged for pending nor rejected filings.**

WHAT TO SUBMIT BY MAIL (AFTER CASE IS ASSIGNED TO A JUDGE)

STEP 2 – Required to Mail to Court **after a Probate Court Case Number is issued**

- Ohio Department of Health and Vital Statistics Certificate of Adoption ([HEA2757](#)) (**MUST BE TYPED**)
- Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) record check pursuant to O.R.C. Section 2151.86, dated within 18 months of filing of the Petition to reflect petitioner’s current status.

STEP 3 – Additional Documents to Mail to Court (if applicable to your Petition)

- Proof of relationship existing between Petitioner and Adult Adoptee, prior to adoptee reaching 18 years old.
- Proof of marriage of the Petitioners. Certified copy of marriage certificate (*not your marriage license*).
- Certified copies of all divorce decrees of both adopting parents, if either or both have been previously married.
- Proof of support of any minor child(ren) from previous marriage(s) and/or relationship(s).
- Proof of death if either birth parent is deceased. (Certified copy of death certificate).
- Certified copy of death certificate for any previous spouse of the Petitioner.

Cases assigned to [Judge Laura J. Gallagher](#)

Mail to:

[Cuyahoga County Probate Court](#)
[c/o Edward Klatka, Bailiff, Room 219](#)
[1 Lakeside Avenue West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113](#)

Cases assigned to [Judge Anthony J. Russo](#)

Mail to:

[Cuyahoga County Probate Court](#)
[c/o Melissa Cummings, Room 211](#)
[1 Lakeside Avenue West, Cleveland, Ohio 44113](#)

Filing Status for E-Filed Petition and Notification of Hearing

- If the filing is accepted, you will receive notification of your case number and a receipt by email.
- If the filing is not accepted, you will receive notification of the reason for rejection by email.
- When a hearing is scheduled, you will receive a Notice of Hearing by regular mail or email.

Rejected filings may be corrected and resubmitted within 72 hours. After 72 hours, you must begin a new submission.

A hearing on the petition will not be set until all documents are received at Court.

Hearing Information

Petitioner(s) and Adult Adoptee must be available for interviews prior to the date of the hearing. If Petitioner is married, his/her spouse must also be available for interviews and must appear at the hearing.

On the date set for hearing, Petitioner(s) and Adult Adoptee must appear in Court. In some instances, the hearing officer may make alternate arrangements (telephonic, Zoom, etc.) for the hearing and will give advance notice and instruction.

For questions about the E-Filing submission process, please call the E-File Help Desk at (216) 443-8948.

Court staff are prohibited from giving legal advice to prospective petitioners.

Document Preparation and Signatures

Forms downloaded from the Court's web pages are fillable PDFs and **MUST be typed** complete with signatures. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.

Signatures on forms and pleadings may be submitted in the following ways:

- 1) As an ink signature, the signed document then converted to a scanned PDF copy, or
- 2) As an **E-Signature**, formatted by typing **/S/** in front of the typed name on signature lines, or
- 3) As an electronically signed or captured signature using software with audit tracking capability (e.g., DocuSign).

Note: The audit track is not required with submission for forms or pleadings but must be presented if requested by a hearing officer reviewing the document.

E-File Setup to Submit Petition for Adoption of Adult

1. AFTER LOGIN: Select **File a New Case** from the blue E-Filing tab

Select ADOPTION

Select Type of Filing (ADULT ADOPTION)

Case Title: type the full name of the adult AFTER the adoption

[Click **Save and Proceed** to advance each screen]

2. ADD CASE PARTIES

Party Role information must match the information on the *Petition*.

Enter full names for all parties without abbreviations or initials.

[Click **Save Party** for each added role]

The following roles are REQUIRED for an Adoption petition:

Case Party Role on Web	Petition Fields (Form 19.0)
Adoptee (type full name of adult AFTER adoption)	Adult to be adopted
Petitioner 1 (E-File user responsible for payment)	Petitioner
Petitioner 2 (if applicable - Independent or Agency adoptions)	Petitioner
*Do NOT add biological parents of the adult as Petitioner(s)	

3. ADD DOCUMENTS

- Upload the Petition for Adoption of Adult ([Form 19.0](#)) – Upload with attached Cover Page as first page. Petition must be ink-signed or signed with E-Signature.
- Upload a certified copy of Adoptee’s birth certificate.
(Use code “Copy of Birth Certificate”)
- Upload Consent(s) to Adoption with ink signature by Adult Adoptee ([Form 18.3](#)).
(Use code “Consent to Adoption (Form 18.3)”)
- Upload the [Supplemental Adoption Information sheet](#).
(Use code “Supplemental Adoption Information sheet”)

4. **FILING REVIEW:** Review your data and documents for accuracy. [EDIT](#) for corrections.

