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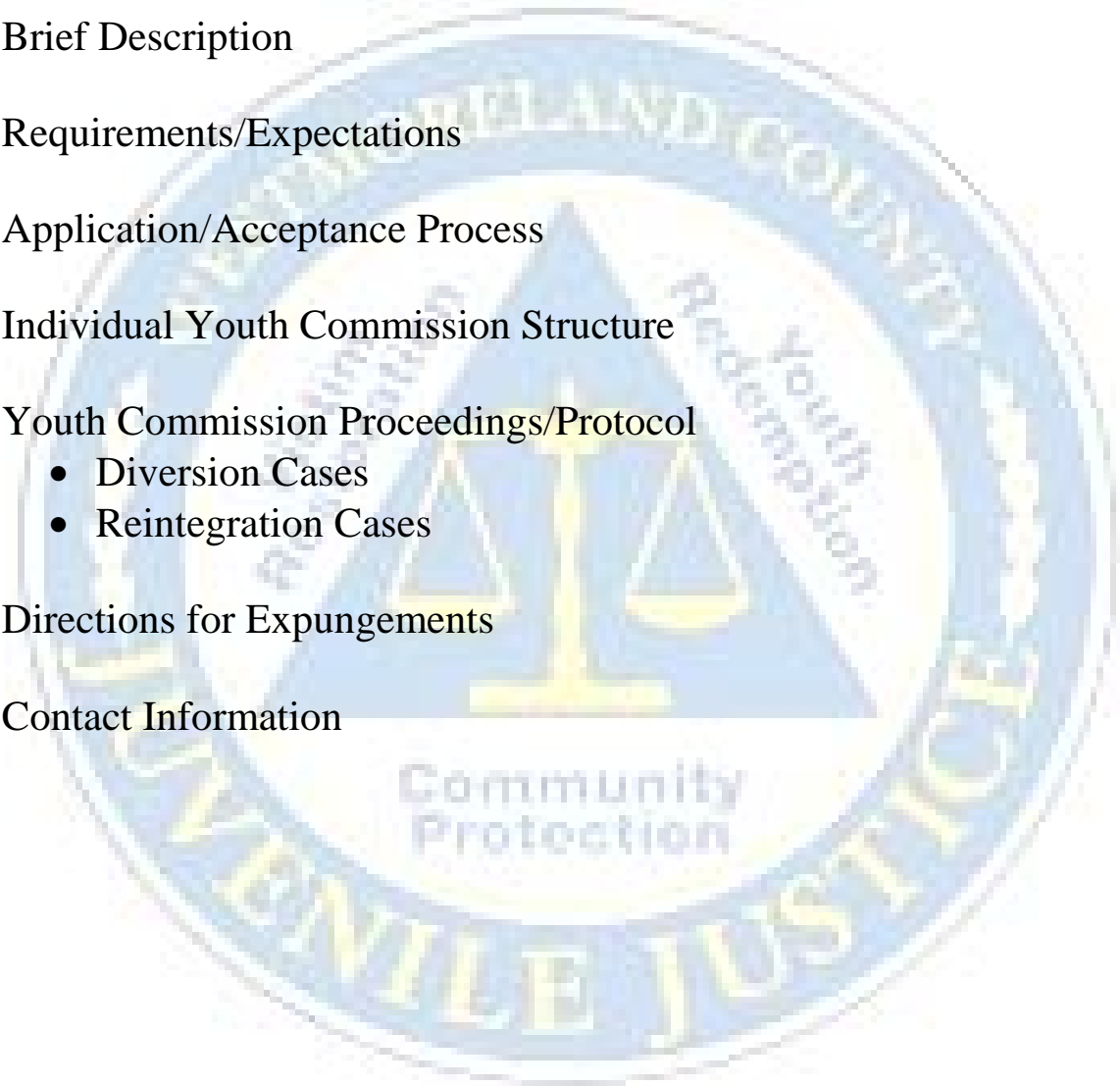
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LOCATION OF YOUTH COMMISSIONS

