



16 & 17 Year-Old Public Hearing and Records Reform

Judges should be allowed to determine if a juvenile offense at 16 or 17 is serious or violent enough to warrant a public hearing and record.

Under current Minnesota law, court proceedings for 16 and 17 year-olds charged with *any* felony level offense are public and the resulting records are public, even if the charges are later dismissed or reduced. Minn. Stat. § 260B.163 (2008).

This policy is contrary to the rehabilitative purposes of the juvenile justice system and unnecessarily limits the future opportunities of thousands of Minnesota's young people. When these young people who have not been adjudicated delinquent of a felony level offense later seek employment and housing, they will often be denied, sometimes not even knowing their juvenile record was the reason for denial.

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