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**ST. LOUIS COUNTY FAMILY COURT REACHES AGREEMENT TO ENSURE DUE  
PROCESS AND PROTECT YOUTH**

St. Louis County Family Court has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice to ensure due process and equal protection for youth coming before the court in St. Louis County. The Court remains fully committed to providing impartial, prompt, and appropriate resolution of delinquency proceedings involving youth, their families and victims, and to the safety and well-being of the community at large.

To advance these goals, the Court has taken significant actions, including:

- The Chief Juvenile Officer will be supervised by the Family Court Administrator instead of the Administrative Judge.
- Ensuring the immediate appointment of counsel to represent youth charged with an offense.
- Working with community partners to reduce the overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Creating a staff position dedicated to addressing the overrepresentation of minority youth in the system.
- Making probable cause findings for the detention of youth.
- Improved the collection and reporting of data reflecting the involvement of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

In addition, the Court is undertaking measures designed to protect the constitutional rights of youth and to better serve the community. These measures include:

- Increasing the number of experienced attorneys to represent youth accused of crimes.
- Prohibiting police interrogations in the Detention Center.
- Providing additional training for Deputy Juvenile Officers regarding racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.



“The St. Louis Family Court is deeply committed to safeguarding the constitutional rights of youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system and to providing them with services that will help them make better choices and lead productive, positive lives,” said Ben Burkemper, Family Court Administrator. “We will continue to work with the Department of Justice and our community partners to strengthen our juvenile justice system.”

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