

LORAIN COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. When my child was arrested, the police took him. Where is he? What do I do now?* Law enforcement officers have the discretion to take a child into custody (what is considered to be an arrest in adult systems) and to remove the juvenile from the community. The officer can request that the juvenile be detained in secure detention by contacting the Intake Department (Juvenile Court). If the juvenile is admitted or accepted into the Detention Home, court personnel will contact the legal guardian within 24 hours of child's detainment and advise the legal guardian of the scheduled Detention Home hearing. Most law enforcement agencies do notify the parent by phone or by visiting the residence when a child is arrested.
- 2. When I called the police to report my child for being unruly in my home, no arrest was made. What can I do now?* If the police do not make an arrest, you as legal guardian can file in juvenile court an "unofficial complaint" form. This form is then reviewed by the intake department, who decides whether diversion services, an unofficial court hearing or formal charges are necessary.
- 3. My child is not following his curfew, not taking his medication, leaving the house without permission, and is aggressive towards me...what can I do?* You may file an unofficial complaint (pink sheet) with the court. An unofficial complaint form can be filled out at the Lorain County Detention Home or the Justice Center - Juvenile Probation Department, 2nd floor. It is advised that parents do not fill out a pink sheet for EVERY rule violation. If your child is not taking their medication, you should contact your child's doctor, draft a medication chart to monitor missed doses, give appropriate consequences when your child refuses to take their medication, or have an adult monitor your child while taking the medication. If your child becomes violent, threatens violence or is physically aggressive, you should contact your local police department immediately.
- 4. Can I emancipate my child?* Emancipation is defined as the freeing of a child from parental control. There is no statute in the State of Ohio exempt under specific provisions defined by each case (under Child Support guidelines). Children do not have a private right to emancipate themselves under current Ohio law.
- 5. Are there any Boot Camps in Ohio?* There are no Boot Camps in the State of Ohio. There are, however, specialized placement facilities that parents or guardians can contact for assistance. Parents and guardians are financially responsible for placement facilities. One agency is the Independent Educational Consultant Association - IECA at (703) 591-4850.
- 6. My child won't go to school, can you make him go or lock him up?* It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that their child is attending school on a daily basis. If your child is refusing to go to school, juvenile court will not place your child in the detention home. Juveniles may receive official truancy charges if attaining five consecutive absences. Youths may also receive chronic truancy charges for accumulating seven unexcused absences in one month or twelve unexcused absences in one year.
- 7. What do I have to do to withdraw my child from school?* If your child is at least 16 years of age and working 35-40 hours per week, you can apply for an Age and Schooling Certificate (work permit) to have your child withdrawn from school.

8. *What is a Guardian ad Litem? (G.A.L)* Is a person appointed by the court to protect the interest of a party in court proceedings. Per the policy of Lorain County Juvenile Court, a GAL is appointed to the juvenile in Domestic Violence cases, as there may be a conflict of interest between legal guardian and child.
9. *What is a dispositional hearing?* A hearing held to review and determine all possible alternatives and imposing sanctions (i.e., consequences). Also known as a *sentencing* hearing in adult court.
10. *Why can't I bail my child-out of DH?* Unlike the adult court system where bail can be posted, a child is detained in secure detention only if he meets the following criteria (Is the child likely to abscond, Is there probable cause to believe a delinquent act occurred and child committed same, or Is the child a risk to himself or others?) The law requires that secure detention be used only when there are no other alternatives to protecting the juvenile or the community. Due to these factors, *bond* is not set in most cases.
11. *My child was reported as a runaway, why can't he go to the DH?* Secure detention is viewed as a last resort and not intended for punishment. Federal Guidelines mandate that those juveniles who violate status offenses *should not* be held in secure detention.
12. *My child is in the DH, can I bring him food & clothing? When can I visit him?* In that the Detention Home is secure detention, no outside food, clothing, or hygiene supplies are accepted. Each juvenile is given all supplies necessary. Only parents/legal guardians are permitted to visit on Wednesdays, Saturdays & Sundays. Visitation schedule is posted in the lobby at the Detention Home. Any concerns may be directed to the facilities Superintendent.
13. *Will my child attend school during his stay at the DH?* Our educational program is administered by the Educational Services Center of Lorain County. Any questions may be directed to one of our educators, by simply calling our facility (326-4040).

For more information about the Court, additional Frequently Asked Questions or concerns, please see the website <http://www.loraincounty.com/domesticrelations> or call the Lorain County Domestic Relations Court Juvenile Probation Department at (440) 326-4880.