



Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

This document is provided by the BRYCS Clearinghouse.

Guardianship Information by State

Compiled by BRYCS

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One of the most common requests we receive at BRYCS is for information on guardianship issues, including state laws (see BRYCS' Fact Sheets on guardianship at <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/GSHPFACT.PDF> and <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/GSHIPSUM.PDF>). Since guardianship laws differ by state, we have embarked on an effort to gather current information for each state and house it in one central location. This is an ongoing project, where we will continue to add links and regularly update the Web sites with guardianship information for each state.

The links below are grouped by state, and go primarily to the state family court websites, where you can get more specific information. If there are any guardianship links or resources you have found useful, or feedback you would like to share, please contact the BRYCS Technical Assistance Coordinator , Laura Gardner, via our toll-free number 1-888-572-6500 or by e-mail at info@brycs.org.

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Alabama

- The Probate Courts have jurisdiction over guardianship.
- Jefferson County Probate Court
- Mobile County Probate Court
- Montgomery Country Probate Court

Alaska

- Family Law Self-Help Center. Alaska Court System. Provides information about divorce, dissolution, custody, paternity, child support, and referral information about adoption, change of name, emancipation and powers of attorney & guardianship.

Arizona

- Arizona Supreme Court Self Service Center. Arizona Supreme Court. Provides information on divorce, child support, family crisis, landlord/tenant, name change, guardianship, and small claims.
- Self-Service Center Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County. Information and court forms, domestic violence, family law, guardianship, estate, dependency, and small claims tax appeal.

Arkansas

- General information about the Arkansas judiciary system.
- Arkansas Circuit Courts has jurisdiction over juvenile matters.
- Probate court forms pertaining to guardianship issues

California

- The state of California's Courts Self-Help Center Web site provides basic information about probate guardianships for children, including guardianships in general, guardianship of the person, and estate guardianship. The site now provides an overview of the Probate Guardianship process in text and in video for those deciding to apply for guardianship for a child. The video follows one family through the process, and includes an introduction to the topic, where to find help, alternatives to guardianship, temporary guardianship, and takes you step-by-step through the process.
- Forms and Instructions
- Judicial Council of California, Center for Families, Children, and the Courts: case summaries, reports, program information, and resources.
- Placer County Family Court Clinic.
- San Francisco Superior Court, Unified Family Court: contact information,

- FAQs about various processes, local rules, delinquency, child support, dependency, mediation, family law facilitator, juvenile traffic, forms, maps.
- [Santa Clara County Family Court](#)
 - [Superior Court of California, County of Orange Family Law Court.](#)

Colorado

- The [District Courts of Colorado](#) handle juvenile matters, including guardianship.
- [Instructions](#) for appointment of a guardian.

Connecticut

- [Probate courts in Connecticut](#) have jurisdiction over guardianship. On this page, you can select a town and will be provided with the contact information for the probate court in your area.

Delaware

- [Family Court of Delaware](#): History, court rules and fees, structure, and other information is available on the site.

District of Columbia

- [District of Columbia Courts](#): information in Amharic, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese; [Family Court](#) (including juvenile, domestic relations, and adoptions); [Probate Division](#)

Florida

- [Family Court Services](#): forms, Family Nurturing Center, divorce, drug court, foster care review, mediation, guardian ad litem, and other information.

Georgia

- [Superior Court of the Atlanta Judicial Circuit, Family Division.](#)

Hawaii

The Circuit Court has jurisdiction over mental health, estate, and juvenile matters.

- [Forms](#)
- [O`AHU - First Judicial Circuit](#)

- Circuit Court (Maui - Second Judicial Circuit)
- HAWAII - Third Judicial Circuit
- KAUA'I - Fifth Judicial Circuit

Idaho

The Magistrates Division has jurisdiction over estate, mental health, and juvenile matters.

- Forms
- Family Court Service Coordinators, listed by district

Illinois

- The Circuit Court has jurisdiction over civil and juvenile cases.

Indiana

- Indiana has one probate court and one probate judge. The court has jurisdiction over adoption, estate, and miscellaneous civil and juvenile matters.

Iowa

- The District Courts of Iowa have jurisdiction over most guardianship cases.

Kansas

- The District Courts have jurisdiction over civil and juvenile cases.

Kentucky

- District Court List
- Information by county

Louisiana

- Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish.
- Fourth Judicial District Court Family and Domestic Rules (Ouachita and Morehouse Parish)

Maine

- Family Division includes contact information, publications, Division goals,

FAQ, rules, and more.

Maryland

- [Department of Family Administration](#) includes information about and links to the Committees on Family law; foster care; forms; juvenile delinquency; legal resources; local coordinators and circuit court family divisions; publications; family services; and treatment/evaluative services.
- [Circuit court family divisions and family services programs](#)

Massachusetts

- [Massachusetts Court System, Probate and Family Court](#): jurisdiction and contact information. Also includes links to the probate and family courts, plus contacts, directions, hours, fax and e-filing information, jurisdiction, etc.
- [Barnstable Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Berkshire Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Bristol Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Dukes Country Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Essex Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Franklin County Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Hampden Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Hampshire Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Middlesex Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Nantucket Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Norfolk Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Plymouth County Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Suffolk Probate and Family Court](#)
- [Worcester Probate and Family Court](#)

Michigan

- [Calhoun County](#): biographies of family court judges, contact information for court staff, and information about SMILE (Start Making It Livable for Everyone), a program for divorcing families.
- [Washtenaw County Family Division](#) links to probate, juvenile, mental health services, guardianships, and judge profiles, opinion bank, friend of the court, resources on family violence and other domestic relations issues.

Minnesota

- [All Minnesota courts](#) have a link on the comprehensive MN courts website
- [Dakota County Family Court](#) contact information, forms, and self-help

- center.
- **Fourth Judicial District (Hennepin County)**: overview, records, FAQs, divorce education requirements, guardian ad litem program. Very comprehensive site.
- **Second District Special Courts Division (Ramsey County)** contacts and forms.
- **Sherburne County District Court, Family Division** mission and phone number.

Mississippi

- **Fifteenth Chancery District, Copiah and Lincoln Counties.**

Missouri

- **Family Court in Jackson County**

Montana

- The **District Courts** have jurisdiction over estate, mental health, and juvenile matters and allows jury trials.

Nebraska

- Nebraska has 93 **County Courts** in 12 **districts**, which have jurisdiction over estate, adoption, and juvenile matters.

Nevada

- **Clark County Family Court**: Forms, records, codes, divorce information, e-filing information, link to online case inquiry.
- **Washoe County (2nd Judicial District)**
- **Washoe county self help page.**

New Hampshire

- **Family Division** history, annual report, mediation, neutral case evaluation, guardians ad litem, and goals.

New Jersey

- **Family Practice Division** comprehensive site with overview, mediator roster, domestic violence information and initiatives, domestic violence procedures manual, parenting time, forms, reports, and information for litigants.

- **Passaic County Family Division:** contact information, general description, intake information, program outlines.
- **Somerset County Family Division (Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage):** information about delinquency, non-dissolution, dissolution, domestic violence, family crisis intervention, child abuse and neglect, child placement, and adoption.
- **Morris/Sussex Vicinage Family Division:** contacts, non-dissolution/dissolution team, domestic violence, juvenile, children in court, records, links to programs (ADR, support, intake, CASA, parent education, etc.).
- **Union Vicinage Family Division:** domestic violence, central case reception/intake, matrimonial team, juvenile, administration.

New Mexico

The District Court also has jurisdiction over juvenile and mental health matters.

- **First Judicial District Court**
- **Second Judicial District Court**
- **Third Judicial District Court**
- **Fifth Judicial District Court**
- **Ninth Judicial District Court**
- **Eleventh Judicial District Court**
- **Twelfth Judicial District Court**

New York

- **Allegany County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all courts in the county.
- **Broome County Family Court:** contacts, forms and petitions, child care center, instructions for filing, access, hours, directions.
- **Cattaraugus County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all courts in the county.
- **Chautauqua County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all courts in the county.
- **Chemung County Family Court:** legal research, guide to family court, support collection unit, law guardian office, contacts, hours, security statement.
- **Chenango County Family Court:** overview, guide, domestic violence programs, forms, dispute resolution services, attorney list, links to agencies, contacts, hours, map.
- **Cortland County Family Court:** hours, contacts, forms, jurisdiction.
- **Delaware County Family Court:** contacts, hours, forms, mediation and petition intake assistance, links to related agencies, legal aid contacts, terms of court.

