

CONNECT

SAFETY

TEXAS JUVENILE JUSTICE
**YOUTH
HANDBOOK**

JUNE 2021 • Edition 1

EMPOWER

CORRECT

This handbook will help you understand what your life will be like while you are at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD).

- This handbook will help you understand the rules and rights you have.
- Once assigned to your dorm, you may be given additional rules and information.
- Keep this handbook in a safe place so you can refer to it when you need to.
- You will be told when any information or rules in this handbook changes.
- If you have questions, all TJJD staff are here to help you!



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IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Intake, Assessment, and Orientation

Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex
P.O. Box 1267
Brownwood, TX 76804
325-641-4200 phone
325-646-7704 fax

24-Hour Abuse Reporting Hotline: 866-477-8354

- Hotline answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Call this number about:
 - criminal behavior
 - abuse
 - neglect
 - other illegal activity
- use **blue** phones located in program areas

Independent Ombudsman for TJJD: 855-468-7330

- Investigate
- Evaluate
- Secure rights of youth committed to TJJD

TJJD Central Office:

Texas Juvenile Justice Department
P.O. Box 12757
Austin, TX 78711

Other Contacts

- Parole Officer | Reentry Team: 512-490-7768
- Youth Grievance Coordinator: 512-490-7235
- TJJD Release Review Panel: 512-490-7101
- Sentenced Offender Department: 512-490-7031
- Sex Offender Registration: 512-490-7289
- State-Operated Programs and Services: 512-490-7172

Your Parole Officer

Name: _____

Phone: _____

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AT TJJD?

While at TJJD, you will have most of the same basic rights you had before coming. Here's what you need to know.

- There will be some limits to your rights and staff will tell you what those are
- To make sure everyone is safe and that you are getting the best treatment, your rights may be limited at any time
- If you believe your rights have been violated or that you have been treated unfairly, you can take some action (explained later)

YOUR BASIC RIGHTS

Right to Equal Treatment – You have the right to be free from discrimination

Right of Free Speech and Expression – You can express yourself if it isn't disruptive or unsafe

Right of Religious Freedom – You and your parents (if you are under 18) can decide whether or not you participate in religious activities of your choice

Right to Personal Possessions – You can keep and use personal possessions that are safe and don't disrupt programs or promote bad behavior

Right to Receive Visitors – You can receive visitors, including private in- person meetings with your family

Right of Access to Mail and Telephone – You can freely send and receive letters in the mail except if they are a security risk. You will have access to phones as much as possible

Right to Earnings and Monetary Gifts – You have the right to have money while at TJJD. There may be a limit to the amount of cash you can have with you and you cannot take money from your trust fund without your permission

Right to Protection from Physical and Psychological Harm – You have the right to be protected from harm and to get healthy food, clothing, and shelter

Right to Medical and Dental Care – You will get basic and necessary medical and dental care, both routine and emergency

Right of Access to Attorneys – You are allowed to talk with your attorney (lawyer) in private

Right to be Informed – TJJD will tell you about all policies, procedures, and rules affecting you

Right to Accuracy and Fairness – Decisions made about you will be fair and correct

Right to Confidentiality of Records – You have the right to your records being confidential. They will not be released except to those authorized by law

Right to File Grievances and Appeal Decisions – You have the right to have your complaints taken care of quickly and fairly

WHAT ARE MY PARENT'S RIGHTS WHILE I AM AT TJJD?

While you are at TJJD, your parents will be partners with the staff you work with. They are encouraged to participate in your treatment - from the time you arrive to the time you leave. Just like you, your parents have certain rights.

Your parents have the right to know you will be treated fairly and as an individual

Your parents have the right to know TJJD will provide a safe, secure, and sanitary environment for you

Your parents have the right to know you will not to be judged, blamed, or labeled because of your stay at TJJD

Your parents have the right to know they can be vocal and active supporters on your behalf

Your parents have the right to know they can be active participants when decisions are made about you

Your parents have the right to know they will be informed about matters related to your well-being

Your parents have the right to know they can access your records anytime

Your parents have the right to know they can participate in your treatment, like when making medical and behavioral health decisions and with school issues

Your parents have the right to know they can communicate with you, whether by visiting you at your facility, talking on the phone, or by writing letters

Your parents have the right to know all TJJD staff will be professional, courteous, and respectful

Your parents have the right to know TJJD will make sure all is done to protect your rights

Your parents have the right to know they can participate in your release planning – from the beginning to end of your TJJD stay



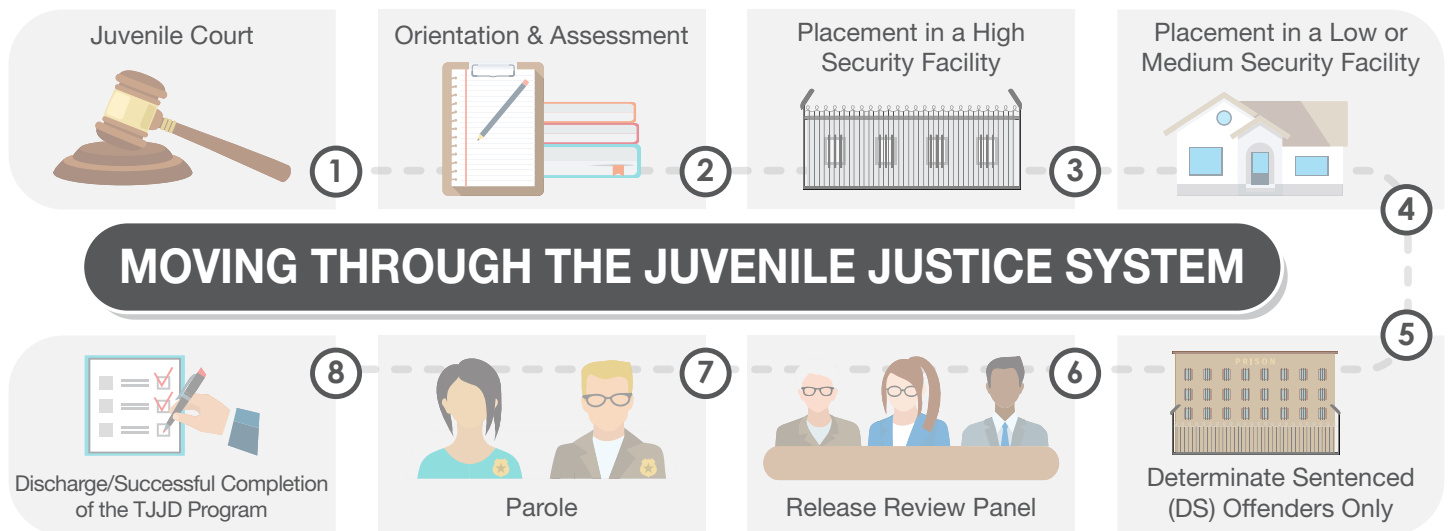
MOVING THROUGH TJJD

Now that you are at TJJD, you are in the custody of the state of Texas.

- TJJD is the highest level of placement youth in Texas can go - unless certified as an adult
- TJJD programs are located around Texas
 - some are high-security
 - some are medium or low-security

Your TJJD journey will be unique because treatment programs are designed to meet your needs and abilities.

The picture below explains a typical way you might move through the TJJD system.



Juvenile Court | Type of Commitments

The judge who handled your case made the decision to send you to TJJD. There are two ways this can happen:

- **INDETERMINATE COMMITMENTS:** Most youth sent to TJJD are given an indeterminate commitment. This means the judge did not tell TJJD how long your stay will be.
 - TJJD will look at your needs and risks and determine how long you will stay
 - if you do really well, you will stay for a minimum length of time or you could get a reduction in time
 - here's what doing well means:
 - you pay attention
 - you participate in your treatment programs
 - you don't hurt, try to hurt, or threaten other people

Finishing your minimum length of stay (explained later) does not automatically mean you go home. If you don't focus on your treatment or you hurt or threaten people, TJJD assumes you are not ready to leave. Everyone at TJJD are here to help you; however, it will be up to you to do your best so you can go home as soon you can.