5. **PAYMENT:** Add Credit or Debit Card billing information:

Submit the filing on behalf of PETITIONER 1.

*Your credit/debit card will be charged only AFTER your E-Filing has been accepted.
The name on the credit/debit card MUST match the Registered E-File Account Name.
Third party payments will NOT be accepted without prior arrangement with E-File staff.*

Print a copy of the **Filing Confirmation** submission for your records.

Bring ALL original documents listed above to your hearing.

GUIDELINES TO RECOGNIZE FOREIGN ADOPTION

(Obtaining an Ohio Birth Certificate for completed Foreign Adoption)

E-File Setup to Submit Petition to Recognize Foreign Adoption

1. AFTER LOGIN: Select **File a New Case** from the blue E-Filing tab

Select ADOPTION

Select Type of Filing: PETITION TO RECOGNIZE FOREIGN ADOPTION

Case Title: type the full name of the adoptee AFTER the adoption

*[Click **Save and Proceed** to advance each screen]*

2. ADD CASE PARTIES

Party Role information must match the information on the *Petition*.

Enter full names for all parties without abbreviations or initials.

*[Click **Save Party** for each added role]*

The following roles are REQUIRED for an Adoption petition:

Case Party Role on Web	Petition Fields (Form 19.2)
Adoptee (type full name AFTER adoption)	Minor/Adult to be adopted
Petitioner 1 (E-File user responsible for payment)	Petitioner
Petitioner 2 (if applicable - Independent or Agency adoptions)	Petitioner
*Do NOT add biological parents of the adoptee as Petitioner(s)	

3. ADD DOCUMENTS

- Upload the Petition to Recognize Foreign Adoption ([Form 19.2](#)) – Upload with attached Cover Page as first page. Petition must be TYPED, ink-signed or E-Signed.
- Upload a certified copy of Adoptee’s birth certificate, and if not in English, also attach a translation certified as to its accuracy by the translator. (Use code “Copy of Birth Certificate”)
- Upload the Ohio Department of Health and Vital Statistics Certificate of Adoption ([HEA2757](#)) (MUST BE TYPED) (Use code in menu available for this form)
- [Statement of Adopted Person](#) (MUST BE TYPED) (Use code “Supplemental Document”)
- Certified copy of foreign documentation finalizing adoption, along with translations of said documents. (Use code in menu available for this form)

Continued on next page

4. **FILING REVIEW:** Review your data and documents for accuracy. [EDIT](#) for corrections.

5. **PAYMENT: Add Credit or Debit Card billing information:**
Submit the filing on behalf of the PETITIONER 1.

A filing fee of \$140.00 plus \$4.95 (credit card transaction fee) is due at the time of submission.

Credit or debit card used must be in the name of the E-File Petitioner or their attorney of record.

Third-party payments will not be accepted. Cards will not be charged for pending nor rejected filings.

Print a copy of the **Filing Confirmation** submission for your records.

Bring ALL original documents listed above to your hearing.

Cases assigned to [Judge Laura J. Gallagher](#)

Contact:
[Edward Klatka, Bailiff](#)
(216) 443-7554
eklatka@cuyahogacounty.us

Cases assigned to [Judge Anthony J. Russo](#)

Contact:
[Melissa Cummings](#)
(216) 443-8974
mcummings@cuyahogacounty.us

Filing Status for E-Filed Petition and Notification of Hearing

- If the filing is accepted, you will receive notification of your case number and a receipt by email.
- If the filing is not accepted, you will receive notification of the reason for rejection by email.
- When a hearing is scheduled, you will receive a Notice of Hearing by regular mail or email.

Rejected filings may be corrected and resubmitted within 72 hours. After 72 hours, you must begin a new submission.

A hearing on the petition will not be set until all documents are received at Court.

Hearing Information

Petitioner(s) and Adoptee must be available for interviews prior to the date of the hearing. If Petitioner is married, his/her spouse must also be available for interviews and must appear at the hearing.

On the date set for hearing, Petitioner(s) and Adoptee must appear in Court. In some instances, the hearing officer may make alternate arrangements (telephonic, Zoom, etc.) for the hearing and will give advance notice and instruction.

For questions about the E-Filing submission process, please call the E-File Help Desk at (216) 443-8948.

Court staff are prohibited from giving legal advice to prospective petitioners.

Document Preparation and Signatures

Forms downloaded from the Court's web pages are fillable PDFs and **MUST be typed** complete with signatures. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.

Signatures on forms and pleadings may be submitted in the following ways:

- 1) As an ink signature, the signed document then converted to a scanned PDF copy, or
- 2) As an **E-Signature**, formatted by typing **/S/** in front of the typed name on signature lines, or
- 3) As an electronically signed or captured signature using software with audit tracking capability (e.g., DocuSign).

Note: The audit track is not required with submission for forms or pleadings but must be presented if requested by a hearing officer reviewing the document.