



DREAMS DEFERRED

**THE IMPACT OF JUVENILE FEES
ON FLORIDA'S CHILDREN,
FAMILIES, AND FUTURE**

WRITTEN BY
FINES AND FEES JUSTICE CENTER AND JUVENILE LAW CENTER

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About Us

The [Fines and Fees Justice Center](#) (FFJC) is catalyzing a movement to eliminate the fines and fees that distort justice. Our goal is to create a justice system that treats individuals fairly, ensures public safety and community prosperity, and is funded equitably. We work together with affected communities and justice system stakeholders to eliminate fees in the justice system, ensure that fines are equitably imposed and enforced, and end abusive collection practices.

[Juvenile Law Center](#) advocates for rights, dignity, equity and opportunity for youth in the child welfare and justice systems. Founded in 1975, Juvenile Law Center is the first non-profit, public interest law firm for children in the country. Through litigation, appellate advocacy and submission of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs, policy reform, public education, training, consulting, and strategic communications, we fight for children who come into contact with the child welfare and justice systems. We strive to ensure that laws, policies, and practices affecting youth advance racial and economic equity and are rooted in research, consistent with children’s unique developmental characteristics, and reflective of international human rights values. Juvenile Law Center is also part of the national Debt Free Justice campaign.

Contact

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Introduction

70 years ago, Langston Hughes posed a question that is, sadly, still relevant for many of Florida's children today: *what happens to a dream deferred?*¹

Right now, thousands of young people in Florida find even modest dreams of a decent job and a life without endless debt almost impossible to attain. Their dreams have been indefinitely deferred by debt imposed by the justice system.

Over the last decade, the Florida legislature has taken major steps to protect and support children's futures, but the current policy of charging youth, and their families, justice system fees severely undermines this progress. Every young person who comes into contact with Florida's courts — regardless of guilt or innocence — is saddled with fees. Florida law authorizes 31 different court fees, costs and surcharges to be imposed on youth and their families. Together, these fees are quietly leading our youth, and their families, down a path of inescapable debt and poverty.

DEQUAN'S STORY

Dequan Jackson dreamed of playing professional football ever since he was a little boy. He excelled in the classroom and on the field, and today he is one of the top 50 players in the Mountain West Division.

Nine years ago, Jackson's dream to play for the NFL was almost taken from him.

In middle school, Jackson bumped into a teacher while horsing around in the hallway. Rather than a reprimand or detention — a middle school punishment one might expect — he was charged with battery.

Jackson worked 40 hours in a food bank, met with a counselor, and kept to a daily 8PM curfew. But it wasn't enough. The courts punished him again, this time with a bill for \$200 in juvenile court fees.

For Jackson and his mother, scraping together \$200 of spare income was impossible. When the family couldn't pay, the courts placed him on probation and billed them another \$30 per month in probation fees.

After 14 months, Jackson's court fee bill had climbed to almost \$900.

¹ Langston Hughes, "Harlem" from *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, ed. Arnold Rampersad, and David E. Roessel (New York: Knopf, 1994).

This report outlines the catastrophic consequences of juvenile fee debt for Florida's children, families, and economy including: increased poverty, increased recidivism, and the exacerbation of racial disparities in the justice system. It also shows how the accumulation of fee debt is particularly damaging for Black youth and youth in the child welfare system. Using county-level and statewide data, the report highlights the futility of both government, and private collection efforts, arguing that the costs of fee assessment and collection far outweigh the meager revenue received from such efforts.

The solution to the problem of juvenile fees is simple: eliminate them and give young people a fair chance at a future. The Florida legislature has already shown leadership in prioritizing children's futures by removing obstacles to education, vocational training, and safe housing. The Debt-Free Justice for Children Act is an opportunity to strengthen this tradition by eliminating fees imposed on young people, up to age 18, and extending protection for youth in the foster system, up to age 21, who are especially vulnerable to the impacts of court costs.

A growing number of states — both red and blue — have already enacted reforms to end juvenile system fees. In 2021 alone, Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Virginia, and California all passed reforms to eliminate some or all juvenile fees and end the debt-based punishment of low-income children and families. Now, it's Florida's turn. Let's seize the opportunity.

Key Findings

- **Florida charges children, young people, and their families 31 different fees and costs for their involvement in the juvenile system — regardless of guilt or innocence.** These fees include: court administration fees, medical care costs, public defender fees, probation supervision fees, the costs of detention, and surcharges.
- **The immense debt that youth incur on account of these fees obliterates their future prospects while driving them, and their families, deeper into poverty.** When children and their families cannot pay fees, these young people often face extended probation and continue their system involvement with ever-increasing costs, loss of driver's license privileges, civil judgments, tax liens, and more punishments.
- **Fee debt imposed on children and their families is uncollectible — whether by governments or private debt collectors.** In 2019, only 11% — or \$547,973 — of the \$5.1 million assessed against youth was collected.² Florida counties that reported data from private collections also confirmed that they collected negligible

² 2019 data on Florida's juvenile fees assessments and collections rates is available with the Fines and Fees Justice Center upon request.

amounts of juvenile fee debt in 2019. Young people typically have no jobs and no means to pay these fees. Thus, the debt often falls to their families, most of whom are from low-income, marginalized communities.

