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STAGES IN A JUVENILE CASE

Stage 1: Law Enforcement Contact / Arrest

- Youth may be warned, cited, or taken to Juvenile Hall.
- Officer refers case to Probation for review.

Stage 2: Intake & Probation Review

- Probation assesses case severity and prior history, and decides:
 - Dismissal (no action)
 - Informal handling (supervision without court)
 - Referral to District Attorney (DA) for charges (“602 Petition”)

Stage 3: Detention Hearing (If in Custody)

- Held within 48–72 hours of arrest.
- Judge decides if the youth stays detained, is released to a guardian, or placed on home supervision.

Stage 4: Transfer Hearing (“707 Hearing”)

- For certain serious offenses, the DA may request a Transfer Hearing under W.I.C. 707 to assess:
 - If the juvenile should remain under juvenile court jurisdiction,
 - Or be transferred to adult criminal court.
- This includes interviews, investigations, and possibly psychological evaluations.

Stage 5: Readiness Hearing

- Occurs before trial.
- Court hears any legal motions.
- Youth may enter a plea.
- If no plea is entered, the case proceeds to trial (adjudication).

Stage 6: Adjudication Hearing (Trial)

- A judge—not a jury—hears evidence to determine if the minor committed the offense.
- A “true finding” is equivalent to a guilty verdict in adult court, under the standard of “beyond a reasonable doubt”

Stage 7: Disposition Hearing (Sentencing)

- If a true finding occurs, the judge determines the consequences:
 - The youth may be declared a ward of the court,
 - Placed on probation with tailored terms and conditions (e.g., programs, school, restitution),
 - Or, in more serious cases, placed in secure facilities

Stage 8: Probation and Rehabilitation

- Tailored rehabilitation plan (school, counseling, community service).
- Supervised by a probation officer through home/school visits.
- Goal: reduce risk, build skills, support family involvement.

Stage 9: Diversion & Prevention Programs

- For first-time or low-risk offenses.
- Includes STAR/PAL, Community Assessment Teams (CAT), school-based supports.
- Focus: avoid court involvement and keep youth in the community.