



# DALLAS COUNTY JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

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Henry Wade Juvenile Justice Center  
2600 Lone Star Drive, Box 5

(214) 698-2200  
Dallas, Texas 75212

## DALLAS COUNTY GUIDELINES FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION TO THE NEWS MEDIA

- I. Juvenile Department Records and Information
  - A. Public Information Office
    1. The Agency maintains a 24-hour immediate response service for members of the news media through its Public Information Office (voice 214-698-2276 or 214-698-2223).
    2. The Public Information Officer will be designated by the Chief Probation Officer. Until otherwise notified, the Chief Probation Officer will be the Public Information Officer.
    3. News media inquiries should go to the Public Information Office. Staff are not prohibited from speaking with reporters about their specific jobs, experiences and the agency services with which they are directly familiar, but they should encourage reporters to start at the Public Information Office to ensure that the most knowledgeable sources provide information. No staff should represent their personal views as Agency positions, nor be interviewed at length without their supervisor's knowledge and approval.
    4. Staff who provides information to reporters must notify the Public Information Office of the contact as soon as possible. Guidelines for media interviews are available through the Public Information Office.
    5. The Public Information Officer attempts to accommodate all reasonable requests for media access to Agency facilities, with access limited only by security, client confidentiality, and legal and scheduling concerns.
  - B. Staff Interviews
    1. No staff member is required to talk with reporters and should feel free to politely decline, but must assure the reporter that the Public Information Office will provide information and arrange interviews and tours as needed.
    2. Interview requests unrelated to the Agency must be arranged between employee and reporter.
  - C. Access to information
    1. Most Agency information is available and provided to the public on request. All matters of public record, such as information about the Agency's operations, the juvenile justice system, juvenile law, and data on youth crime, etc., are provided promptly and/or may be available on our website: [http://www.dallascounty.org/departments/juvenile/juvenile\\_index.php](http://www.dallascounty.org/departments/juvenile/juvenile_index.php).
    2. Some information is withheld from the news media and public, such as: case information about clients and their families (per Title 3, Texas Family Code),

information protected by law in personnel matters and pending litigation, and information which might violate a person's right to privacy or threaten security.

## II. Court Records

A. Availability- Records of the Juvenile Court will be available to all news media upon written request. The following information will be made available for the limited purpose of tracking the case through the Court System:

1. Date, time and place of next Hearing

The information will be released only after the media person requesting the information agrees in writing to keep confidential the name of the juvenile unless or until the juvenile is certified to stand trial as an adult, or as otherwise authorized by the Court.

B. Detention Hearings - Information about Detention Hearings will not be given to the media, and **media coverage will not be allowed in Detention hearings.**

C. Exceptions - We encourage the news media to adopt a policy of non- publication of names of juvenile offenders, as the Court will not order general information on juvenile matters to be released to the media for dissemination to the public, except under the following conditions:

- The juvenile has been certified to stand trial as an adult.
- The information has been released by Court Order to be disseminated to the public because a Law Enforcement Agency requested media assistance in the apprehension of a juvenile offender who is at large and who poses a clear and present danger to public safety.
- The juvenile's record is reviewed by the Court after the Court is satisfied, based upon a review of an affidavit, that there is probable cause to believe that the particular juvenile committed a crime of violence.
- After the file review by the Court, the Court's file photograph and the juvenile's name will be released to the media with a request to disseminate the name and photograph if:
  - The Law Enforcement Agency requesting media assistance has, consistent with time and circumstances, made a reasonable effort and has been unable to locate the whereabouts of the suspect;
  - The juvenile's past record coupled with the allegations of the current offense and a consideration of the totality of the circumstances indicate that the juvenile is a clear and present danger to the public; and,
  - There is reason to believe that publication of the name and photograph would aid law enforcement in apprehending the suspect.



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## NEWS MEDIA PRIVILEGE AGREEMENT

In accordance with the Texas Family Code and national standards, neither the Dallas County Juvenile Department nor the Juvenile Court permit public access to case records or to any information which might lead to public disclosure of the identity of children on probation or in custody. However, in the interest of public awareness and education, the Court may approve access to Media Representatives from established News Media Organizations. Such access is not a right but a privilege granted at the discretion of the Court and Department only after the Media Representative and the News Media Organization agree to withhold names, addresses, photographs, tapes or other information which might publicly identify a child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of News Media Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of News Media Organization

- In return for identifying information, I agree to keep the identity of a child confidential. I further agree not to publish the identity or photograph of a child nor make a public identification of a child without specific approval of the Juvenile Court.
- For purposes of tracking a specific case through the Dallas County Juvenile Justice System, and conditioned upon the above confidentiality agreement, I request information on the child allegedly involved in the following offense which occurred on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, at AM/PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of News Media Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Managing Editor or News Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Court Authorization for Access to Juvenile Information

- For purposes of tracking a specific case through the Dallas County Juvenile Justice System, the following information is hereby provided under the terms and conditions noted above:

When requesting further hearing information from the Court, please refer to the juvenile's name (if you have obtained it) and/or cause number. The Department will not release the name of any juvenile. The Court Coordinator will provide docket setting information upon request. The Detention Hearing may not be covered by the media. Since these hearings are usually not open to the public (all other Court Hearings are open forums), the media representative will need to show "good cause" to attend the Detention Hearings in a specific case or for general purposes. Once you have completed the paperwork, for information (hearing dates and times) please call:

304<sup>th</sup> District Court: Ms. Temecca Carter at 214-698-4936 or

305<sup>th</sup> District Court: Ms. Tracie Broadnax at 214-698-4924

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return **completed form in person** to either Richard Crawford (214-698-2276) or Ms. Denika Caruthers at (214-698-2221 at 2600 Lone Star-Henry Wade Building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. **DURING BUSINESS HOURS 9 AM – 4 PM, M-F.**