



Youth in Adult Court

How Do Youth End up in Adult Court in PA?

- **Direct File Juvenile (“DFJ”)** *Based on age + offense, charges filed in adult court include:*
 - homicide
 - rape
 - IDSI
 - aggravated assault
 - robbery
 - aggravated indecent assault
 - kidnapping
 - voluntary manslaughter
 - +attempt, conspiracy or solicitation
- **Certification** *At discretion of prosecutor and judge, a case can be moved from juvenile to adult court.*
- **“Once an Adult, Always an Adult”** *If a youth had a DFJ case, any new charges are in adult court.*

What Happens to Youth who get Prosecuted as Adults in Philadelphia?

- Young Men await trial at the Philadelphia Institutional Correctional Center (“PICC”), and young women await trial at Riverside Correctional Facility (“RCF,” adult jails on State Road.
 - You can ask to be released on bail, unlike in juvenile court.
- Your case will first be heard at the Criminal Justice Center (“CJC”) for a preliminary hearing.
- Then, your defense attorney can file a motion for “decertification” which means the case could be sent to juvenile court.
 - At a decertification (“decert”) hearing, your defense attorney can present information about you, including an evaluation by a psychologist and other important information.
 - The judge will decide if it is in the public interest to send the case to juvenile court.
 - You may decide to plead guilty in order to be “re-slated” in the juvenile court and/or sent to juvenile placement.
- If the motion for decertification is not successful, and the you are sentenced in the adult system, you may serve time in PA prisons and/or on adult probation:
 - If sentenced to adult prison while under 18, men are sent to SCI Pinegrove, which has a “Youthful Offender Unit” that is run like a military boot camp; women are sent to SCI Muncy.
 - If there is time remaining on your sentence when you turn 18, you can be sent to any state prison. If the sentence is 24 months or shorter, time may be served in county jail (subject to “sight and sound” separation from adults until you turn 18).

