

Wayne County Probate Court

Administrative and Procedural Updates

By
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I. Administrative Updates

A. Judicial Transitions

This year began with significant changes on the bench, including the retirement of our long-serving Chief Judge, Judge Burton. We are fortunate to now have Judge Braxton leading the court as our new Chief Judge, providing strong and thoughtful leadership. Other changes to our bench include: Judge Perkins is now serving as our Chief Judge Pro Tempore and the rest of our bench is comprised of Judge Paolucci, Judge Keith, Judge McClory (who we welcome back to our court from Juvenile), and Judge Gaines who was elected to the bench this year. Judge Hartsfield and newly elected Judge Briggs are assigned to the Juvenile Court.

B. Updated Online Resources

We have expanded our online resources. Updates and new additions to our website and YouTube channel offer step-by-step guides for navigating court processes. We also launched a website chatbot—**Ask Wayne**—to provide user-friendly, accessible answers to commonly asked questions. These key website addresses are: www.wcpc.us and www.youtube.com/@wayneprobate

C. Customer Service Renovations

We opened our newly remodeled customer service area at the beginning of the year. It now features more space for visitors, publicly accessible computers for reviewing court documents, and improved signage for easier navigation.

D. Visitor Management Technology

We also implemented a new visitor check-in system—similar to those used in restaurants and medical offices—that can send a text notification when it's your turn. We have two tablet kiosk stations for customers to self check-in for customer service. This has streamlined the customer experience.

E. Flexible Access to Court Services

We are committed to being a modern, fully accessible court. The public can file pleadings and request service via email, fax, mail, in person, or through our website. Zoom hearings continue to be offered, leading to improved attendance, fewer delays in court proceedings and more convenience to the customer.

F. Ongoing Technology Upgrades

We continue to invest in technology upgrades, including courtroom audio and video recording systems, video conferencing tools in training and conference rooms, and enhancements to our network infrastructure and operating systems.

G. Exploring the Role of AI in the Courts

We are closely monitoring developments in artificial intelligence to assess how it might be effectively and ethically integrated into court operations in the future.

H. Case Management and eFiling Integration

Looking ahead, we plan to maintain the strengths of our current case management system while preparing for integration with the statewide eFiling system. This shift will make filing more efficient for Wayne County residents.

II. Procedural Updates

A. Implementation of WCPC 96

The court created a new local form, [WCPC 96](#), Request for Emergency Hearing, Adjournment of Hearing, or Withdrawal of Petition. With the implementation of this form, the court's website has been updated to explain the use of this form when requesting emergency hearings (see: [WCPC - Emergency Filings](#)), or to request the adjournment or rescheduling of hearings or withdrawal of a petition (and thus cancelation of a hearing) (see: [Request to adjourn/reschedule hearing or withdraw a petition](#)). This form replaces email or phone requests for these items and is entered into the case record so that the customer and the court can see the request. This form should also be used when requesting the rescheduling of multiple hearings in one case or related cases to a common hearing date and time. This form may be completed and submitted by the attorney on behalf of your client (in other words, your client's signature is not required, you can sign as the requestor on your client's behalf).

If submitting this form with the submission of the related pleading, send it in one pdf to that department's email. If submitting this form after the related pleading is filed, submit it to courtroomfile@wcpc.us. Remember, you must attend the hearing date as scheduled unless otherwise notified that the hearing date is being changed by the court.

B. Implementation of WCPC 262

The court created another new local form, [WCPC 262](#), Guardian's Financial Disclosure of Ward's Assets. All of our judges now order upon the appointment of a new guardian for an adult (so GA and GL cases), and whenever ordered to do so, the guardian must file with the court and serve on all interested parties including the ward this completed form. In addition, if the information changes the guardian must submit an updated disclosure and serve it on all parties. This form should be filed and served with the annual report of guardian if there is a more cash or property than what was previously reported to the court. As part of these changes, the bench has also updated its guardianship appointment orders to direct that if there are greater than \$10,000 in gross assets of the ward, the guardian must file a petition for protective order or petition for conservatorship.

This form includes disclosures regarding all assets, income, and regular expenses of the ward (including joint ownership assets). This form is submitted to the FileDept@wcpc.us.

C. Attorney Voucher Process

The Attorney voucher process was updated this past year. There is only one email to submit attorney vouchers to: vouchers@wcpc.us. Vouchers must be saved as individual pdf files, titled as the voucher number. Vouchers expire 12 months from their event date; all vouchers with an event date of 12 months or older cannot be paid. When submitted, it takes time for the vouchers to be processed, including making it through Wayne County offices for actual payments to be disbursed. Please timely

submit vouchers as this process can take many weeks. Also, please note that vouchers are not paid when the estate is directed to pay; and when a matter is adjourned or rescheduled, additional vouchers are not issued – one voucher is issued for each assignment.

D. Where Do I File Chart

Remember there are only 5 email addresses to be used for filing (and each filing should only go to 1 of these – nothing is required to be submitted to more than one email address). These emails are:

Contact Information	Please FAX or email to:	
When contacting the Wayne County Probate Court, please provide your name, email address, telephone number, and any other relevant information along with your filings.	FAX #	Email
Probate Counter - Service Clerks - Case Initiation	(313)967-4030	probateservice@wcpc.us
Records Department	(313)967-4041	filedept@wcpc.us
BHU/Mental Health/Developmentally Disabled	(313)967-4013	BHUDept@wcpc.us
Chief Deputy Probate Register/Court Attorney	(313)967-4042	chiefdepregr@wcpc.us
Judges' Office filings		courtroomfile@wcpc.us

See the court's "Where Do I File Chart" to confirm which department email is to be used. This chart is found directly at www.wcpc.us/wheredoifile.pdf or through the court's website, under Filing:

