King County
Department of
Community and Human Services
Office of Public Defense
206-296-7662

At-Risk Youth & CHINS Petitions – Public Defense Services

Description:
By law, your child has the right to an attorney to represent their concerns in the At-Risk Youth Petition (ARY) and Child in Need of Services (CHINS) process. When you file a petition, an attorney is automatically assigned to represent your child. Parents and legal guardians are required by law to pay for the legal costs of their child's defense unless they are unable to pay and qualify for public defense services.

Who is eligible for public defense services?
Your family's income and assets need to be reviewed to see if you qualify for public defense services. In general, your family's income must not exceed 125% of the Federal poverty level. However, a complete screening needs to be completed to see if you qualify. Families who receive public assistance such as food stamps or TANF qualify by law but still need to be screened.

Family Size	2013 Maximum Monthly Income
2 people	$1,616
3 people	$2,035
4 people	$2,454

How to qualify:
After filing an ARY or a CHINS petition at Juvenile Court, you would next complete a financial screening at the Office of Public Defense (OPD). You will be charged a **$25 processing fee** at the time of the financial screening. If needed, you may sign a promissory note for this fee. Please bring the following documents with you to the screening:

- Case Number (or copy of the ARY Petition)
- Proof that you are receiving public assistance – or –
- Paystubs from the last three months
- Last year's tax return
- Any additional information you may have available, such as recent bank statements, etc.

How much does it cost if I don't qualify?
If you don't qualify, you will be billed $937.60 (plus the $25.00 processing fee). If desired, you may set up a payment plan by signing a promissory note with King County OPD.

Costs for dismissed cases:
Parents who do not qualify for public defense services at no cost are responsible for the entire cost unless the case is dismissed within one week of filing the petition.

Locations:

King County Juvenile Court	King County Courthouse	Maleng Regional Justice Center
1211 E. Alder St., 3rd Floor	516 Third Ave., 8th Floor	401 Fourth Ave. N., Room M-1
Seattle, WA 98122	Seattle, WA 98104	Kent, WA 98032
M-F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	M-F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	M-F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Additional information about the Office of Public Defense and financial eligibility may be found at http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/opd.aspx.

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