

YOUTH COUNCIL

AUTHORITY:	Administrative Directive	
RESCINDS:	New	
FORMS:	Youth Council Application	Attachment
PURPOSE:	To provide youth the opportunity to positively contribute to their community through collaboration, teamwork and positive leadership and to be a liaison for other youth within the facility.	

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Community

Council members shall set positive examples and serve as role models for all youth and take an active role in helping themselves and others. They should role model, teach, mentor, and guide others in working collaboratively with staff in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration.

B. Goals

1. To create a platform where youth have input in facility-related issues regarding programming, leisure activities, incentives, or other youth-related subjects, excluding facility safety and security.
2. To teach leadership and responsibility.
3. To teach youth to accept responsibility and perform successfully in new situations.
4. To expose youth to collaboration, teamwork, building consensus, and the decision-making process.
5. To allow youth a voice and the opportunity to add value to their community. Youth will understand the facility staff are willing to listen, teach, mentor, and collaborate with them.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Facility Council Members

Juvenile Hall Youth Council (YC) Members

Juvenile Hall council members will be comprised of one youth from each living unit. If there are less than seven council members within Juvenile Hall, the remaining positions may be filled by other youth who meet the eligibility requirements, have demonstrated exceptional behavior and participation, and are selected by the

Youth Council Coordinator(s) and the assigned Deputy Juvenile Correctional Officers (DJCOs)/Supervising Juvenile Correctional Officers (SJCOs).

YGC YC Members

YGC council members will be comprised of one youth from each living unit. If there are less than four council members within YGC, the remaining positions may be filled by other youth who meet the eligibility requirements, have demonstrated exceptional behavior and participation, and are selected by the Youth Council Coordinator(s) and the assigned DJCO/SJCO.

YLA YC Members

YLA council members will be comprised of five youth from YLA1. If there are less than five council members within YLA, the remaining positions may be filled by other youth who meet the eligibility requirements, have demonstrated exceptional behavior and participation, and are selected by the Youth Council Coordinator(s) and the assigned DJCO/SJCO.

1. Selection of Council Leaders

- a. Each living unit shall have one youth designated as a primary council member and one alternate council member. Youth must apply for the position.
- b. The SJCOs and DJCOs assigned to work with each living unit will review the applications for the YC and reach consensus on the council member and alternate council member.
- c. Council members may be removed from this position by a DJCO via a Special Incident Report (SIR) with SJCO approval. The reasons for removal will be discussed with the youth and include related counseling, if needed.
- d. The alternate will fill in for the council member in their absence. All eligibility rules will apply to the alternate council member.

2. Eligibility Requirements for Council Members

- a. Youth must be in Phase III or Phase IV.
- b. Youth must show they are willing and able to consistently exhibit exemplary behavior and voluntarily accept the responsibilities of a council member.
- c. Youth cannot be involved in any physical altercations for 30 days prior to submitting the application. If the youth was clearly identified as non-participatory (victim) in the physical altercation, they may participate. If the youth was clearly identified as the initiator/aggressor in the physical altercation, they may not participate, as noted above.
- d. Youth must consistently demonstrate active participation in facility programming, schooling, and unit activities.

3. Duties of the Council Member

- a. Sets a positive example for all youth in the facility.
- b. Models, assists, coaches, and guides new youth on proper behaviors consistent with facility rules and guidelines for all youth.
- c. Assists staff in maintaining the living unit, keeping the day area clean and teaches other youth how to do proper housekeeping.
- d. Participate in the daily schedule orientation and group discussions, when appropriate.
- e. Participates as an active member of the YC; attends monthly council meetings and represents all youth from their living unit; informs their unit of YC decisions made at the meetings and assists in setting reasonable and attainable goals for the Youth Council. If the council believes that more frequent meetings are necessary, the council can add it to their agenda for review or consideration.
- f. Acts as a spokesperson for the unit when talking to volunteers, public tours, inspections, or other visitors.

