



## STEPS IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM (SEE PROCESS FLOWCHART)

1. Youth can be referred to DJS by law enforcement, schools, citizens, and parents. Some police departments run diversion programs, and only those youth who fail out of the program would be referred to DJS.
2. DJS makes an emergency detention decision to determine if a youth requires secure detention until the next court day. This decision is guided by a Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI).
3. The intake complaint is assessed by an intake officer, who has statutory authority to determine how the case should be handled. The options are:
  - Disapprove as legally insufficient
  - Resolve, when it is determined that furthering the case would be disadvantageous to the interests of the youth and to public safety.
  - Informal adjustment, where the family signs a 90-day agreement to certain conditions without court involvement. This is the main DJS court diversion program.
  - Formally authorize the State’s Attorney to petition the juvenile court for a hearing.
4. At the detention hearing, the juvenile court determines if detention is required until the adjudicatory or dispositional hearing. Youth may also be detained directly by the juvenile court in cases where the youth is presented during court hours, either on a new charge, a writ or warrant, or due to a violation or sanction of a supervision order (probation, community detention, drug court, etc). All secure detention centers are operated by DJS.
5. Youth who present a lower risk may also be supervised in programs providing alternatives to secure detention. These programs ensure that the youth is available to attend the adjudicatory hearing, and must comply with certain restrictions, which include house arrest, electronic monitoring, or day and/or evening reporting centers. Structured shelter is also used for cases where the youth cannot return home after arrest but otherwise represents a lower risk.
6. DJS formally authorizes the State’s Attorney to petition the juvenile court. The State’s Attorney then reviews the complaint, and may dismiss it, or file a petition to the juvenile court for an adjudicatory hearing.
7. At the adjudicatory hearing, the juvenile court determines the outcome of the petitioned charges, which can be sustained or not sustained.
8. While a youth is awaiting adjudication, disposition and/or supervision or placement, DJS conducts a series of assessments and investigations which will guide the DJS recommendation to the court on how the case should be handled.
9. For cases where the charges are sustained, a dispositional hearing is held to determine if the youth requires supervision by DJS under a probation order, or will be committed to DJS’ care which usually indicates an out-of-home placement.
10. For youth whose disposition is probation, DJS case managers provide supervision and services while the youth resides at home. Supervision intensity varies depending on the risk level of youth. Standard community supervision levels include low, moderate, or high supervision intensity. The most intensive supervision is provided as part of the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI), and includes three supervision levels (Levels I, II, and III).
11. Youth who are committed to the Department for out-of-home placement may continue to wait in detention “pending placement” for an appropriate placement to become available.
12. Youth who are committed to an out-of-home placement may be placed in a broad variety of programs (state-run or private, secure or non-secure) depending on the risk level and treatment needs of the youth.
13. DJS has committed diversion programs for youth who might otherwise be placed out-of-home. These in-home programs provide services and treatment to the youth and family, including Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multisystemic Therapy (MST), Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care - Adolescent (MTFC-A), and Family Centered Treatment (FCT).
14. Youth returning home from a committed placement are supervised by DJS case managers. This supervision is at various intensity levels, and case managers also assist youth with school re-entry, employment, and other services.