



Juvenile justice system

Juvenile sentencing



The Illinois juvenile justice system was created to address the unique needs of young offenders. This *Get the Facts* provides an overview of the types of sentences imposed by juvenile court judges.

What sentencing options are available to judges after a youth pleads guilty or is found guilty by the court?

Juvenile court judges have a variety of sentencing options. They range from required substance abuse and mental health treatment, fines, community service, and restitution, to levels of probation, home confinement, and confinement at a county detention center or within the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.

What is probation?

When a juvenile is given a sentence of probation, he or she is allowed to return to the community but must comply with court-ordered conditions, such as attending school, abiding by a curfew, meeting with a probation officer, and avoiding other trouble with the law. Probation officers monitor the youth with frequent meetings to ensure that conditions set by the court are met.

What is conditional discharge?

Conditional discharge allows youth to return to the community without being monitored by a probation officer, but requires compliance with court-ordered conditions. If a youth complies with all conditions set by the court, he or she will be successfully discharged from the juvenile justice system.

What is intensive probation supervision?

Intensive probation supervision (IPS) involves stricter probation guidelines than standard probation. IPS requires juveniles to meet frequently with a probation officer and strict curfews, electronic monitoring, and drug testing requirements may be imposed. IPS may last for the first year of multi-year probation sentence or be used as a last-resort measure for a youth who has failed to meet standard probation conditions.

How does home confinement work?

A youth sentenced to home confinement must remain at his or her place of residence, leaving only with the court's permission. Youth may get permission from the court to attend work or school, receive medical attention, and other activities requiring him or her to leave the home. Home confinement often is ordered with electronic monitoring, which requires the youth to wear an ankle bracelet. Home confinement and electronic monitoring also may be set as conditions of a youth's probation sentence.



What treatment sentencing options do judges have?

Judges may sentence a youth to attend treatment programs or obtain counseling for drug and alcohol abuse, sex offenses, or for mental health or medical problems. Some treatment sentences include a stay in a residential facility. Treatment also may be a condition of probation or conditional release.

Could a youth be sentenced to a prison term?

Yes. The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) is a state juvenile corrections agency operating eight youth facilities, called Illinois Youth Centers. A youth who is at least 13 years old and convicted in a juvenile court may be sentenced to a period of IDJJ confinement. Juveniles are given indeterminate sentences, which means their release dates are unknown but confinement cannot extend beyond the youth's 21st birthday. Most of these youth are paroled prior to their 21st birthdays and are monitored in the community by a parole agent.

What happens after a youth completes his or her sentence?

Once the conditions of a sentence are met, including successful completion of parole if a prison sentence was imposed, the youth is successfully discharged from the juvenile justice system. If the youth was convicted in the juvenile court, his or her records will be sealed.

What happens when a youth does not meet the requirements or conditions of his or her sentence?

A youth who does not comply with sentence conditions are at risk for harsher sentencing and further involvement with the juvenile justice system. A petition to revoke the original sentence may be filed with the court by probation officers, judges, prosecutors, and parole agents. A juvenile court judge will hold a revocation hearing in which the youth's sentence violations or non-compliance are detailed. If the judge determines that the youth has violated the conditions of his or her sentence, the judge may impose stricter sentencing conditions, or revoke the sentence entirely and re-sentence the youth to something even more restrictive.

About *Get the Facts: Juvenile Justice System*



This *Get the Facts* series was created to answer common questions about the juvenile justice system. Other topics in this series include juvenile arrests, the pretrial process, the courts, and corrections.



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