- **DETERMINATE COMMITMENTS:** Some judges send youth to TJJD with specific times they must stay. These are called determinate sentences because the time served is set by a judge.
 - for a determinate sentence, the most time a judge can set is 40 years
 - longer sentences are for very serious offenses
 - if you have a determinate sentence, the judge probably:
 - sent you to TJJD because they believe you can improve with treatment
 - wanted to give you a chance to avoid adult prison

There are staff at TJJD's Central Office who only help those youth with determinate sentences. Staff in this unit assist with cases and make important decisions. If you have a determinate sentence, staff at this unit may also answer questions you or your family may have.

Here's some other things you should know about your time at TJJD.

- It is important you be successful with your treatment, so when it's time, a judge can allow you to go on parole instead of going to adult prison
- If you complete your entire sentence at TJJD, then you will eventually be discharged
- If you don't complete your sentence, a judge will decide whether to order parole or prison by either:
 - following the recommendation of TJJD on whether you should be granted parole or prison, when you are almost 19-years-old
 - ordering early transfer to prison, based on your lack of treatment, your hurting, trying to hurt, or threatening others, when you are at least 16-years-old

Length of Stay

Everyone at TJJD will have a different minimum length of stay. If you came to TJJD without a determinate sentence set by a judge, you will have to stay in TJJD until your 19th birthday.

TJJD will decide exactly how long you stay based on a few things:

- Your needs – when you first arrive at TJJD (orientation and assessment), staff will look at what you need to be successful
- Your ratings
 - **SEVERITY RATING** – this may be high, moderate, or low based on your committing offense
 - **ASSESSMENT RATING** – this may be high, medium, or low based on your possible risk to the community. To figure this out, staff look at:
 - your prior offense(s) and your referral history
 - your medical, emotional, and school record
 - whether you will likely break the law or commit serious offenses if released
 - tests or assessments you will take will be –
 - performed by medical staff
 - forms with questions you will need to answer
 - interviews
 - some questions may be hard or embarrassing, but be honest - no one at TJJD will judge you
 - The time you are told you will stay is only a guide
 - You may stay for a shorter time, especially if your behavior is good and you focus on your treatment
 - this could reduce your time by up to 3 months!
 - remember though, reduced time doesn't happen often and you will need to work hard to get it
 - Remember, you could stay for a longer time, depending on your behavior, especially if you:
 - don't focus on your treatment
 - hurt or try to hurt others
 - make threats

If you came to TJJD with a determinate sentence, you will have a period of time you will have to stay at a facility before being on parole. This time is set by state law. Some examples:

- 10 years for capital murder
- 3 years for aggravated controlled substance felony or first-degree felony
- 2 years for second-degree felony
- 1 year for third-degree felony

Facilities

TJJD has high, medium, and low-security facilities. You will be assigned to one of these during orientation.

- **HIGH-SECURITY FACILITIES**
 - these buildings are surrounded by fences. TJJD also uses private buildings that are not owned by the state
 - At these facilities, you can:
 - meet your treatment needs
 - get counseling and group sessions
 - go to school and get your diploma or GED
 - take part in groups that teach you about needed skills
 - learn vocational skills or those things to help with future job opportunities
 - earn privileges when you succeed
- **LOW | MEDIUM-SECURITY FACILITIES**
 - these buildings are not surrounded by fences
 - these are halfway houses and other buildings TJJD use, where you live, instead of at a high-security facility
 - at these facilities, you can:
 - meet with a case manager to help plan for your going home
 - show you are responsible before going home
 - work on treatment needs and continue with school

Stages of TJJD Program

Once placed at a facility, you must work the program. That means going to school, going to treatment, and working toward going home. You will progress through five stages while at TJJD, ending with Youth Empowerment Status (YES). These stages help you:

- Learn about your *protective and risk factors* – and how they relate to your success when you go home (explained in a moment)
- Understand how your offense relates to those risk factors, like your attitudes, values, and beliefs
- Develop a community re-entry plan – a plan to use when you go home to help you stay out of trouble and be successful
- Work with your family in treatment

To move from one stage to the next, you must also do well on your case plan goals, participate in group, school, and apply what you learn in your daily life. Your case manager will help you with what you need to do. Remember, your treatment program will not look the same as anyone else's. Based on your protective and risk factors – you and your case manager will develop a case plan for you.

Protective | Risk Factors

Everyone has both protective and risk factors. While at TJJD, your goal should be to increase your protective factors and reduce your risks. Here's the difference between the two.

- **PROTECTIVE FACTORS** are things in your life that will help you succeed
 - Some examples –
 - the ability to communicate with adults
 - keeping positive adults in your life
 - hanging out with healthy friends
 - getting good grades in school
- **RISK FACTORS** are things in your life contributing to negative thinking and actions
 - Some examples –
 - having many difficult relationships with family members
 - spending lots of time with negative people
 - no positive role models

TJJD Programs | Groups

Every facility, whether high, medium, or low-risk will have programs to help you. They will help you figure out what led you trouble and how to stay out of trouble when you go home. Here's what you should know.

- Groups | programs will support you as you learn new skills and ways to have positive relationships
- You will work with staff, mentors, family, and other youth your age to attain these skills
- Skills groups will be at least three times a week. You'll learn:
 - how to control (regulate) your responses to emotions and stress
 - how to be in the moment, or being mindful
 - how to talk to people in a positive way
 - about alcohol and drug addiction
 - how to solve problems
 - how to build personal relationships with proper boundaries
 - how to make smart choices
- **SUPPLEMENTAL GROUPS**
Groups that focus on special topics – usually about four times a week
 - specialize in anger management, alcohol | drug issues, mental health support, recovery from trauma, and other special needs
- **SPECIALIZED INTENSIVE GROUPS**
Depending on your offense, you may have to participate in more specialized treatment, led by trained or licensed staff. For example, if you came to TJJD:
 - for a capital or serious violent offense
 - with an alcohol | drug issue
 - and need help with a mental health issue(s)
 - and your offense or behavior is sexual in nature – these groups are for you

- **LEISURE SKILLS BUILDING GROUPS**

These are fun groups where you will learn about things that interest you and do them in your free time.

These groups include things like:

- guitar lessons
- money management
- yoga
- painting
- sculpting
- participating in talent shows

You must be on your best behavior to be in these groups. If you have ideas about other fun groups, talk to your case manager or student rep.

- **YOUTH SERVICES TEAM | YST**

Every month, this group of staff will meet with you to talk about your treatment program. Here's what you should know about YST.

- group consists of your case manager, a teacher, and a coach who knows you
- your parents will be invited to attend these meetings
- YST looks at your behavior and suggest ways to keep you on track
- YST may change goals on your case plan and determine the stage you are at
- while attending this group, it's important to make your voice heard – if you need help, your case manager can assist you

Completing the TJJD Program

After completing all TJJD stages and for staff to consider your release (*if you are not a sentenced offender*), you must:

- Finish your minimum length of stay
- Completed your treatment program
- Have no major rule violations 30 days before your exit interview and before your release
- Reach Stage YES (Youth Empowerment Status). You are able to go home without getting to Stage YES, but it is much easier go home with it

Here's what you should know about Stage YES.

- you must be participating in school and work programs
- you must be participating in skills development groups
- you must be able to show (*with your behavior*) positive skills you have learned
- Complete a community re-entry plan. It should show:
 - you understand your risk and protective factors
 - how you will reduce your risk factors and increase your protective factors
 - your future plans and how you are going to achieve them
 - you know what will mess up your success and the plan to deal with it
- Participate in all helpful programs, like:
 - reading improvement
 - positive behavioral supports system (PBS - explained later)
 - gang intervention or sex-offender treatment (*at least 12 hours*), only if required by the court

If you complete all of this, you are ready to be released.

