

# **JUVENILE JUSTICE PROCESS**

**INTAKE** The process of determining where a child under the age of 18 will be placed until the case is resolved. There are three forms of detention status: home, non-secure or secure.

**DIVERSION PROGRAMS** An alternative to trial where the juvenile is placed in a community based program such as juvenile arbitration, juvenile alternative services program (JASP), or a treatment plan (Walker plan). If a juvenile successfully completes the diversion program, then the charges are generally dismissed.

**FORMAL CHARGES** The filing of a petition in court by the State Attorney's Office. The charge may be filed in either juvenile court or adult court, depending upon the crime and age of the offender.

**ARRAIGNMENT** The accused is formally charged and enters a plea of guilty, not guilty, or no contest.

**ADJUDICATORY HEARING** The trial of the juvenile, conducted in front of a judge. The judge will decide whether the juvenile committed the charged offense(s).

**DISPOSITIONAL HEARING (SENTENCING)** When a juvenile is found to have committed a delinquent act the court will hold a dispositional hearing to determine which sanctions to impose on the juvenile. The sanctions could range from community-based sanctions like probation and community services up to residential commitment.

**JUVENILES TRIED AS ADULTS** Juveniles who commit very serious crimes may be tried as adults. Juveniles who are prosecuted as adults may be sentenced to adult or juvenile sanctions.

**You may contact the State Attorney or law enforcement agency for more information regarding the stages of the criminal and juvenile justice process.**