

# Diversion

When the Prosecuting Attorney receives a police report from law enforcement and determines there is enough probable cause to proceed with a case, one of two things will happen: The youth will be charged and be ordered to appear in Juvenile Court or s/he will be referred to the Diversion Program.

## What is Diversion?

Diversion is a confidential alternative to court for youth who have committed non-felony/minor law violations such as shoplifting, possession of alcohol or marijuana, simple assault, trespass, etc. Each case is handled on an individual basis by the diversion unit. Typically, this means the youth will meet with the volunteer Community Accountability Board (CAB). The CAB does not determine guilt or innocence but holds the youth accountable for his actions by assigning community service, restitution, information/education or other options. Because the youth is taking responsibility for his actions and not being convicted, he can truthfully say he had not been convicted of a crime.

## Diversion Objectives

The goals of Diversion are: To hold youth accountable for criminal behavior. To foster a change in attitude/behavior to conform to the law and community standards. To impress upon the youth that the community is concerned with acceptable behavior/conduct. And, to increase the youth's awareness of the relationship between the offense committed and the people injured by the offense.

## Differences Between Court and Diversion

### Diversion:

- Proceedings are confidential and private
- Case records are confidential
- Legal representation is not required
- Detention is not a possible consequence
- No conviction

### Court:

- All proceedings are open to the public
- Court records are public information
- Numerous court appearances may be required
- Court fees/penalties will be assigned
- Public defender (private attorney) fees may be assessed
- Upon conviction, up to 30 days detention and up to 12 months of probation may be ordered.