Including municipalities served by each Commission

1. Burrell Lower and Upper Burrell, entire school district
2. Derry Area Derry Borough, Derry Twp, New Alexandria
3. Greensburg Salem City of Greensburg Greensburg, Boroughs of South & SW Greensburg, and Salem Twp.
4. Franklin Regional Murrysville, Export, Delmont
5. Hempfield Twp. Hempfield School District (in its entirety)
6. Jeannette City of Jeannette
7. Kiski Area Vandergrift, E. Vandergrift, Washington, Bell Twp., Allegheny Twp., Avonmore, Oklahoma, Hyde Park, West Leechburg
8. Latrobe Latrobe Borough, Unity Township
9. Ligonier Valley Ligonier Borough and Ligonier Township
10. Monessen City of Monessen (*Currently forming*)
11. Mt Pleasant/
Southmoreland Mt Pleasant Borough, Mt. Pleasant Twp, Borough of Scottdale, East Huntingdon Township (*Currently forming*)
12. New Ken/Arnold Cities of New Kensington and Arnold
13. Norwin Area N. Huntingdon Twp, Irwin, North Irwin
14. Penn Twp Penn Township
15. Rostraver Rostraver Township, Borough of North Belle Vernon
16. Trafford Borough of Trafford
17. Yough Boroughs of Madison, Arona, Smithton, Sutersville, West Newton, South Huntingdon Twp, Sewickly Twp.

Mission

Our mission is to connect youth and family to community.

What is the Youth Commission?

In the 1960s, the first Youth Commission was established in Pennsylvania by the Westmoreland County Juvenile Court. Its original purpose was to allow first time youthful offenders the opportunity to avoid a juvenile court record and encourage community involvement. Based upon the long term success of these efforts, and our commitment to restorative practices, we have expanded the program to include a reintegration component in which the community is instrumental in aiding a youth's successful transition from placement to home, or giving that extra support to a probationer who needs it. We recognize the importance of assisting victims, individuals, and families within their own communities as when the system is gone; community is still present to provide support and direction.

The Youth Commission is comprised of dedicated community volunteers who provide new and better opportunities for youth to learn, readjust, and conform to the laws of our society. It also is charged with helping the youth take responsibility for his/her actions and repair the harm caused to the victims and/or community.

Authority

The commission does not have the authority of the Court, but is supported by the following subsection of the Juvenile Act of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

Section 6323: Informal Adjustment

(1) Before a petition is filed, the probation officer or other officers of the court designated by it, subject to its direction, shall, in the case of a dependent child where the jurisdiction of the Court is premised upon the provisions of paragraph (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), or (7) of the definition of "dependent child" in section 6302 and if otherwise appropriate, refer the child and his/her parents to any public or private social agency available for assisting in the matter. Upon referral, the agency shall indicate its willingness to accept the child and shall report back, in writing, to the referring officer within three months concerning the status of the referral. Similarly, the probation officer may in the case of a delinquent child, or dependent child where the jurisdiction of the Court is permitted under paragraph (6) of the definition of "dependent child" in section 6302, refer the child and his/her parents to an agency for assisting in the matter.

Requirements/Expectations

All applicant background checks must comply with the provision of Pennsylvania Title 23, Chapter 63, related to Child Protective Services. Prior to serving in any capacity on the Youth Commission, an applicant must have a satisfactory Pennsylvania State Police criminal history check, an FBI criminal history check or sworn/affirmed statement of compliance as described in Pennsylvania Title 23 Section 6344.2, and a satisfactory child abuse clearance from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

As required by Pennsylvania Title 23, Chapter 63, all Youth Commission Members accepted for volunteer service will provide updated criminal history and child abuse clearance at least every 36 months. Any commission member failing to do so shall immediately be placed on inactive status until clearances are obtained.

Attend free trainings as scheduled by the Juvenile Probation Office. It is required that each member attend two trainings per year.

