

# Hernando County Youth Court Offender Handbook

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## IMPORTANT

Please read the following statements and sign below.

- I have received this Offender Handbook from Youth Court which contains information necessary for the successful completion of my Youth Court sentence.
- I understand that this handbook must be returned to Youth Court staff in proper condition and on or before my completion date.
- I have read and understand the Youth Court Dress Code and Conduct Code which are included in this handbook. **Failure to comply with the Dress Code and Conduct Code will result in my being sent home without credit for attendance.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

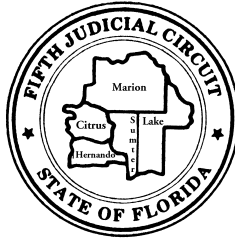
\_\_\_\_\_  
Offender's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

### Parental Permission

My child has permission to drive to and from Youth Court.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian



# Hernando County Youth Court Offender Handbook

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This handbook has been prepared to assist you in successfully completing your Youth Court sentence. Take the time to read all the information. If you have any questions, please contact the Youth Court at (352) 540-6263.

HERNANDO COUNTY YOUTH COURT  
20 North Main Street, Room 300  
Brooksville, FL 34601  
(352) 540-6263 Fax: (352) 754-4235  
Email: [rselby@circuit5.org](mailto:rselby@circuit5.org)  
Website: [www.circuit5.org](http://www.circuit5.org)

(Click on Court Alternatives – Hernando County Youth Court)

## Table of Contents

PREPARING TO ATTEND COURT .....	2
Dress Code for Youth Court.....	2
Conduct Code for Youth Court.....	2
Dropping Off & Picking Up Youth Court Participants .....	2
MANDATORY SENTENCE COMPONENTS .....	3
Jury Duty .....	3
Community Service Work Hours.....	4
Final Essay & Speech.....	4
OPTIONAL SENTENCE COMPONENTS .....	5
Law Related Education Packets .....	5
Letters of Apology.....	5
Writing Essays.....	5
Other Sanctions.....	5
PAYING RESTITUTION.....	6
HERNANDO COUNTY YOUTH COURT COMMUNITY WORK SERVICE TIMESHEET .....	7
Community Service Worksite Listing .....	8
Youth Court Program Evaluation – Youth.....	10
Youth Court Program Evaluation – Parent/Guardian.....	11

## Preparing to Attend Court

Dress Code and Conduct Code must be obeyed while in the building, not just in the court room. You will be sent home if you do not comply with the Dress Code and Conduct Code for Youth Court.

### *Dress Code for Youth Court*

- All blouses and shirts must be buttoned and tucked into pants or skirts.
- Absolutely no tank tops, tube tops, shorts, spandex, sweat suits, or clothing with logos or writing are permitted.
- No facial jewelry other than earrings, hats, sunglasses, pagers, or stereo headsets are allowed.
- Shorts are not allowed to be worn in the courtroom by anyone.
- T-shirts and jeans may be worn by Youth Court participants, as long, as they are neat, clean, and do not have any holes in them.
- Youth Court participants may not wear any clothing that has inappropriate writing, slogans or logos, of any kind

### *Conduct Code for Youth Court*

It is a privilege to serve in and use the courthouse and courtrooms. Please show your respect by following the court rules.

- If you must carry an electronic communication device, it must be turned off in the courtroom.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.
- Do not put your feet on the furniture.
- Once court begins, there is no talking permitted and you are to remain in your seat.
- Do not leave or enter the courtroom unless a recess has been called by the judge.
- Possession of tobacco by anyone under the age of 18 is against the law and will be prosecuted. Any participant seen using tobacco will be removed from the program.
- All Youth Court participants will follow instructions given by the Youth Court Coordinator/Clerk and any Adult Volunteers. Failure to comply with the instructions and rules of Youth court will result in dismissal from the program.
- It is the policy of the Hernando County Youth Court program that all participants will be safe, secure, and free from harassment or bullying of any kind. Conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment is prohibited and may result in suspension or termination from participation in the program.

