

## Juvenile Justice Glossary of Important Terms

**Direct File** – A power that allows prosecutors solely to decide whether to bring charges against young people in juvenile court or in adult criminal court. Many states do not even allow the defense to challenge or a judge to review this decision.

**Incarceration** – The act of imprisoning or confining someone.

**Juvenile (Youth) Offender** – Someone who is under the age of 18 at the time of their crime.

**Parole** – The release of a prisoner who has proven s/he is no longer dangerous. People who are paroled are supervised by a parole officer.

**Proposition 57 (Public Safety and Rehabilitation Act of 2016)** – A measure on the California 2016 ballot that:

- Requires judges, rather than prosecutors, to decide whether youth as young as 14 years old should be tried as adults and sent to adult prison.
- Allows persons convicted of a non-violent felony and sentenced to state prison to be eligible for parole consideration after completing the full term of their primary offense.
- Grants the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) the authority to award credits earned for good behavior, and rehabilitative or educational achievements.

**Recidivism** – A return to committing crimes, following release from prison or jail. The failure of our justice system to rehabilitate returning people in prison makes it more likely that they will commit new crimes when released.

**Restorative Justice** – Views crime as more than breaking the law – it also causes harm to people, relationships, and the community. So a just response must address those harms as well as the wrongdoing. If the parties are willing, the best way to do this is to help them meet to discuss those harms and how to bring about resolution. Other approaches are available if they are unable or unwilling to meet. Sometimes those meetings lead to transformational changes in their lives.

**What other terms do you need in your glossary?**

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