- **Juvenile fee debt drives recidivism and undermines the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile justice system.** The accumulation of fee debt can push young people toward recidivism as they search for any way to pay these fees.³ One study has already confirmed this trend, finding higher recidivism rates for youth who have court fines and fees imposed.⁴ Fees undermine the purpose of the juvenile system — which should be to help support young people’s growth and development and set them up for success.
- **Black youth and their families carry a disproportionate amount of the costs and fees imposed by the juvenile system** — some of which are imposed regardless of the young person’s guilt or innocence. From 2019 to 2020, Black youth comprised 21% of the population in Florida under 18, but accounted for 50.9% of youth arrests⁵ and it is the arrests that determine which Floridians will be saddled with fee debt.
- **Youth in both the child welfare and delinquency systems are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of fees.** Youth in the child welfare system do not have financial support from their families or from the Department of Children and Families; they are at greater risk of being pulled into the justice system and acquiring fee debt. Youth in the child welfare system with fee debt can also have a difficult time finding a permanent family because prospective caregivers have to bear the burden of these costs to welcome these youth into their homes. Nearly 50% of children in the child welfare system become homeless within 18 months⁶ of aging out of the system.
- **Judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, and probation professionals oppose fees on youth.** The National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, The American Probation and Parole Association, Fair and Just Prosecution, Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration and Youth Correctional Leaders for Justice all acknowledge the need to end juvenile fees.

³ Alex R. Piquero, Wesley g. Jennings, “Justice System-Imposed Financial Penalties Increase the Likelihood of Recidivism in a Sample of Adolescent Offenders”. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 15, no. 3 (July 2017): 325–40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204016669213>.

⁴ Piquero and Jennings, “Justice System-Imposed Financial Penalties Increase Likelihood of Recidivism”

⁵ Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Ethnic Disparity Benchmark Report FY 2019-2020, <https://bit.ly/3mUVyDQ>.

⁶ Shalita O’Neale, “Foster Care and Homelessness”, *Foster Focus Magazine*, Vol. 5 Issue 3 (August 2015), <https://bit.ly/3HCGK54>.

How Juvenile Fees and Court Costs Pile Up

Youth who enter the justice system face fees at nearly every stage of their journey through the courts — regardless of the offense or outcome of their case. Some or all of these court costs are automatically imposed on youth or their families in all cases and can include: court administration fees, medical care costs, public defender fees, probation supervision fees, the costs of detention, and surcharges.

For example, while all youth have a right to counsel and to have an attorney appointed for them if their family cannot afford one, there is a \$50 application fee to apply for a public defender and another fee to pay for a “free” attorney.

Youth placed on probation pay fees for supervision and additional fees if an ankle monitor is required. And because probation typically continues until all fees are paid, the fees for ongoing supervision and monitoring continue to mount. When families cannot pay these fees, some children are forced to remain on probation for years until they age out of the juvenile justice system. If these youth are ordered into detention or placement, their parents must also pay room and board fees to the state.

Youth moving through the justice system are also likely to incur a host of other costs including: the cost of their own prosecution, the expungement of their juvenile records, and the suspension and reinstatement of their drivers licenses.

A CLOSER LOOK AT COURT COSTS:

According to a recent survey of juvenile defenders in Florida:

- 100% of respondents reported that their jurisdictions assessed court costs in juvenile cases.
- 64.3% said their jurisdictions charged for probation costs such as supervision and electronic monitoring.
- 50% of juvenile defenders stated that youth were charged to have their records expunged.
- 78.6% of respondents said their judicial circuit charged a fee for a court appointed attorney.

SOURCE: *Surveys conducted by Stetson University College of Law students in the Social Justice Advocacy Concentration, 2019*⁷

⁷ These surveys are on file with the Fines and Fees Justice Center and are available upon request.

For the complete list of costs, fees, and surcharges imposed on youth, including statutory authority, amounts, and where the money goes if it is collected, see **Appendix I**. For a sample memorandum of costs issued by the juvenile court, see **Appendix II**.

Fees Harm Youth, Families, and the Community

Youth, as a class, are unable to pay costs and fees. Young people are either in school, too young to work, or in a position where working would disrupt schooling, counseling and other programs designed to help them. Their inability to pay fees results in a cascade of consequences that negatively impacts their families' financial stability and undermines public safety. For young people trying to get back on the right track, juvenile fee debt — which can total thousands of dollars — is an impossible hurdle to clear.

