

COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO, FIFTH APPELLATE DISTRICT, FAIRFIELD COUNTY

In re A.B.

2026-Ohio-83 · No. 2025 CA 00039 · Decided January 12, 2026

SUMMARY

The Fifth District Court of Appeals of Ohio affirmed a Fairfield County Juvenile Division judgment awarding legal custody of A.B. to Monica Lampron and granting paternal grandmother Laura Shufeldt limited visitation. The court held that the custody and visitation decisions were supported by the evidence and did not constitute an abuse of discretion. It also upheld consideration of the guardian ad litem report and rejected the claim that Shufeldt was entitled to designation as a non-residential parent for statutory notice purposes.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Fifth Appellate District, Fairfield County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	William B. Hoffman; Craig R. Baldwin; Robert G. Montgomery
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Fifth Appellate District, Fairfield County
DECIDED	January 12, 2026
DOCKET	2025 CA 00039
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Appeal from a Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division judgment awarding legal custody of A.B. to Monica Lampron, granting Laura Shufeldt visitation, and denying Shufeldt's objections to the magistrate's report.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	An award of legal custody and decisions concerning grandparent visitation are reviewed for abuse of discretion. A custody decision is not unreasonable when supported by competent, credible evidence.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion; decided on the accelerated calendar.
PARTIES	Laura Shufeldt v. Monica Lampron

TOPICS

- child custody
- visitation
- guardian ad litem
- family law procedure
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

family law

juvenile law

child custody

grandparent visitation

guardian ad litem

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the juvenile court abused its discretion by awarding legal custody of A.B. to Monica Lampron.
2. Whether the juvenile court abused its discretion by limiting Laura Shufeldt's grandparent visitation to one weekend per month and restricted holiday time.
3. Whether the juvenile court erred by considering the guardian ad litem's report despite alleged noncompliance with Supreme Court of Ohio Rule 48.03.
4. Whether the juvenile court erred by failing to designate Shufeldt as a non-residential parent for purposes of statutory notice and access to the child's records.

HOLDINGS

1. The juvenile court did not abuse its discretion by awarding legal custody of A.B. to Monica Lampron because the award was supported by a preponderance of the evidence and was in A.B.'s best interest.
2. The juvenile court did not abuse its discretion by limiting Shufeldt's visitation to one weekend per month and restricted holiday time.
3. The juvenile court did not err by considering the guardian ad litem's report despite the alleged failure to complete every duty under Supreme Court of Ohio Rule 48.03.
4. The juvenile court did not err by declining to designate Shufeldt as a non-residential parent for purposes of access to A.B.'s records because Shufeldt was not a non-residential parent and identified no authority requiring that designation.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“An abuse of discretion connotes more than an error of law or judgment; rather, it implies the trial court's decision was unreasonable, arbitrary, or unconscionable.” (§ 14)

“Even if the Court found she did not comply with every duty in the Rules of Superintendence, the Rules of Superintendence do not require the Court to disregard the GAL's report in its entirety.” (§ 30)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A.B., born in 2016, was regularly left in Monica Lampron's care beginning in 2017 and lived with Lampron more often than with her biological mother beginning in 2018. In March 2024, A.B.'s mother overdosed in front of the children, after which Lampron sought legal custody; both biological parents stipulated that they were unfit. The guardian ad litem recommended awarding legal custody to Lampron, with Shufeldt receiving visitation, and testified that A.B. and Lampron had a loving, bonded relationship while A.B. wished to live with Lampron.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Monica Lampron filed a complaint for legal custody on March 29, 2024, and Laura Shufeldt filed a competing complaint on May 30, 2024. After a trial, the magistrate recommended awarding legal custody to Lampron and granting Shufeldt visitation on the first weekend of each month. The juvenile court overruled Shufeldt's objections and entered judgment on September 9, 2025. Shufeldt appealed, raising four assignments of error.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- In re C.V.M., 2012-Ohio-5514, ¶ 7 (8th Dist.)
- In re B.B., 2016-Ohio-7994, ¶ 18 (9th Dist.)
- In re Mullen, 2011-Ohio-3361, ¶ 14
- In re H.J.H., 2019-Ohio-116, ¶ 3 (1st Dist.)
- Blakemore v. Blakemore, 5 Ohio St.3d 217, 219 (1983)
- In re K.R. 1, 2022-Ohio-1768, ¶ 17 (5th Dist.)
- Rownd v. Marcelli, 2016-Ohio-7142, ¶ 14

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