

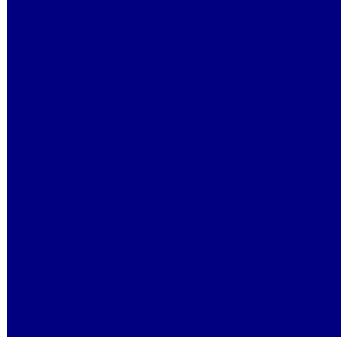
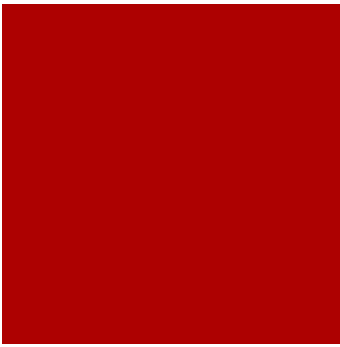


Children's Defense Clinic



University of Richmond School of Law Children's Defense Clinic

The University of Richmond's Children's Defense Clinic is an in-house clinic that allows third-year law students to represent clients directly in a law office atmosphere under the supervision and mentorship of full-time clinical faculty. Students in these clinics interact directly with clients, drafting and filing legal documents and briefs, negotiating plea deals, and appearing in court on behalf of a client. The Clinic represents children in a pro bono capacity, so clients are never billed for our services.



Director, Children's Defense Clinic
Julie E. McConnell, Esquire



The UR Children's Defense Clinic

The Children's Defense Clinic is a litigation-oriented clinic that focuses on the needs of indigent children and adolescents. Under the supervision of Professor Julie E. McConnell, Director of the School of Law's Children's Defense Clinic, students advocate on behalf of children appearing before area juvenile courts. In the majority of cases, students serve as defense counsel for youth accused of delinquency (criminal) offenses or truancy, but sometimes they serve as Guardian *ad Litem*. Professor McConnell has previously served as a public defender and as a prosecutor in the City of Richmond.

Clinic Hours

Monday – Friday
9:00am – 5:00pm

Clinic Phone

(804) 289 – 8921

Clinic Address

28 Westhampton Way
University of Richmond,
Virginia 23173

Clinic Website

<http://law.richmond.edu/academics/clinics-skills/in-house/childrens-defense/index.html>

UR Downtown Address

626 E. Broad Street, #100
Richmond, VA 23219



+ CLIENT RIGHTS CHECKLIST

The Court System can be a confusing place, and when you or a loved one is facing a criminal charge, your stress level is already elevated. Those who take a few minutes to become informed about the court process will find it easier to navigate.

The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts differ from other courts, such as General District and Circuit Courts. The welfare of the juvenile and the family, the safety of the community, and the protection of the rights of victims are the highest concerns in the court's proceedings. In addition to protecting the public and holding juvenile offenders accountable for their actions, the Courts have a duty to protect the confidentiality and privacy of juveniles coming before the court and a commitment to rehabilitate those individuals. Generally, the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts have the same requirements and provide the same safeguards as other courts. This court does not, however, conduct jury trials. All cases are heard by a judge, and all decisions may be appealed to the Circuit Court.

Client Rights

1. You have the right to plead not guilty and have a trial.
2. You have the right to trial by jury (would be appealed first).
3. You have the right to confront the witnesses against you.
4. You have the right to testify at your trial, and you have the right *not* to testify at your trial.
5. If you decide to plead guilty or to take a plea deal with the Commonwealth, you may waive issues that are otherwise appealable.
6. The consequences of a guilty plea may include but are not limited to: the revocation of a previously suspended sentence, loss of voting rights, loss of the right to possess a firearm, forfeiture of your property to the Commonwealth, impact on housing and employment, impact on public assistance and education, sex offender registration, and/or immigration consequences.

Definitions

Juvenile - Any person under 18 years of age.

Delinquent - A juvenile who has committed an act, which would be a crime if committed by an adult.

Status Offender - A juvenile who has committed certain actions, which, if committed by adults, would not be considered criminal offenses – such as curfew violations.

Child in Need of Supervision - One who engages in truancy or habitually runs away from home.

Child in Need of Services - One whose behavior, conduct, or condition poses a risk of harm to himself or herself or to another person.

Commonwealth's Attorney – The local prosecutor that represents the Commonwealth of Virginia and is the attorney responsible for prosecuting a criminal case against a criminal defendant.

Defense Attorney – Represents the accused (defendant) in a criminal case.

Judge – The judge is the most important person in the courtroom. A judge is empowered to decide cases and give out punishment for conduct that is determined to be in violation of the law. One should always be respectful and pay attention to what the judge says.

Arraignment – The court appearance where the defendant is formally advised of the charge(s) and of his/her right to an attorney.

KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS

CLIENT RIGHTS CONTINUED

Plea Bargaining - A process whereby the defense attorney negotiates with the prosecutor to obtain the best possible plea for his or her client. This process may include the prosecution charging the defendant with a lesser charge, or agreeing to a lesser punishment for the same charge in exchange for a guilty or no contest plea. A defendant is *never* required to accept an offered plea bargain.

Trial - The presentation of witness testimony and evidence by the prosecution and the defense to a judge or jury, who will ultimately decide the result of the case.

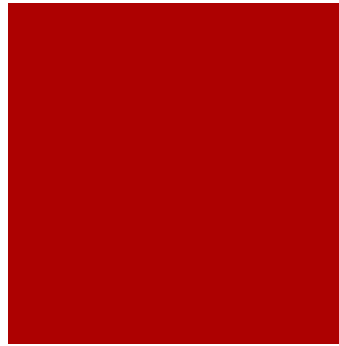
Guilty - A formal finding by the Court where the defendant is convicted of the charge(s). Must be based upon a finding of proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

Not Guilty - A formal finding by the Court dismissing the charge(s) based upon insufficient evidence to support the charge.

Probation - A period of court-ordered supervision wherein an individual's activities are monitored by a probation officer. The probation officer supervises several aspects of the individual's life, including things like requiring community service, drug testing, counseling, substance abuse treatment, and monitoring compliance with the law. Any violations are reported to the Court for appropriate action.

Detention - "Kid Jail" - This is a locked facility where juveniles may spend time for failing to follow the rules of their bond or probation.

Restitution - The court may order defendants to repay some or all damages to the person who suffered a property loss.



Top Eight Tips

1. Bring a parent, a guardian, or another responsible adult with you to every stage of the process.
2. Start building a good record right away: Stay out of trouble. Go to school. Go to court dates and other appointments on time.
3. Show that you take the process seriously: Treat everyone with respect. Be polite. Dress appropriately.
4. Take advantage of the programs and services in the system.
5. If you don't understand something, ask questions!
6. Be honest and open with your lawyer.
7. Use caution when talking to other people in the justice system besides your lawyer.
8. Stay in touch with your lawyer.