Fees undermine the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile justice system.

From the inception of the juvenile justice system over 120 years ago,⁸ juvenile courts focused on rehabilitation, rather than punishment. These courts sought to “spare juveniles from the harsh proceedings in adult court” and “the stigma of being branded criminal”⁹ and adopted a less punitive and more therapeutic approach. They recognized the clear distinction between juvenile misconduct and adult criminal conduct.

The rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile system is embedded in Florida's Juvenile Justice Act: “to increase public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention, and treatment services that strengthen and reform the lives of children.”¹⁰ The juvenile court has broad discretion to order services and responses that will help a child, including diversion services, substance abuse treatment, community service, and educational programs. Even when placed outside the home, youth are entitled to education and mental health services in recognition of the system's core prevention, support, and treatment goals, and the unique developmental needs of children.¹¹ Fees assessed against youth undermine these goals.¹²

⁸ First established in 1899 in Cook County, Illinois and then rapidly spread across the country, the juvenile court became the unifying entity that led to a juvenile justice system.” See <https://bit.ly/3zllFlc>.

⁹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, “Juvenile Justice Reform Initiatives in the States 1994-1996” pg. 36 (October 1997), <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles/reform.pdf>.

¹⁰ The Florida Legislature, “Florida Statutes”, Fla. Stat. 985.01 (1)(a), <https://bit.ly/3JFmDF3>.

¹¹ Office of the State Courts Administrator, “Juvenile Delinquency Benchbook” (Florida June 2021) <https://bit.ly/3JlVeBZ>.

¹² During recent litigation the State of Florida successfully argued that fees and costs are part of the punishment imposed on people who violate the law (pg. 4 of <https://bit.ly/3FPtSb4>). In their subsequent opinion the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed stating that “Court fees and costs imposed in a criminal sentence...are part of the state's punishment for a crime.”(pg. 32 <https://bit.ly/3mV0Orh>). Punishing youth and/or their families upon whom the burden of fees and costs often fall is not consistent with the goals of the juvenile justice system.

Today, the principle that children are “different” from adults permeates American jurisprudence. The United States Supreme Court has relied repeatedly on an increasingly settled body of psychological and neurological research that “show[s] fundamental differences between juvenile and adult minds.” The Court’s decisions remind us of “what any person knows” — that youth is a “time and condition of life” marked by behaviors, perceptions, and vulnerabilities that change with age. Youth are “less mature and responsible than adults” and “lack the experience, perspective, and judgment to recognize and avoid choices that could be detrimental to them.”¹³ One of the key conclusions of this research is that children’s attitudes, perceptions and behaviors are not fixed — but can, and often do, change over time.

Juvenile fees deprioritize and disrupt education.

Education is the primary driver in determining future opportunities for young people; and Florida’s own education law requires youth to attend high school full time through age 18, with limited exceptions. Forcing young people to earn money to pay off system debt disrupts their capacity to focus on, and succeed in, school and is likely to lead to increased drop-out rates for system-involved youth.

Juvenile fees increase recidivism and poverty.

Youth who cannot pay are at increased risk of further system involvement, whether because of the increased family tensions, the added economic stress, or simply because some young people turn to illegal activities to try to raise the money to pay back their system debt. One study has already confirmed this trend, finding there were higher recidivism rates for youth with court fines and fees imposed.¹⁴ Additionally, limited expungement opportunities for youth with juvenile records further restricts their access to employment opportunities.

This cycle of inability to pay and punishment for non-payment pushes youth deeper into the juvenile and criminal justice systems, and their families deeper into debt. Because youth cannot pay fees, this debt often falls on parents and families — many of whom are already struggling to pay basic living costs. The accumulation of juvenile fee debt often forces parents to choose between putting food on the table, paying for rent, paying for utilities — or paying down their child’s court debt.

¹³ *J.D.B. v. North Carolina*, 564 U.S. 261, 273 (2011) (citing *Roper v. Simmons*, 543 U.S. 551, 569 (2005)); *Eddings v. Oklahoma*, 455 U.S. 104, 115 (1982), <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/564/261/>

¹⁴ Piquero and Jennings, “Justice System-Imposed Financial Penalties...”

STRUGGLING FAMILIES HAVE NO SPARE INCOME TO PAY COURT FEES

In Florida, a person working on a minimum wage salary grosses \$1600/month (less than \$20,000/year). The yearly costs¹⁵ for a single parent raising one child in Florida are:

- Approx. \$4,500/year in food costs
- Approx. \$8,000/year in child care costs
- Approx. \$9,000/year in medical costs
- Approx. \$15,000 in housing costs
- Approx. \$9,000 in transportation

These costs alone, which total approx. \$45,500, far outpace a single parent's minimum wage income; and fees from the justice system inevitably heighten family debt.