Orientation training is scheduled as new members join the commission, and all members are required to attend the training before supervising any Youth Commission cases. At this training you will be trained on how to spot child abuse, neglect and how to report it.

Elected or appointed public officials are not permitted to serve on the Youth Commission

Volunteers will:

- Commit to work with a youth ages ten to twenty
- Commit to attending 75% of monthly meeting at your local commission
- Commit to working a few hours per month with youth, based on goals and needs identified for each youth
- Present a clean and neat appearance and dress to the standards that contribute to a casual professional image
- Attend training as offered locally. Following are some examples:
 - Orientation (required)
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Restorative Practices
 - Drug & Alcohol Education/Awareness
 - Introduction to Motivational Interviewing
 - The Importance of Family Involvement
 - Bridges Out of Poverty
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

The Juvenile Probation Office is available to the Youth Commission to provide additional training and technical assistance as needed.

Anyone choosing to run for public office must take a leave of absence immediately upon filing their petition, and must notify the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Office in writing as such.

If appointed to public office the member must resign immediately.

If absent from the Youth Commission for six months or longer, due to medical or other leave of absence, updated clearances will be needed.

Member Application/Acceptance Process

- Find the “Youth Commission” tab under the Juvenile Probation section at www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/juvenile
- Fill out the application and send with two letters of reference to:
Attention: Youth Commission
2771 S. Grande Blvd
Greensburg, PA 15601

A representative from the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Office will contact you to schedule an interview

- Begin the process of applying for PA Child Abuse Clearance
<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm>
- Begin the process of applying for Criminal Background Check
<http://www.psp.pa.gov/Pages/Request-a-Criminal-History-Record.aspx>
- Begin the process of applying for FBI Criminal History Check
<http://www/fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks>

(If you have received these, please bring to your interview. If you are appointed by the Court, your fees will be reimbursed.)

- Upon acceptance as a Youth Commission Volunteer, you will sign a confidentiality agreement
- You will be scheduled to be sworn in by a Judge
- You will be scheduled to meet your local Commission
- You will be scheduled for Orientation Training

Individual Youth Commission Structure

Local Youth Commission Officers

Each commission will be led by a Chairperson chosen by fellow commission members. Other officers include Vice-Chair and Secretary. Elections will be held in the fourth quarter (October- December) of odd numbered years and the results are to be forwarded to the Juvenile Probation Department in writing. Officers will commence their tenure on January 1 of the following even numbered year.

All members will be expected to avail themselves for meetings and proceedings scheduled by the Chairperson.

Chair: The Chair shall conduct all proceedings and meetings of the Youth Commission. There shall be a member appointed to conduct proceedings/meetings in the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chair.

Vice-Chair: The Vice-Chair shall perform all duties of the Chair during his/her absence and or departure and shall otherwise assist the Chair as needed.

Secretary: The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of the meetings and proceedings and a record of the members' attendance at the meetings. The Secretary shall notify all persons involved in the proceedings (parents, youth, and police). The Secretary shall be responsible for all records of the local Youth Commission and receive and answer all correspondence pertaining to the commission. The Secretary must forward all appropriate forms to the Probation Department from the proceedings as soon as possible, no later than 7 days. The forms include: copy of the complaint, regulations form, and victim forms. The costs of stamps will be reimbursed. For reimbursement, the Secretary must send the Probation Department the receipt for postage.

The Chairperson shall appoint another member as acting Secretary in the event the Secretary is absent from the proceeding for any reason including extended leave of absence or individual meeting absence.

Individual members: Those supervising **reintegration** cases will forward written documentation to the Probation Office via email, facsimile or US Mail on the 1st of every month. Mail to the: Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department, 2771 South Grande Blvd, Greensburg, Pa 15601, cmiller@co.westmoreland.pa.us or fax us at 724-830-6263

Ethics

The Youth Commission Program is an arm of the Westmoreland County Juvenile Court System. Therefore volunteers are expected to continuously present themselves in an appropriate manner. Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation expects volunteers to demonstrate the highest degree of integrity, responsibility and professional conduct at all times. All proceedings and any additional contacts volunteers make with youth, family, schools or any other entity on behalf of the Westmoreland County Youth Commission Program shall be dignified and professional.