Release from TJJJ

BEING RELEASED means you will leave a facility or program, but you will still be under supervision or parole (explained later). You could be released to a halfway house while on parole, instead of going home, but it depends on your needs. Some things you should know about being released.

- The principal at your facility will review information (explained in a moment) about you, especially your behavior and how you use Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) skills
- If you have improved, the principal will recommend your release to the YST (treatment team)
- If for some reason, the YST disagrees with you being released, your case will be reviewed by the Special Services Committee (SSC) at your campus, with the final decision being made by the superintendent.
 - ultimately, if your parole is not approved because staff believe you aren't ready to move on, your case will be reviewed by the TJJJ Release Review Panel

TJJJ Release Review Panel

Here's what you need to know about the release review panel.

- This panel will decide if you will be released by looking at your progress and behavior
 - if the panel decides to grant you parole, your treatment team will decide if you go home or to a halfway house
 - if the panel decides you need more treatment, your stay in TJJJ can be extended

Below explains what information the panel will look at.

Information used by the Release Review Panel

All information about you, including your Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS – explained later) and your reading levels. You have to meet school goals, if not, the law says you cannot be released.

You, your family, victims, or any supportive person you choose can send information in writing for the panel to review.

Your family, victims, or any supportive person may ask (in writing) for a meeting with the panel.

The panel can interview you or anyone else about your treatment. You don't have to speak to the panel if you don't want to.

Reconsideration of Release Review Panel Decision

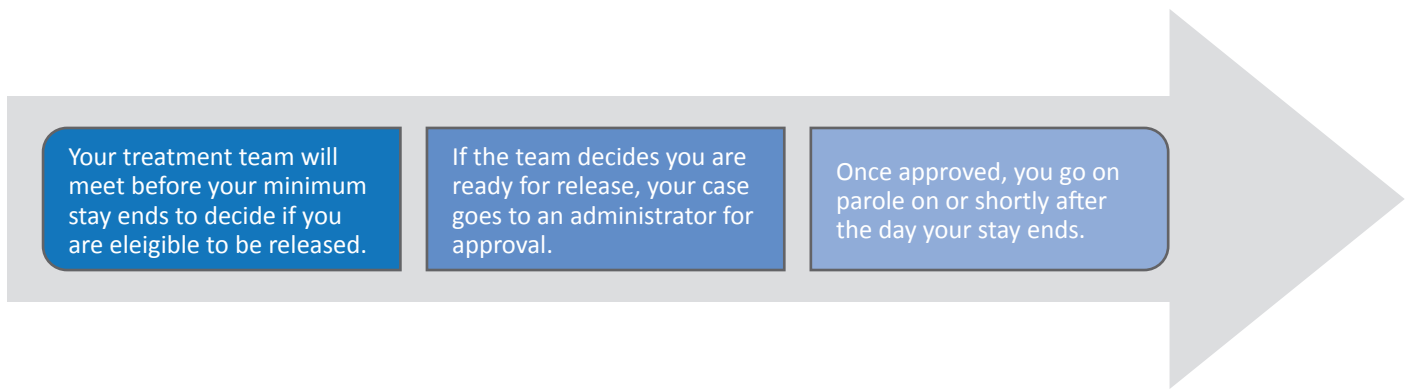
If you disagree with the decision of the Release Review Panel and believe they don't know everything about you, you can ask them to look again. This is called a *request for reconsideration*.

Here is what you should know.

- Many people can make a request for you, including you, your parent(s) or guardian(s), advocates, victims, TJJJ employees, employees of TJJJ contractors, or TJJJ volunteers
- Once you are told about the panel's decision, you will have 15 days to make a written request for reconsideration. If you need help, you ask your case manager or a staff member
- There may be times when the person in charge of your facility makes a request. This happens if there is new information the panel didn't know or if you commit a major rule violation

Remember – you should remain on your best behavior during this entire process. Once it is decided you will be released, you will be transition to parole.

Parole



Here's what you should know about parole.

- Like most youth, when you are paroled, you will likely go to a halfway house before going home
 - this is an important time because you get to prove you can be safe by applying what you've learned at TJJD
- You could be paroled and go straight home. This only happens if your behavior was really good, you focused on completing your treatment, or other special circumstances
- Remember - whether in a halfway house or at home, your behavior is important! If you don't follow the rules or if you commit another offense, your parole can be revoked and you may have to go back to a high-security facility
- The better choices you make, the sooner you will be going home

Discharge | Completing the TJJD Program

DISCHARGE from TJJD means you have completed the program, from beginning to end and are ready to be on your own. Now remember, just because you are discharged, does not mean TJJD is no longer there for you! Here's some things you should know.

- If you want to continue school, TJJD staff can help you fill out applications
- Staff can help you apply for financial help if you need it
- Staff may also help you find out if you can get financial help from a trust fund TJJD is in charge of

Remember - you have a chance at a great future! Success comes from things like:

- Finishing school, if you didn't at TJJD
- Working toward the job or career you want and making plans toward it
- Following through on plans talked about at TJJD
- Using what you learned in treatment, like how to control your emotions

Be sure to ask your parole officer, caseworker, or reentry specialist about available school and career opportunities.

CONTACT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Texas law says TJJD may not tell most people you are here. You and your family though, are welcome to tell anyone you want. Remember:

- You being at TJJD is confidential
- People will only be able to find out where you are from you or your parents
- Make sure to give your friends and family your current address
- If your parents move, make sure you tell your case manager

Phone Use

You will be able to use the phone. Here are some things you need to know.

- You must have staff permission to make calls and they can only be when you are not busy
 - the exception – if you need to call the TJJD abuse hotline, you can make these calls without staff permission as long as there is not a scheduled activity. If you need to make a call staff may ask you to wait until the activity is over.
- Staff will only allow you to call people that are on your approved list
- You are encouraged to make calls to your family - to keep them involved in your treatment
- In emergencies, staff will help you contact your family
- Phone calls (except calls with your lawyer) can be recorded and listened to if staff have concerns about it
- If you don't follow phone rules, all of your privileges can be taken away



Visitation

Spending time with your family is important to your success.

Here's what you need to know about visitation.

- Visits are usually on weekends, but they may be planned for weekdays based on the situation
- Virtual visits may be arranged if your family cannot visit you in person
- Your family can make arrangements to see you if there is an emergency you need to know about
- TJJD must approve all visitors and their criminal record will be checked
- A copy of the visitation rules will be given to your family and they must complete a visitor application
- If you would like other supportive people to visit you, they must complete a visitor application. Your case manager or family liaison can send them an application or they can download it from the TJJD website

If your family can't afford to visit you, TJJD partners may be able to help. Your parents should contact your facility for details. Partners can help pay for things like gas, motels, and bus tickets.

- If any rules are broken during a visit, TJJJ may remove the person(s) from your visitation list
- If there is an emergency on campus, TJJJ may stop visits until it is safe to resume them
- Your lawyer and personal pastor may visit you any day of the week as long as you aren't in school or group. Ask your case manager to add them to your visitation list
- You do not have to visit with someone if you don't want to

There are some people who may not visit you, including:

- Former or current TJJJ youth, unless they are in your immediate family
- A parent who had their parental rights terminated (if you are under 18)
- Anyone who the court said can't contact you
- Any former or current TJJJ employee, unless they are immediate family
- Anyone who is a safety and security risk or who may delay your treatment progress
- Any victims of your offense who are under 18, unless approved

Mail

You are able to receive mail while at TJJJ. Here's what you need to know.