Fees exacerbate racial disparities.

Despite similar rates of offending, Black youth are disproportionately impacted by system involvement. They are arrested at higher rates, processed into the juvenile and criminal systems at higher rates, and are more likely to be incarcerated if adjudicated or convicted. In Fiscal Year 2019-2020, Black youth comprised 21% of the population in Florida under 18, but accounted for 50.9% of youth arrests and 53.8% of adjudications.¹⁶ As a result, Black youth and their families bear a disproportionate amount of the costs and fees imposed by the juvenile and criminal systems. They also face higher unemployment rates and poverty rates, coupled with lower education rates. The convergence of these factors mean that the families and youth that require the most support experience the most severe levels of state imposed debt and punishment.

Fees are especially damaging to youth in the child welfare system.

Youth in both the child welfare system and delinquency system are particularly vulnerable to the harmful impacts of fees. They don't have families to fall back on for support, and the Department of Children and Families, which has become their guardian, does not pay their debts. These youth also face increased incidence of involvement in the juvenile justice system, where they can be adjudicated for running away from a placement or acting out in residential facilities. After youth age out of the child welfare

¹⁵ Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department. of Urban Studies and Planning, *Living Wage Calculator for Florida*, <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/12>; see **Appendix IV**.

¹⁶ Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, *Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Ethnic Disparity Benchmark Report FY 2019-2020*, <https://bit.ly/3mUVyDQ>.

system, 40-50% become homeless within 18 months.¹⁷ In Florida, youth between the ages of 18 and 21 in the child welfare system can qualify for continuing care only if they meet certain educational requirements.

“Through no fault of their own, foster youth typically do not have the family connections or wherewithal to satisfy the fees. Worse yet, owing fees can make it hard for children to find a permanent family because prospective caregivers have to bear the burden of these costs to welcome the youth into their homes.”

- Paul Nigro, Florida Guardian Ad Litem regional director

DEVON’S STORY

After his father’s rights were terminated and his mother’s relinquished, Devon was placed into the care of the Department of Children and Families. Fortunately, Devon and his grandmother were very close and so she made plans to adopt him.

But adopting Devon meant taking on \$1200 in court fees that had been assessed to him in a prior delinquency adjudication. Even though he completed more than 120 hours of community service, wrote letters of apology, and took the required anger management class, Devon’s case would not be terminated until these fees were paid. His grandmother had no way to earn the income needed to pay these — and so could not take on the debt required to adopt him.

Fortunately for Devon and his grandmother, a dedicated Guardian ad Litem (“GAL”) team filed a motion in the Circuit Court to have the fees waived due to hardship. When the motion succeeded, they were told it was the first — and only — time that fees had been waived in that court.

Juvenile Fee Revenue is Not Worth the Cost

Revenue collected from juvenile fees is not worth the cost to Florida’s families or government. Because youth as a class cannot pay, and youth involved in the juvenile system are disproportionately from poor families, the fee debt imposed on children and their families is almost entirely uncollectible. In the 2019 calendar year, only 11% — or \$547,973 — of the \$5.1 million dollars assessed against youth was collected. Additionally, this negligible amount of revenue collected from fees does not even account for the

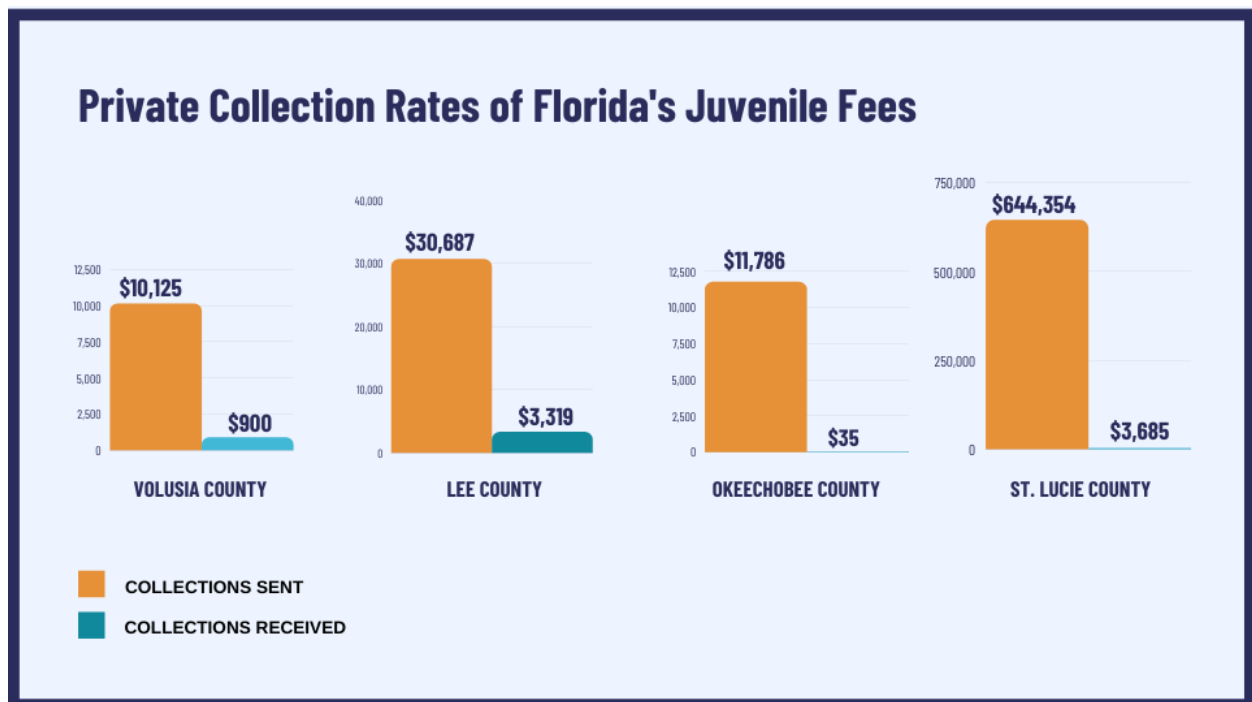
¹⁷ O’Neale, “Foster Care and Homelessness”.

