

CITY OF CLEVELAND
COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD
YOUTH COMMUNITY DIVERSION PROGRAM

The Youth Community Diversion Program is a joint effort between the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. The program began in 1999. The program's goal is to divert youth offenders who have committed misdemeanor, low level felony and status offenses from official court proceedings. The Youth Community Diversion Program addresses the youth's illegal behavior and resolves the matter unofficially. The youth are given accountability based assignments in an effort to prevent further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

When a complaint is filed against a youth, Juvenile Court will determine if the youth is eligible for the Youth Community Diversion Program. If eligible, a caseworker will contact the parent/guardian and offer the program to them. Participation in the program is voluntary. The youth and parent/guardian will be required to provide background history, sign all necessary participation forms and attend an informal hearing. At the informal hearing the caseworker will give the youth assignments to complete and also make referrals to community resources if needed.

Assignments imposed on the youth may include the following:

- Apology letters to victims or parents
- Volunteer work
- Curfew restrictions
- Essays
- Financial restitution
- School monitoring
- Participation in pro social activities
- Participation in job readiness/paid employment programs such as Fresh Start
- Referral to drug and alcohol education
- Referral for drug and alcohol assessment
- Referral for mental health counseling

Youth are involved in the program for a minimum of 90 days. Youth who re-offend or fail to complete assignments will be terminated from the program. The youth will be sent back to juvenile court and their next steps will be determined.

Program location: 75 Erieview Plaza 1st Floor Cleveland, OH 44114
Phone numbers: 216-664-6344 or 216-664-6250
Fax number: 216-420-8015