- Staff will inspect mail for contraband outside youth's presence
- Staff may read your mail to determine whether it presents a direct threat to safety and security
- There is no limit to how many letters you get
- TJJJ will pay to mail three letters a week; if you want to send more, you will have to buy stamps
- If you are sending letters to your attorney or the court, TJJJ will pay to have those mailed

If contraband is found in your mail, it will be taken and whoever sent it could face criminal charges



DAILY LIFE AT TJJD

Living at TJJD will be very structured in order to keep you safe and out of trouble. Here are some things you need to know.

- Most of your time will be spent with your dorm group, except for school, where you will be in class with youth from other dorms
- There will be about 12 to 18 youth in your dorm
- In most secure facilities, you will have your own room
- At halfway houses – you will share a room with a few other youth
- Most dorms will have:
 - a case manager’s office
 - a group area
 - a laundry area
 - a place for showers, sinks, toilets
- You are responsible for keeping your personal area clean and common areas tidy
- Staff will explain your duties to you when you get to the dorm

Case Manager

Your TJJD case manager is one of the most important people assigned to help you. He (or she) will:

- Explain your treatment program, including your required specialized assignments
- Help you plan your treatment goals
- Keep an eye on your progress and help keep you on track
- Be the main TJJD contact with your parents or guardians to keep them informed about you
- Encourage your family to be involved in your treatment
- Provide group and individual counseling
- Help you decide the best way to be successful at home

Family Involvement

Your family should always be a part of your treatment. Some things you should know.

- You are encouraged to visit, call, and write letters to your family
- There may be activities at your facility you and your family may do when they come visit
- All high-security facilities have a family liaison or contact that will keep your family updated on how you’re doing
- Your family will receive a written report about how you’re doing – at least every 90 days
- Even if your parents do not speak English –
 - Most information that is printed or on TJJD’s website is available in Spanish
 - If your family speaks a different language, TJJD will have someone translate information for them
 - Staff can call the language line to translate ***any language***

Schedule

Every TJJD facility has its own schedule that will keep you busy most of the day.

- At secure facilities, your day will last about 16 hours - from the time you wake up until it’s time for bed
- Schedules are different for weekdays, weekends, and holidays

Personal Items

TJJD will provide you with all of the basic personal things you need.

- You are allowed to have some personal items like books, religious books, religious articles used in worship (explained later), and pictures
- You will be provided with soap, shampoo, toothpaste, a toothbrush, deodorant, shaving products, clean bedding, and sheets
 - you are expected to practice good personal hygiene skills – like regular showers and dental care
 - a barber or hair stylist will come to your dorm every so often to tend to your hair
- If your behavior is good, you can earn privileges to buy other products you may need

Staff on the dorm will tell you what you are allowed to have.

Dress Code | Appearance

TJJD provides all of your clothes and shoes. Here's some things you need to know.

- You will get clean underwear and socks every day and clean outer clothing at least three times a week
- You can wear only clothes and shoes provided by TJJD or purchased through TJJD as an earned privilege
 - you will usually wear khakis, blue pants, or jeans, a colored shirt, and tennis shoes
 - when you progress in treatment and have good behavior, you can earn privileges to wear non-state issued clothing and shoes
- About your uniform –
 - it must be clean, fit properly, and appropriate for activities you are doing
 - underwear must be worn and must be covered by outer clothing
 - shoes or acceptable footwear must be worn that are appropriate to activities
 - hair must be worn in a standard style, neatly cut, clean, and well groomed
 - earrings or other body piercing items are not allowed
- Girls must wear bras during non-sleeping hours
- Boys must be clean-shaven
- You may get special clothes for community service events, to play sports, or to work

Staff will tell you more about dress code rules when you arrive at your assigned facility.

Food | Nutrition

You will be provided with a well-balanced diet while at TJJD.

- You will be given three meals a day, as well as a morning, afternoon, and late-night snack – if you want a vegetarian meal, that is your choice
- If a doctor orders a special diet, that will be provided to you
- You may also get a religious diet if your religion requires it

At some point, you may get a survey about the food at your facility – fill it out! It may make a difference in what food is served at facilities.



Working on Campus

Most facilities have programs where you can work and earn money. This will get you ready for working when you leave TJJD.

- Campus jobs usually pay between \$0.50 and \$2.00 an hour
- Having a job is a privilege - if you want one, you must have a good behavior record, participate in school, and work your treatment program

Volunteers on Campus

TJJD is lucky to have thousands of caring volunteers.

- These volunteers give their time and talent to help you
- On your campus, there will be a Community Relations Coordinator who is in charge of mentors and tutors
 - a mentor will build a friendship with you - they offer encouragement and listen when you share
 - tutors can help you with reading, homework, or to prepare for a GED test

If you would like a mentor or a tutor, ask your Community Relations Coordinator or case manager.

Medical Needs

Facilities have medical clinics, called infirmaries, on all campuses. Here's what you need to know.

- During orientation, you'll get a physical, dental exam, mental health assessment, alcohol and other drug tests, along with other necessary labs
 - you may also get any vaccinations (shots) you need, including for hepatitis B, the flu, or the COVID-19 vaccine when you arrive
- When at your assigned facility, you'll get medical care when you are sick
- Nurses will be at infirmaries every day and if you need to see a doctor, it may be in-person or through a computer

MEDICATION

You may have been taking medication before arriving at TJJD or may be prescribed some by a doctor when you get here. Here's what you should know.

- if you have to take medication, you'll get it in what's called the pill line, before meals and/or at bedtime
- you should always take your medicine and if you have a problem, feel side effects from it, or just don't feel well, tell a nurse
- **never**, for any reason, take someone else's pills - this is dangerous
- tell staff immediately if another youth asks or tells you to give them your medication

SICK CALL REQUEST

When you are sick or have a medical issue, you can ask to see a medical staff member. Here's what you need to know.

- fill out a sick call request form when you feel sick, have a mental health or dental problem
- staff will explain how to submit a request
- once your request is turned in, nurses will review it and usually, you'll be seen at the next sick call clinic or sooner – based on the nurse's review
- if you are injured or too sick to wait for sick call clinic, let staff on your dorm know, who will tell a nurse
- if you have an emergency the campus can't handle, you'll be taken to the emergency room (ER)

Religious Services on Campus

TJJD allows you the right to practice your preferred religion. Here is what you need to know.

- Every facility will have a chaplain
 - the chaplain's role is to:
 - protect your religious rights
 - help you understand what is important to you
 - you can ask to speak with a chaplain using a conference request form
- You will be asked about your religion and what you practice when you first arrive at TJJD
 - you don't have to declare a religion if you don't want to
 - if you aren't 18, your parents must approve your religion choice
- Once you have told staff about your religion:
 - a chaplain can help you with religious counseling, worship, and learning more about spiritual beliefs
 - you can participate in religious services, ceremonies, and other customs when they are not a threat to safety
 - you are allowed to have a few religious items in your room, like –
 - a bible
 - a rosary
 - religious materials
 - your chaplain can help you get these items so you can practice your religion in your room
 - to keep everyone safe, some religious items are not allowed in your room though, like candles
 - you may be able to use these things during a religious service
 - if you ever want to change to a different religion, you should talk with a chaplain
 - a chaplain will help you determine how sincere you are to commit to a new religion
 - a chaplain will also talk with your parents about this if you are under 18



EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AT TJJD

Education is one of the few things in this world that can't be taken away from you. Here at TJJD, your education is taken seriously and you will be provided with opportunities to improve.

School

Most TJJD youth are four to five years behind in school and many have dropped out or given up on their education.

For you, this means the better you are able to read, the more likely you will be successful in the future. Here's what you need to know about school at TJJD.