costs associated with the assessment and collection of fee debt including salaries, benefits and non-personnel expenses.

In a 2007 report, the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) recommended that “the Clerks of Court Operations Corporation should consider modifying the collection standard for the juvenile delinquency division [set then as now at 9%] as collections are small, thereby allowing clerks to target their resources toward divisions where defendants are more likely to be able to pay.”

The Clerks of Court, who are responsible for collecting court debt and reporting on yearly collections, have also repeatedly recognized that youth cannot pay, noting in their 2019 5 Quarter report for Alachua (2019): “This group does not have jobs”; for Dixie (2019): “Juveniles and their families are historically unable to pay”; Escambia (2019): “The local economy and ability to pay affect the collection rate.”¹⁸

Florida law requires that unpaid court fees be sent to private debt collection companies; and still, collections data show that these private efforts have little impact on collections received. Of the counties that reported data on the private collection of juvenile fees in 2019, all reported negligible amounts of fee revenue received.



Source: Florida CCOC Collection Agent '19-'20 Annual Report. For additional county rates, please see **Appendix III**.

¹⁸ Clerk of Court Quarterly Collections Performance Measure reports on file with authors and available upon request.

Organizations that Oppose Fees on Youth

National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges — the oldest judicial membership organization in the country recognizes that core functions necessary for the nation’s juvenile courts should be fully funded by governmental revenue and not by revenue generated by fines, fees, and costs.¹⁹

The American Probation and Parole Association — the leading voice of the community corrections industry, and the field’s leading professional membership association, recognizes that officers are spending time collecting financial assessments instead of focusing on their responsibilities to supervise and assist in rehabilitation. The Association calls for a focus on restitution over fines and fees.²⁰

Fair and Just Prosecution — an organization that brings together newly-elected local prosecutors as part of a network of leaders committed to promoting a justice system grounded in fairness, equity, compassion, and fiscal responsibility calls for the abolition of fines and fees during the COVID pandemic, and urges states to work to make these law and policy changes permanent.²¹

Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration — a group made up of over 200 current and former police chiefs, sheriffs, federal and state prosecutors, attorneys general, and correctional officials from all 50 states calls for an end to the imposition of criminal justice debt on youth.²²

Youth Correctional Leaders for Justice — a coalition of current and former leaders of youth justice agencies called for the immediate suspension of all fines and fees during the COVID pandemic.²³

¹⁹ “Resolution Addressing Fines, Fees and Costs in Juvenile Courts”, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, March 2018, <https://bit.ly/3sXfvhu>.

²⁰ “Resolution on the Use of Monetary Judgments for Justice-Involved Individuals”, *American Probation and Parole Association*, March 2017, <https://bit.ly/3FPzPVs>.

²¹ “Call For a Nationwide Moratorium on Juvenile Fees and Fines”, May 2020, <https://bit.ly/3mRE1g8>.

²² “Ensuring Justice and Public Safety: Federal Criminal Justice Priorities for 2020 and Beyond”, *Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration*, April 2020, <https://bit.ly/332Hpxl>.

²³ “Recommendations for Youth Justice Systems During the COVID-19 Emergency”, Youth Correctional Leaders for Justice, (March 2020) <https://yclj.org/covid19statement>.

States Across the Country Are Eliminating Juvenile Fees

In just seven years, a growing number of states — both red and blue — have enacted reforms to curb juvenile fees and protect children in the juvenile system.

