

## Overall benefits of Teen Court

- Positive peer pressure sends a clear message to the offenders about their behavior.
- Teen Court reduces the likelihood of repeat offenses and serves as a positive learning experience.
- The teen offenders are held accountable for their actions.
- Both teen offenders and teen volunteers contribute to their community.
- Teen Court offers teen volunteers a remarkable leadership opportunity.
- Both teen offenders and teen volunteers learn about due process, restorative justice and the benefits of volunteering to improve their community.

For more information contact  
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## CITY OF EL PASO MUNICIPAL COURT

### CONTACT US

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### TEEN COURT PROGRAM



**A REAL JUSTICE PROGRAM  
RUN BY TEENS FOR TEENS.**

## What is Teen Court?

Teen court is a real justice program run by teens for teens. It provides juveniles, who have been charged with a misdemeanor offense, an alternative means by which to have their case heard. Teen Court also provides alternative sentences if the juvenile is found guilty.

Teen volunteers sentence their peers for offenses such as theft, curfew, and traffic violations. Teen volunteers perform the roles of a juror, court clerk, bailiff, attorney, or prosecutor.



## Why Teen Court?

The philosophy of Teen Court is to use peer pressure as a positive force that holds the teen offenders accountable for their actions. In Teen Court, the emphasis is on restorative justice, seeking to repair the harm done to the victim and the community.

## How does Teen Court work?

Defendants are questioned by both the teen defense and prosecution attorneys to determine the circumstances of the offense. After careful consideration of the facts and circumstances, the teen jury determines a fair and constructive sentence, which may include community service and participation in future teen court sessions, counseling, attending educational programs and writing essays.

## Volunteer in Teen Court

Teen volunteers must be in middle or high school, complete a training session, desire to improve their community, and be dependable and serious about volunteering.

## Benefits of being a volunteer

Gain legal & judicial knowledge

- Advance professional skills
- Gain field experience
- Receive letters of recommendation for college and scholarship applications.



## Defendant in Teen Court

If you committed an offense and you want your case heard in Teen Court you must meet the following:

- Under the age of 18 or
  - Enrolled full time in a school leading towards a HS diploma.
  - Needs to have committed a Class C Misdemeanor offense (this includes traffic violations)
  - Must have plead no contest or guilty to the offense
- (Art. 45.052 Texas Code of Criminal Procedure)

## Benefits of having your case heard in Teen Court

- Ticket Dismissal
  - Case placed on hold for 180 days
  - Saves parents from paying fine
  - Gives the teen an opportunity for a positive learning experience
  - Increases teen awareness of current laws.
- Upon successful completion of the program, defendant will be permitted to participate as a volunteer in Teen Court.

JUVENILE WILL PAY A PARTICIPATION FEE OF \$20 IN LIEU OF FINE.