Youth Commission Proceedings/Protocol

DIVERSION CASE:

Youth Commission Volunteers comprise a local diversionary program that is able to closely supervise a first time offender and allow him or her to repair the harms to a victim and community locally while also providing youth the opportunity to avoid fines and a permanent court record.

Crime creates social and spiritual separation from the community. For youth who have created harm in the community, mentoring helps them repair the harm and gain or regain a sense of self-worth and acceptance that allows them to be fully reintegrated into the community.

Referral Sources: Juvenile Probation Department or Magisterial District Judge (summary non-traffic violations only)

- Juvenile must be between the ages of 10-17 when offense occurred.
- Juvenile must accept responsibility for their actions.
- All parties (youth, parents/guardians, police, and victim(s)) must agree that the case be handled through the Youth Commission.
- Juvenile and parents/guardians must agree to cooperate with the Youth Commission.

Meeting Procedures:

1. Commissions shall schedule the time, date, and place of the proceeding/meeting and notify the juvenile and his/her parent/guardian in writing at least ten days in advance.
2. Commissions shall contact the victim(s), if applicable, according to “Instructions for Victim Notification”.
3. The Chairperson shall introduce all persons present at the beginning of the meeting and explain the purpose of the commission. (A script is enclosed in the Forms Packet to assist in conducting the proceeding)
4. Charges shall be read and explained to the juvenile and parents/guardian.
5. The “Rights” form shall be explained and signed by the juvenile and his/her parents/guardians.
6. The juvenile/parents/guardian shall then present their description of the incident.
7. No person shall be present at the proceeding other than those directly involved.
8. The Chairperson shall maintain control of the proceeding at all times.
9. After all the facts have been heard and deliberated; a disposition of the case is made. Copies shall be given to the juvenile and his/her parents/guardians.
10. Copies of all forms shall be mailed as soon as possible, but within 7 days, to the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department, 2771 South Grande Blvd, Greensburg, Pa 15601.
11. The Youth Commission maintains files on Diversion cases.

12. Upon completion of the Youth Commission Program, the Probation Office should be notified via the “Discharge Form” as soon as possible, but within 7 days. If case was a Magisterial District Judge referral, a copy should be sent to the Magisterial District Judge office.
13. Shortly thereafter, you will receive confirmation that we received and processed the discharge; the Secretary will receive a “Letter to Destroy Records.” At that time, all paper files pertaining to the youth shall be shredded. Additionally, should you have any digital files; they should be deleted.

REINTEGRATION CASE:

Youth Commission volunteers will assist the youth in pursuing employments, recreation, and other positive community based activities.

Crime creates social and spiritual separation from the community. For youth who have created harm in the community, mentoring helps them repair the harm and gain or regain a sense of self-worth and acceptance that allows them to be fully reintegrated into the community. This applies to both first time offenders and repeat offenders. In most instances youth remain in the community; however, in a small percentage of cases, it is necessary to place youth outside of the home. Placement creates physical separation of youth from her or his family, school, and community. For youth returning from placement meaningful connections to unpaid community members provides a critical link that allows youth the opportunity to gain trust, understanding, and redemption. The Commission is also positioned to assist families dealing with the struggles associated with a youth’s return home. The ultimate goal is to provide the youth and their families a level of service, care, compassion and connection to the community that is conducive to success. This dramatically decreases the opportunities for re-arrest.

Referral Source: Juvenile Court ONLY

- ❖ The Juvenile Court Judge may refer a youth at any time.
- ❖ A Probation Officer may refer a youth at any time after disposition of the case following approval by a Probation Supervisor.

