



## OFFICE OF PARKER COUNTY JUDGE PAT DEEN

1 Courthouse Square | Weatherford, TX 76086 | Office: 817.598.6148 | Fax: 817.598.6199 | [parkercountytexas.com](http://parkercountytexas.com)

### **Court Docket:**

The Probate Court will offer in-person hearings only except for the following two exceptions. 1. Virtual/Zoom hearings will be permitted for out-of-state applicants. 2. Virtual/Zoom hearings will be permitted when there are safety concerns for travel due to existing medical conditions for the applicant. Probate dockets are held on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month. The probate docket will finalize by the end of day Wednesday prior to court. Late additions to the docket may be considered based on the circumstances of the case. To schedule a hearing, please email the Court Coordinator [rich.contreras@parkercountytexas.com](mailto:rich.contreras@parkercountytexas.com).

### **Scheduling a Hearing:**

The Parker County Probate Auditor will review each file and will not set a hearing until the following has been met: all pleadings, proposed orders, reports, and documents have been submitted. Compliance with this rule allows us to review the file and contact the attorney should any deficiencies be present. It also allows the County Clerk's probate department to prepare any required documents. The following requirements must also be met before a case can be set for a hearing:

- **Original Will:** By law, the original will must be filed with the County Clerk's office within 72 hours of e-filing the application for probate. TRCP 21(f)(12)
- **JBCC Background Investigations:** By law, guardianship cases will not be placed on the court docket or scheduled for a hearing until the JBCC background check has been completed. Once I have reviewed the file a note will be entered in Odyssey signifying that the JBCC Background check is complete. GC 155.203(b)

Note: Pre-dated oaths will not be accepted.

Effective immediately, Parker County Probate Court will require the attorney to provide death-verification letter or bring the death certificate for review and inspection by the court. Without it, the order will not be signed. It will be noted on the docket sheet that the death certificate has been reviewed.

### **Ad Litem Fees:**

It is the Court's duty to ensure that estates of decedents and wards pay only the reasonable attorney's fees necessarily incurred. Parker County Ad Litem/Attorney Fees will be paid at a flat rate of **\$300.00**. If a case drops/discharges before a PC hearing takes place, the fee will be paid at a flat rate of **\$150.00**. Rates may vary for more complex litigations and the Court will consider the extent of the lawyer's experience in the area of law as well as Board Certification in Probate and Estate planning with approval of the Judge.

No block billing

No billing for consultations with court staff ie phone calls, emails to set hearings, etc.

No billing for trips to the Courthouse or Annex for filing documents

No billing for drafting or filing Attorney Fee Applications

### **Filing of Will with the County Clerk in a Probate Proceeding**

The original will can be filed with the Clerk's Office in the following ways:

1. Mailed via USPS: The mail is usually processed the same day it is received. Mail the original will to the following address:

Lila Deakle, County Clerk  
1112 Santa Fe Drive  
Weatherford, TX 76086  
ATTN: PROBATE

2. You may want to consider using certified mail, FEDEX or UPS overnight service as you will have a confirmation of delivery. Use the same address as above.

3. Hand Delivered to the Clerk's Office: If you choose to hand deliver the original will they are accepted Monday – Friday at 1112 Santa Fe Drive in the probate office. Keep in mind that the probate office is closed from 12:00 – 1:00 pm for lunch. If you would like a file marked copy of the will please bring an additional copy or be prepared to pay \$1.00 per page for copies.

### **Dress Code:**

Everyone appearing in court should be attired in an appropriate manner maintaining the dignity of the Court. The Court does not allow the following attire:

- No hats, caps or other headwear
- No shorts or tank tops
- No bare mid-drifts
- No sagging pants
- No Flip Flops

- Effective 11/3/2022 all probate cases will be heard in the Commissioners Courtroom. All mental health and guardianship cases will be conducted in the smaller courtroom and will be offered virtually/via Zoom on a needs basis.
- Any procedural or policy changes to probate or guardianship hearings are to be reviewed and approved by the county judge prior to implementation.

**Addendum regarding compensation paid by estates for attorney services effective June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023:**

\$525.00 for 3 hours worked regardless of estate size and attorney's years of service.

\$200.00 paid per hour for additional hours thereafter.

In perceived special cases where each respective attorney feels there are extenuating circumstances that may justify additional fees, you may petition the County Judge only, on a case by case basis, showing just cause that additional compensation is justified. No one else has the authority to approve any deviations from this policy.

**Note: This addendum replaces the flat rate of \$150.00 per hour compensating attorney services paid by estates. All other services paid by Parker County for Ad Litem fees will remain at the current flat rate of \$300.00.**

Regards,



Pat Deen  
Parker County Judge