



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET ~ SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

**SIMSBURY JUVENILE REVIEW BOARD
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE**
Approved by Board of Selectmen on March 10, 1982
Revised Date: August 13, 2018

1. Purpose

- A. The Simsbury Juvenile Review Board (JRB) is an established program within the Simsbury Community and Social Services Department to provide an alternative and early means of identifying and assisting youths (age 17 and under) who are troubled or in trouble with the criminal justice system. The Board will accomplish its purpose through considering juvenile cases referred to it and offering recommendations regarding the best method of dealing with the youth's particular needs.
- B. Where possible, the Board will attempt to construct non-judicial case recommendations. These may involve, but are not limited to such non-judicial options as individual or family counseling, psychiatric evaluation, work or monetary restitution, or participation in group or other activities. In many instances, these services are presently available, but unknown or unused, by the youth, family, school or police.
- C. The purpose of the Simsbury Juvenile Review Board shall be to provide an opportunity for troubled youths to be diverted from the criminal justice system and allow a path to becoming responsible members of the Simsbury community.

2. Effective Date

This policy shall remain in effect until revised or rescinded and replaces the original policy effective March 10, 1982. The Town reserves the right to amend this policy as necessary.

3. Goals

- A. The goals of the Review Board are:
 - 1) To use community resources as the first source of action in handling the community problem of juvenile delinquency.
 - 2) To promote community awareness of services to youth and youth activities.
 - 3) To provide juveniles with rehabilitative and supportive services in an effort to reduce delinquent behavior.
 - 4) To reduce the recidivism rate of juveniles.

- 5) To strengthen the working relationship and referral process between the Simsbury Police Department, Simsbury Public Schools, the Juvenile Court, and the Community and Social Services Department.
- 6) To assist and advise the Simsbury Police Department and school system with juveniles who are in trouble.

4. **Composition/Voting/Meetings**

- A. The size of the Board shall not exceed 11 persons, with 10 regular members and 1 alternate. Membership on the Board shall be comprised of representatives from agencies or organizations which have direct responsibility, contact or concern with youth and their families.
- B. The following agencies and organizations shall have a representative(s) on the Review Board:
 - 1) Police Department (1 individual as assigned by the Chief)
 - 2) School Department (2 individuals as assigned by the Superintendent)
 - 3) Town Recreation Department (1 as assigned by the Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation)
 - 4) Town Director of Community and Social Services
 - 5) Board of Selectmen Member (1 Selectman as appointed by the Board of Selectmen)
 - 6) YMCA Representative (as appointed by the Board of Selectmen)
 - 7) Probation Officer from Juvenile Court (as appointed by the Board of Selectmen)
 - 8) Family Counseling Service (as appointed by the Board of Selectmen)
 - 9) Simsbury Clergy (as appointed by the Board of Selectmen)
 - 10) Alternate - Town Social Worker (as assigned by the Director of Community and Social Services)
- C. Staff appointments to the JRB should be reviewed and approved by the Director of Community and Social Services. The Director of Community and Social Services, in consultation with the JRB, will make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen for appointments to the JRB for members representing outside agencies as noted above in Section 4B.
- D. Any member of the JRB may be removed by the Board of Selectmen, upon the recommendation of the Town Manager, for cause. Such member will be afforded an opportunity for a public meeting with the Board of Selectmen prior to a final decision being made regarding their status for removal. The purpose of the public meeting is to give the member an opportunity to be heard in person before the Board of Selectmen prior to a final decision being made.
- E. Any member who is absent from more than fifty (50) percent of JRB meetings during any twelve (12) month period may be removed from the JRB, and the vacancy shall

be filled as outlined in Section 4B. An exception may be granted by and at the discretion of the Town Manager due to a member's illness or other exigent circumstances.

- F. The Town Attorney will be available to the Board as needed.
- G. Each representative shall have one vote.
- H. Meetings shall be held as often as necessary to consider cases or administrative matters. Attendance shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- I. Parent(s) and juvenile(s) will be notified of Board meetings concerning them and are required to be present at such Board meetings.
- J. Guests are permitted at Review Board meetings with the prior consent of the Chairperson and parent(s). Guests will have no vote and must sign a confidentiality agreement before attendance is allowed.
- K. Appropriate case and other files are the property of the Police Department, but may be maintained in a central location to expedite the Board's work.
- L. The Community and Social Services Director shall act as the Chairperson. On an annual basis the JRB will select a Vice Chair. The Community and Social Services Department shall be responsible for scheduling and cancelling meetings, distributing minutes and the filing of case disposition, as well as other duties that may be necessary.
- M. The Board shall establish rules and procedures to govern the conduct of meetings and the filing of case dispositions, and review those rules and procedures on an annual basis.

5. **Procedure for Case Consideration**

- A. A matter is eligible for Review Board consideration if it involves a juvenile contact, if it is their first offense, and it is not involving a felony. The police will be encouraged to refer all eligible juvenile contacts to the Board but may exercise discretion on referrals.
- B. Parental authorization will be required before a child's case can be brought before the Board and before any information can be shared between and among agencies. If the parents refuse to sign the authorization form, then the case will be handled by the Police Department through its usual channels. If the child says he/she is not guilty of the offense, the case will automatically be handled by the Police Department to determine the facts of the case and appropriate findings. Under no circumstances will it be the Board's responsibility to determine if the offense occurred, or if the accused is innocent or guilty of the offense.
- C. When sufficient information regarding the youth and his/her family has been presented, the Board may formulate a recommendation by a 2/3 vote of those

present. A case may be continued to the next regular meeting, but must be acted upon at that time.

- D. Case dispositions will be communicated to the youth and family by a letter from the Chairperson. A copy of the disposition notice will be placed in the case file.
- E. Any agency or individual to which a youth is assigned as part of his/her case disposition shall make a report to the Board at the completion of the youth's assignment or at periodic intervals if the time period covers more than three (3) months.
- F. The Review Board should have a clear policy on what cases they are able to accept or reject. The Juvenile Review Board does not have to accept every case referred to it, but should state the reason they are choosing to reject the case before them. This statement should reference the above mentioned policy when notifying a juvenile about the Board's decision to reject their case.

6. Confidentiality/Records

- A. The discussion of cases shall be held in executive session, where only Review Board members and permitted guests shall be present.
- B. Individual case names, or other identifying information, shall not appear in the minutes.
- C. No information shall be released to another person or agency without permission of the parents and a majority vote of the entire Review Board.

Statement of Purpose

The Juvenile Review Board is an authorized program within the Community and Social Services Department in collaboration with the Simsbury Police Department. The Board is designed to review situations of juvenile contact/arrest and to provide an alternative and early means of assisting youths and their families who are troubled or in trouble. The Board only reviews cases where the juvenile has admitted guilt to the charges filed by the Police Department.

The Board is composed of representatives from the Police Department, Town Community and Social Services Department, Culture, Parks and Recreation Department, School Department, Juvenile Matters Division of the Connecticut Superior Court, Family Counseling Services, the YMCA, and a local clergyman.

The Board will attempt to formulate non-judicial recommendations which may include: counseling for the juvenile and/or his/her family, community service work and/or monetary restitution. The prime goal of these recommendations would be to prevent any further behavior which would bring the juvenile into negative contact with the justice system. However, the Board may also recommend, after a review of the case, that a referral to court is the best course of action. All information gathered will be kept strictly confidential.

Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and the juvenile will be notified of Board Meetings concerning them and may request to appear before the Board. The Board may also request the presence of parent(s) and juvenile at a hearing concerning them.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and juvenile always have the option of electing to appear before the Court rather than before the Juvenile Review Board.