ADAMS COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
RULES OF ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION

Rule 2.9. Confirmation of Accounts

A. All accounts and statements of proposed distributions which are filed by the tenth (10th) day of the month, provided that proper notice has been given and no objections filed, shall be confirmed by the Court on the Civil Miscellaneous Court Day of the following month.

B. Prior to the date of confirmation, a proposed decree of distribution shall be filed by accountant and a copy provided to the Orphans' Court Judge.

Rule 14. Guardianship of Incapacitated Persons

Rule 14.1. Guardianship

A. *Guardians*--Except in the case of an adult child living with his/her natural parent(s), preference in appointments shall normally be given to banking institutions and suitable persons who do not reside with the alleged incapacitated person, are not related to the person and who reside or have a regular place of business in Adams County.
B. *Estate*--Consent of Proposed Guardian - The written consent of the proposed guardian to act as guardian shall be attached to the petition.
C. *Estate--Proof of Service*--Proof of service shall be presented at the hearing. The affidavit of service shall, in all cases, recite that the petition and citation and notice were read and explained to the alleged incapacitated person.
D. *Sale of Personal Property*--Court approval for sale of personal property shall not be required.

Rule 14.3 to 14.5. Reserved

Rule 15. Adoptions

Rule 15.1. Investigations

A. Adams County Children and Youth Services is designated as the agency to perform investigations required by the Court in accordance with the Adoption Act.
B. Fees for investigations by the agency shall be periodically set by the administrative order. Until changed, the fee shall be $75.00. Fees for obtaining child abuse clearances and criminal histories shall be in addition to the investigation fee.
C. Petitioners and/or persons filing notices of intention to adopt shall, unless excused from an investigation, pay the investigation fee within two (2) weeks of filing a petition or notice of intention to adopt, whichever is filed first.
D. Petitioners shall, within the two (2) week period, provide the agency with a description of petitioners' home and detailed directions to it.
E. Persons who are otherwise subject to investigation and who request a waiver thereof shall include, with the application for waiver, either:

1. **an affidavit setting forth in detail that person s criminal history and all indicated reports of child abuse that are known to the person, or**
2. **original or certified copies of the person's criminal history and child abuse clearance forms.**

F. Upon receipt of the material described in (e), the Clerk shall promptly provide the agency with copies thereof.

Rule 15.2. Voluntary Relinquishment to Agency

The caption for all pleadings and the docket entry shall carry the given name of the child.

Rule 15.3. Voluntary Relinquishment to Adult Intending to Adopt Child

A. The caption for all pleadings and docket entry shall carry the given name of the child.
B. In addition to other information required by Pa. O.C. Rule 15.3, the petition shall describe any agreement between petitioner and natural parents regarding fees, costs, payments, or future rights of visitation and/or custody.

Rule 15.4. Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights

A. The caption for all pleadings and the docket entry shall carry the given name of the child.
B. Information required by Local Rule 15.3 (B) shall be provided.

Rule 15.5. Adoption

A. *Petition*.
1. **The caption for all pleadings and the docket entry regarding an adoption shall be in the name to be taken by the proposed adoptee. Where there was a prior relinquishment or termination proceeding known to the adopting parents, there shall be a reference thereto by number and year in the petition for adoption.**
2. **The petition shall contain the information required by Pa. O.C. Rule 15.3(b).**

B. *Adult*--Change of Name. An adult to be adopted who desires to assume the surname of adopting parent or parents shall advertise such desire in accordance with Pa. R.C.P. 430(b)(1).
C. *Intermediary*. When a report is filed by an intermediary and the prior relinquishment or termination proceeding is not known to the adopting parents, the report of the intermediary shall refer to the prior relinquishment or termination proceeding by number and year. Where the prior relinquishment or termination proceeding is not referred to in the Adoption Petition or in the report
of the intermediary, but is known to the clerk, the Clerk shall place a memorandum in the adoption packet showing the reference to the prior relinquishment or termination proceeding.

Rule 15.6. Notice--Method and Time

A. If personal service is not obtainable and the registered or certified mail is returned undelivered, then:

1. **Notice shall be sent by regular mail to the last known address of the parent and an affidavit of mailing shall be filed of record.**
2. **Further notice by publication shall be given once a week during three successive calendar weeks in the local legal periodical and in a newspaper of general circulation published at or near his or her last known residence within the county.**
3. **The notice by publication shall appear in substantially the following form:**

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

ORPHANS' COURT DIVISION

NOTICE

TO: (Party to Whom Notice is Given)

You are hereby notified that a Petition for (Adoption/Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights to Child) has been filed in the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas of Adams County, Pennsylvania. A hearing has been set for _____ at _____ o'clock, __.M., prevailing time, at the Courthouse at Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania, for the purpose of determining whether or not statutory grounds exist for the (Adoption/Involuntary Termination of Your Parental Rights) with respect to your child.

You should contact your lawyer at once. If you do not have a lawyer or cannot afford one, go to or telephone the office set forth below to find out where you can get help.

Court Administrator

Adams County Courthouse

111-117 Baltimore Street

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325

Telephone Number: 717-337-9846

4. **Proof of notice by publication shall be presented to the Court at the time of the hearing.**

Rule 15.7. Impounding--Docket Entries--Reports--Privacy

The docket maintained by the Clerk shall carry only the name and date of each paper filed and shall also carry the date in reference to final action, which entry shall consist of a notation either that the decree was entered or that the petition was dismissed. Adoptions shall be indexed on an annual basis rather than to a term and number. An alphabetical index will be maintained for the

convenience of the Clerk.

Rule 16. Abortion Control Act Proceedings

Rule 16.1 through 16.5 Reserved

Rule 16.6 Dockets. Docket Maintenance

In addition to the requirements of Pa. O.C. Rule 16.6, all docket entries shall be referenced under an "AC" number, with the appropriate year, and not under an "OC" number.

Rule 16.7 through 16.12 Reserved

[Pa.B. Doc. No. 05-984. Filed for public inspection May 20, 2005, 9:00a.m.]
[Pa.B. Doc. No. 17-466. Filed for public inspection March 17, 2017, 9:00 a.m. AND Pa.B. Doc. No. 17-467. Filed for public inspection March 17, 2017, 9:00 a.m.]
[Pa.B. Doc. No. 25-1132. Filed for public inspection August 22, 2025, 9:00a.m.][Addition of Rule 2.9]

[current as of September 23, 2025]