- **Erie County Family Court:** contacts and photos.
- **Herkimer County Family Court:** contacts for all county courts, including family.
- **Genesee County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all county courts.
- **Jefferson County Family Court:** contacts for all county courts, including family.
- **Lewis County Family Court:** contacts for all county courts, including family.
- **Madison County Family Court:** contacts, hours, filing instructions, forms and petitions, community resources phone list.
- **Nassau County Family Court (Long Island):** contact information.
- **New York City Family Court:** Contacts, forms, and the Introductory Guide to the New York City Family Court, which includes detailed information on proceedings, history, authority, child-waiting rooms, and “Who’s Who in the Courtroom.”
- **Niagara County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all county courts, plus news/special announcements.
- **Oneida County Family Court (Rome and Utica):** contacts for all county courts, including family.
- **Onondaga Family Court:** contacts for all county courts
- **Orleans County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all county courts.
- **Oswego County Family Court:** contacts for all county courts, including family.
- **Otsego County Family Court:** contacts, hours, jurisdiction, instructions for completing petitions, link to FAQ on access to petitions, mediation information, forms, children’s center information.
- **St. Lawrence County Family Court:** family court forms, domestic violence forms, contacts.
- **Schuyler County Family Court:** contacts, forms.
- **Suffolk County Family Court:** contacts, judicial terms of office, jurisdiction.
- **Third Judicial District Family Court (Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster Counties):** adoption, child abuse and neglect, support, custody and visitation, guardianship, paternity, PINS, court services, forms, contacts, directions.
- **Tioga County Family Court:** contacts, forms, information about other county courts.
- **Tompkins County Family Court:** contacts, schedule, forms, instructions, agencies, overview, lawyer referral, domestic violence court, family treatment court, Collaborative Family Lawyers of Central New York, dispute resolution, “bill of rights” for children whose parents are separated, jurisdiction, etc.
- **Wyoming County Family Court:** contacts and directions for all county courts.

North Carolina

- **Family Court:** overview, locations of existing programs, administration, history, FAQ, need for program, target population, mission. Eight judicial districts in North Carolina have family courts. Some information available in Spanish.
- **Cumberland County Family Court:** custody mediation rules and program, support guidelines, resources, financial mediation, domestic court rules, juvenile court rules, directory, support group for children, guardians ad litem, overview, contacts.
- **Durham County Family Court:** staff, FAQs, domestic court, juvenile court, rules, forms, pro se divorce packet, links to programs.
- **Greene County Family Court:** overview, administration, case managers, services, and programs.
- **Lenoir County Family Court:** overview, administration, case managers, court services and programs.
- **Mecklenburg County Family Court:** overview, mission, judges and staff, services, fatherhood program, volunteer and intern opportunities, FAQs. See also the Mecklenburg County Child Support Court and the Domestic Violence Court.
- **New Hanover Family Court:** overview, plus links to the general information provided by the North Carolina Court System.
- **Pender County Family Court:** overview, plus links to the general information provided by the North Carolina Court System.
- **Wayne County Family Court:** overview, administration, case managers, court services and programs.

North Dakota

- The **District Court** has jurisdiction over estate, mental health, and juvenile matters.

Ohio

In Ohio, the Court of Common Pleas has jurisdiction over probate matters and handles estate, mental health, and juvenile cases. [Link](#) to District Courts of Appeals, Court of Claims, and Web sites listed by county.

- **Allen County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Division**
- **Ashtabula County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions**
- **Athens County Court of Common Pleas, General and Domestic Relations Divisions**
- **Auglaize County Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations, Probate, and Juvenile Divisions**
- **Belmont County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions**
- **Brown County Municipal Court**

- Butler County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Juvenile Division
- Clark County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Domestic Relations and Juvenile Division
- Clermont County Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division
- Clinton County Municipal Court
- Columbiana County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions
- Coshocton Municipal Court
- Crawford County Court of Common Pleas, General and Domestic Relations Divisions
- Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Juvenile Division
- Defiance County Court of Common Pleas, General and Domestic Relations Division
- Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division and Juvenile Divisions
- Erie County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Domestic Relations and Juvenile Divisions
- Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Domestic Relations and Juvenile Divisions
- Fulton County Court of Common Pleas, Probate Division, Juvenile Division
- Gallia County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions
- Geauga County Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Divisions
- Summit County Common Pleas: Probate Division (FAQ sheet on guardianship), Domestic Relation Division, and Juvenile Division.

Oklahoma

- The District Court has jurisdiction over civil and juvenile cases.

Oregon

- OJD Family Law Website: forms, parenting plan information and enforcement, resources, contacts, family law facilitation programs, parent education programs, child support guidelines and calendars, free legal information for low-income parties, etc. Also in Spanish.
- Lane County Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Unit: contacts, divorce, family court assistance office, adoption, custody, emancipation of minors, restraining orders, paternity, mediation, visitation, modifications, local rules, statutes, etc. Also in Spanish.
- Multnomah County Family Court Services: conciliation, family counseling, mediation, evaluations, parent education, etc.

