

Summit County Probate Court 2026 State of the Court



Our State of the Court report highlights some of the work we do.

2025 was another successful year for your Summit County Probate Court. We continue the fundamental work in caring for our vulnerable population through guardianships, being good stewards in estate administration and facilitating adoptions. The New Day court assisting those with a civil commitment continues as a model across the country. We still offer free attorney consultations through the Help Desk and mediation services in contested cases.

In 2013, when I began work in this court we adopted "Service, Compassion and Integrity" as the watchwords for our court and established the basis for our actions as we move forward. In 2026, I am proud to tell you that we are keeping up the good work so important to the community. If you think I am making this up, I ask you to consider the cards and letters we received recently.



Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer

"We are grateful for the kind words from those we serve. These notes are a reminder of why we do this work- supporting our community with care, respect and integrity ever day"



Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer,

Please send my appreciation to your staff, to Emma who has been so helpful to our family navigating the probate process over the course of last year.

Thank you and best regards,
Janet

*Thank You All
for Your Service
& Customer Care!*

*A note of
warmest thanks.*

*Jennifer,
My sincere thank you
for your kindness.
Mary Lou*

Thanks so much for the clarification! Appreciate you, the Judge and the good operation you run over there.

Corinne

Again, thank you. I appreciate the entire staff at Summit Probate for always being so accommodating to our clients' needs and being so user-friendly for the lawyers. It's really refreshing! I often say that clients are dealing with the Probate Court at one of the worst times of their lives, and that having the court work with the family and lawyers is really what it's all about.

So, thank you! :)

DB

Thank you so much! That means everything to me.

The project that I am working on is due this weekend and you have exceeded my expectations in response time. I really appreciate it!

Kindly,
Elizabeth

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Pictured above are New Day Court Coordinator, Kimberly Humphrey (right), and Mental Health Clerk, Kathy Herr.

It's a New Day for those suffering from Mental Illness

421 Mental Illness cases

Summit County has long used the outpatient commitment process to provide treatment in the community to citizens suffering from severe mental illness. The specialized program offered through the New Day Court gives those who participate the tools to take an active role in their recovery to avoid repeat hospitalizations. The New Day Court program offers compassionate case management supported by the Court and all of the service providers involved in the participant's treatment plan.

The Summit County Probate Court's New Day Court was developed in 2016 by Judge Stormer to assist the severely mentally ill on outpatient commitment.

Summit County's New Day Court is the first of its kind in the State of Ohio.

More information can be found at our website at www.summitohioprobate.com

75 Active New Day Court Participants

46 Participants graduated from New Day Court in 2025!

2852 Marriage Licenses Issued

In Ohio, the Probate Court issues marriage licenses. Once the license is issued, it is valid for 60 days. If 60 days pass without getting married, the marriage license expires and you must reapply for a new license.

When applying for a license, both applicants must appear at the Court.



170 Correction of Birth Registrations

Probate Court is where you go to file an application for a Correction of Birth Record. Ohio law provides that a person who claims to have been born in Ohio, and whose registration of birth was not recorded, has been lost or destroyed, has not been accurately recorded, or requires a change to gender marker, may register, correct or change their birth record.

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571 Name Changes

All applicants who choose to change their name must apply through Probate Court. An applicant for a name change of an adult or minor must live in Summit County for no less than sixty days immediately prior to filing. Once the documents have been properly filed, reviewed and approved by the court, the judgment order will be sent to the applicant. It is up to the Judge or Magistrate to decide if a hearing is to be held and if so, you will be notified of the hearing date. A parent or guardian of a minor child may apply to change the name of a child.



Pictured above is Deputy Clerk, Clayton Conaway.

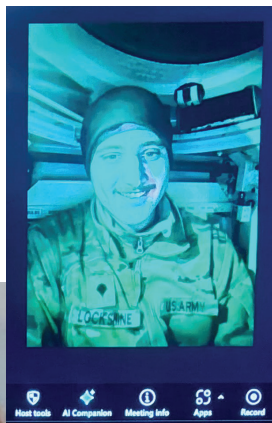
94 Adoptions

Helping a child and parent become a family is one of the most rewarding duties of the Court. Probate Court has the responsibility for finalizing all adoptions within Summit County, and depending on your personal situation, there are numerous ways to successfully adopt.



“Seeing the love of this family was such a blessing today! I was honored to finalize these adoptions. Hearing the words of wisdom from dad and the inspirational words from his son, daughter and wife made my day. I am so happy we were able to have this hearing today, what a great family!”

- Chief Magistrate Steve Elliott



One of many special adoption stories from Probate Court... This amazing family petitioned the Court to recognize & finalize the lifelong bond between a stepfather and his adult children- as he had always been their father in every way that mattered. Respecting his terminal illness, the Court expedited and arranged the hearing to ensure the family's wishes could be honored, including allowing his son to appear by Zoom while serving overseas in the military. Finalizing these adoptions was a privilege, giving legal recognition to a bond that had long been lived and deeply cherished.

Dear Chief Magistrate Elliott,
Thank you for holding the adoption hearing just before Christmas and for scheduling it so quickly. Allowing our son to join via Zoom meant more to our family than we can express. While our children may not have their dad much longer, they will now carry his name forever. You played an important role in making that possible. We are so grateful to you!

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2384 Estate related cases

The **administration of an estate** is handled through Probate court and is the legal process to settle the affairs of a person who passed away. Through this process, their debts are settled, and their assets are distributed. This is not always a quick and easy process as many times family members do not agree and therefore either the Judge or one of our Magistrates must decide the fate of the estate.

Full Administration of an Estate is necessary when: There is a surviving spouse of the deceased person and the total value of the deceased person's assets is greater than \$100,000. There is no surviving spouse and the total value of the deceased person's assets is greater than \$35,000. A Wrongful Death/Litigation Action is filed at the Court.



Pictured above is Deputy Clerk, Tammy Shomo.



Chief Magistrate Steve Elliott



Magistrate Clinton Householder



Magistrate Paula Haas



Magistrate Angela Hardway

2980 Active Guardianships

Probate Court **administrates a few types of guardianships** depending on the needs and age of the proposed ward. An Adult Guardianship is established for a person over the age of 18 who is unable to manage their own care. Guardianship of a Minor is for a child under the age of 18 who has no living parents or whose parents are unable to properly care for the child. A third type, a Conservatorship, is established for a person who is mentally competent but has physical or some mental limitations. Probate Court is the "superior guardian" and monitors all the guardianships to protect the personal and financial interests of the ward.



The Help Desk is staffed by a licensed attorney and available by appointment only to assist with your probate law matters. To schedule an appointment, call 330-643-2350. Court filing fees remain applicable, there is no charge for the Help Desk service.

PLEASE NOTE: The Help Desk is a limited resource and is not intended to replace an attorney. Appointments are limited to ONE (1) visit per case.

209 S. High St. Akron, OH 44308-1616

Summitohioprobate.com



Main: 330-643-2350 **Fax:** 330-643-2329
Help Desk: Free

Hours: Monday through Friday 8am – 4pm
Closed Saturday, Sunday and
Legal Holidays