### *Dropping Off & Picking Up Youth Court Participants*

- All Youth Court participants must arrive at the Hernando County Government Complex Center between 5:00 and 5:15 p.m. Anyone arriving later than 5:15 p.m. will not be allowed to participate in the Youth Court proceedings.
- Parents/guardians are permitted to drop their children off as long as the youth is picked up as soon as the last court session is over.
- Juveniles participating in Youth Court are not allowed to leave the building to wait for their transportation home. Parents/guardians must park and come into the building to sign out and pick up youth. A handicap entrance is available if needed.
- Youths who are licensed to drive themselves must ask the permission of the adult supervisor before leaving and sign themselves out.
- Pickup time is generally around 7:30 p.m., but it is wise to come in and ask about anticipated pick up time. Please be patient if court runs past 7:30 p.m.
- Parents/guardians, please be punctual in arriving to pick up your child.

## Mandatory Sentence Components

### *Jury Duty*

- All offenders are required to serve at least two jury duty nights in Youth Court and there are several rules that must be observed while the offender serves as a juror.
- Everyone involved in the Youth Court program, juveniles and adults, must comply with the Oath of Confidentiality. This means that you may not talk about any offender, nor discuss any case that you have heard in Youth Court. Anyone who violates the Oath of Confidentiality will be removed from the program.
- As a juror on Youth Court, you will have an opportunity to participate in a very important part of our democracy. Jury duty is a privilege and a serious responsibility.
- A Youth Court jury member determines appropriate and fair consequences for the defendant. You must listen carefully to the facts of the case and pay close attention to the questioning of the Defense and Prosecution. You are required to base your deliberation upon the evidence as you hear it in court, and upon the law as the Judge instructs you in it. The sentence should be designed to hold the Defendant accountable for his/her actions to the community and/or the victim. The sentence should be proportional to the offense and the aggravating and mitigating factors.
- A Youth Court juror must be able to treat each case individually and without prejudice. You are obligated to perform honestly and conscientiously, without fear or favor.
- You must abide by the Oath of Confidentiality administered at the beginning of court.
- Acknowledge if you know the Defendant prior to the hearing.
- Always sit in the same seat in the jury box.
- Listen to every question and answer.
- Do not discuss the case with anyone.
- Control your emotions – no facial expressions, eye-rolling, laughing, etc.
- In carrying out your duty as a Juror, conduct yourself in such a way that no one can question your uprightness. You are a judicial officer through your participation in Youth Court and your behavior must not arouse the distrust of the most suspicious.

In the deliberation room:

- A foreperson will be selected by the jury to preside over the deliberation.
- The selected foreperson shall see that all Jurors have an opportunity to express their opinions.
- The business of the jury shall be conducted in an orderly, courteous, and respectful manner.
- Keep discussions on topic in order to save time.
- In case of any questions regarding the hearing, the Youth Court Coordinator or the Judge should be consulted. Both the Coordinator and the Judge are always ready and available to answer all questions of law pertaining to the case.

## ***Community Service Work Hours***

- You will be sentenced to perform community service as part of your Youth Court sentence. **These hours may not be performed while school is in session.**
- A listing of approved community service work sites is available on our website. You may only work at the approved work sites. Work performed at any non-approved work site will not be accepted. If you are having trouble scheduling community service work hours, contact the Youth Court Coordinator immediately. An extension for completion of your sentence will not be granted without prior, written approval from the Youth Court Coordinator.
- While in the Youth Court program, you are required to follow all instructions given to you by the community service site supervisor. Failure to do so will result in your immediate dismissal from this program.
- Youth Court is about being responsible. You may not just “show up” at the work site. You are responsible for contacting the work site and setting up dates and times to perform the community service. Be on Time. If you are late, the supervisor will send you home and then contact the Youth Court Coordinator. If you do not show up for the appointed community service, the supervisor will contact the Youth Court Coordinator. In either case the Coordinator will call and inform you that you may not go back to that work site. If there is an emergency, and you cannot get to the work site on time, phone the work site supervisor.
- Your Community Service time sheet is available on our website. You must print out one of these forms and keep it secure. If you lose your time sheet, you will not be given credit for hours you have worked. Print your name and Youth Court case number on the time sheet. It is your responsibility to have the work site supervisor sign the time sheet every time you work. The work site’s name must be clearly noted on the time sheet. All time sheets will be verified by the Youth Court Coordinator.

