

# Now that You're in Juvenile Court

## Here's what you need to know!

If you are arrested or if you receive a **summons** (notice that you and your parent/guardian are to appear in court) you have to go to court because you have been charged with a crime. Here is some information that may be useful.

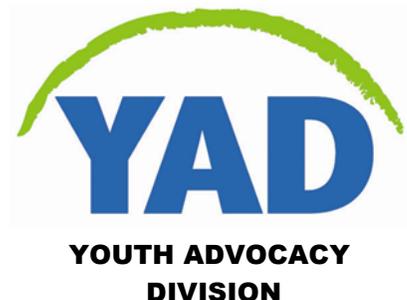
**FIRST STEP - ARRAIGNMENT:** Make sure that you arrive in court on time and ask the juvenile court probation department where you should check in. The first time you go to court is the **arraignment**. This is where you will be formally charged with the crime and the judge will decide whether you can go home or whether you will be held on **bail**. **At the arraignment:**

- You are presumed to be innocent (not guilty) of the crime.
- You will be given a **lawyer** if you can't afford to pay for one.
- You may meet with a **probation officer (P.O.)** before you go into court. When in the courtroom, a P.O. will tell the judge how you are doing at school, work, and at home and whether you have been to court before. If you meet with the P.O., make sure that you don't talk to him about your case.
- In the courtroom, the lawyer who represents the government, called the **prosecutor**, will tell the judge what you are charged with and may read a police report and give a summary of why you were charged with a crime.
- Your lawyer will tell the judge why you should be allowed to go home without someone having to post **bail** (this is where someone must pay money to the court so that you are not held at **DYS**). Depending on your case, your lawyer may also be able to convince the judge that you shouldn't be charged at all.
- If the judge arraigns you, he can release you to go home, release you to go home and order that you follow **conditions** (rules), or hold you on bail.
- If the judge orders that you be held on bail, you will be held at the **Department of Youth Services (DYS)** until someone posts bail, the bail is reduced, or until the case is over.

**REMEMBER!** Your lawyer is the only person you should speak with about your case. Everything you tell your lawyer stays between the two of you. The more you work with your lawyer, the more your lawyer can help you.

**NEXT STEPS:** If you go **home** after your arraignment:

- Meet with your lawyer as soon as possible so that your lawyer is able to help you and defend you.
- Don't talk about your case with anyone except for your lawyer – including teachers, parents, or the police. If you do, the prosecutor can use your words against you.
- Do not talk (email, text, etc.) to, or ask your friends to talk to, the **witnesses** (the people who are saying you did something illegal). You could get a new charge against you for this.
- Do not post anything on Facebook about your case.
- Go to school every day on time, and go to work if you have a job. Follow all the rules that the judge set for you. Keep your curfew! The court can send the police to check on you.



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**NEXT STEPS:** If you go to **DYS** after your arraignment:

- You have the right to a **bail review**. This means that a judge from the Superior Court will hear about your case and will decide whether the bail was fair. Call your lawyer and tell your lawyer you want a bail review.
- Don't get in any fights or into any kind of trouble at **DYS**. A good report from **DYS** can help you with your case; a bad report can hurt you.
- If your family or legal guardian wants to post bail at **DYS** rather than at court, they will have to pay an extra \$40 to get you out.

**Important!** Going to court can be tiring and complicated. Ask your lawyer a lot of questions and be sure you know what's going on.

## YOUR CASE IN COURT:

- After the arraignment, you will have to come back to court for a **pre-trial hearing**. On that day, your lawyer will get more information (**discovery**) from the prosecutor about your case. Your lawyer and the prosecutor will also talk about possible outcomes of your case. This is sometimes referred to as **plea negotiations or plea bargaining**.
- If you are fighting the case, there will be more court dates. There might be a **motions hearing** where your lawyer will argue that certain evidence should not be used against you. Eventually, there will be a **trial**.
- At the trial, the witnesses will come to court and tell what happened to them. Your lawyer will **cross-examine** them, which means he or she will ask a lot of questions. Also, any witnesses that you and your lawyer have decided should speak on your behalf will tell what they know.
- The trial can be in front of a **judge** or a **jury**. A **jury** is a group of adults from the community. The judge or jury will decide whether there is enough evidence that you committed this crime.

**REMEMBER!** Follow all the rules set by the Court while your case is going on. Be on time for each court date and keep in touch with your lawyer. Don't contact, or have your friends or family contact, any witnesses - this means in person, by phone, email, text, or any other means.

## SOME RULES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT:

- **You have to be in court.** If you miss a court date, you will be in **default** and will be arrested. If you have to miss court because of an emergency, call your lawyer and call the court and ask to speak to probation to let them know what's going on.
- **Comply with conditions.** If the judge ordered you to follow certain conditions (rules), make sure you follow them. If you are having a problem following them, tell your lawyer. If you don't follow these conditions, you can be brought back into court and held at **DYS** for up to 90 days.
- **Don't get a new case.** Getting a new case during this time can cause you to be held at **DYS** for up to 60 days or until your case is finished.
- **Be on time.** You have to be at court at **9 a.m.** Most courts require you to check in with probation when you get to court; if you are late, the court can issue a default warrant and have you arrested. Sometimes you have to wait a long time for your case. Be patient, and don't ever leave the courthouse.
- **Wear nice clothes.** Leave your hats, cell phones, and chewing gum at home.