

## To Volunteer:

For those of you who wish to volunteer in Warren County's Youth Court, access the Court's website at:

[warrencountyohio.gov/Probate\\_Juvenile](http://warrencountyohio.gov/Probate_Juvenile)

and under the "Youth Court" tab, click on the Volunteer Application form.

You can also use the QR code below to fill out the application.

Make sure you get your parent's permission to participate before submitting your application.



## A MESSAGE FROM JUDGE KIRBY

Thank you for your interest in Warren County Juvenile Court's Youth Court. I believe this program will serve as an outstanding option for misdemeanor offenses while also providing young men and women in our community with a great opportunity to experience the juvenile justice process.

I would also like to convey one important component of Youth Court that is always at the forefront of the efforts of all participants: while the youthful offender should be held accountable for his or her offense, Youth Court should be an instrument of restorative justice. It is an opportunity for a youth to right a wrong and to hold the offender accountable to the victim and the community. At the same time, it provides our youth volunteers with a unique introduction to the juvenile justice system.

Your involvement in Youth Court is greatly appreciated and I am confident that you will find the experience a rewarding one.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JK', is located at the bottom center of the message section.

## WARREN COUNTY JUVENILE COURT



## YOUTH COURT

[warrencountyohio.gov/Probate\\_Juvenile](http://warrencountyohio.gov/Probate_Juvenile)

# WARREN COUNTY YOUTH COURT

## What is Youth Court?

The Warren County Youth Court is a program designed to provide the community's youth exposure to the juvenile justice system. Youth volunteers will hear real cases in Juvenile Court and they will actually participate in the proceedings.

## What Happens in Youth Court?

Youthful offenders who have already admitted to an offense appear for a dispositional hearing. A jury of their peers will hear the evidence of their case that is relevant to their particular session. After hearing the evidence and arguments from the youth defense attorney and prosecutor, the jury will begin deliberations to determine what penalty will be rendered to the offender. The dispositions may include options such as community service, online programs, or paying restitution to the victim of their crime. If the youthful offenders abide by the conditions of their sanctions, the charge against them will be dismissed. If they are unsuccessful, they will be scheduled to appear before the Judge or Magistrate for an official hearing to face further sanctions. The jury cannot sentence a youth to a detention facility.

## What Types of Cases are Heard in Youth Court?

The program coordinator will screen the cases and determine which are suitable for Youth Court. Cases heard by Youth Court will involve youthful offenders who have admitted to committing misdemeanor offenses such as underage consumption, criminal damaging, and disorderly conduct. The parents or guardians of the youthful offender must also agree to have their child's dispositional hearing conducted in Youth Court.

## Participation Requirements

Every high school student who lives in Warren County is invited and encouraged to participate. You must get your parent's permission in order to participate. The Volunteer Application can be accessed on the Juvenile Court website at [co.warren.oh.us/probate\\_juvenile/](http://co.warren.oh.us/probate_juvenile/) under the 'Youth Court' drop down menu. Volunteers must attend a mandatory training session at the Warren County Juvenile Court before they can participate in Youth Court. The training session will teach participants proper conduct during the hearings and how they can best apply the principles of restorative justice to their dispositions. Youth Court also provides participants the opportunity to accrue community service hours.

## Roles of Youth Court Participants

**Judge:** Presides over the dispositional hearings, explains the offenses to the jury, instructs the jury prior to their deliberation and issues the disposition according to the jury's recommendations. Unlike a lot of Youth Court models, these duties will be performed by a youth judge.

**Bailiff:** Calls Youth Court to order as the judge enters and exits. Swears in all participants.

**Prosecutor:** Represents the interests of the people of the community, reviews the circumstances of the offense, presents evidence, and offers recommendations to the jury.

**Defense Counsel:** Represents the interests of the offender, reviews the circumstances of the offense, relates the background of the offender, presents evidence including mitigating evidence, and makes recommendations to the jury.

**Jurors:** Listen to the evidence presented and arguments made by counsel, ask questions of witnesses, and make the final, binding sanction for the youthful offender. The verdict of the jury must be voted on by a majority of the jurors.

All roles are filled by youth volunteers; adults will only serve in an advisory capacity.