Meeting Procedures:

1. The Juvenile Probation Officer will make a referral to the Youth Commission based on Judicial Order, or consultation with his/her supervisor. He/she will appear at a Youth Commission meeting to make a presentation of the case.
2. The Juvenile Probation Officer shall schedule the time, date, and place of the proceeding/meeting with the Youth Commission and family.

3. The Juvenile Probation Officer will notify the juvenile and his/her parent/guardian of the proceeding/meeting.
4. The Chairperson shall introduce all persons present at the beginning of the meeting and explain the purpose of the commission.
5. The Juvenile Probation Officer shall assist the juvenile in explaining his/her history and needs to the commission.
6. The Youth Commission shall assist the juvenile and Probation Officer in developing a measureable goal and a plan to achieve that goal.
7. A member or members shall be assigned to mentor the youth and help him/her achieve his/her goals.
8. Brief notes shall be made of each contact with youth.
9. Copies of all completed forms shall be mailed or emailed the first of every month to: **Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department, 2771 South Grande Blvd, Greensburg, Pa 15601**, or cmiller@co.westmoreland.pa.us
10. In Reintegration cases, the Juvenile Probation Department maintains all files as well as responsibility for managing the case.
11. At the conclusion of the reintegration case, all files shall be destroyed.

Protocol Leading up to and Including Expungements

Expungements/Youth Commission Diversion Cases

Cases filed directly with the Youth Commission (from the Magisterial District Judge)

1. Case information is entered into Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS) by the Magisterial District Judge's Office
2. Magisterial District Judge's Office refers the case directly to the Youth Commission Secretary
3. Youth Commission holds a proceeding with the youth and family
4. Youth Commission sends disposition sheet to Juvenile Probation Office and Magisterial District Judge within 7 days
5. Youth completes his/her supervision successfully
6. Youth Commission Secretary submits discharge forms to Juvenile Probation Office and Magisterial District Judge regardless of youth's compliance

7. This case is eligible for expungement utilizing the following procedure:
 - a. Complete the attached form (which may be found on the Westmoreland County Website)
 - b. Upon completion, submit form in person to the Westmoreland County Clerk of Courts w/payment of \$26.40.*

Cases filed directly with the Youth Commission (from the Juvenile Probation Office)

1. Case information is entered into the Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS) & Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS)
2. Intake Interview is held and all parties agree to refer the case to the Youth Commission
3. Case is referred to the Youth Commission
4. Youth Commission holds a proceeding with the youth and family
5. Youth Commission Secretary sends a disposition sheet to the Juvenile Probation Office within 7 days
6. Youth completes his/her supervision successfully
7. Youth Commission Secretary submits discharge form to Juvenile Probation Office
8. If youth fails to complete his/her supervision successfully, the case will be scheduled for Juvenile Court (Master or Judge)
9. This case may be eligible for expungement if certain requirements are met. If a family wishes to seek an expungement they may do so by the following procedure:
 - a. Complete the attached form (which may be found on the Westmoreland County Website)
 - b. Submit form in person to the Westmoreland County Clerk of Courts w/payment of \$26.40.*

Expungement Forms are available on the Westmoreland County Website

<http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/index.aspx?NID=271>

Summary Offenses

If the offense is a summary offense referred by a Magisterial District Judge, click on the county website above. Go to: Departments, Clerk of Courts, Forms and the form is called "Expungement for Summary Offense".

Misdemeanor Offense

If the offense is a misdemeanor offense referred by the Juvenile Probation Office, click on the county website above. Go to: Departments, Clerk of Courts, Forms and the form is called “Juvenile Expungement”.

Price of expungement is subject to change, price effective as of 2/18/15



Contact Information:

The Youth Commission Administration can be reached by telephoning:
Casey Miller, PO Aide at 724-830-4213

Email: cmiller@co.westmoreland.pa.us

Mail: 2771 South Grande Blvd
Greensburg, PA 15601

Revised 4-9-15/cm