

Mission Police Department

First Offender Program



Texas Family Code Section 52.031

- The Texas Family Code Section 52.031 allows law enforcement agencies to adopt a First Offender Program for Juveniles between the ages of 10-16 years.

Optional Overview

- The First Offender Program is for the children between the ages of 10-16 who have committed for the first time a crime classified between a class “B” Misdemeanor and State Jail Felony. It excludes weapons and violence offenses. (Texas Family Code Section 52.031) Offenses that are eligible for this new program include but are not limited to: Possession of Marijuana, Thefts, Criminal Mischief, and Graffiti.
- Voluntary Basis ---not forcing anyone to do it.
- Voluntary restitution – to the victim if necessary.
- Voluntary community service, or other requirements can be assigned.
- Educational, vocational training, counseling, and / or other rehabilitative services are available.
- Periodic reporting by the child to Mission Police Department
- 90 Day probationary period
- Upon Successful completion of this program:
- Students participating in this opportunistic six week trial & subsequent 90 day probation period: will have their first time criminal offense permanently cleared by the Mission Police Department.
- This will provide the individual with a second chance at a successful and hopeful future.
- With this in mind, they would not have to worry about having a record when they are older. Additionally, they would avoid having to spend money in court cost.
- It would be as if the offense never occurred!

Curriculum



The course curriculum will be facilitated by high- quality instructors and may include educational field trips to enhance and broaden the education of the student at various valley wide locations, (locations to be disclosed at a later date).

In addition, participants will attend Saturday morning guidance meetings with police officers and First Offender Program staff. Attendees will be subject to other positive re-enforcement activities like team building will consist of meetings with community leaders, positive community and other dedicated community professionals wanting and willing and able to assist in the team building and communication process.

Class Program (Sub-Topics)



Children accepted in the First Offender Program will be REQUIRED to attend two hour classes (with their parent/guardian) held at the Mission Police Department on consecutive Saturdays for 6 weeks. These educational classes will commence at 10:00 AM and conclude 12:00 Noon. These classes will cover sub-topic which will include but are not limited to:

- 1. Violence prevention**
- 2. Drug and alcohol resistance**
- 3. Respect**
- 4. Leadership skill development**
- 5. Teamwork**
- 6. Life Skills & The Importance of an Education**
- 7. Anger Management**
- 8. Discipline**
- 9. Decision Making**
- 10. Positive choices**

Instruction is provided for the students and adults (when able)

Six Week Class Schedule Break Down (Short Version)



1. What is a fault in someone's character, and what type of faults have I experienced in my past? Deciding to change my life character, and behavior in a positive direction. Learning to resist violence/ control my anger and learning how to earn respect from others/ respecting myself.
2. How my past actions affect not only my future, but all of those around me. Understanding the consequences of my actions, and writing out the faults leading up to my offense. Learning how to make long term goals, and understanding how to reach them.
3. Recognizing who else is affected by my faults, starting the process of rebuilding the trust I lost, learning to say I am sorry, and following through with actions to prove it. Finding the courage to apologize to my parents/ guardians, and show them, I want to change.
4. Learning to serve others, while learning new outlooks on life and friends. Understanding what is a good and bad influence/ friend and learning how to get involved in my school and community. Coming to terms with what I need to change in my life in order to not reoffend. Committing to making a positive change in my life by creating a contract with myself and parent/guardian.
5. Learning from our past, understanding the mistakes we made, and understanding the lesson they can teach us. Understanding the problem solving process, and learning new tricks to make better decisions in the future.
6. This week is a makeup week where we go back into detail on topics we did not have enough time for. We also utilize this week to view videos about drug and alcohol resistance. Our parents also received additional information on drug and alcohol abuse/ prevention. (Other topics and activities can also be covered during the week).

Student Class Completion Speech Requirements:

- Students must state whether or not they are ready to leave their past decisions, behaviors, and character behind, and start fresh as they move into their 90 day probation.
- The student must pledge to everyone present that they will **not** commit any further offenses, and be willing to change parts of their lives to show they mean it.
- The student must indicate what lessons they have learned throughout their six weeks attending the Mission Police Department First Offender Program (this should be a specific list).
- The student is required to list 3 things that they have removed from their lives, and or 3 things they are going to change in their lives.
- Students are expected to thank their Parent/Guardian for bringing them to the 6 classes.
- All of these statements must be made in front of the class, before dismissal. This is done to build the child's skill set in public speaking, and as reinforcement for all the curriculum they have already received.
- The student will also be made aware of the mandatory check in policy; that is now to be implemented for all students entering their 90 day probation.
- Failure for a student to comply with this policy can result in an extension of the 90 day probation period, having to complete additional classes, and or be required to complete an outside outpatient program in addition to program pre-requisites.

Mandated Check in Policy Terms

This is subject to change and modification at any time

- Students of the Mission Police Department First Offender Program are required to participate in a mandatory check in system once they start their 90 day probation period, or during a school holiday lasting at least 1 week including weekends.
- During this time period students are required to make contact with the First Offender Specialist at the Mission Police Department between the hours of 8AM-12 PM and 1 PM -5 PM Monday through Friday.
- Alternatively, accepted check ins will also include: leaving a voice mail for the Specialist if they are not in office (once the number is approved by Chief Dominguez), the student may stop by before, or immediately after a scheduled First Offender Program class on Saturday (no later than 12:15 PM), or the student may contact the specialist via email with an update of how things are going at home, in school, with their friends, and if they are having any issues with any illicit activities.
- Once a student has completed the Mission Police Department First Offender Program, the student is to check in with the First Offender Specialist once every 2 weeks. This is meant as a means to keep track of the students until they graduate or reach the age to be considered an adult (17 years old).
- For parents of the program it is highly encouraged for them to also check in weekly, or twice a week at least for the same purposes of being proactive to prevent recidivism. This is currently not a required policy, but this may change in the near future.
- Failure for a student to comply with this policy can result in an extension of the 90 day probation period, having to complete additional classes, and or be required to complete an outside outpatient program in addition to program pre-requisites.