

### **C. COURT REVIEWS AND PAPERWORK:**

Only juveniles who are adjudicated delinquent may be court ordered to placement. The juvenile probation department may not place juveniles without a court order. Exceptions include juveniles who meet the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Detention Standards or juveniles who need emergency placement.

Once a juvenile is court ordered to placement a formal court review must be completed every 6 months. The length of placement may vary from a couple of days to 18 months or longer depending on the type of placement. Please remember that juveniles under probation supervision may remain so until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Plan to help compile and review a Family Service Plan, Placement Amendment and 6 Month Placement Reviews. Each report describes the reason for placement, why the chosen placement is appropriate and the actions expected by the juvenile, the parents and the juvenile probation department.

### **D. AFTERCARE PLANNING:**

It is common for juveniles to be placed in foster care immediately following a placement. This is not always the case, but it is a consideration for each juvenile as a "step down" from the structure of a placement to the reunification with the family and society. Parents are responsible for a portion of the foster care cost.

Aftercare planning is developed by the placement facility, parents, the juvenile, and juvenile probation. It may include additional supports such as foster care, half-way homes, McKean County MH/MR, Wrap around, outpatient counseling, specialized group and/or individual counseling, and psychiatric or psychological services. Payment for such services is the responsibility of the juvenile's family (cash, private insurance or MA).

### **E. IN SUMMARY:**

Having a child in placement through the juvenile justice system may be a difficult and trying time for you and your family. Without your opinions, patience, and cooperation the experience is only compounded and limits the possibilities of success for your child. Everyone involved with your child (family, probation, placement staff, support services) needs to make a concerted effort to openly communicate and work together.

We may not always agree but the lines of communication need to remain open to give your child the best opportunity for success. Ultimately, none of us can make your child change his/her behavior but we can provide them with the opportunity to make better decisions on their own.

Please direct placement questions to:

**Luke Kinney**

Placement Specialist  
500 West Main Street  
Smethport, PA 16749  
814-887-3365

McKean County Juvenile Probation  
Department  
Courthouse  
500 West Main Street  
Smethport, PA 16749

Phone: 814-887-3365  
Fax: 814-887-5825

# What if my child is removed from my home?



## Placement information for Parents



**McKean County  
Juvenile Probation**

**Contact information:  
814-887-3365**

## **A. PLACEMENT INFORMATION:**

To make a referral to a placement facility much information needs to be gathered pertaining to each child. Releases of information are requested so that the necessary records may be obtained. Also, personal information is required. Copies of your child's birth certificate, social security card, medical assistance or medical insurance information, medications and immunization records are needed. In addition, a social history is completed.

Once the appropriate information is obtained and discussion occurs with the family of the juvenile, referrals are made to various placements. Placements are chosen by looking at the needs of the juveniles, recommendations from other treatment services and professionals, and the requirements of the family. We are not always able to pursue the wishes of the family however, we strive to enable the parents to keep their parental role with their child.

Many placements send a representative to interview the juvenile and the family to provide detailed information about their facility. This is also an opportunity for juveniles and parents to ask questions. Each facility differs in respect to their specific regulations but we try to provide visitation, telephone contact, safety, educational, medical, treatment modalities, average length of stay, physical activity, vocational, and if applicable independent living skills information to each parent and juvenile.

When a juvenile is placed there is often a restriction on visitation and contact during the first month of placement. This is **NOT TO PREVENT** contact between the juvenile and parents. The practice is in an effort to ease the transition to placement and increase the level of concentration the child puts into his/her treatment. Active participation by the parents is welcomed and encouraged.

Usually about 1 month after placement there is a meeting to plan the juvenile's treatment program. Parents, probation, placement staff and the juvenile participate.

During placement, **Luke Kinney** will be your main contact at juvenile probation. Each facility will also have a specific counselor assigned to work with you and your child. Please direct concerns, questions, and problems to **Luke Kinney** who will help you contact the facility to remedy concerns.

It is not unusual for misunderstandings to occur when there are numerous people involved so please call **Luke Kinney** for assistance at **814-887-3365**. You are the parent(s) and you know your child better than anyone. We encourage and need your opinions.

## **B. OBLIGATIONS OF PARENTS:**

### **1. Placement Cost:**

Biological parents or adoptive parents are liable to pay a portion of placement cost after state and federal reimbursement. The County pays the remainder. Each placement cost per day is determined by the facility and type of placement. Typically placement costs range from \$50.00 a day to \$300.00 a day.

Most placements are either 60% or 80% reimbursable to the county. Therefore, at the end, McKean County pays either 40% or 20% of the actual cost of placement. The parents are responsible for reimbursing the County for the expenses. Typically the probation department requests that parents sign a payment agreement of a negotiated monthly reimbursement amount that each parent will pay. This payment agreement then becomes an order of court.

For example, if the parents are married, the department will ask for the parents to pay 10% of their monthly take home pay to the county until placement costs are paid in full. If parents are divorced or separated, the department will ask for each parent to pay 5% of their take home pay until payment is made in full. Therefore, you may be expected to continue paying placement costs after your child returns home.

Please note the parents may request a placement cost hearing before the Domestic Relations Hearing Officer. **All payments are arranged through the Domestic Relations Office.** Payments may be made directly, but should a payment be 30 days late the remainder will be wage attached. Agreements are attempted to be reached prior to the hearings but if not, the Hearing Officer will make the final decision.

This process applies to **EACH** placement should your child have more than one placement. Typically, the Court will just extend the length of payments to include all placements.

### **2. Active participation in treatment:**

As a parent you may be requested to travel to the placement facility to participate in treatment meetings, visits, and counseling with your juvenile. We understand that transportation and/or distance may be a difficulty for parents. You may always request to participate via speakerphone with the facility. Juvenile probation is willing to assist you in any way we can but you are still expected to make a serious effort to participate in your child's treatment. Should you have any difficulties please notify juvenile probation and the treatment facility.