## ***Final Essay & Speech***

- All Hernando County Youth Court offenders are required to complete a 200-word essay and speech. The speech is to be delivered on the last night of attendance at Youth Court.
- When you arrive, you must advise an Adult Supervisor that you need to give a speech on that night. Your name will be called when it is your turn.
- All speakers will be required to answer questions from the audience in attendance that night, as well as from Adult Supervisors.
- Your essay/speech must be handed in after you have given the speech.

## Optional Sentence Components

### *Law Related Education Packets*

- All Law Related Education Packets are available on our website. Immediately after your hearing, you will receive a form that indicates which packets you will need to complete.
- Access and print out all of the packets required to successfully complete your sentence.
- Use ink when completing the packets.
- **Write your name**, case number and the date on the front of each packet.
- Read all the information before completing the activities outlined in the packet.
- Complete all the activities required in the packet. This includes letters, essays, and personal surveys.
- The packet which is specific to your crime is to be turned into the Youth Court Coordinator 2 weeks after your court hearing.

### *Letters of Apology*

- All apology letters should be typed or printed neatly in black or blue ink, and single spaced.
- In the top right corner of the page, print the following information.
  - Your full name (first and last name)
  - Date
- The letter should fit within the margins of the paper used. If you are typing your letter, margins should be 1" at the top and bottom, and 1.25" at the left and right.
- All handwritten letters should only be printed on one side of the papers.
- A stamped, letter size envelope must be turned in at Youth Court with your letter.
- *In your apology letter, you must take full responsibility for your actions.*

### *Writing Essays*

- All essays should be typed or printed neatly in black or blue ink and single-spaced.
- In the top right corner of the page, print the following information.
  - Your full name (first and last name)
  - Date
- The essay should fit within the margins of the paper used. If you are typing your essay, margins should be 1" at the top and bottom, and 1.25" at the left and right.
- All handwritten essays should only be printed on one side of the papers.

### *Other Sanctions*

You will be given detailed instructions regarding all components of your sentence immediately after your hearing. In addition to the above, you may also be sentenced to such activities as:

- Counseling Group Sessions
- Jail Tour
- Speeches to Youth Centers about your crime
- Drug testing & counseling sessions (only for alcohol and/or drug related crimes)
- Special sanctions for Traffic Court cases.

## Paying Restitution

*If your case is a Juvenile Civil Citation:*

- Restitution is to be paid by money order made payable to the victim.
- The money order is to be completely filled out and returned to the Youth Court Coordinator or Case Manager.
- Restitution must be paid in full in order to successfully complete Youth Court.

*If your case is a Juvenile Criminal Case:*

- Restitution is to be paid to the Juvenile Clerk, Room 133, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the government complex between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- A \$3.50 Clerk's fee will be added to the restitution amount.
- You must provide a copy of the restitution receipt to the Youth Court Coordinator as proof of payment.