Texas — In 2021, Texas eliminated a wide range of juvenile fees, including fees for court-ordered treatment, out-of-home placements, graffiti eradication, diversion, DNA testing, teen court, teen dating violence court, drug education, and alcohol awareness.

Louisiana — In 2021, Louisiana eliminated all fees for those under age 18 in both the juvenile and adult systems, including fees for care and treatment, counsel, and probation supervision.

Oregon — In 2021, Oregon eliminated all fees and fines and wiped away all outstanding juvenile justice system debt.

New Mexico — In 2021, New Mexico eliminated all juvenile fees and fines, including penalties of up to \$100 for possession of marijuana and the nonrefundable “application fee” for a public defender.

Colorado — In 2021, Colorado eliminated all juvenile fees and discharged all outstanding juvenile fee debt.

Virginia — In 2021, Virginia eliminated juvenile fees charged to the parents of youth detained or committed to the state Department of Juvenile Justice.

New Jersey — In 2021, New Jersey passed two bills eliminating almost all remaining fees and financial penalties, and canceled all outstanding debt related to these fees.

Maryland — In 2020, Maryland eliminated all juvenile fees and fines, including fees for legal representation, cost of care, and other court costs, and fines imposed for motor vehicle violations, possession of tobacco, and falsifying identification. The law also ended the collection of outstanding debt.

New Hampshire — In 2020, New Hampshire costs of services and child support imposed on parents of youth in the justice system.

Nevada — In 2019, Nevada eliminated all juvenile fees, including fees for cost of care, court programs, drug and alcohol evaluation, and court-appointed representation.

California — In 2018, California eliminated almost all juvenile court fines and fees. Legislation in 2020 forgave all outstanding juvenile justice system debt.

Washington — In 2015, Washington eliminated numerous juvenile diversion fees, court costs, appellate courts fees, adjudication fees, and certain fines.

Why Florida Should Lead the Next Wave of States Ending Juvenile Fees

Over the past decade, the Florida Legislature has promoted children's futures by removing roadblocks to jobs, education and vocational training, and safe housing.

The Legislature has recognized that many childhood misbehaviors are rooted in a response to trauma, victimization, and untreated mental health issues, and that intervention and treatment are better courses of action than harsh penalties, sanctions, and overly restrictive programs. This has led to several successful reforms aimed at improving the lives of young people including:

The Safe Harbor Act presumed victimization and coercion into child sex trafficking rather than delinquency (2012)

Lowering the age for expunction of juvenile records and keeping records confidential by providing law enforcement the authority to not place juvenile arrests online (2014)

Expanding civil citations has resulted in tens of thousands of children avoiding needless arrest records (2015)

Banning child marriage has practically eliminated forced marriage (2018)

Expanding juvenile diversion opportunities has given children new paths to clearing their records (2018); and, removing the statute of time limitation for sexual battery against children has brought abusers to justice (2020).

Expanding automatic expunction for nonjudicial juvenile arrest records for any offense if the individuals completed diversion programs, passed both the House and Senate unanimously but vetoed by the Governor (2021), has been revised and is expected to pass unanimously again and be signed into law next year.

The **Debt-Free Justice for Children Act** (HB257/SB428) is the next step in Florida's efforts to prioritize and protect children's futures. This bill would eliminate 31 court fees and costs currently imposed on all youth up to age 18 and their families, and extend these protections for youth who qualify for extended care in the child welfare system up to age 21. The law would also vacate all outstanding fee orders, vacate the related debt, and reinstate driving privileges for those youth who lost them for failure to pay fees.

The Debt-Free Justice for Children Act will give youth the chance to pursue their dreams without the burden of fee debt. It will help families rediscover the hope that is too often crushed by piling court bills; and it will provide Florida with a key opportunity to lead the next wave of states ending juvenile fees.

Appendices

APPENDIX I: List of Florida's Costs and Fees Imposed on Youth

Court Costs, Fees, and Service Charges Description	Juvenile	Young Adult/Crossover	If collected, where are the fees distributed?
Indigent/Public Defender Application Fee (Florida Statute 27.52)	\$50	\$50	98% to the Indigent Criminal Defense Trust Fund, 2% for administrative costs/General Revenue
Driver License Reinstatement Fee – Civil (FL Statute 318.15)	\$60	\$60	Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund
License Suspension - Criminal (FL Statute 322.245)	\$25 Delinquency Fee \$60 Reinstatement Fee	\$25 Delinquency Fee \$60 Reinstatement Fee	Delinquency Fee: \$10 to General Revenue; \$15 to the Clerk of the Court; Reinstatement Fee: Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund
Court Costs - Crime Prevention (FL Statute 775.083(2))	\$20 Misdemeanor, Other \$50 Felony	\$20 Misdemeanor, Other \$50 Felony	Crime Prevention Fund
Additional Court Costs (FL Statute 938.01)	N/A	\$3	92% to FDLE CJ Standards and Training TF; 6.3% to FDLE Op. TF; 1.7% to DCFS DV TF
Crimes Compensation Trust Fund Cost (FL Statute 938.03)	\$50	\$50	\$49 to Crimes Compensation Trust Fund; \$1 to the Clerk of the Court
Add. Court Costs (FL Statute 938.05)	N/A	\$225 Felony \$60 Misdemeanor	\$25/\$10 to General Revenue; Remainder to

