

PROPERTY

**Youth
Accountability
Program**

Misdemeanor

**An alternative to Juvenile Court
for first time offenders**

**JAMES C. BACKSTROM
DAKOTA COUNTY ATTORNEY**



Why the

Youth Accountability Program?

The Program is available for juveniles who reside in Dakota County and have been apprehended by police for selected first time property offenses.

The process is intended to provide a cost effective alternative from court to appropriately deal with crimes involving property offenses.

The Goals

of the Program are to:

- Provide an alternative to court proceedings as an incentive to change behavior and reduce repeat offenses.
- Ensure full and prompt payment of restitution to victims.
- Protect public safety by holding offenders accountable to society for their behavior.
- Establish consistent consequences for first time offenders.

Who is Eligible?

- First time offenders who commit misdemeanor property related offenses including shoplifting, theft, criminal damage to property, trespassing and motor vehicle tampering. Other juvenile property offenders may also be eligible at the discretion of the County Attorney's Office.
- Juveniles referred by the Court.
- Any juvenile who voluntarily enrolls in the program.

What are the Components of the Program?

- The juvenile must attend an educational class with at least one parent.
- The class focuses on restoration of community values and morals and respect for others, including their property.
- The juvenile must pay a class fee. If a family is financially unable to pay the fee but desires to participate in the class, the juvenile should contact the Program Coordinator.
- If the victim of the crime incurred a loss, the juvenile must pay restitution in the amount determined by the County Attorney.

What Benefits are provided through the Program?

- Parents and juveniles have the opportunity to learn new relationship skills.
- Cost savings are generated by avoiding court appearances and associated paperwork.
- The matter will be treated informally without Juvenile Court involvement.
- The juvenile's citation will be dismissed if the juvenile completes the program.

What Happens

when juveniles fail to comply with the conditions of the Program?

- The County Attorney's Office will notify the Court to process the juvenile's citation.
- The juvenile will be required to appear in court.
- If the juvenile is found to have committed the offense, the Court may order the juvenile to pay restitution, perform community work service, attend an educational class, and/or be placed on probation.
- The juvenile will have a court record of being found to have committed the offense.



For more information regarding the Youth Accountability Program, please contact:

PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Dakota County Attorney's Office

1560 Highway 55
Hastings, Minnesota 55033
(651) 438-4438

www.co.dakota.mn.us/attorney