

## **Grandparent Visitation Rights in Tennessee - HELP4TN Blog**

Tennessee law allows parents to decide who can and cannot see their children. Parents can even say that grandparents are not allowed to see the children, and the law says that is ok. Courts only grant legal visitation rights to grandparents in certain situations.

### **When can a grandparent get visitation rights?**

The courts may order parents to allow grandparents to have visitation with their grandchildren if any of the following is true:

- The mother or the father has died.
- The parents are unmarried.
- The parties are divorced or are legally separated.
- One parent has been missing for over six months.
- The child lived with the grandparents for a year or more, and was then removed from the grandparents' home by the parent or parents.
- The grandparent and the child had a significant existing relationship for at least one year before a parent ended or severely reduced the relationship for reasons other than abuse or a danger of substantial harm to the child.
- Another state says that the grandparent has visitation rights

### **How do grandparents get visitation rights?**

To get legal visitation, grandparents have to file a petition for visitation against the parent or

parents in the county where the child lives. Depending on the county, the petition might be filed in the circuit court, juvenile court, or general sessions court. The grandparents should probably hire a lawyer to represent them. A hearing will be conducted, during which the judge will consider the entire situation, and if it is appropriate will order a visitation schedule that the judge believes to be in the best interests of the children.

If you want to ask a lawyer questions about your rights, you can use [TN.FreeLegalAnswers.org](http://TN.FreeLegalAnswers.org) or call 844-HELP4TN.

HELP4TN Blog posts are written by TALS staff attorneys. This blog is not legal advice, but it is legal information to help you learn about your rights. If you have questions about this blog or about your legal situation, you can talk to a lawyer for free at 1-844-HELP4TN (1-844-435-7486).

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