



## Steps in the Juvenile Justice System

### Intake

- » When an offense is alleged against a youth, any individual (e.g., parents, agency representatives, law enforcement personnel) may file a complaint with a CSU intake officer.
- » When the youth has contact with law enforcement, the youth may be taken into custody, summonsed and released until a hearing on the matter, diverted, or counseled and released with no further action.
- » The intake officer reviews the circumstances of the complaint to determine whether probable cause exists.
- » If the intake officer finds that no probable cause exists, the complaint is unfounded, and no further action is taken. The complaining party may appeal this decision to the magistrate if the offense is a felony or Class 1 misdemeanor.
- » If probable cause exists, in many cases the intake officer has the discretion to informally process or divert the case, file a petition to initiate court action, or file a petition with an order placing the youth in a JDC.

### Petition and Detention

- » The filing of a petition initiates official court action on the complaint and pre-court services are offered to youth and families prior to scheduled court hearings.
- » If the intake officer releases the youth, the next court appearance is the arraignment, where the youth is informed of the offenses charged in the petition, advised of the right to an attorney, and may be asked to enter a plea. The youth does not have the right to an attorney at the arraignment hearing.
- » If the youth is detained pending the hearing, a detention hearing must be held within 72 hours of the detainment. At the detention hearing, the youth has the right to an attorney and is arraigned on the offenses charged in the petition. The judge decides whether to hold the youth in a JDC or release the youth, with or without conditions.

### Adjudication or Trial

- » A youth who is adjudicated in J&DR district court does not have the right to a jury trial but has all the other constitutional protections afforded in criminal court, such as the right to an attorney, the right to call and cross-examine witnesses, and the right to refrain from self-incrimination. All delinquency charges must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.
- » If the judge finds the youth delinquent, the case is usually continued to another day for the judge to make a dispositional decision. The judge's adjudication and dispositional decisions may be appealed by either party to the circuit court for a *de novo* review (as if the first adjudication never occurred).
- » When a youth is tried in circuit court as an adult, the trial is handled in the same manner as a trial of an adult. In the case of a jury trial, the court determines the sentence. The conviction and sentencing in circuit court may be appealed by either party to the Court of Appeals.