

JUVENILE COURT  
POLICY/PROCEDURE

**PERMITTED ATTENDANCE AT COURT HEARINGS**

POLICY

Pursuant to §938.299(1)(a), the general public is to be excluded from hearings under §938 unless a public fact-finding hearing is demanded by a juvenile through his or her counsel. Statutes provide for exceptions related to whether or not this demand must be honored, and in general, what other parties may attend as determined by the court.

Statutory exceptions to the above general principle of hearings not being open to the public are:

- (1) A **victim** of a juvenile's act/alleged delinquent act may attend any hearing. A **member of the victim's family** or a **representative from an organization providing victim support services** may attend. Certain exclusion apply related to matters dealing with sensitive personal matters of the juvenile or juvenile's family. (Reference §938.299(1)(am)). Victims are not permitted to further disclose information obtained at the hearing unless necessary to commence civil action or otherwise permitted by statute.
- (2) The **general public** (including news media) may attend any hearing related to a felony delinquency allegation for a juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent previously and that previous adjudication remains of record and unreversed. Certain exclusions apply related to objections that may be made by victims of sexual assault or those portions of proceedings that may deal with sensitive personal information regarding the juvenile or juvenile's family. Additionally, the **general public** (including news media) may attend any hearing for a juvenile alleged to have committed a felony classified as part of the Serious Juvenile Offender Program (refer to list in §938.34(4h)(a).

PROCEDURE

Persons permitted to attend a hearing based on this statute should be directed to the assigned bailiff.

EXCEPTIONS

The court may exclude persons from hearings otherwise permitted by statute in the event of space or safety constraints resulting from inadequate space in which to adequately separate or monitor parties.