



Community Defender Division

Juvenile Services Program

WHAT IS THE JUVENILE SERVICES PROGRAM?

The D.C. Council asked PDS to form the Juvenile Services Program (JSP) in 1978, in response to a government report describing systemic mistreatment of the District's securely detained youth. Since its inception, JSP has served as the legal ombudsman for youth in the District who are securely detained or committed to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS). JSP has offices in detention facilities managed by DYRS: the Youth Services Center (YSC), for youth pending trial and sentencing, and the New Beginnings Youth Development Center, for youth who have been committed to DYRS. JSP also provides legal representation and advocacy for children committed to DYRS who are placed in the community and at residential facilities.

HOW DOES JSP HELP JUVENILES?

- Institutional disciplinary hearings and appeals
- Juvenile aftercare revocation hearings (called Community Status Review Hearings) and appeals
- Post-commitment legal matters before the Superior Court of the District of Columbia
- Institutional grievances (medical, educational, behavioral health, segregation, programming)
- Presentation of "Know Your Rights" programs inside YSC and New Beginnings, and in the community

- Orientations for youth who are newly admitted to YSC and New Beginnings
- Referrals for services such as education advocacy and behavioral health treatment
- Training of defense attorneys in post-commitment representation
- Visits to local placements to monitor conditions for committed youth
- Collaboration with other advocates to achieve systemic change for detained and committed youth

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