Pennsylvania

- [Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas](#), Office of Domestic Relations: FAQ (mainly on support).
- [Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas](#), Civil/Motion/Family Court Division: overview, history, custody, procedures, motions, links to rules and forms, etc.

Rhode Island

- [Rhode Island Family Court](#): overview, contacts, FAQ, forms, parent education, family drug court, parenting time, truancy court, adoption reunion registry, CASA, case management, juvenile court, filing fees, family services, divorce mediation, domestic violence court.

South Carolina

- [Uniform Statewide Family Court](#): exclusive jurisdiction over all matters involving domestic or family relationships; sole forum for cases concerning marriage, divorce, legal separation, custody, visitation, termination of parental rights, adoption, support, alimony, division of marital property, and change of name; exclusive jurisdiction over minors under the age of 17 alleged to have violated a state law or municipal ordinance.

South Dakota

- The [Circuit Court](#) has civil and juvenile jurisdiction.

Tennessee

- [Hamilton County Chancery Court](#): includes some domestic relations forms, parenting plans, etc.

Texas

- [Dallas County Family Courts](#): links to each family court (there are 7). Each site contains contact information, biography of court clerk, plus policies and procedures.
- [Harris County District Courts](#): The Family Courthouse site contains contact information plus links to Texas Bar Family Section and other state and local family law professionals, codes, Houston Public Library, missing children, and other resources.
- [Travis County Family Court Services](#): Q&A on guardians ad litem, plus links to information about child support, forms, children's bill of rights, information about common-law marriage, guide for divorcing parents,

information about probation. [Travis County Domestic Relations Office](#) contains information about support, visitation, family court services, parenting class, forms, divorce, community resources, etc.

Utah

- The [Utah District Courts](#) deal with custody issues.
- Use the [Judicial District Locator Map](#) to find the location and contact information for the Utah State Court in each district.
- The [Utah Online Court Assistance Program \(OCAP\)](#) is the official State of Utah website for assistance in preparing court documents including guardianship of a minor.

Vermont

- [Vermont Family Courts](#): links to county contact information and calendars, jurisdiction, divorce information, child support, mediation, domestic abuse, juvenile, etc.

Virginia

- List and links to [Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts](#). (Note: Virginia does not have a family court; Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts have jurisdiction over most family matters. Divorces and other cases in equity are heard in the chancery side of Circuit Court.)
- [Chesterfield Circuit Court, Civil/Chancery](#): includes general information, fees, divorce, guardians, adoption, name changes.
- [Prince William County Circuit Court \(Manassas\)](#): contacts, fees, forms, procedures, dispute resolution, FAQ, law library, announcements.
- [Prince William County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court](#): contact information, forms and relevant statutes, custody and visitation information, procedures, paternity, FAQ, volunteer opportunities, programs, announcements, juvenile information. Taken with the county's Circuit Court site (above), this is informative, comprehensive, and easy to use.

Washington

- [Superior Courts in Washington State](#). Superior courts have exclusive jurisdiction over domestic relations.
- [Clallam County Unified Family Court](#): overview, mediation, at-risk youth, program for children of divorcing parents.
- [Clark County Courts](#): includes Family Law Practice, Family Court Services, contacts, etc.
- [Pierce County Superior Court](#): Civil/Domestic Trials procedures, misc.

- links.
- **Thurston County Unified Family Court:** History, mission, judges, and contact information.

West Virginia

- **Family court judges** hear cases involving divorce, annulment, separate maintenance, paternity, grandparent visitation, and issues involving allocation of parental responsibility and family support proceedings, except those incidental to child abuse and neglect proceedings.
- **Family Court Judges**
- **Family Court Map**
- **Family Court Forms**

Wisconsin

- In Wisconsin, the **Circuit courts** have original jurisdiction in all civil and criminal matters within the state. **Circuit Court Forms**
- **Green County Family Court**, Monroe, Wisconsin.
- **Ozaukee County Family Court Commissioner:** contacts, overview, forms.
- **Waukesha County Family Division:** contacts, jurisdiction, fees/costs, FAQ, links to self-help site, counseling resources, records search, local rules, departmental news.

Wyoming

- The **District Courts** have jurisdiction over mental health, estate, and juvenile matters.