- During orientation, you will take some tests to see how you perform in school
- These tests will help to figure out what grade level you are at and whether you should be in special education
- Courses you take will depend on your age, grade, treatment progress, your safety risk
- Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) is a way your teachers will help you with your learning
 - PBS (*trauma-informed education practice*) helps you to feel supported, welcomed, and ready to learn
 - it will help you to –
 - handle your feelings better
 - develop self-control
 - better interact with others
 - in your classroom, there will be posted rules that will tell you what is expected of you
 - PBS is important when staff decide it is time for you to leave – so you must understand it (explained later)
- If you don't speak English, you will still be able to take part in all programs
- You may earn certifications during your stay and can even take college courses when you're ready

Use the time here to improve yourself – the more education and certificates you have, the more likely you will be successful when you go home.

Certificate of High School Equivalency | CHSE

You are able to take an equivalency test while at TJJD, which is helpful if you are behind in school. Passing a CHSE (Certificate of High School Equivalency) test shows you know what you need to go to high school.

- The CHSE tests four areas:
 - math
 - science
 - social studies
 - language arts

Because learning and behavior are inextricably linked, and learning and improved behavior correlate with decreased recidivism rates, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department shall not only fulfill the commission's duties under state and federal law to provide general and special educational services to students in commission educational programs but also shall implement a comprehensive plan to improve the reading skills and behavior of those student"

- You may take classes at TJJD to get you ready for the CHSE
- Once you get your CHSE, you may either:
 - stay in school and earn your high school diploma
 - get a certification that interests you
 - take college or vocational classes

Those with high school diplomas earn about \$9000 more a year than people who drop out of high school

High School Diploma

A high school diploma is important and will affect your future earnings.

- Classes you take at TJJD will earn you points toward your graduation

TJJD’s Accelerated Learning Program

- TJJD schools are year-round and faster-paced (accelerated) learning programs
- You may earn credit faster than you would at public school because of this fast pace
- These learning programs help you to catch up on credits

Educational Incentives - Athletics

If you do well in school and treatment, you are able to play sports at TJJD.

- Depending on your behavior, you might be able to play games and participate in sports away from your facility
- Giddings and Gainesville State Schools are part of the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) league for:
 - football
 - basketball
 - track
- Ask your case manager about how you can participate in these sport activities.

TJJD’s Reading Program

One difference between TJJD schools and public schools is that all TJJD students will get extra help with reading. Here’s what you need to know.

- All TJJD teachers add at least 20 minutes of reading to their classes
 - this means you will get more than 60 minutes of help with your reading every day
- You will have to complete reading activities, like:
 - debating topics
 - learning new vocabulary words
 - showing you understand paragraphs by summarizing and explaining reading passages
- If reading is hard for you, there are special reading programs available
 - if you are in this program, your teacher will provide extra help to improve your reading
 - you can leave the reading program once your reading has improved

Special Education Services

You or your family (depending on your age) can contact education staff at your facility if you are having trouble learning. Here are some things you should know.

- At any time, you or your family can make a referral for a special education (*Section 504*) evaluation with the Special Education Coordinator on your campus – this does not need to be in writing, it can just be a matter of asking a teacher
- Once your request is turned in, the school must respond within 15 school days, but only if your request is in writing
- The school must provide a notice in writing on whether you will be evaluated – if you *are* to be evaluated, you or your family must provide written permission
- An initial evaluation and report must be done within 45 school days after your request is turned in – you will receive a copy of the report, called an Admission, Review, and Dismissal process (ARD)
- There are some websites where you can get more information on special education:
 - Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process
 - Partners Resource Network
 - Special Education Information Center
 - Texas First Project
- Talk with your teacher or case manager about any other special education needs

Career and Technical Education Courses | Industry Certification

While at TJJD, many youth enjoy taking trade school courses. Here's some information you should know.

- These technical classes give you hands-on learning. Some classes include:
 - welding
 - building cabinets
 - home construction
 - auto mechanics
 - auto paint and body repair
 - working with trees and plants
 - safe food handling
 - computer programming
- Some of these classes can count toward your high school diploma and give you a chance to earn an industry certification
 - one TJJD graduate, who earned a welding certification, made more than \$80,000 one year in his hometown - Houston

College

TJJD wants you to succeed, even after you are released. There are several opportunities available to you if you want to go to college.

- Anytime you need help, whether it's enrolling in school or seeing what you qualify for, contact educational staff at your facility
- TJJD offers dual credit college courses at secure facilities
 - dual credit - allows you to earn high school and college credit at the same time for the same class

Don't let a concern about money stop you from going to college or trade school! There may be money available to you – TJJJ staff will let you know what you qualify for. Some things you may be able to access:

[FAFSA | Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#)

- financial aid form you have to fill out when applying for student loans or grants from the federal government
- this is the first place you must try when looking for money to pay for your education
- schools use this form to decide if you can get financial aid
 - grants - do not have to be paid back
 - loans - have to be paid back when you're done with school

[Private Scholarships](#)

- groups and people select students to give money to
- if you find a scholarship you qualify for, apply for it! TJJJ staff can help you with this if you need it

[The John C. Wende Trust Fund](#)

- this fund gives money to eligible students so they are able to keep going to school after earning a CHSE or diploma
- money from this fund can pay for school, books, supplies, housing, and food
- to qualify –
 - one or both of your parents must have passed away
 - your parent's rights have been terminated
 - abandonment by one or both of your parents
 - one or both of your parents are in prison
- not everyone can get these funds – reach out to education staff or your parole officer to see if you qualify

[Youth on TJJJ parole](#)

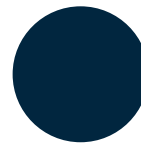
- while on parole, TJJJ may be able to help with a limited amount of college or trade school money
- there are rules to get access to this money - it is considered *a last resort* when paying for school
- ask education staff about these funds



INDEPENDENT LIVING

Depending on your situation, you may go to an independent living program before being discharged, to help you when you do go home. Here are some things you need to know.

- An independent living program teaches you how to live on your own, especially if you will live by yourself once discharged
 - *If you are in the custody of the state (DFPS), ask about the PAL program, which can provide support after you turn 18*
- Program has lessons you have to pass, called modules
 - after studying a module, you must take a quiz to make sure you understood it – must get a 70 or above
 - you must complete all of the modules and complete at least 60 hours of community service
 - you must have and keep a job for least 30 days
 - before considering your discharge, you must save enough money to pay for your apartment, utilities (water, garbage, lights), and the first month's rent
- Once you are finished with the independent living program, TJJD may be able to give you enough money to pay for up to six months until you are on your feet
 - with this money comes more intense supervision
 - your case manager and parole officer will have to come in to your home to search for contraband
 - you must sign a contract with rules you must follow



RULE VIOLATIONS AT TJJD

In addition to your basic expectations, there are rules you must follow while at TJJD.

- All rules are important, but not abiding by some is more serious than others
 - if you break the rules or help someone else do so, there will be consequences
 - consequences depend on the type of rule violated

Rules at TJJD are either **MAJOR OR MINOR**

MAJOR RULE VIOLATIONS

- **ASSAULT** - unauthorized physical contact with staff or another youth, like pushing, poking, or grabbing
 - person doesn't have to be injured for it to be assault
- **ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY TO STAFF OR ANOTHER YOUTH** – doing something on purpose or because of recklessness, causing someone to be hurt
- **ATTEMPTED ESCAPE** – trying to escape from TJJD, while in a facility or at an off-campus activity
- **CHUNKING BODILY FLUIDS** – throwing blood, seminal or vaginal fluid, spit, urine, or feces at someone to harass them
- **DISTRIBUTION OF PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES** – selling or giving away anything not allowed at TJJD
- **ESCAPE** – leaving, or being gone from, a TJJD facility without permission
- **EXTORTION OR BLACKMAIL** – demanding or getting favors, money, or anything else from someone in return for protecting them, not harming them, or not turning them in for something
- **FIGHTING - WITH OR WITHOUT BODILY INJURY** – getting in a physical fight with someone else
- **FLEEING APPREHENSION** – disrupting a dorm, campus, classroom, or other common area by running from staff or refusing to come when called
- **TWO OR MORE FAILURES TO COMPLY WITH WRITTEN, REASONABLE REQUESTS** – when assigned to a medium-security facility - repeatedly not doing what is asked of by staff, even after it's put in writing
- **MISUSE OF MEDICATION** – using medicine in a way different from a doctor's instructions, like –
 - taking someone else's medicine
 - pretending to take medicine when it has not been taken
- **PARTICIPATING IN A MAJOR DISRUPTION OF FACILITY OPERATIONS** – when at least two youth do something on purpose, like threatening other people or property, resulting in a major disruption of facility programs
- **POSSESSION OF PROHIBITED ITEMS** – having things not allowed at TJJD, like:
 - cell phone
 - matches | lighters
 - jewelry - unless you have permission
 - cash or other form of money - unless you have permission
 - pornography
 - anything used for tattooing or body piercing
 - cleaning supplies when you aren't cleaning
 - anything else you can use in a dangerous way

If you do something that is against the law, you could be charged with a crime. TJJD staff must report criminal activity to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). OIG investigators are real police officers and can arrest and charge you with a crime.