4. Benefits for Council Members

- a. As active members of the YC, youth will have input in determining elective programming and activities for all youth at their assigned facility.
- b. They will work closely with staff to learn more about leadership, accepting responsibility the overall functioning of each unit.
- c. They will be eligible for appropriate incentives and YC-related community service projects, when available.
- d. Council members and their alternates will have access to additional incentives, snacks, or "late night" on two additional days per week.
- e. Council members and their alternates will also earn the use of additional incentive items such as MP3 players, ear buds, headphones, and electronic games.
- f. Council members shall wear a collared shirt and different colored pants/shorts than the general population. This is meant to easily identify YC council members and to establish a sense of pride and accomplishment for other interested youth, to strive toward.

B. Additional Information

1. Staff Role

- a. Staff shall ensure youth are behaving appropriately and council members understand their roles and expectations.

- b. Staff shall ensure members of the youth council have clear directions and understand institutional rules and expectations.
- c. Staff shall provide guidance and support to members of the youth council. These youth have willingly taken on extra responsibilities but have no official authority. It is essential for staff to support these leaders for them to have a better chance to be successful in the facility and upon transitioning back to the community.

2. YC Leadership Contracts

- a. YC leadership contracts shall be developed, describing the duties, expectations and incentives for participation.
- b. When a youth is selected to participate as a council member, the YC Coordinator shall review the leadership contract with the youth.
- c. The purpose of these leadership contracts is to ensure each youth fully understands their roles and responsibilities as a council member and to provide consistency.
- d. Each youth will be given a leadership contract to refer to and review, as needed.
- e. Leadership contracts shall also be read, reviewed, and understood by participating staff to ensure the program maintains integrity and fidelity.

3. Journals

Each YC member will be provided a journal to record daily activities, group issues and suggestions to be raised at council meetings.

4. YC Meeting Structure

YC meetings must have basic structure and direction to be effective. Participating youth should expect to be prepared to discuss appropriate agenda items and/or similar issues during meetings:

- a. Review the purpose and goals of the YC.
- b. All members of the YC should have a leadership contract titled Youth Council – Roles and Responsibilities. They should be familiar with what is expected of them, which can be discussed at YC meetings.
- c. Each member self-reports from their journal including positive and negative behavior; personal problems, conflicts or potential conflicts; incidents during which they demonstrated or failed to demonstrate leadership; other serious incidents or rule violations impacting their living unit.

- d. Discuss any suggestions to improve youth related activities at their assigned facility. YC shall also set agenda items for future meetings, maintain meeting minutes, and prioritize ideas. They shall provide possible suggestions and/or solutions for consideration by staff, unit supervisor, or administration, when appropriate.
- e. Staff, supervisors, and/or administrators may add agenda items for the YC to review and provide input, as needed.
- f. YC council members may forward questions to the Juvenile Hall administration. If a meeting is requested with the Director and/or Assistant Director, it should be arranged as soon as possible.
- g. The overarching goal of the YC is to provide a platform for youth in the facility to be heard, serve as role models to other youth, and for staff to maintain a positive and supportive role.
- h. The DJCO acting as the YC liaison, must ensure the council takes and maintains meeting minutes to memorialize topics discussed and issues to be brought forward for consideration. The YC meeting minutes will be distributed to the SJCOs and Administration for review.
- i. If recommendations need to be brought forward, they will be discussed at the next Supervisor Meeting for review and discussion, then sent to administration for consideration.
- j. Decisions will be communicated to the YC via the council liaison after review and approval by both the supervisor/management team.

REFERENCES:

Procedures

M. Arreguin

APPROVED BY:



Orange County Probation Department Youth Council Application

Name: _____ Date: _____

Facility: _____ Unit: _____ Current Phase: _____

Three reasons why I am a good leader are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I would like to be part of the Youth Leadership Council because _____

Before leaving the facility, I would like to:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Unit DJCO Signature: _____

Assigned DJCO Signature: _____

Unit Supervisor Signature: _____