



KILLEEN TEEN COURT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

WHAT IS TEEN COURT?

- Teen Court is a specially designed court to allow juvenile defendants and select volunteer teens to participate first hand in the judicial system. Cases filed in this court are fine only class C misdemeanor offenses which could include cases such as traffic, curfew violations, or theft under \$100.00. Juvenile defendants and their parent or legal guardian meet with a juvenile case manager in order to establish if the case and the juvenile are eligible for the teen court program. After the evaluation qualifying juvenile offender are placed on the teen court docket for the punishment phase of their case.
- A vital element of this program is the teen volunteer base. Teen volunteers from the school community are trained and mentored by our judge's, prosecutor, and court staff to act as prosecutors and defense attorneys. They are introduced and trained in legal vocabulary, court room procedures and etiquette and the law. This program is not restricted only to those individuals interested in a career in law. Mentors promote and introduce skills such as speech, debate, critical thinking, team work, conflict resolution and problem solving; just to name a few.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The courts judges and prosecutor mentor the teen volunteers and offer advice on how to proceed with the prosecution and defense of these cases. They will be schooled in the rules of law and learn how to question witnesses, present opening and closing statements, submit valid objections, and to submit and publish evidence.
- Prosecutors and defendant attorneys will examine the facts of the case to include citations, police reports, accident reports, and video. In most cases the facts will be provided to teen volunteers in advance in order to prepare their case. Preparation of a case will include opening and closing statements, questioning witnesses, arguments, and objections.
- The jurors hearing the case are juvenile defendants who have already appeared in teen court. During jury deliberations they are mentored to ensure that the rules of law are being followed and to impress upon the participants the importance of their duty.

PUNISHMENT

- Punishment is based on predetermined ranges, dependent upon the violation. Certain violations require mandatory punishment and will be automatically assessed by the judge. Punishment assessed by the jurors could include:
 - Serve as a juror
 - Community service

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- Apology letters
- Attendance at a remedial class

**This is not an all-inclusive list – punishment may vary depending on the circumstances of a case.

THE DAY OF TEEN COURT

- The juvenile defendant will enter a plea of guilty or no contest to the Municipal Court Judge. Once the plea has been accepted court will recess in order for the defendant to meet with their assigned defense attorney.
- Defense attorneys meet with their juvenile clients and get to know more about the facts of the case and the individual in order to present a case to the jury that convinces them that their client does not deserve a maximum punishment based on the facts of the case.
- The prosecutors job is to see justice done. The prosecutor should strive to be fair, focus on the facts of the case, and the defendants personal responsibility and rehabilitation.
- After hearing the case, the teen jury will deliberate to decide the punishment.

BENIFITS

- The opportunity to intern with judges and prosecutors in a real court with real court cases.
- Letter of reommendation for college application
- Community service hours for college application

MUNICIPAL COURT STAFF

Mentors:

Presiding Judge – Mark D. Kimball
Associate Judge – Greg K. Simmons
Prosecutor - Marti Samuel

Juvenile Case Managers and Mentors:

Mr. Johnny Brooks 254-501-7657
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