

Family Services will include a notice which informs the birth parent that an updated social and medical history form may be submitted with either of the newly prescribed forms.

The forms created by the Department of Jobs and Family Services will be made available to the Department of Health. Information regarding the new forms will be included on the Department of Health's website. The Department of Health will have one year after the effective date of the new law to make the biological parent's name redaction request form available to the public. **Thus, the adoptee or the adoptee's lineal descendants will not be able to submit requests for the release of the contents of the adopted person's adoption file prior to March 20, 2015. For further information regarding the new changes, please visit the Ohio Department of Health's website: www.odh.ohio.gov/vitalstatistics/legalinfo/adoption.aspx**

During the period from 3/20/14 to 3/20/15, the adoptee remains able to submit a written request to the court for release of non-identifying information. The request should include the full adoptive name of the adoptee, the adoptee's date of birth, the year the adoptee believes the adoption was finalized and the full name of the adoptive parents. The request must be accompanied with a copy of the adoptee's driver's license or state issued photo ID and a copy of the adoptee's birth certificate. There are no court costs assessed for this request.

ADOPTIONS FINALIZED ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 18, 1996

For adoptions finalized on or after

September 18, 1996, identifying information may be accessed if the birth parents have executed a disclosure statement authorizing the release of identifying information. The adoptee who is at least 21 years of age or the adoptive parents of the adoptee, who is at least 18 years of age, but not yet 21 years of age, may request a copy of the contents of the adoption file from the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics.



Non-Identifying social and medical information is available to an adoptee whose adoption was finalized on or after September 18, 1996. The adoptee must be at least 21 years of age and must submit a written request to the court, either by mail or fax. The request should include the full adoptive name of the adoptee, the adoptee's date of birth, the year the adoptee believes the adoption was finalized and the full name of the adoptive parents. The request must be accompanied with a copy of the adoptee's driver's license or state issued photo ID and a copy of the adoptee's birth certificate. There are no court costs assessed for this request.



Judge Robert N. Rusu, Jr.

As Probate Court Judge, my goal is serve the public in the most efficient and courteous manner possible. I am providing this brochure to help with any possible questions or concerns you may have while working with the Probate Court. I hope you find this information helpful.

HOURS & LOCATIONS

Mahoning County Probate Court
120 Market Street
Youngstown, OH 44503
Phone: 330-740-2310
Fax: 330-740-2325

Monday- Friday 8:00 AM- 4:00 PM

BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
mahoningcountyoh.gov/probate



The information in this pamphlet is provided as a service of the court and does not constitute legal advice which can only be given to you by an attorney. Many probate and family law matters involve complex and valuable legal rights. You should always speak with an attorney before filing any papers.



Mahoning County Probate Court
Robert N. Rusu, Jr., Judge

Reprinted with permission from Hamilton County Probate Court. Copyright © 2014 Hamilton County Probate Court. All Rights Reserved

Robert N. Rusu, Jr., Judge Mahoning County Probate Court

Adoption Records



Informational Guide for Access to Adoption Records

ACCESS TO ADOPTION RECORDS

All adoption records held by this court are confidential. Information contained therein may be accessed only with court approval. In addition to the information maintained by the court, adoption information is also maintained by the agency which handled the adoption and by the Ohio Department of Health. Access to adoption information is controlled by state law.

The date of finalization of the adoption will determine whether identifying information may be released. Identifying information is defined by Ohio law as first, middle and last names, social security numbers, addresses, telephone numbers, places of employment or any other numbers which state or federal law requires or permits to be used to identify a person. All other information would be deemed to be non-identifying information.

ADOPTIONS FINALIZED PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 1964:

For adoptions finalized before January 1, 1964, adoption records may be accessed by the adoptee, the adoptive parents, a lineal descendant of the adoptee, birth parents or birth siblings upon written request to the court. The adoptee or the lineal descendant of the adoptee may also access the original birth certificate from the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics by submitting an application to the Department and a filing fee.



