**Juvenile Law Key Terms**

**Adjudicate** –to remove a case through a judicial decision. Many juvenile justice casesare heard without the assistance of a jury. In such cases the judge will hear the case and prescribe the best course of action, thus "removing" it from the court

**Aftercare** –the probationary period following a youth's release from a juvenile facility.During this time the youth's behavior will be followed by the juvenile court, and he or she may be required to meet specific probationary obligations

**Concurrent jurisdiction** –if a crime falls under the jurisdiction of both the juvenile courtand the criminal court, the prosecutor has the liberty to decide where to file the case **Confidentiality protection** –a youth's records may be made available to schools, youth

agencies, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, victims, and the public only under certain, specified circumstances. Juvenile confidentiality is guarded by each state's provisions

**Consent decree** –a youth who has admitted to committing delinquent acts may have hisor her case dismissed by fulfilling obligations to the court and the injured party. These obligations are set out in a consent decree and often include restitution, mandatory curfew, increased school attendance, and rehabilitation

**Delinquency petition** –a petition filed by a prosecutor asking for a youth to be declared"delinquent" by the juvenile court. An adjudicatory hearing will determine if the youth is culpable

**Disposition hearing** –scheduled if a youth has been found delinquent by the juvenile

court. The probation officer, prosecutor, and juvenile are permitted to propose disposition strategies. Recommendations frequently include drug rehabilitation, limited (weekend) confinement, restitution, and residential placement

**Informal disposition** –held when a youth admits guilt to a crime in an informal juvenilehearing. During the disposition, the requirements of the court are laid out in a consent decree

**Judicial waiver** –a judge may waive the juvenile court's authority over certain cases,sending them to be heard in criminal court

**Juvenile** –a person who was at least 10 years old but not yet 17 at the time he or shecommitted an act defined as “delinquent conduct” or “conduct in need of supervision”

**Juvenile delinquency** –a delinquency act is an act that would be considered criminal, ifnot for the fact that it was committed by a juvenile. A juvenile is defined in the U.S. Code as a person under the age of 18

**Reformatory** –prior to the formal establishment of the Juvenile Justice System,delinquent youths were placed in privately run reformatories. Reformatories are generally geared toward rehabilitating and educating youth

**Reverse Waiver** –a youth being tried in the adult system may request to be transferredinto the juvenile justice system

**Status offender** –a juvenile who has committed an act that is only considered a lawviolation because of his or her status as a juvenile. Some examples of status offenses are underage alcohol consumption, truancy from school, general "ungovernability," violation of curfew, and running away from home

**Waiver petition** –a prosecutor or intake officer may petition the court to allow a casenormally under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to be heard in criminal court

**Youthful offender** –"youthful offender" status may be given to a juvenile being tried inthe criminal justice system. The status usually guarantees that the proceedings will not be open to the public and that after turning 21 the youth's criminal record will be cleared, provided court requirements have been met