



CIRCUIT COURT
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

FRIEND OF THE COURT
414 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ROOM 225
GRAND HAVEN, MI 49417-1464

STATE OF
MICHIGAN

DOCKET #: _____

IV-D #: _____

INVESTIGATOR: _____

OTTAWA COUNTY FRIEND OF THE COURT

Business Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5 pm

Phone: 877-543-2660 Fax: 616-846-8128

Visit us online, www.miottawa.org/foc

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FRIEND OF THE COURT?

The Friend of the Court Office is part of the 20th Judicial Circuit Court - Family Division and is responsible for protecting the rights and interests of the children in domestic relations matters.

The Friend of the Court Office has the following statutory duties:

- ✓ To investigate, report, and recommend to the Family Court which parent should have custody of minor children.
- ✓ To enforce all child support orders, including medical support orders, entered by the Family Court.
- ✓ To insure that children's rights to parenting time with the non-custodial parents are protected, and to enforce parenting time rights ordered by the Family Division when parenting time is denied.

HOW DO I CONTACT MY INVESTIGATOR (aka CASEWORKER)?

Investigators are assigned alphabetically by the father's last name (unless the case is an intergovernmental case). Two specialized investigators are assigned to specific functions — the medical liability specialist and the bench warrant officer.

In writing...

Written correspondence may be submitted in four ways:

1. Signing up for MiCase at: www.michigan.gov/micase.
2. Via US-Mail to the address above.
3. Via fax at the number above.
4. Dropped off to the Friend of the Court directly at the address above.

Written correspondence is preferred by the Friend of the Court office. It allows your investigator to fully investigate your inquiry and respond appropriately. Written documentation also provides the easiest method for documenting your case.

By telephone....

The main office number may be called during regular business hours. This will place you into the mandated interactive voice response system (IVR). The IVR is user friendly and a caller may follow the prompts to be connected with the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU) for account information, to request forms or may choose to connect to the local Friend of the Court office. Please be advised that the office receives a high volume of calls daily and you may need to wait to speak to a receptionist.

By utilizing your investigator's all-access day...

You may walk-in or call your investigator on their designated Setmore phone appointment day. This schedule is posted on the Friend of the Court website. All access hours are 8 am – 4 pm.

Appointments

The Friend of the Court office is open for in person walk-in appointments on Wednesdays and virtual appointments on Monday and Friday and during your investigator's individual all access day.

Monday/Friday: Virtual

General question day

Tuesday/Thursday: Virtual

Specific Investigator Questions

Wednesday:

Ottawa County Courthouse, Grand Haven
8:00 am – 4:00 pm, last appointment at 3:30

**As investigators staff the walk-in hours on a rotating basis, you may not see your regular investigator during your in-person visit.*

IMPORTANT WEBSITES:

Ottawa County Friend of the Court Website
www.miottawa.org/foc

- ✓ Court forms
- ✓ Demographic forms
- ✓ "SUBMIT A QUESTION" link
- ✓ Complete Friend of the Court handbook

MiChildSupport Website
micase.state.mi.us

- ✓ Up-to-date child support balances
- ✓ Printable account summaries
- ✓ Upcoming Show Cause hearing notices

- ✓ Income Withholding activity

HOW CAN I MAKE A PAYMENT?

Child support is ordered to be paid on monthly basis. Typically, support is collected by an Income Withholding Order which garnishes the payment directly from the paycheck of the payer of support. If an Income Withholding Order is not in place, child support must be paid by:

Cash...

Cash payments can be made during business hours at the Friend of the Court office located in the Ottawa County Courthouse ONLY.

PayNearMe...

After registering at <https://www.paynearme.com>, you may make your child support payment with cash at CVS Pharmacy store, 7-Eleven and Family Dollar stores nationwide. A \$1.99 service fee is charged for each transaction.

Check or money order...

Mail your check or money order to the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU). Payment coupons are available on the Friend of the Court Website.

MiSDU
PO Box 30351
Lansing, MI 48909

Credit card...

Visit <https://www.misdu.com/secure> to make your payments via a credit card. A convenience fee will apply.

Allpaid...

Visit <https://www.allpaid.com>, or call 1-888-604-7888 to make a credit card payment using Allpaid. You will also need your case number and social security number. A convenience fee will apply. Payment location code is **8829**.

HOW DO I RECEIVE CHILD SUPPORT?

All child support will be distributed electronically. Clients must have support deposited directly into a bank account or put onto a US Bank ReliaCard Visa debit card. A US Bank card will be mailed to the recipient of support unless a direct deposit account is established prior to the initial deposit of support funds.

The MiSDU handles all inquiries regarding direct deposit. US Bank (855-233-8374) handles all inquiries regarding the ReliaCard. The MiSDU deals with inquiries such as payment coupons, direct deposits, check issuance, lost/stolen checks, unclaimed checks, IVR pin numbers, debit card disbursement questions and disbursement details. In general, all other questions should be referred to your local FOC office. MiSDU may be reached by calling the automated IVR, (616) 846-8210) and following the prompts to connect to MiSDU. You may also follow the prompts to reach your local FOC office.

HOW DOES MY PARENTING TIME/CUSTODY WORK?

Custody is the ability to make decisions for your minor child(ren). If you would like custody to be modified, and you are unable to reach an agreement with the other party, you may file a motion for a custody assessment. This motion is available from the Legal Self-Help Center or your Friend of the Court Investigator. It is customary for a custody assessment to take approximately three months to complete. Due to the in-depth nature of the custody assessment procedure, this paperwork is not typically mailed out to clients. You will need to schedule an appointment with your investigator to discuss the custody assessment process.

If there are emergency circumstances (for example, you believe the child is at immediate risk of harm while in the care of the other parent) please contact your local law enforcement agency or Ottawa County Child Protective Services at 855-444-3911. You may file an ex parte petition for temporary custody. Forms are available at the Legal Self-Help Center, located in the Ottawa County Courthouse in Grand Haven.

If parenting time is specified in your court order (for example: "alternating weekends" or "Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.") and the provision in your court order is not being followed, you may file a parenting time complaint. A complaint form is available in our office, on our web site or may be requested through the automated IVR. If your court order does not identify a specific parenting time schedule and you wish to have the parenting time provision of your order modified to include specific days/times/holidays, you will need to file a motion to modify parenting time. This form is also

available in our office, on our web site or through the automated IVR. For general parenting time provisions, please refer to the Friend of the Court parenting time policy available on this website.