

ELEMENTS OF TEEN COURT

Teen Court allows young people who commit first-time offenses to have a “sentencing hearing” with teens acting as prosecutor, defense advocate and jurors. An attorney presides as the judge and the teen jury determines the sentence.

Participation in Teen Court is voluntary and is only offered to those teens that the **Judge** deems as “qualified” depending on the type of charge and the circumstances of the case. Juvenile defendants must admit to guilt in order to participate. A parent/guardian must be present during the sentencing hearing.

THE PURPOSE OF TEEN COURT

Teen Court is designed to educate the youth about the judicial process. A defendant in Teen Court learns responsibility to the community and becomes accountable to his/her peers as well as to the criminal justice system and allows a juvenile to keep his/her record clear.

TEEN COURT SENTENCES

A Teen Court sentence is a deferred judgment and sentence. A deferred judgment and sentence means no conviction is entered by the court at the time of the guilty plea. So long as the defendant successfully completes the terms and conditions of the Teen Court sentence, the case will be dismissed. If the defendant fails to complete the Teen Court sentence, then the Court will enter a conviction and the defendant will be sentenced by the Court.

Sentences imposed by teen juries may consist of community service, letter(s) of apology, essays, classes (theft, alcohol, education, anger management, etc.), restitution to the victim, curfews and participation in future Teen Court Juries (this is a mandatory part of any sentence), and mandatory probation.

Sentencing is intended to be constructive and to actively involve the juvenile in his/her community, as well as in future Teen Court sessions. The Municipal Court Judge and staff will be responsible for enforcing the sentence requirements. Failure to satisfactorily complete the sentence will result in additional sanctions, including the Defendant having to return to municipal court for a revocation hearing and re-sentencing.

Teen Court sentencing can be appealed to the Municipal Judge if a parent/guardian believes his/her child has not been fairly sentenced.