

# **The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services in cooperation with the Criminal Justice Council announce the Statewide Juvenile Civil Citation Program Beginning**

**Wilmington, DE-** The Criminal Justice Council is pleased to announce that funding has been awarded to the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) for the implementation of Delaware's Juvenile Civil Citation Program. This project will address juvenile first-time misdemeanor offenses for violations of Disorderly Conduct, Loitering, Shoplifting, Title IV Alcohol Offenses (underage consumption and possession), Possession of Marijuana (less than 1 ounce), and Criminal Trespass III. Since early 2010, the State has convened work groups with statewide representatives involved in juvenile justice to look at alternative methods of arrest for low level first-time misdemeanor juveniles.

The Juvenile Civil Citation Program funded with a grant of \$67,745 per year for three years, will try to prevent further delinquency, and ensure that participating youth will address their offense appropriately without creating a criminal record. This will allow juveniles the opportunity to be held accountable for their actions without limiting future growth and success as the result of having a criminal arrest/adjudication. Additionally, participating youth will be given the opportunity to have intervention services at pre arrest stage of delinquency. "The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services looks forward to building partnerships

with our community stakeholders and law enforcement to promote and expand the civil citation process statewide. By intervening at the early stages of delinquency, we can provide immediate intervention and hold youth accountable for their actions”, said YRS Director Nancy Dietz.

Christian Kervick, Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Council, noted that we were proud to be a partner in the development of the Civil Citation program for DYRS. This program will provide another tool for law enforcement to move low level first time juvenile offenders through the system efficiently and effectively while reserving more resources to dedicate to more serious juvenile offenders.

Studies have shown that diverting first-time juvenile misdemeanants through programs such as civil citation saves significant dollars that otherwise would be spent if these same youth were arrested and required to go through formal delinquency processing. Delaware’s model utilizes much of the existing state’s juvenile justice system tools, with the addition and creation of a Juvenile Civil Citation Coordinator position to organize, collaborate, and move this concept forward. The projected start date will be in July, 2015.