- **POSSESSION OF A WEAPON** – having anything that can be used as a weapon
- **POSSESSION OR USE OF PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES AND PARAPHERNALIA** – having any unauthorized substance, like drugs, alcohol, tobacco, prescription medication, or anything that may be used to make a prohibited substance
- **REFUSING A DRUG TEST** – refusing to take a drug test or tampering with a sample of urine
- **REFUSING A SEARCH** – refusing to submit to a search of your person or your personal area
- **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT** – any sexual contact, indecent exposure, watching someone, or sexual harassment, done on purpose (discussed in detail later)
- **STEALING** – taking something from someone else without permission - worth \$100 or more
- **TAMPERING WITH SAFETY EQUIPMENT** – messing with, damaging, or blocking anything used for safety or security, like –
 - locks
 - fire alarms
 - extinguishers
 - cameras
 - radios
 - phones (during an emergency)
 - handcuffs
 - shackles
- **TATTOOING/BODY PIERCING** – tattooing or piercing yourself or someone else
- **THREATENING ANOTHER WITH A WEAPON** – threatening someone with something that can injure them
- **VANDALISM** – causing \$100 or more in property damage on purpose
- **VIOLATION OF ANY LAW** – breaking any law

MINOR RULE VIOLATIONS

- **BREACHING GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY** – talking to someone outside a group about something that was said or happened during a group
- **DISRUPTION OF PROGRAM** – doing something on purpose that messes up a scheduled activity, like –
 - being loud without permission
 - swearing
 - being disrespectful
 - refusing to participate in a scheduled activity
 - breaking activity rules
- **FAILURE TO ABIDE BY DRESS CODE** – not wearing clothes correctly or presenting yourself outside of what is expected
- **FAILURE TO DO PROPER HOUSEKEEPING** –failing to complete all chores properly or keeping the dorm or personal areas messy
- **GANG ACTIVITY** – doing anything promoting a gang, like –
 - tagging
 - throwing signs
 - writing gang symbols on personal items
 - being in possession of gang-related items
- **GAMBLING OR POSSESSION OF GAMBLING PARAPHERNALIA** – betting on anything or having things that can be used for gambling

- **HORSEPLAY** – wrestling or roughhousing with someone with no one getting upset or injured
- **IMPROPER USE OF TELEPHONE/MAIL/COMPUTER** – using mail, computer, or phone for communication against the rules or to access prohibited information
- **LENDING | BORROWING | TRADING ITEMS** – giving to, borrowing from, or trading things with another youth without staff permission
- **LYING | FALSIFYING DOCUMENTS | CHEATING** – lying or withholding information from staff, falsifying a document, or cheating
- **POSSESSION OF AN UNAUTHORIZED ITEM** – having item(s) not allowed at TJJD – not including personal letters, photographs, or items constituting a major rule violation
- **REFUSAL TO FOLLOW STAFF VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS** – failing to do what staff says
- **STEALING** – taking property from someone else without permission - less than \$100
- **THREATENING OTHERS** – making verbal or physical threats toward someone else
- **BEING IN AN UNDESIGNATED AREA** – being somewhere without permission
- **VANDALISM** – considered a minor rule violation if damage is less than \$100 and done on purpose

Consequences for Violating Rules

The TJJD system is set up to teach you responsibility for bad behavior.

- Consequences are firm but fair
- Goal – to use the least amount of consequences needed to correct bad behavior and to ensure safety
- When staff are deciding consequences, some questions are asked, like -
 - How serious was the rule that was broken?
 - Has past behavior been good or bad?
 - Was the behavior necessary?
- Regarding consequences:
 - you will not be humiliated or mentally abused
 - corporal punishment (staff member hitting a youth) is not allowed
 - purposeless or degrading work is not allowed
 - only staff can impose discipline – youth may not
 - you can only be disciplined for your own behavior
 - taking the following away as a consequence of behavior is not allowed
 - meals or snacks
 - sleep
 - exercise
 - mail
 - visitation | phone calls
 - legal help
 - mental health needs
 - educational services
 - religious services
 - medical attention

What happens to you as a consequence for bad behavior also depends on what kind of facility you are at. If you are in a high-security facility, discipline is different than at a medium-security facility.

Consequences for *High-Security Facilities*

MAJOR DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

- *PLACEMENT IN THE VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CONTINUUM* – placement in a special program designed to address certain aggressive behavior (explained later)
- *MAJOR SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES* – loss of all privileges for 30 days - this may be used only if it is proven through a Level II hearing (explained later)
- *LOSS OF TRANSITION ELIGIBILITY* – if a minimum length of stay is not complete, spending another month in high-restriction before being eligible to move to a medium-restriction facility
- *STAGE DEMOTION* – stage in a rehabilitation program may be lowered by one or more stages if it is proven a major rule violation was committed

MINOR DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

- *SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES BY YOUTH SERVICE TEAM* – youth service team may decide to take away privileges for up to 14 days, for either breaking a major or minor rule
- *ON-SITE SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES* – loss of one privilege for up to seven days or all privileges for up to three days - this may be issued by any staff member who sees any major or minor rule being broken

Consequences for *Medium-Security Facilities*

MAJOR DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

- *DISCIPLINARY TRANSFER* – if you aren't on parole, you may be moved to a high-restriction facility for committing a major rule violation
- *MAJOR SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES* – loss of all privileges for 30 days after a major rule violation is proven
- *PLACEMENT AT PHOENIX PROGRAM* – if transferred to a high-restriction facility through a disciplinary transfer, the Phoenix Program may be assigned
 - located in a building at Evins Juvenile Correctional Facility
 - a hearing must be held before a youth can be placed here
 - if placed here, you will return to the lowest stage and may receive an extended stay
 - program focuses on skills to manage forceful behavior and how to manage anger better
 - once done at the program, youth will be sent to another facility to work on getting their stages back
 - the following are violations that may send someone to the program:
 - assault causing moderate or serious bodily injury to another youth
 - assault causing injury to staff
 - chunking bodily fluids at staff
 - fighting causing moderate or serious bodily injury to another youth
 - assault causing bodily injury on three separate occasions within a 90-day period
 - any other major rule violation when the incident justifies the placement and the placement is directed by the executive director or designee
- *STAGE DEMOTION* – if not on parole, stages may be lowered one or more level in the agency's rehabilitation program if it is proven through a Level II hearing that you committed a major rule violation

MINOR DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

- **PRIVILEGE SUSPENSION** – loss of one or more privileges for no more than 14 days if a major or minor rule violation is committed
- **COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS** – when a major or minor violation is committed, being assigned an extra 40 hours of community service
- **TRUST FUND RESTRICTION** – restriction from trust fund access for up to seven days if a major or minor rule violation is committed
- **FACILITY RESTRICTION** – restriction from participating in an activity away from the facility for up to 48 hours, unless it is an approved constructive activity, for violation of a major or minor rule violation

Due Process Hearings

You have the right to due process while at TJJD. This means that before any consequence is given to you, you can have a fair hearing. Here's what you should know.

