

At-Risk Youth Supervision

Background

The At-Risk Youth program is one tool to support families and help keep them together. It is described in a part of Washington State Law called the Family Reconciliation Act. The Washington State Legislature places great importance on the family unit, affirming that "...[families] should remain intact in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary." At-Risk Youth supervision aims to keep families functional by reconciling family issues and reinforcing rules of the home. This form of court contact generates no criminal record and maintains a high degree of privacy for those involved.

Definition

An *at-risk youth* is a juvenile who is absent from home for at least seventy-two hours without parental consent; who is beyond parental control to the point that the child's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or any other person; or who has a substance abuse problem for which there are no pending criminal charges related to the substance abuse.

ONE OR MORE OF THE ABOVE THREE CONDITIONS MUST BE MET FOR A FAMILY TO GAIN SERVICES THROUGH AT-RISK YOUTH SUPERVISION.

Parents must be able to describe precisely why their child meets the above criteria as well as attempts they have made to remedy the situation prior to Court contact.

COURT CONTACT SHOULD NOT BE THE FIRST ATTEMPT ON THE PART OF PARENTS TO GAIN CONTROL OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Petition Process

Parents seeking assistance in managing their child's behavior initiate contact by submitting an *At-Risk Youth Petition* to Clallam County Juvenile and Family Services, 1912 W 18th Street, Port Angeles. Petitions can be picked up and returned here between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M. Next, the At-Risk Youth Coordinator gets in touch with the parents to set up a *family assessment* – an interview designed to collect family background information.

Court

Now, a court *hearing* is scheduled to present the petition. At-Risk Youth Court takes place in the Juvenile Services Courtroom starting around 8:30 A.M. on Wednesday mornings. If the petition is dismissed the youth goes home with their parents. If the youth is found to be "at-risk" the Court may lay out rules of the home. Counseling, mental health evaluations, substance abuse evaluations, and related treatment may be ordered. To achieve success parents must reiterate the rules of the home when needed, insist that rules of the home are observed, and support their child through any possible evaluations and treatment.

Further Court Appearances

Review hearings are generally scheduled every one to three months. The court will take into consideration progress or otherwise and decide if supervision should continue or cease.

Contempt/Sanctions

When a child is breaking rules of the home parents should contact the At-Risk Youth coordinator to request the filing of a *motion for contempt* which will need to be heard in court. Occasionally, an *order for apprehension* is requested along with a motion for contempt. This is essentially documentation, signed by a *judge* or *commissioner*, required to admit the youth to a secure corrections facility so that the motion for contempt can be heard on the following business day. An order for apprehension is only issued in extreme cases (where the youth or others may be in danger, for example). At a *contempt hearing* the youth may be found to have violated the terms of their court supervision, in which case *sanctions* may be imposed, otherwise the motion for contempt is dismissed. Sanctions for those found to have violated terms of court supervision can include fines, community service work, detention time in a secure corrections facility, or school-type work such as essays.

Petitioner Responsibilities

Parents petitioning for At-Risk Youth assistance should be aware of their responsibilities as success through court intervention is closely coupled with their participation and willingness to follow through on all court-ordered directives. Please observe the following list of responsibilities:

1. petitioner(s) monitor At-Risk Youth court-ordered directives;
2. petitioner(s) notify the Court of a youth's non-compliant behavior by requesting a motion for contempt that is filed with the Court;
3. petitioner(s) attend all Court hearings (At-Risk Youth hearings, review hearings, contempt hearings);
4. petitioner(s) contact the At-Risk Youth coordinator at least twice monthly to report progress;
5. petitioner(s) follow through on all court-ordered directives applicable to the petitioner(s);
6. petitioner(s) are responsible for fees assessed for court-ordered counseling or treatment

Note: This list is not all-inclusive. Further obligations may exist on the part of petitioning parents. Also, remember that the At-Risk Youth coordinator is available for assistance at any step of the Court process and can be contacted through Clallam County Juvenile and Family Services during normal business hours.

