

Huron County Probate Court

Step-Parent Adoption Guidelines

1. The following documents must be filed with the court: a) an original, typed and signed Petition for Adoption; b) an original signed consent from each biological parent; and c) a certified copy of the child's full, long-form birth certificate. If consents from each biological parent are not filed, the petitioner must complete that portion on page two of the Petition entitled "Persons Whose Consent to the Adoption is Not Required."
2. The filing fee is **\$170.50**, which includes the \$21.50 fee for a new birth record. Additional charges will be assessed if publication or legal notification is needed.
3. A medical statement (JFS Form 01653) is required for all of the Petitioner's household members, including the child to be adopted. The medical examinations described in the statements must have occurred **within the six-month period immediately preceding the filing of the Petition**.
4. A financial statement (JFS 01681) is required for the assessor to complete the home study.
5. The Petitioner must submit six letters of character reference as follows: one from the Petitioner's employer, one from the Petitioner's clergyman; and four from non-relatives. These letters should contain the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the individual references, and should be dated **within the six-month period immediately preceding the filing of the Petition**. Petitioner's clergyman should be identified as such on the letter. If the Petitioner has no clergyman, an additional letter from a non-relative may be provided instead.
6. The Petitioner must also file a certified copy of the Petitioner's current marriage record. The required marriage record is not the marriage license, but the record may be obtained from the probate court that issued the marriage license.
7. Petitioner must be married to one of the child's parents for at least six months before the Petition is filed.
8. The Petitioner must file certified copies of all divorce decrees involving the Petitioner or the Petitioner's current spouse. These documents are obtained at the Court that granted the divorce or dissolution, and will become part of the permanent record in the adoption case.
9. If one of the child's parents is deceased, the Petitioner must also file a certified copy of the death certificate for that parent.
10. The Petitioner must also file a Preliminary Petitioner's Account. The Petitioner's Final Account is due 10 days before the final hearing.
11. If the biological father of the child is unknown, the Petitioner must also request a search of the Putative Father Registry.
12. The Petitioner's fingerprints must be sent to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, P.O. Box 365, London, Ohio 43140. Fingerprinting can be done electronically at a) the North Point Educational Service Center, 180 Milan Avenue, Norwalk, Ohio; b) Huron County Department of Job & Family Services, 185 Shady Lane Drive, Norwalk, Ohio; and c) Huron County Sheriff's Department, 255 Shady Lane Drive, Norwalk, Ohio. The Petitioner must file the results of the electronic fingerprint check with the Court.
13. The Petitioner must complete and file an information sheet for a new birth record (Form 2757). The new birth record is usually not returned to the Court until approximately 3 to 4 months after the adoption is finalized.
14. The Petitioner and the Petitioner's spouse must make themselves available for interviews and a home visit by the court's adoption assessor before the date of the hearing. The adoption assessor will complete the Step-Parent Adoption Home Study before the interlocutory hearing and the final pages before the Final Decree of Adoption is issued.
15. The Petitioner, the Petitioner's spouse and the child to be adopted must all appear in Court on the day of the interlocutory hearing.