

- The enforcement of the Compulsory School Attendance Laws.
- The removal of the age restrictions on a minor's application for a marriage license.
- The giving of judicial consent to a minor's employment or enlistment in the armed services if law requires such consent.
- The giving of judicial consent to the medical treatment of a child when his/her parents or guardians are unable to do so.
- Judicial authorization of an abortion without parental consent.
- The adjudication of alleged traffic violations by persons under the age of eighteen.
- The transfer of serious delinquency cases to criminal court for trial as adults.

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 37-1-159, the juvenile court is a Court of Record. It may enforce its orders in any way in which a court of equity may enforce its orders and decrees, including by imprisonment and by fine for contempt.

Juvenile Court Professional Staff

The dedication of the juvenile court staff is crucial to the functioning of the juvenile court. The typical juvenile court professional staff is comprised of the Juvenile Court Judge, the Referee (primarily in the larger courts), the Youth Services Officers or Probation Officers, and the Juvenile Court Clerk.

The Juvenile Court Judge must be 30 years old, licensed to practice law (unless elected to the post prior to 1982, or the county has no qualified attorney), a resident of his/her district for one year, and elected by the people. In addition to his/her judicial duties, the Judge is the chief administrator of the court and is seen as having the following attributes: (1) learned in the law; (2) possessing administrative ability and experience; (3) maintaining a broad acquaintance with modern social problems affecting children and youth; and (4) having a realistic understanding of children and their behavior in relation to their total life needs.

The Referee is appointed by the Judge, and may be directed to hear any case or class of cases. He or she must be licensed to practice law and has the same authority and powers as the Judge to issue process and to conduct proceedings. Referees are generally appointed when the court's juvenile justice population is greater than one Judge can cover, or when a commitment is probable and the Judge is not an attorney.