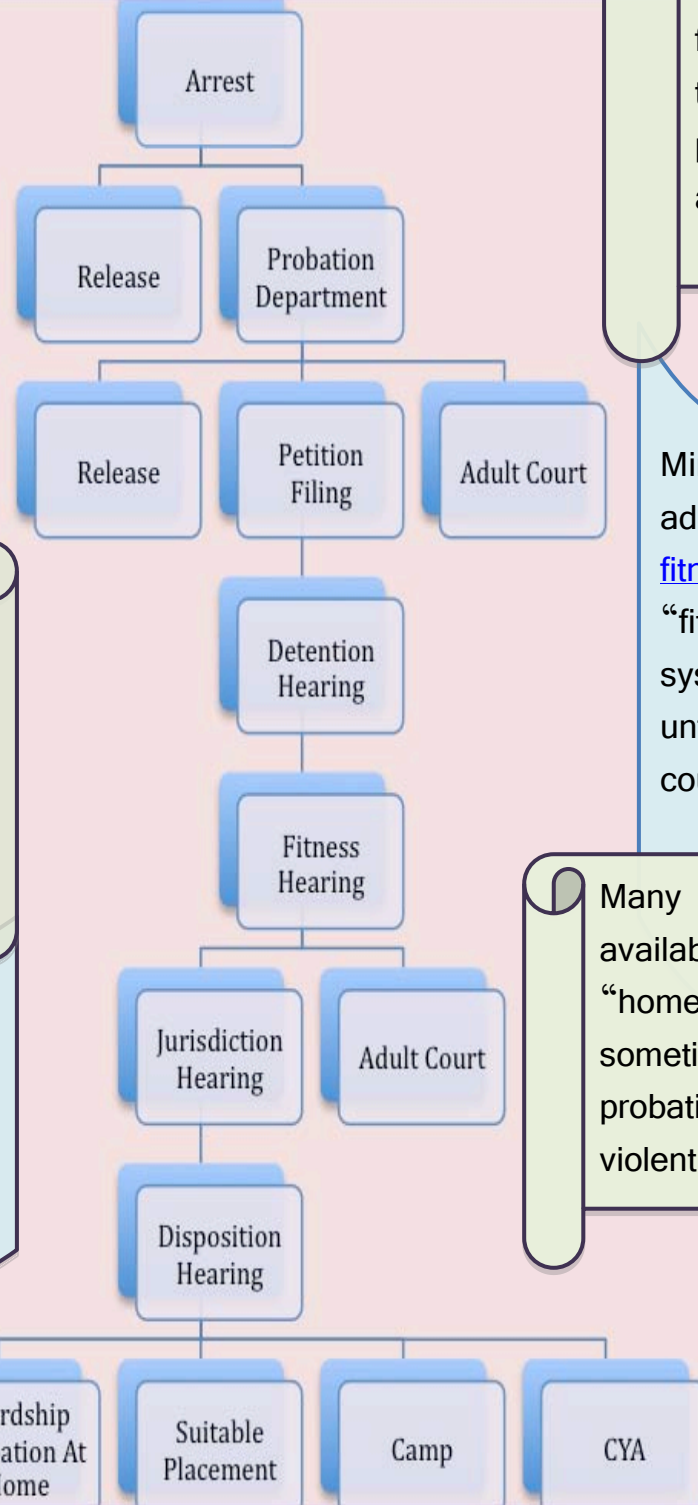


THE CALIFORNIA JUVENILE COURT PROCESS

When a minor is arrested in California, the cops have choices. They can release the minor with a warning or they can deliver the minor to probation officers at juvenile hall. Minors have rights at each stage, including during [police interrogations](#).

In serious cases, the probation officer might want to keep the minor at juvenile hall. But the minor is entitled to a swift [detention hearing](#) so a judge can decide whether detention is necessary to protect the minor or society.

In juvenile delinquency court, the “trial” is called the jurisdiction or [adjudication hearing](#). “Sentencing” happens at the [disposition hearing](#).



Just like cops, probation officers have choices. They can “divert” the minor from formal court proceedings or they can recommend that the prosecutor [file a petition](#) against the minor.

Minors are sometimes tried as adults. A judge decides at a [fitness hearing](#) if the minor is “fit” for the juvenile delinquency system. If the minor is found unfit, the minor goes to adult court.

Many [sentencing options](#) are available. Often a minor can stay “home on probation,” but sometimes a minor is committed to probation camp. CYA is for violent and repeat offenders.

Please visit our article [California Juvenile Criminal Defense](#) for more information about the California juvenile delinquency system.