



For immediate release
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Juvenile Civil Citation Program Expanded Statewide in 2016

Wilmington, DE – The Delaware Children’s Department, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (YRS), is pleased to announce the expansion of the Juvenile Civil Citation Program in Delaware. The program addresses juvenile first-time misdemeanor offenses for violations of Disorderly Conduct, Loitering, Shoplifting, Title IV Alcohol Offenses (underage consumption and possession), Possession of Marijuana (less than 1 ounce), and Criminal Trespass III.

Beginning as a pilot program in late 2015 with School Resource Officers, the program now permits all police officers statewide to refer youth who commit a first-time misdemeanor offense to a 90-day program in which they will receive an assessment and must participate in a variety of community service activities. The young person would not go through the traditional criminal justice system nor be subject to a criminal record.

“Law enforcement professionals now have an additional tool at their disposal when processing young persons who have committed a first-time minor offense,” said Carla Benson-Green, Secretary of the Children’s Department. “Through this program, juveniles will continue to be held responsible for their actions. However, with the omission of a lengthy criminal proceeding and the housing of these youth in the state’s rehabilitative facilities, Delaware taxpayers will save thousands of dollars annually.”

“This alternative to arrest program allows youth who commit first-time eligible offenses to receive intervention services without an arrest record and further involvement in the criminal justice system. First-time offenders are afforded the opportunity to learn from their mistake and avoid the lifetime stigma associated with an arrest. It makes sense to use resources strategically and reserve serious sanctions for youth who pose the highest risk to public safety,” said Nancy S. Dietz, Director YRS.

The program is funded through a grant from the Delaware Criminal Justice Council.

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The Children’s Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts as well as prevention services targeted toward all youth. For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.