



COMMON PLEAS COURT

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Laura B. Smith, Judge

Proposed Amendments to the Local Rules of Court for the Fairfield County Common Pleas Court – Domestic Relations Division

Comments are requested on the following proposed amendments to the Local Rules of Court for the Fairfield County Common Pleas Court - Domestic Relations Division. The Court will accept public comments until Thursday, June 18, 2026.

Comments on the proposed amendments should be submitted in writing, not later than Thursday, June 18, 2026, to:

Lori L. Lovas, Court Administrator

Fairfield County DR Court

224 East Main Street, 4th Floor

Lancaster, Ohio 43130

lori.lovas@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

Please include your full name and mailing address in any comments submitted by email.

Key to Adopted Amendments:

1. Existing language appears in regular type. Example: text
2. Existing language to be deleted appears in strikethrough. Example: ~~text~~
3. New language to be added appears in underline. Example: text

S E R V E • C O N N E C T • P R O T E C T

RULE 7.0
CIVIL PROTECTION ORDERS

- 7.1 **Hearing Requirements Pleading.** ~~No civil protection order will be granted without a hearing. The first hearing may be ex parte, but a second hearing shall be conducted within the guidelines of Revised Code Section 3113.31 unless waived by the parties. Actions under Ohio's domestic violence statute, R.C. 3113.31, may be initiated by filing a Petition for Domestic Violence Protection Order or Petition for Dating Violence Civil Protection Order. The Petition for Domestic Violence Protection Order or Petition for Dating Violence Civil Protection Order shall be treated as a separate action at all times. The Petitions shall not be incorporated, merged, or consolidated into any pending divorce, dissolution of marriage, legal separation, annulment, or parentage action.~~
- 7.2 **Failure of Service Procedure.** ~~Failure to serve respondent before the second hearing may result in either a continuance or a dismissal of the petition and the termination of the temporary protective order:~~
- (A) ~~Forms are available in the Court's document resource center. Electronic forms are available on the Court's website (co.fairfield.oh.us/dr) and the Supreme Court of Ohio's website (supremecourt.ohio.gov). Interactive forms and information can be found on the Ohio Legal Help website (ohiolegalthelp.org).~~
 - (B) ~~If the petitioner is seeking a temporary allocation of parental rights and responsibilities of minor children, the Petition shall include a Parenting Proceeding Affidavit.~~
 - (C) ~~All Petitions for Domestic Violence Protection Order and Petitions for Dating Violence Civil Protection Order must be filed in person with the Clerk of Courts during regular business hours. Electronic filing is not permitted for any document filed in a civil protection order case.~~
- 7.3 **Visitation Duration of Protection Orders.** ~~Where children are involved, requests should include proposed visitation guidelines and/or propositions why visitation should be temporarily denied. Failure to include a visitation schedule may result in a denial of the requested protection order.~~
- (A) ~~Any Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order Ex Parte or Dating Violence Civil Protection Order Ex Parte issued following an ex parte hearing shall be valid for one (1) year from the date of issuance, or until another date set by the judge/magistrate at the ex parte hearing.~~
 - (B) ~~Any Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order or Dating Violence Civil Protection Order issued after a full hearing on the Petition shall be valid until a date certain, but not later than five (5) years from its date of issuance.~~

(C) ~~_____ A party seeking to extend a Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order or Dating Violence Civil Protection Order beyond its original expiration date must file a motion. The motion should be filed at least 14 days prior to the scheduled expiration of the protection order.~~

7.4 ~~**Effective Time of Order Reporting to Law Enforcement and Compliance Plan.** Any order issued after the full hearing shall be effective for up to five full years.~~

(A) ~~_____ The Court has a duty to ensure complete, accurate, and timely submission of information into the state's computerized criminal history repository at the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), the Ohio Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), and other law enforcement databases.~~

(B) ~~_____ The Court, in collaboration with the Clerk of Courts, law enforcement agencies, and any other applicable justice system partners, will develop a Reporting to Law Enforcement & Compliance Plan.~~

(C) ~~_____ The Reporting to Law Enforcement & Compliance Plan will identify procedures and timelines for:~~

(1) ~~_____ Reporting information regarding protection orders as prescribed by R.C. 3113.31 and Civil Rule 65.1.~~

(2) ~~_____ Reporting sealed and expunged records to BCI, LEADS, and other law enforcement databases pursuant to R.C. 3113.31.~~

(D) ~~_____ The Court will review the Reporting to Law Enforcement & Compliance Plan every three years from its adoption date.~~

7.5 ~~**Termination of Order Modification or Termination.** An entry to terminate must be filed with orders to the Clerk of Courts to serve a copy of the entry to the proper law enforcement agencies to remove the Protection Order from their indexes. A party seeking to modify or terminate a civil protection order must file a motion. The Court shall not modify or terminate a civil protection order without oral hearing.~~

7.6 ~~**Publication of Case Information Online.** There shall be no public access to any civil protection order docket through the Clerk of Courts' publicly available internet website.~~