### Community Service Worksite Listing

	Contact	Hours	Duties	Minimum Age
<b>Elks Lodge #2582</b> 13383 County Line Rd. Brooksville, FL 34609	Larry White 352-799-7148	Friday 5pm – 9pm Saturday and Sunday 12pm – 8pm	General yard work – raking, weeding Kitchen – dishes, cleaning floors	12
<b>Faith Presbyterian Church</b> 200 Mt. Fair Ave. Brooksville, 34601	352-796-4969	Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm	Clerical work, housekeeping, yard work	14
<b>First United Methodist Church</b> 9344 Spring Hill Dr. Spring Hill, 34608	Robert Weatherall 352-683-2600 Ext. 2015	Monday-Friday Negotiable Some Saturdays	General cleaning	12
<b>For Each 1 Reach 1</b> Mentoring Program Inc. 7284 Sunshine Grove Rd. Brooksville, FL 34613	Lynette Mackey 352-556-2768 Call to arrange	Monday – Friday Saturday – Sunday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Call to arrange	Cleaning, office work and helping with scheduled activities	10
<b>Goodwill Industries</b> 4750 Commercial Way Spring Hill, FL 34606	Leslie King Coordinator Community Svc 727-577-6411	Monday – Saturday 9am – 9 pm Sunday 10am – 5:30 pm	Cleaning, loading & off-loading trucks, stocking, displaying merchandise, and assisting customers.  **Must have a signed parental or guardian form and a signed Community Svc Program Store Rules form.	16**
<b>Heritage Museum</b> 601 Museum Court Brooksville, 34601	352-799-0129	Tuesday-Saturday 12-3 pm	Raking, weeding, light office work	15
<b>Humane Society of the Nature Coast</b> 7200 Mobley Rd. Brooksville, 34601	Christine Sepulveda 352-796-2711	Saturday-Sunday 8am -5pm	Cleaning dog & cat kennels, feeding cats & dogs, laundry, organizing supplies, yard work Must wear long pants & closed shoes	16
<b>Jericho Road Ministries Thrift Stores</b> Sunrise Plaza, Ridge Manor / Winchester Plaza, Hwy 19	Cheryl Hart 352-799-2912	Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm	Clerical work. Cleaning, window washing. Processing donated materials, sorting, pricing	14
<b>Nature Coast Botanical Gardens</b> 1489 Parker Ave. Spring Hill	352-683-9933	Saturday, Monday, Wednesday 9 am-12 pm	Spreading mulch, weeding, watering, raking, digging, clearing brush	12

	Contact	Hours	Duties	Minimum Age
<b>Salvation Army</b> 3570 Commercial Way Spring Hill, FL 34606	352-666-9009 Ext. #4	Monday thru Saturday 9:00 AM to 7:00PM	Cleaning, organizing merchandise	16
<b>Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - SPCA</b> 9075 Grant St. Brooksville, FL 34613	352-596-7000	Monday-Friday 11 am-3 pm	Cleaning dog & cat kennels, feeding cats & dogs Must wear long pants & closed shoes	16
<b>Spring Hill United Church of Christ</b> 4244 Mariner Blvd. Spring Hill, FL	352-683-4870	Call to arrange	Yard Work, Cleaning, etc.	14
<b>St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store</b> 1291 Kass Circle Spring Hill, FL	352-688-3331	Monday-Friday 9AM – 4PM Saturday 9AM – 1PM	Miscellaneous	12
<b>Tri-County Community Center</b> 28444 Forbes St. Nobleton, FL 34661	352-796-1312	Monday – Friday Non-School Hours	Sweep Floors, Collect Trash Outside, Dust Furniture, Move Tables, Set up Chairs	16
<b>Shaquille's Boxing Club</b> Operation Turnaround 13418 Chambord St. Brooksville, FL 34613	732-289-8778	Monday-Friday Non-school hours	Sweep floors, collect trash, yard work	10

**Youth Court Program Evaluation – Youth**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to evaluate your experience with Youth Court. This will help us to make future changes to keep the program effective.

*Initial parent-child interview with Youth Court Coordinator:*

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*Court Session and Sentencing:*

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*Contract/Exit Interview after court:*

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*Community Work Service Experience:*

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*Jury Duty:*

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*Counseling Groups (if applicable):*

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*Suggestions for Improving the Youth Court Program:*

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*Additional Comments:*

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*Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.*

**Youth Court Program Evaluation – Parent/Guardian**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to evaluate your experience with Youth Court. This will help us to make future changes to keep the program effective.

*Initial parent-child interview with Youth Court Coordinator:*

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*Court Session and Sentencing:*

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*Contract/Exit Interview after court:*

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*Community Work Service Experience:*

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*Jury Duty:*

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*Counseling Groups (if applicable):*

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*Suggestions for Improving the Youth Court Program:*

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*Additional Comments:*

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*Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.*