

Eliminating Juvenile Fines & Fees in Missouri



"THE CHILD WELFARE POLICY OF THIS STATE IS WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD." - MO RS 211.111

WHY ARE JUVENILE FINES AND FEES AN ISSUE IN MISSOURI?

Fines and fees drive youth deeper into the legal system, undermine public safety, and harm children and families. System-impacted youth are repeatedly strapped with fines and fees that have little to do with the rehabilitative purpose of the youth court system. Youth are commonly charged with assessments, surcharges, clerk fees, and more. These fees and fines can cost youth and their families up to thousands of dollars. Recent survey data shows that fines and fees negatively impact youths' education, mental health, future opportunities, family dynamics, and the financial wellbeing of their families.

MISSOURI COURTS ALREADY RECOGNIZE THE HARM OF FINES AND FEES IMPOSED ON YOUTH

Many courts in Missouri do not charge and/or waive financial charges imposed upon youth and their families. Data from the Office of the State Court Administrator confirms what has been said anecdotally: courts from St. Louis County to Newton County are not charging court fines and/or fees to youth. Other courts in Missouri are taking notice. As of December 1, 2022, the juvenile court in Boone and Callaway counties has significantly reduced the fees they impose upon youth and their families.

IMPOSING COURT FINES AND FEES UPON CHILDREN IS NOT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF MISSOURI CHILDREN.

\$470k

charged to Missouri children and their families in court fees from 2019-2021

16

other states, including Oklahoma and Indiana, have enacted legislation around ending juvenile fees and fines.

only
25%

of court fees imposed on youth and families were collected in 2021

Studies show the more families pay, the more a youth is likely to recidivate.

COMMON FEES CHARGED TO MISSOURI YOUTH

Fee	Amount
Detention Room and Board	\$200 (10 days @ \$20/day, cost is variable based on parents' income)
Juvenile Assessment	\$50
Filing Fee	\$45
Family Court Fee	\$30
Court Reporter Fee	\$15
Court Automation	\$7
Crime Victim's Fund Fee	\$7.50
Civil Legal Services Fund Fee	\$10
Inmate Security Fund Fee	\$2
Late Fee (if not paid in full in 30 days)	\$24
Total	\$391.50