ADOPTIONS WHICH WERE FINALIZED BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 1964 AND PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 18, 1996:

Prior to December 19, 2013, access to adoption records for adoptions finalized between January 1, 1964 and September 18, 1996 was restricted by law. Persons seeking identifying information contained in the court's adoption file had to submit a petition for identifying information and pay a filing fee. Upon receipt of the petition, the court would issue an order to the Ohio Department of

Health requiring the Department to produce any releases on file for the adoptee. If an Authorization for Release of Information had been signed by the biological parent(s) and/or sibling(s) and filed with the Ohio Department of Health, identifying information would be provided to the applicant as authorized in the release. If no release had been signed, the probate court would issue an order to the Department to hold the petition as pending and to inform the court if a subsequent release was signed. If a subsequent release was filed, the probate court would inform the petitioner that



a release had been filed and would provide the adoptee with the information as authorized in the release.

On December 19, 2013, the Governor of Ohio signed legislation, which became effective March 20, 2014, that now permits an adoptee or a lineal descendant of the adoptee, who is at least 18 years of age, to access adoption records for adoptions finalized between January 1, 1964 and September 18, 1996. The adoptee or the adoptee's lineal descendants will submit a written request directly to the Ohio Department of Health for the adoption information, along with the required filing fee. Upon receipt of a request, the Department of Health will provide the adoptee/lineal descendant with the contents of the adopted person's adoption file. Please note, the Department will not release any information in the adoption file regarding the name of birth parent if the birth parent has executed a biological parent's name redaction request form.

Under the new law, the Department of Jobs and Family Services is to prescribe a contact preference form for biological parents. The form will provide the manner in which the parent is to be contacted, be it direct contact, contact through an intermediary or no contact at all. The biological parent's preference regarding contact is advisory only and is not enforceable. The Department of Jobs and Family Services is also to provide a biological parent's name redaction form. If the biological parent requests redaction of his/her name, the information released from the adopted person's file will not include the name(s) of the birth parent(s). The forms created by the Department of Jobs and

DATE OF ADOPTION FINALIZATION	ADOPTIONS FINALIZED ON OR BEFORE 12/31/1963	ADOPTIONS FINALIZED ON OR AFTER 1/1/1964 AND BEFORE 9/18/1996	ADOPTIONS FINALIZED ON OR AFTER 9/18/1996
Who may access information	Adoptee Lineal birth relatives of adoptee Lineal adoptive relatives of adoptee	Until 3/20/2014 Adoptee; Adoptive parents After 3/20/2015 Adoptee; Lineal birth relatives of adoptee; Biological parents of adoptee	Adoptee Adoptive Parents
What information may be accessed	All identifying information	Until 3/20/2014 Non-identifying information; If a petition for identifying information is filed and an authorization for release has been signed by a birth relative, the adoptee will be able to obtain identifying information regarding the relative who executed the release After 3/20/2015 All identifying information	Non-identifying information; Information contained in the adoptee's adoption file as maintained by the Ohio Department of Health, if a disclosure has been signed by the biological parent; Identifying information maintained in the court's adoption file, if a disclosure has been signed by the biological parent.
Where to submit application for adoption information	The probate court which finalized the adoption and/or the adoption agency which placed the child for adoption	Until 3/20/2014 <i>For non-identifying information or petition for identifying information:</i> The probate court which finalized the adoption After 3/20/2015 <i>For the original Birth Certificate:</i> The Ohio Department of Health, PO Box 15098 Columbus, Ohio 43215-0098 <i>For identifying information maintained in the court's files:</i> The probate court which finalized the adoption	<i>For non-identifying information:</i> The probate court which finalized the adoption <i>For information contained in the file maintained by the Ohio Department of Health:</i> The Ohio Department of Health, PO Box 15098 Columbus, Ohio 43215-0098