		\$60 Criminal Traffic	Fine and Forfeiture Fund
Fee imposed in controlled substance offense (FL Statute 938.055)	N/A	\$100	Operating Trust Fund of the Department of Law Enforcement
Court Cost - Crime Stoppers (FL Statute 938.06)	N/A	\$20	\$17 to Crime Stopper Trust Fund; \$3 to Clerk of Court
Surcharge - Domestic Violence program funding (FL Statute 938.08)	N/A	\$201	\$85 to the Domestic Violence Trust Fund; \$115 to the county; \$1 to the Clerk of the Court
Surcharge - Rape Crisis Centers (FL Statute 938.085)	\$151	\$151	\$150 to the Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund; \$1 to the Clerk of the Court
Additional Court Cost (FL Statute 938.10)	\$151	\$151	\$50 to Guardian Ad Litem; \$100 for Children's Advocacy Centers; \$1 to the Clerk of the Court
Additional Court Cost-Misdemeanors involving drugs or alcohol (FL Statute 983.13)	N/A	\$15	\$14 to County Drug Abuse Trust Fund; \$1 to the Clerk of the Court
Additional Court Cost-Local Criminal Justice Education (FL Statute 938.15)	N/A	\$2	To the county for criminal justice education
Additional Court Cost-Teen Court (FL Statute 938.19)	Up to \$3	Up to \$3	Teen Court, 5%(\$0.15) retained by the Clerk for admin. costs.

Additional Assessment- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (FL Statute 938.23)	N/A	Amount up to statutory fine amount of underlying charge	County Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Trust Fund or Grants and Donations Trust Fund of the Dept. of Children and Families
Cost of Prosecution and Investigation (FL Statutes 938.27/985.032)	No less than \$50 for misdemeanor or criminal traffic; no less than \$100 for felony	No less than \$50 for misdemeanor or criminal traffic; no less than \$100 for felony	To entity that incurred investigation expense (agency trust funds, FDLE); Cost of prosecution to State Attorneys Revenue Trust Fund
Cost of Public Defender (FL Statute 938.29)	No less than \$50 for misdemeanor or criminal traffic; no less than \$100 for felony or VOP	No less than \$50 for misdemeanor or criminal traffic; no less than \$100 for felony or VOP	Indigent Criminal Defense Fund
Additional Court Costs and Surcharges (FL Statute 939.185) (Miami-Dade Only)	\$65 + \$85	\$65 + \$85	Clerk of Court's Fine and Forfeiture Fund
Expungement Fee (FL Statute 943.0515)	\$75	N/A	Department of Law Enforcement Operating Trust Fund
Subsistence Fees (FL Statute 944.485)	N/A	Amount of daily subsistence costs	Department of Corrections
Cost of Supervision, Electronic Monitoring (FL Statute 948.09)	N/A	NTE actual cost + \$2/month surcharge; Misdemeanor Supervision \$40+/month; Cost of electronic monitoring/urinalysis, etc.	NTE actual cost & \$2-DOC for probation officer's training & Equipment; \$40 to supervision provider; Costs of electronic monitoring/urinalysis to provider

Reimbursement to Crime Victims' Services Office (FL Statute 960.28)	Up to \$1000	Up to \$1000	Crimes Compensation Trust Fund
Right to Counsel (FL Statute 985.033)	Right to counsel, eliminates waiver, reasserts no fee for indigency application	N/A	
Cost of Supervision and Cost of Care (FL Statute 985.039)	\$1/Day, \$5/Day (Assessed against parent(s)/guardian)	N/A	Department of Juvenile Justice
Civil Citation and Prearrest Diversion programs (FL Statute 985.12)	Program Fee (Judicial Circuit to determine)	N/A	If the program imposes a fee, the clerk of the court of the applicable county must receive a reasonable portion of the fee.
Neighborhood Restorative Justice programs (FL Statute 985.155)	Bond payment by parent/guardian	N/A	
Medical, psychiatric, psychological, substance abuse, educational examination and treatment (FL Statute 985.18)	Reimbursement for expenses of emergency treatment or care	N/A	The county or the state
Court and Witness Fees (FL Statute 985.331)	Varies	N/A	The witness