LEVEL I HEARING

- used when TJJD wants to take away your parole - for example, when a parole officer or other staff believes your parole conditions have been violated - they may want to send you back to a secure facility
- you will be represented by a lawyer even if you can't afford one
- a TJJD lawyer will be the hearing officer, or decision-maker
- staff must prove a violation was likely committed and that parole can and should be revoked

LEVEL II HEARING

- held for major disciplinary consequences or a minor rule violation for which you were referred to the Regulation and Safety Unit (special unit for those having serious behavioral problems)
- you may pick a person to represent you or TJJD may assign someone
- a TJJD staff member who doesn't directly supervise you and was not involved in the alleged incident will be the hearing manager
- at the hearing, it must be proved a rule violation was likely committed
- if you are on parole, a level II hearing would be requested to place you in a halfway house

LEVEL III HEARING

- in high-security facilities, this type of hearing may be held to determine if you should be admitted to or kept in the Regulation and Safety Unit longer
- you get a chance to tell your side of the story, but you don't have to
- you will have someone at the hearing to help you
- staff will decide if you violated a rule and what the consequence should be
- if you are in a medium-security facility or on parole, you will have this type of hearing if you are facing any minor disciplinary action – you can speak on your behalf at this type of hearing, but won't get an advocate

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

- similar to a Level III hearing, but is not considered one
- these discussions only happen if you are at a high-security facility
- if you are having trouble on a dorm, but are not removed, staff may give a minor disciplinary consequence, after talking to you about what happened
- you can tell your side of the story during these discussions

LEVEL IV HEARING

- this type of hearing is used in medium-security facilities or when you are at home on parole
- it is used to decide if you should remain in detention or jail while waiting for another hearing

Ask staff about these hearings if you have questions and if you need help with anything. Remember at all TJJJ hearings, you have the right to:

- remain silent
- call witnesses on your behalf
- be assisted by an advocate or lawyer
- present evidence on your behalf
- cross-examine witnesses
- challenge evidence
- appeal results

Appealing Consequences

You have the right to appeal any consequence you receive – meaning you can ask that any decision about you be changed if you do not agree with it. You may appeal if you believe:

- You did not commit a rule violation
- The consequence you received was not fair
- There were extenuating circumstances to the violation

When you appeal, it doesn't mean the consequence will be changed, just that someone else will look at it to decide if there should be consequences and if they were fair.

- After a Level I or II hearing (major consequences), you will be reminded about your right to appeal and how to do it



PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR AT TJJD

TJJD considers your safety a top priority. While *everything* will be done to keep you safe, there could be times when someone (staff or youth) makes you feel uncomfortable, especially in a sexual way. TJJD has a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding any type of sexual abuse. Here's what you need to know to keep yourself safe.

What is Sexual Abuse?

At TJJD, sexual abuse is any sexual contact, indecent exposure, uncomfortable watching, or sexual harassment, which may be done by another youth or staff. It could be a sudden sexual attack or you may be tricked into becoming sexually active with someone over a period of time. Some terms you should know.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- causing contact, including penetration (however slight), between the penis and the vagina or anus; between the mouth and penis, vagina or anus; or penetration (however slight) of the anal or genital opening of someone else with a hand, finger or other object
- touching or fondling, either directly or through clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of another person
- kissing for sexual stimulation
- exposing anus, buttocks, breasts, or genitals to someone
- masturbating openly and obviously

SEXUAL CONTACT

- touching the genitals or groin area, anus or buttocks, breasts, inner thighs, or any other part of the body in a sexual manner either directly, through clothing, or with an object

INDECENT EXPOSURE

- someone showing you their genitals, buttocks, or breasts

VOYEURISM

- an invasion of your privacy by a staff member or another youth; some examples:
 - someone peering at you in the shower
 - making you expose yourself when it is not related to official duties

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- repeated, unwanted comments or behaviors of a sexual nature toward you, including:
 - threats
 - extortion
 - bribery
 - demeaning or derogatory remarks
 - profane or obscene language or gestures



You may believe you could never be sexually abused. Read the following myths.

Common Myths about Sexual Abuse

SEXUAL ABUSE MYTHS	SEXUAL ABUSE FACTS
<i>I will never be raped or molested.</i>	Anybody can be raped or molested.
<i>It is easy to identify a rapist or molester.</i>	You never know who they are. They can be male or female.
<i>It is not rape if you don't fight back.</i>	If you are still or pretend to go along with it, this does not mean you allowed it to happen.
<i>The only people raped in facilities are rapists and child molesters.</i>	Rape can happen to anyone. It happens most often to vulnerable groups, such as individuals who are first-time offenders or those with mental health issues.
<i>I've had this happen before and this is normal for me.</i>	Sexual abuse is never okay. Report the abuse! Help yourself and others from being abused also.
<i>It is part of the punishment of being locked up.</i>	Being raped while in a facility violates your constitutional rights. It is not punishment for anything you have done in the past.
<i>It was not rape because I felt a sexual response.</i>	Your body is designed to respond to touch. It is normal to have a physical response, arousal, or orgasm during rape or assault. This does not mean you wanted it or liked it.
<i>I am embarrassed and don't want to tell.</i>	Staff are trained to help you and they understand you might be embarrassed. You can call the TJJJ Abuse Hotline to report it.
<i>It's probably my fault! I don't want to get in trouble.</i>	Sexual abuse and rape are never your fault! You will not get in trouble.
<i>No one will believe me.</i>	When you report sexual abuse, the law says staff have to report it. Law enforcement officers will be called, who are trained to find evidence to help prove the sexual abuse happened. People will believe you.

Hearing about possible sexual abuse may be uncomfortable, but it is important for you to know what to do if this happens to you. Sexual predators are good at *grooming* – breaking down normal, healthy boundaries so they can take advantage of you. One way to reduce your risk of being sexually abused or assaulted is by having healthy boundaries. Remember:

- Don't ask for or accept favors or gifts that are against the rules
- Don't have inappropriate conversations with other youth or staff
- Avoid anyone who says too many nice things about you, along with anyone who tries to get you alone, or wants to share improper secrets
- Report anyone who threatens you
- Report anyone who seems to be touching you too much. This could mean someone who always hugs you, tries to hold your hand, or someone who seems to always accidentally brush up against you
- Report anyone who keeps looking at you in a way that makes you feel nervous or uncomfortable

While at TJJJ, you will learn about the Prison Rape Elimination Act, or PREA (*pronounced pree'-uh*). It is a federal law that helps officials detect, prevent, and respond to rape or sexual abuse against people who are in prisons or juvenile correctional facilities. This, along with other state laws make it a crime to sexually abuse children and people in custody.

Sexual contact at TJJJ between two people is prohibited – period. There is no such thing as a consensual sexual relationship at TJJJ -

- NOT BETWEEN YOUTH
- NOT BETWEEN STAFF AND YOUTH

TJJJ ABUSE HOTLINE POSTERS are displayed in all dorms at all facilities.



There is a zero-tolerance policy at TJJJ regarding sexual abuse, including consensual sexual contact, of a child. Any such violation must be reported to 866-477-8354

Fortunately, sexual abuse and assault are rare at TJJJ, but because they are serious, it's important for you to know what to do if it happens to you or someone else.

What if I have been sexually abused?

