



# Bay County Teen Court

Suzanne Cox, Director

456 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street

Panama City, Florida 32401

(850)747-5191

## Dear Prospective Volunteer:

I'm so glad you're interested in volunteering for Teen Court. Attached you will find some basic program information, some sentencing information, and parent permission forms.

### Please do the following:

1. Read and sign the Oath of Confidentiality and the Agreement. Have your parents also read and sign the agreement.
2. Complete the volunteer questionnaire.
3. Read the program information and sentencing information so you can participate as an informed juror during your first session.

As soon as you have completed steps 1-3, please make plans to attend a Teen Court session. Teen Court holds court the first three Tuesdays of the month. (Call the office to verify the next court date, 747-5191.) When you arrive at the Teen Court Office, a sign on the front door will tell you what time to have your ride pick you up. Please make sure you let a member of Teen Court Staff know you are here as a new volunteer. You can turn in your paperwork at that time, then you may sit and observe a session or participate as a juror.

I look forward to meeting you and am glad you are interested in volunteering. I hope you'll enjoy being involved in Teen Court as much as I do!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Cox  
Teen Court Director



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## **Teen Court Volunteer Information**

Thank you for expressing an interest in Teen Court. The following information should prove helpful to you as you begin volunteering for Teen Court:

Teen Court sessions are held the first three Tuesdays of each month (unless otherwise instructed), beginning at 5 p.m. at the Teen Court Office - Courtroom.

All jurors must report no later than 4:15 p.m. Jurors are required to complete and sign the enclosed forms and return them to Teen Court before you will be able to participate in a Teen Court session.

All business conducted in a Teen Court session is strictly confidential. Any juror breaking the oath of confidentiality will be asked to leave the program.

Teen Court sessions are formal court proceedings and jurors should dress appropriately. No shorts, flip-flops, torn or ripped jeans, hats or other inappropriate courtroom attire will be allowed to participate.

Teen Court sessions typically last from one to three hours. A sign indicating the pick-up time will be posted on the front door of the Teen Court Office before each session begins. Please use this information to inform your parent/guardian, or whoever is picking you up, the appropriate time to return.

Once a volunteer has served two to three sessions as a juror he/she will be given the opportunity to be trained as an attorney. Any juror interested in attorney training should let the Director know of his/her interest at the conclusion of his/her third session as a juror.



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## Teen Court Volunteer Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Extracurricular Activities You're Involved In: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### In case of emergency, who should we contact?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers:

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this completed questionnaire to Teen Court Director



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## **Oath of Confidentiality**

I hereby pledge never to divulge, by word, sign, or act, anything I may hear or see during a Bay County Teen Court Session. I understand that, as a Teen Court volunteer attorney, juror or clerk, I will be privy to confidential information about other juveniles and that said information is not to be released to the general public. I acknowledge that if I violate this oath of confidentiality in any manner I will be asked not to come back.

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**Teen Court Volunteer**

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**Date**



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**As a member of the Bay County Teen Court Program,  
I understand and agree to the following conditions and  
responsibilities:**

1. Members must be compatible with the program's purpose of promoting law abiding behavior and confidentiality.
2. Members will dress appropriately when appearing in court. No shorts or other inappropriate attire will be accepted.
3. Members will be removed from participation in Teen Court if they are found to be in violation of the program's philosophy or rules.
4. It is further agreed that the undersigned do hereby compromise and forever release, acquit, discharge, indemnify and covenant to hold harmless Bay County Teen Court, its employees and volunteers, from any and all actions, causes of action, claims liability, damages, growing out of any and all known and unknown personal injuries, property damage or any other type of damage which the undersigned may hereinafter have, individual and/or parent/guardian/ custodian of said minor, resulting or growing out of the participation of the youth in the Bay County Teen Court Program.

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**Teen Volunteer**

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**Parent/Guardian/Custodian**

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**Teen Court Director**

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**Date**



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## Teen Court Juror

### Do's

Dress appropriately. That means NO ragged t-shirts, ragged jeans, shorts or flip-flops.

Behave appropriately. That means NO talking, whispering or giggling in court.

Print your name, when signing in, clearly and legibly.

Sit in your assigned place when asked to by the Director.

Answer all questions asked in court audibly and clearly.

Address the Judge as "Your Honor" and always standing.

### Dont's

Leave the courtroom for any reason, other than to deliberate with your fellow jury members, until court is over.

Disclose the name of any defendant.

Laugh, smile or giggle at defendants when returning to the courtroom to deliver a verdict.

Discuss information regarding any case with anyone who is not a member of this program.

Talk to any of the defendants before or after court.



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## Teen Court Sentencing Options

**Jury Duty** -- The defendant must serve a minimum of two nights as juror for nondrug related charges and a minimum of four nights as a juror for drug related charges. If you, as jurors, think the defendant would benefit from additional nights as a juror you may assign them, up to a maximum of four for nondrug related charges and eight for drug related charges.

**Community Service Work** -- The defendant will perform the required community service work (from 16 to 32 hours per nondrug charges and 32 to 64 hours for drug related charges) supervised by Teen Court Staff. The amount of community service work required is up to the discretion of the jury. All hours will be accounted for before the defendant is released from the Teen Court program.

**Restitution** -- The defendant must agree to reimburse his/her victim for any and all costs he/she incurred as a result of the crime.

**Curfew Time** -- The defendant will be restricted to his/her home after the designated time you set if you choose this option. Exceptions will be made only if the defendant is at school, at work, at church, completing community service work, or in the physical company of a parent. For example, you could give a curfew of 6:00 p.m. (every day of the week) for two weeks, as part of his/her sentence. The curfew can last from 7 days to 60 days.

**Apology** -- The defendant will provide a self-written letter of apology to the victim, his/her parent/guardian, or to his/her school (if appropriate). The apology letter (minimum of 100 words and maximum of 300 words in length) must be turned in to the Teen Court Staff, along with a stamped, addressed envelope.

**Open Court Apology** -- The defendant will make a formal, face-to-face apology to his/her parent in front of the jury and observers.



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**No Association with Co-Defendants/Victims** -- The defendant will be prohibited from associating with the above people for a prescribed length of time (minimum 7 days and maximum of 60 days) to be determined by the jury.

**House Arrest** -- The defendant is restricted to the home at all times, with the exception of time spent at school, at work, at church and court (minimum of 7 days and maximum of 60 days).

**Suspension of License** -- The defendant will not be permitted to drive a motor vehicle. License will be surrendered to the Teen Court Staff (minimum of 7 days and maximum of 60 days).

**Essays** -- The defendant may be required to complete essays (minimum of 300 words and maximum of 1,000 words in length) on subjects related to his/her crime. For example, a defendant being sentenced for drug possession may be required to write a four-page essay on the dangers of drug use.

**Tour of the Bay County Jail** -- All defendants are required to attend a scheduled tour of the Bay County Jail. The tours are scheduled to be held twice a month. The male and female tours are taken on different days.

**Tour of the Medical Examiner's Office** -- All defendants who are here on drug charges or test positive for drugs will be required to attend a scheduled tour of the 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Medical Examiner's Office. This tour is scheduled to be held once a month.

**Agency Presentation** -- The defendant will make a 15 minute presentation on his/her crime to an agency of the Teen Court Staff's choosing (Girls Inc., Boys' Club, ASAP).