APPENDIX II: Sample Memorandum of Costs Issued by the Juvenile Court

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA			
JUVENILE DIVISION	MEMORANDUM OF COSTS (JUVENILE)	CASE NUMBER	
<i>Jac</i>		<i>Jac</i>	
IN THE INTEREST OF:		D.O.B.	
A CHILD		<div style="text-align: center;"> CLOCK IN FILED JUN 30 2020 HARVEY RUVIN CLERK, CIRCUIT COURT MIAMI-DADE, CO. FLA. </div>	
<u>Court Costs/Fines/Fees</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Florida Statute</u>	<u>Discharge*</u>
♦ Crimes Compensation Trust Fund	\$ <u>50.00</u>	938.03	_____
♦ Add'l. Court Cost (Ord. 04-116)	\$ 25.00	939.185(1)(a)	_____
♦ Teen Courts (Ord. 98-185)	\$ 5.00	938.19	_____
TOTAL	\$ 440.00		
♦ Public Defender Application Fee	\$ <u>50.00</u>	27.52	_____
♦ Public Defender Cost of Defense	\$ <u>50.00</u>	938.29	_____ (Misdemeanor)
♦ Crimes Prevention Program (Ord. 98-171)	\$ <u>20.00</u>	775.083(2)a	_____ (Misdemeanor)
♦ Public Defender Cost of Defense	\$ <u>100.00</u>	938.29	_____ (Felony)
♦ Crimes Prevention Program (Ord. 98-171)	\$ <u>50.00</u>	775.083(2)a	_____ (Felony)
♦ Temporary Criminal Surcharge (Ord.05-123)	\$ 85.00	939.185(1)(b)	_____
♦ Fine	\$ _____	775.083	_____
♦ Surcharge (5% of fine) <i>cop.</i>	\$ <u>60.00</u>	938.04	_____
GRAND TOTAL	\$ <u>300.00</u>		
<p>Payment can be made with cash, money order, credit card or cashier's check, made payable to the Clerk of Courts. Please indicate your name, above case number, and write "Fines/Costs" on your payment. You are responsible for retaining the receipt for your records. Payment Address is:</p> <p>Miami Dade Children's Courthouse, Clerk of Courts, 155 NW Third Street, Room #3318, Miami, FL 33128</p> <p>Parent/Guardian Signature <u><i>via zoom</i></u> Date _____</p> <p>Parent/Guardian Address _____ Zip Code <u><i>33165</i></u></p> <p>Done and Ordered in Miami-Dade County, Florida this <u><i>30</i></u> day of <u><i>June</i></u>, 20 <u><i>20</i></u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ Circuit Court Judge</p> <p>* DISCHARGE: C- CONVERTED TO COMMUNITY SERVICE I- INDIGENT J- JUDGMENT/LIEN P- PLEA (STATE NEGOTIATED) S- SUSPENDED W- WAIVED</p>			

White - Court File

Canary - Respondent

Pink - Office

APPENDIX III:

Florida Counties; Private Collection Rates for Juvenile Fees FY 2019-2020

COUNTY	COLLECTIONS SENT	COLLECTIONS RECEIVED
Citrus	\$6,822	\$835.00
Highlands	\$77,601.73	\$7,138.02
Lee	\$30,687.00	\$3,319.20
Okeechobee	\$11,786.97	\$35.00
Orange	\$0.00	\$3,000.00* (from previous years sent)
Saint Lucie	\$644,354.59	\$3685.34
Volusia	\$10,125.00	\$900.00
Statewide	\$781,377.29	\$18,912.56

APPENDIX IV: LIVING COSTS ON A MINIMUM WAGE INCOME

FLORIDA LIVING COSTS	1 ADULT (WORKING)			2 ADULTS (1 WORKING)			2 ADULTS (BOTH WORKING)		
	NUMBER OF CHILDREN			NUMBER OF CHILDREN			NUMBER OF CHILDREN		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
FOOD	4,670	6,990	9,294	7,238	9,305	11,345	7,238	9,305	11,345
CHILD CARE	8,319	16,638	24,957	0	0	0	8,319	16,638	24,957
MEDICAL	9,421	9,109	9,249	9,109	9,249	8,903	9,109	9,249	8,903
HOUSING	14,980	14,980	20,114	14,980	14,980	20,114	14,980	14,980	20,114
TRANSPORTATION	9,378	11,672	13,896	11,672	13,896	12,611	11,672	13,896	12,611
CIVIC	3,889	3,554	4,127	3,554	4,127	3,982	3,554	4,127	3,982
OTHER	4,687	5,144	6,216	5,144	6,216	6,235	5,144	6,216	6,235
REQUIRED ANNUAL INCOME AFTER TAXES	55,345	68,088	87,853	51,698	57,774	63,188	60,017	74,411	88,145

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