

# SCOTLAND COUNTY

## TEEN COURT



### Volunteer Guide

#### What is Teen Court?

Teen Court is a juvenile justice program that provides a community resource for the diversion of cases in which a juvenile has allegedly committed certain offenses for hearing by a jury of the juvenile's peers. Teen Court programs serve many functions. In addition to providing a mechanism for holding youthful offenders accountable and educating youth on the legal system, Teen Courts provide avenues for developing, enhancing, and practicing life skills. This effort enables youth to contribute to the betterment of their respective communities.

Teen Court is appropriate for first time youthful offenders charged with misdemeanors and other offenses that have not led to serious injury, Teen Court programs also provide services to youth that violate school policies, such as truancy and disorderly conduct. The target population for Teen Court Consists of youth aged 13-17, grades 8<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>. Youth older than 17, can participate in the program if they are currently enrolled in an educational program. The program receives referrals from juveniles' courts, law enforcement, school resource officers and other school personnel, district courts and parents.

At the Teen Court session, student volunteers play the roles of defense attorney, prosecuting attorney, bailiff, clerk, and jurors. During the actual sessions, only the judge is an adult, usually a sitting or retired judge or an attorney who has been trained as a Teen Court Judge. Remember, volunteers who sign up aren't the ones in trouble.

\*Volunteers will sign up for one of the following:

**Attorney:** The defense attorney is an advocate for the defendant, and it is your job to present your client in the best light as possible. It is important to be ethical and trustful and never misrepresent the case or your client. You need to be familiar with the circumstances of the case and know what factors are positive with negative for your client. The Prosecutor represents the State and has the responsibility to seek justice and advocate for the highest possible punishment for the defendant. The Prosecutor needs to be familiar with all the facts and circumstances of the case, in order to know what is favorable or unfavorable for the defendant.

**Bailiff:** The general duty of the bailiff as an Officer of the Court is to assist the Judge and to maintain order in the courtroom. The Teen Court Bailiff will open and close each court session and announce recesses when requested to do so by the Judge.

**Clerk:** The Clerk of Court is responsible for recording and maintaining the paperwork for each case hearing. The Clerk monitors the docket and assists the Teen Court Coordinator in determining whether or not parties (defendants and attorneys) are present and that the jurors are assigned to each case. At the end of the Court session, the Clerk gives all the paperwork to the Teen Court Coordinator.

**Juror:** Jury duty is a privilege and a serious responsibility. As a Teen Court juror, you have the obligation of determining a fair and appropriate sentence that will be constructive for the defendant and the community in its consequences. You must listen to the facts of the case and pay close attention to all information presented from the judge, witnesses, and the Defense and

**Prosecuting Attorneys:** Each juror must listen objectively, without bias or prejudice in order to render a fair and just sentence. The jury discusses the testimony given in the hearing and then decides what sentence is the best interest for the offender. All jurors must agree!

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## TEEN COURT

District 16

### COURTROOM APPEARANCE

The cases that are heard are real misdemeanor cases that would have gone to Juvenile Court if it were not for Teen Court. Because of this, those who are volunteering for Teen Court should come to court dressed in a professional manner. If we expect the offenders to take Teen Court seriously, we must take it seriously. Teen Court is a formal, serious place that commands respect from all who participate in its proceedings. This includes our appearance. While the following is not required, it is the expected standard. If this causes any difficulty, please call and we will work out some accepted alternative.

#### Court Personnel (Lawyers, Bailiff, Clerk):

You represent the court. Your attire should be of a professional nature. Dress pants, pant suits, and dresses / skirts are the preference. Coats and ties are optional. Please remember that your appearance tells others if you are serious about your position.

#### Jurors

You represent your peers. Your appearance can be a little more relaxed. However, it should still be neat and clean, out of respect for the court. Shirts should be tucked in and collared shirts are preferred. No crop tops or tank tops, and no shorts. Jeans should be neat and clean. Slacks and skirts are preferred.

#### General Appearance

While we understand that fashion trends are popular, they are not appropriate in court. Admission to Teen Court will be denied unless the following dress code is followed (just like Juvenile, District and Superior court).

- ❖ Tank tops are not allowed
- ❖ Shorts are not allowed
- ❖ Shirts must be tucked in
- ❖ Dresses and skirts should be at a professional length

Thank you for your assistance in this matter and thank you for volunteering with Teen Court,

**SCOTS FOR YOUTH**  
**TEEN COURT**

## 2016 - 2017 SCHEDULE

Scots for Youth Teen Court will be held on the following dates:

### 2016 – 2017 SCHEDULE

Scots for Youth Teen Court will be held on the following dates at the Scotland County Courthouse located at 212 Biggs Street Laurinburg at 5:45 promptly:

August 16, 2016 (Training)

September 20, 2016

October 18, 2016

November 15, 2016

December 20, 2016

January 17, 2017

February 21, 2017

March 21, 2017

April 18, 2017

May 16, 2017

June 20, 2017

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## YOUTH

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