Dismissal

At-Risk Supervision may cease at the request of petitioning parents at any time. At the time of a review hearing it may be found that further court supervision would serve no purpose, prompting dismissal. Also, court supervision should end 180 days after review unless compelling reasons

exist that support continued supervision. Finally, the At-Risk Youth coordinator may request dismissal for reasons including flagging support on the part of petitioners.

Variations

The above processes do not always progress exactly as outlined. For example, At-Risk Youth hearings, review hearings, and contempt hearings can be continued for further court appearances.

Keep in mind that each family is unique as are their experiences and situations. Those involved with At-Risk Youth participants including parents, coordinators, and service providers often collaborate to find creative ways to address family issues. Court intervention is not always the quickest or most appropriate solution. As such there is no boilerplate response for parents seeking assistance through Juvenile Court.

Resources

Clallam County Juvenile and Family Services
1912 W 18th Street, Port Angeles, WA 98363
360.417.2282
<http://www.clallam.net/JuvenileServices/>

Family Reconciliation Act:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=13.32A>

Juvenile Courts:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=13>

FOR MATTERS CONCERNING AT-RISK YOUTH SUPERVISION CONTACT THE AT-RISK YOUTH COORDINATOR AT CLALLAM COUNTY JUVENILE AND FAMILY SERVICES.

AT-RISK YOUTH FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

YOUTH INFORMATION							
Name:		DOB:		Phone #:			
Address:				City/State:			
Sex:		Height:		Weight:		Eye Color:	
Race:		Other Identifying Information:					
School:				Grade:			
Place of Employment:							

PARENTS			
Mother's Name:			
Address:		City/State:	
Home Phone #:		Work Phone #:	
Father's Name:			
Address:		City/State:	
Home Phone #:		Work Phone #:	
Marital Status of Natural Parents:			
Name of Legal Custodian of Child:			

- I have reviewed the At-Risk Youth Supervision description.
- If I have questions or concerns regarding the At-Risk Youth program I will voice them to the ARY coordinator.
- I understand my responsibilities as petitioner.

Petitioner

Date

Petitioner

Date

OFFICE USE ONLY:

DATE OF PARENT INTERVIEW: _____

PETITION FILED: Y

- 1.4 Petitioner(s) has have the right to legal custody of the child.
- 1.5 The child is not the subject of a Court approved dependency proceeding under Chapter 13.34 RCW.
- 1.6 The child is an at risk youth because he/she:
- Has been absent from home for more than seventy-two (72) consecutive hours without parental consent;
 - Is beyond parental control such that the child's behavior substantially endangers the health, safety and welfare of the child or another person;
 - Has a serious substance abuse problem and there are no pending criminal charges related to the substance abuse.
- 1.7 Court intervention and supervision are necessary to assist the petitioner(s) to maintain the care, custody and control of the child.
- 1.8 Alternatives to court intervention have been attempted.
- There is good cause why alternatives to court intervention have not been attempted.
- 1.9 The above allegations are based on the following facts:

II. RELIEF REQUESTED

I/We request that the Court inquire into this matter and provide the relief available under Chapter 13.32A RCW.

(Joint petitions must be signed by both petitioners).

DATED: _____

Petitioner

Petitioner

III. AFFIDAVIT OF PETITIONER

Problems you are experiencing with your son/daughter (i.e. verbal abuse, leaving home without permission, drug and/or alcohol use, sneaking out of the house, skipping school, poor grades, etc).

Services used or attempted by parents and child in the past (i.e. counseling, mediation, foster care, etc.) Were these services effective? Did your son/daughter willingly participate?

Other attempts by family to reconcile issues:

Why alternatives to court intervention have not been attempted:

IV. CERTIFICATION

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

I certify that I am the legal custodian of the above named child.

Petitioner

Date/Place of Signature

Petitioner

Date/Place of Signature

RULES OF THE HOME

- Obey household rules;
- Don't leave home without permission;
- Treat family members with respect;
- Attend school regularly and achieve grades to the best of your ability;
- No use of tobacco, alcohol or non-prescription drugs;
- Attend counseling as recommended;
- Obtain substance abuse evaluation and follow through with treatment recommendations;
- Submit to random UA's as directed by caseworker;

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