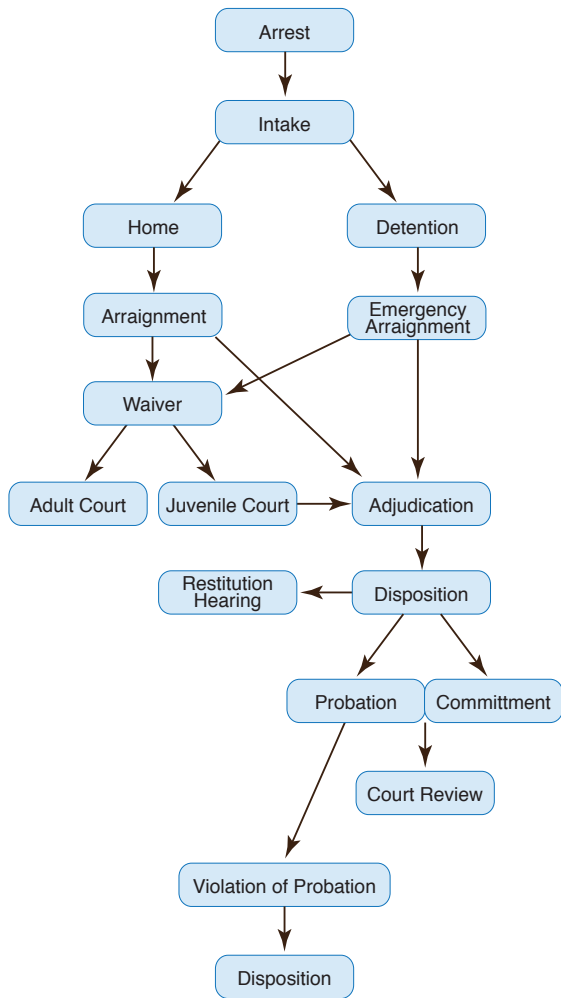


Overview of the Process



How Can I Help My Lawyer?

Do not talk about your case with anyone until you talk to your lawyer.

Be on time for all appointments and court dates.

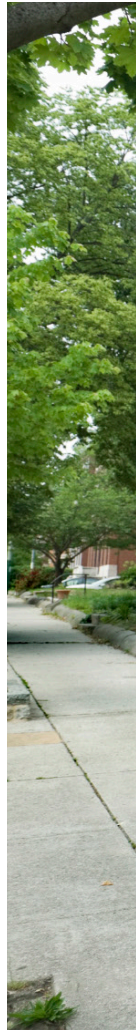
Dress appropriately for court.

Return your lawyer's phone calls.

Tell your lawyer if you change your address or phone number.

Bring any papers or documents your lawyer asks you to bring.

Give your lawyer the names and contact information for any witnesses.



I Got Arrested, Now What?

Prepared by the Baltimore City Juvenile Court Division of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender

- I will not waive my constitutional right to remain silent and to have my attorney present.
- I do not wish to answer any questions without speaking to my attorney first.
- I will not consent to participate in any search until I have spoken to my attorney.

Lawyer's Name:

Lawyer's Telephone:

About Us | We believe that every child is deserving of zealous advocacy, and we fight each day to protect and defend our clients and their due process rights. Our representation continues even when the court case ends.

We urge you to stay in touch with us.

Supported in part by a grant from the Open Society Institute – Baltimore

What Happens If I Am Arrested?

- After you are arrested, you will be brought to the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC).
- The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) will decide to: release you, release you and ask you to come back another day, or detain you.
- You and your parent/legal guardian will meet with a DJS intake worker to see if your case can be resolved without going to court.
- If you are detained, you will go to court on the next day that court is open.

What Happens After I Am Charged?

- If you were released and given a date to return, you and your parent/legal guardian will come to BCJJC and go to the Public Defender's Intake Office on the 3rd Floor, Room 3200.
- If you are locked up, a lawyer will talk to you about your case and get contact information for your family before court.
- Your first court appearance will be an arraignment. An arraignment starts your case. At the arraignment you find out what the charges are and when you need to return to court.

Will The Court Lock Me Up?

The Court will decide whether or not to let you go home based on the answers to these questions, and any other information provided:

- How serious are your charges?
- How many times have you been arrested?
- Did you ever miss a court date?
- Are you a danger to yourself or others?
- Have you been on community detention before? Did you violate community detention?
- Do you attend school regularly? Have you been suspended?

What Happens At Trial?

- A trial in Juvenile Court is called an adjudication.
- At trial, the State, represented by a lawyer called the Assistant State's Attorney, must prove the case against you, beyond a reasonable doubt.
- The State's Attorney will try to prove their case against you by bringing in witnesses who will testify about what they say happened.
- You will have a chance to bring in your own witnesses to testify.
- You will have a chance to testify on your own behalf or you can remain silent. No one will hold your decision against you.
- After hearing from all the witnesses, the Master or Judge will decide if the State proved its case against you.

What If I Am Found Guilty?

- In Juvenile Court, children are found facts sustained, which means guilty.
- If you are found facts sustained, the Court will then decide on a disposition, or sentence.
- The Court will either decide what the disposition will be that day, or have you come back on another day so the Court can find out more information about you.
- The Court can put you on probation or place you away from your home.
- Your disposition will depend on many things. Every child and case is different. Talk to your lawyer, who will be able to explain what to expect in your case.
- If you are found facts sustained by a Master, you can ask a Judge to review that decision. This is called an exception.

Can My Case Be Sealed?

- After your case is complete, you may ask the Court to seal the case. Sealing means that the court records are not allowed to be seen by anyone, unless a court gives permission.
- Before you turn 21, you may petition, or ask the Court, to seal your court records, but you must have "good cause" or a good reason for the Court to grant your request, such as applying for a job, applying to college, or joining the military.
- If you are over 21 years old, you may petition the Court to seal your record and no "good cause" is required.
- Please contact your lawyer directly, or the Office of the Public Defender, so we can assist you in having your juvenile record sealed.

What Is My Lawyer's Job?

- Public Defenders are lawyers.
- Your lawyer represents you, not your parent/legal guardian.
- Everything you tell your lawyer and the people who work with your lawyer on your case is confidential or secret. Your lawyer cannot tell anyone what you talk about without your permission, including your parent/legal guardian.
- Your lawyer is your voice in the court room.
- Your lawyer will talk to you throughout the case and try and help you make decisions, but cannot tell you what to do.

Baltimore City Juvenile Court Division

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<http://www.opd.state.md.us/districts/dist1/jcdhome.aspx>