

# Court Calling Program

## Purpose

The purpose of the Court Reminder Project is to decrease the number of youth who fail to appear in court. This is achieved by using volunteers to contact households the day before scheduled hearings. This method has been proven effective by a study from the Fourth Judicial District Research Unit stating that calling juveniles and their parents to remind them of upcoming arraignment hearings can increase the appearance rate by 20%. Decreasing the number of youth who fail to appear in court will decrease the number of Juvenile Bench Warrants issued and subsequent arrests thereby reducing overall juvenile detention rates and expediting cases through the court system.

## Procedure

The court reminder procedures are to be administered by Court Administration. The calling procedure is to be conducted by volunteers, provided by the Hennepin County Juvenile Probation Department, with the assistance of the staff in District Court Administration.

## Volunteer procedure

1. Conduct court calling procedures
  - 1.1. The volunteers receive the calendar from Christa Bentson via e-mail for the week.
    - 1.1.1. The court calling program is intended to contact the household of every juvenile scheduled for an arraignment, pre-trial or trial court hearing on the Petty, and Felony (Truancy ended) calendars. .
  - 1.2. Phone numbers are included on the calendar.
  - 1.3. A courtesy reminder is then to be performed informing the household of the time and location of their scheduled appearance.
    - 1.3.1. If the call goes to voicemail of the clearly identified correct household, the volunteer will leave a message with the information.
    - 1.3.2. If a juvenile is scheduled to appear on more than one case, it is only necessary to make one call, but to identify the cases for which the juvenile will be appearing in court.
2. Record data to allow for an analysis mechanism for the Court calling program
  - 2.1. Next to each youth's name on the calendar, list the result of the attempt to be recorded using the following key:

**RP** = reached, message left with live person

**RM** = reached, message left on voicemail/answering machine

**≠R** = not reached, i.e. no answer, no voicemail, etc.

**B** = bad phone number, i.e. disconnected, not in service, no one by that name, etc.

**N** = no number available

- 2.2. At the end of the week, the Friday volunteer is responsible for entering the Monday through Friday call results into a spread sheet. This spreadsheet can be used for assessing, and analyzing, the effectiveness of the Court Calling Project and identifying areas for continued improvement.