

You(th) Have Rights

understanding juvenile court



Tips for court

- Be respectful, even if you don't agree with what is being said.
- Talk to your lawyer and let your lawyer talk during court.
- Don't wear a hat or use your cell phone in court.
- Don't eat or chew gum.
- Be patient; you might have to wait for other cases to be heard first.

What happens at juvenile court?

What happens at court depends on a number of factors, including what you are charged with and your age. The process can take 4-6 hours or many weeks.

- Fingerprints: If you have been charged with committing a serious illegal act, or felony level offense, you will get fingerprinted before court.
- First appearance and arraignment
- One of three things happens next:
 - Plea bargain
 - Adjudicatory hearing
 - Diversion program

Get Help: 612.825.0000

www.tubman.org

Give Help: 612.825.3333

ABOUT TUBMAN: Safety. Hope. Healing. Each year, Tubman helps nearly 25,000 people of all ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds who are facing relationship violence, sexual assault, exploitation, homelessness, addiction, mental health challenges or other forms of trauma. We provide safe shelter, legal services, mental and chemical health counseling, youth programs and community education.

Going to Juvenile Court



When do I get a lawyer?

Your family can hire a private lawyer, or the court can appoint a lawyer to defend you. At the first appearance, your parent/guardian can complete an application to find out if you qualify for a lawyer based on their income. You will only be appointed a lawyer for misdemeanor or higher offenses.

What does arraignment mean?

Arraignment is when you get formally charged in front of a judge or referee. The court also decides if you can go home before the first hearing or if you have to go to juvenile detention.



What happens if the case goes to trial?

Juvenile trials are called an adjudicatory hearing. During the hearing, the prosecutor and youth's attorney present their evidence and make their best arguments about the facts of the case. A judge hears the case, not a jury. At the end, a judge decides if a juvenile is innocent or guilty (referred to as "delinquent"). If a youth is found delinquent, they are evaluated, and a recommendation is given to the judge. Then the judge decides on a punishment, which might include options such as therapy, going to juvenile detention, community service, paying a fine, or probation.

If you are certified as an adult, you will go to adult court.

What is a plea bargain?

A plea agreement is an agreement between the prosecutor and the youth. Often the youth agrees to admit they are guilty in exchange for an easier punishment, which might include attending therapy, obeying curfew, or paying a victim for damages.

What is diversion?

When a judge diverts a case, the judge sends the youth to a community program that will work with the youth. Youth may have to do counseling, complete community service, take classes, or pay a fee. After completing the program, the charges are dropped. If the youth does not complete the program, the case goes back to the judge to go through the adjudicatory process.