

JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM TERMINOLOGY

(References-Minnesota Statutes)

Adjudicated	The term used in juvenile court to indicate that a juvenile has been found to have committed a delinquent act.
Admit	The equivalent a guilty plea in adult court.
Arrestment Hearing	Usually the child's initial hearing at which time the court insures that the child and parents understand their rights, the charge and possible consequences. The child must admit or deny the charge at this time.
Certification	The legal procedure for determining whether a juvenile's case should be transferred from juvenile court for trial in the adult court system. M.S. 260.125
CHIPS	Children In Need of Protection or Services. These are children whose cases have been brought into juvenile court, usually by the social services agency, as the result of a dependency or neglect petition. M.S. 260.015
Commitment	The legal action taken by the juvenile court when it has been determined by the court that the adjudicated juvenile should be placed in a state juvenile corrections facility operated under the jurisdiction of the commissioner of Corrections. In doing so, the child's custody is transferred to the commissioner. M.S. 260.185
Delinquent	A child who is at least 10 years of age, but not more than 18 years of age who has committed an act that would be a crime if committed by an adult. M.S. 260.015
Delinquency	A term which describes a juvenile's behavior that is judged to be antisocial or in violation of the law. M. S. 260.015
Deny	The equivalent of a not-guilty plea in adult court.
Dependency	A term which describes a child whose parents are willing, but unable, to provide necessary care and supervision. M.S. 260.015
Detention	The temporary holding of a child in either a secure or nonsecure facility, until the next appearance in juvenile court. M.S. 260.0165 to 260.173

Detention Hearing	The hearing at which it is determined by the juvenile court judge if the child is to be held in detention until the next court appearance.
Disposition Hearing	The hearing at which the juvenile court judge decides the appropriate sanctions and necessary follow-up programming for an "adjudicated delinquent". Similar to sentencing hearing in adult court. M.S. 260.181-260.215
Guardian ad Litem	A person appointed by the juvenile court to represent the best interests of a child in a court proceeding. M.S. 260.155
Neglect	A term that describes a child whose parents neglect or refuse to provide needed care and supervision of their child. M.S. 260.015
Office of Juvenile	The office within the Minnesota Department of Corrections that Release serves as the "paroling" authority for juveniles who have been committed to the Commissioner of Corrections.
Parole	Now referred to as Supervised Release; this refers to juveniles who are released by the Commissioner of Corrections from state juvenile correctional facilities. Similar to the status of an adult who is released from a state prison, these juveniles are supervised in the community by juvenile probation officers, nearly all of who are county employees.
Petition	The legal document that describes the alleged offense committed by the child. Similar to a complaint in adult court. M.S. 260.131
Predispositional Report	Also known as a Social History, this is in fact a presentence investigation which contains much of the same information as its adult counterpart. M.S. 260.151, 260.181, 260.311
Pretrial Hearing	A hearing in juvenile court after the child has denied the petition (pled not guilty), in order to set the trial date and to review the issues and evidence in the case. M.S. 260.155
Probation	A juvenile court disposition which places the adjudicated delinquent back to the community under the supervision of a probation officer. M.S. 260.185
Probation Officer	A person employed at the local level who provides supervision and counseling of juveniles who have been adjudicated delinquent by the juvenile court, and/or released from a state juvenile corrections facility by the Commissioner of Corrections. 260.311

Reference to Adult	Another term used for certification. Usually used in the context of a Court "reference hearing" which is the same as a juvenile court hearing to determine whether or not a juvenile should be certified to stand trial as an adult.
Status Offense	Conduct which is illegal for a child, but not for an adult, such as truancy, curfew, etc.
Stay of Adjudication	When a child has been adjudicated delinquent, but the juvenile court has determined that the circumstances of the case warrant the child being given a "second chance", the court can suspend, or stay, the sentence. If the child satisfies all conditions set forth by the court, the court can dismiss the charge and there will be no record of the adjudication.
Termination of Parental Rights	The order of the juvenile court which terminates the legal relationship between parent/s and a child. This can be either voluntary or involuntary, and temporary or permanent depending upon the circumstances of the case and the needs of the child.
Trial	When the charge stated in the petition is denied by the child and not dismissed by the juvenile court, the judge hears and decides the case. Jury trials are not held in juvenile court.