- **REPORT IT:** If you have been sexually abused, sexually harassed, or sexually assaulted, report it as soon as you can to the TJJJ Abuse Hotline at **866-477- 8354**.
 - tell staff at your facility you trust, even if some time has passed
- **PRESERVE EVIDENCE:** If you are sexual assaulted, remember, you must save evidence for law enforcement
 - after reporting, do not brush your teeth, change clothes, take a shower, eat or drink
 - TJJJ staff will get you to a medical staff to be examined and to collect all evidence in or on your body
- **BE SAFE:** Reporting sexual assault or abuse is the fastest way TJJJ can put a stop to it
 - although traumatic, you can heal from sexual abuse with counseling and support
 - victims of sexual assault who waited to tell often wish they had said something sooner
 - most abusers don't have just one target - by reporting sexual abuse, you will be keeping others safe

Remember If you aren't sure if something is sexual abuse, it's better to report it. If your gut tells you something isn't right, it probably isn't!

There may be other things you need to make a complaint about while at TJJJ, besides something sexual in nature. Remember, you have the right to complain about *anything* you don't feel is right. Here's what you should know.

Who Can Help Me?

You should tell a trusted adult about any problems you are having at TJJD. Any staff member or volunteer can get your complaint to the right person. The following are just some of the people here to help you.

- **YOUTH RIGHTS SPECIALISTS**
 - TJJD employees in charge of the youth grievance system who make sure your complaints are answered
 - if you are a victim of sexual abuse, they can get you the name, address, and phone number of a local rape crisis center
- **ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATORS**
 - TJJD employees who investigate non-criminal allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or policy violations by staff against youth
- **OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**
 - Law enforcement officers who investigate criminal acts committed by TJJD staff or youth – can file criminal charges
- **PARENTS**
 - Remember, your parents can always help you by speaking up on your behalf
- **ADVOCACY GROUPS**
 - These groups help with problems you may have
 - They speak to lawmakers to influence needed changes in the juvenile justice system
- **DISABILITY RIGHTS OF TEXAS**
 - Group that helps youth with disabilities solve any problems
- **OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT OMBUDSMAN (OIO)**
 - agency created to protect youth rights while at TJJD
 - office is not part of TJJD – these staff report directly to the Office of the Governor
 - these independent monitors focus on problems that affect the entire TJJD system Some of their duties include:
 - inspecting all TJJD facilities to make sure youth rights are protected
 - talking to youth to find out about life at TJJD - if you see them on your campus, go meet them and tell them how you're doing
 - looking into youth complaints
 - If you have concerns about your health or safety, contact the OIO immediately at **855-468-7330**



Conference Request System

While living on the TJJD dorm, you may address any issues or concerns by requesting a meeting with staff assigned to your dorm

- After submitting a request, a meeting will be scheduled
- If after the meeting, your problem is not solved, you can file a grievance

Grievances

You can write a grievance for any problem you are having. Here's what you need to know about filing one.

- Each dorm has a youth who serves as the grievance clerk - ask for a grievance form and write down what's wrong and how you would like TJJD to fix it
- Tear off the yellow page and keep it (it's your copy), then fold the white page and drop it in the locked grievance box
- You don't have to explain or show your grievance to anyone before you put it in the box
- You can get help from anyone you feel comfortable with, whether that's peers or staff, when writing your grievance – you can also help your peers with their grievances
- TJJD will let you know in writing within about two weeks if the problem can be fixed the way you want or in another way
 - if you don't like the answer you get about your grievance, you can ask for someone else to look at it again
 - this is called an appeal
- Remember, if you file a complaint with the TJJD grievance system and the problem does not get resolved, call or write the OIO at **855-468-7330**

Remember – never lie! Don't make up something to get someone in trouble. TJJD takes every allegation of abuse, neglect, and exploitation seriously - therefore, it is important any report you make of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation be truthful. Making false reports or lying to investigators are crimes! It is a felony offense to knowingly make an untrue report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

What if someone threatens me about filing a grievance?

It takes courage to report abuse or wrongdoing, especially if you are embarrassed or afraid you'll make things worse on yourself.

- If someone is causing you harm because you reported a problem – it's called retaliation
- *Anyone* who retaliates against you, even TJJD staff, will face serious trouble
- Report retaliation just like you would anything else

MY RECORDS

State and federal law make information about you confidential to most people outside TJJD, but the rules can be hard to understand. Here's what you should know.

- If you aren't 18, your parents have a lot of control over who sees your records, but when you turn 18, you get some of the control
- TJJD can't release information about you to the public – there are times though, when people who work for the courts, police departments, or other law enforcement can see your record without your permission
- If you have a sexual offense on your record, you may have to register on a public database
- When you are discharged from TJJD, you or your family may want to see a lawyer to see what you can do to keep your record as private as possible
- Many youth have their records sealed and a lawyer can help with this

Below are some frequently asked questions about juvenile records.

Who has a juvenile record in Texas?

- Those who were arrested, taken into custody, or charged with an offense
- Those who committed an offense when at least 10 but younger than 17
- Those who were charged with a Class C misdemeanor that was sent to juvenile court

What are juvenile records?

- Records containing information about your court history within the juvenile justice system
- Your record is permanent and will not be destroyed unless you get a court to seal it - you need a lawyer to have this done

Who has access to juvenile records?

- Generally, juvenile records are confidential, with some exceptions. The following may have access to your records:
 - law enforcement
 - prosecutors
 - other criminal justice officials
 - Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
 - FBI
 - personnel when you apply for a job, school, or professional license

What does it mean when my records are restricted?

The automatic restriction of juvenile records limits access to your file after you're 17, as long as you don't commit any more crimes after you turn 17.

- With restricted access, your records remain in the system, but fewer people can see them
- Your records will only be available to criminal justice agencies, to be used for things like job applications and when new crimes are committed
- For most questions, it will be said your records *do not exist*
- When your records are restricted – you can legally say you were never arrested, prosecuted, or adjudicated (found guilty) of a crime

How do my records become eligible for restricted access?

- You don't have to have a lawyer for your records to be restricted
- It happens automatically when you turn 17 if, since your 17th birthday, you have not been found guilty of, or been convicted in adult court of a Class A or B offense
- If you meet these requirements, your records become restricted
 - remember, this only happens if you don't commit any new crimes
 - if you do commit a crime after turning 17, your records are no longer restricted

What records are not eligible for restricted access?

- Cases handled as determinate sentences
- Cases certified or transferred to adult criminal court
- Cases prosecuted in justice of the peace or municipal courts

What happens if I have gang records?

- Information about gang activity is kept by DPS in a gang book
- These records are not eligible for restricted access because they are limited to criminal justice agencies to only be used for criminal justice purposes

What about sex offender records?

- Sex offender registration records cannot be restricted
- If you are a registered sex offender, you may have a right to have your records sealed once you no longer have to register
- There are other legal ways to not have to register - talk to your parole officer or a lawyer to learn more

What if I want to be notified when and if my records are restricted?

- You must tell the TJJJ Youth Records Department before you turn 21 that you would like to be notified about your restricted records
- Be sure to keep TJJJ updated with your current address

How do I get my record sealed or destroyed?

- To have your record sealed, you must start formal court action and will need a lawyer
- If you have criminal records in a justice or municipal court, things can be done to seal those records as well – talk to a lawyer about this

What if there is a victim(s) in my case?

- TJJJ makes sure your victims' legal rights are always protected and will treat them with dignity, fairness, and respect
- Victims are allowed to send information to TJJJ which will be used to help in your treatment program
- Victims can be told when you are released, but will not be given a specific address when you are on parole – unless you have to register as a sex offender, then your address will be on the DPS Sex Offender Public Website

What if there are media outlets on my campus?

- TJJJ often gets asked by reporters to do stories on campus, so you might see news crews at your campus every now and then
- All who bring cameras on any TJJJ property understand they must keep your identity private – unless you give your permission
- If you do want to allow your picture to be taken or give an interview, you will need to fill out a TJJJ form to give up your confidentiality – this form explains some things you should think about before doing this
 - if you are 18 or older, you can fill out this form yourself
 - if not, your parents will need to sign it



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