



## HB25-1294 | Court Costs Assessed to Juveniles

**STATUS:** Introduced in the Colorado House of Representatives and assigned to the Judiciary Committee on March 4, 2025. Its next hearing before the Judiciary Committee is [scheduled for Tuesday, March 18](#).

**SPONSORS:** Rep. Junie Joseph (D), Rep. Jamie Jackson (D), Sen. Tony Exum Sr. (D)

**SUMMARY:** The bill prohibits the courts or the state from assessing or collecting any administrative fees, costs, and surcharges assessed against a juvenile who is under 18 years of age when the crime was committed and under 21 years of age when sentenced. Specifically:

- Courts cannot assess court-ordered costs against a juvenile or their parent, guardian, or legal custodian.
- Courts cannot impose community service program fees on juveniles or their parents/guardians.
- Courts cannot assess restorative justice surcharges against juveniles or their parents/guardians.
- Juveniles and their parents/guardians are not required to pay the \$25 public defender processing fee.
- Courts cannot impose fines or costs on juveniles or their parents/guardians.

**FISCAL NOTES:** This bill is not projected to have any fiscal impact on the state budget. The bill is projected to have a minimal impact on the state workload.

**SUPPORT:** There are no lobbyists currently registered in support of this bill.

**OPPOSITION:** Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance

## PROS

- Many families of minors involved in the juvenile justice system are already struggling financially. When families cannot afford to pay, minors may face additional penalties, extended involvement in the justice system, or even incarceration. Eliminating these costs can reduce the financial burden on families and reduce the likelihood that youth will become further involved simply due to an inability to pay court fees.
- Court fees can perpetuate cycles of poverty and incarceration; eliminating these fees can help support positive outcomes for youth and interrupt the poverty cycle.

## CONS

- Court costs help fund the juvenile justice system; eliminating these fees could potentially lead to budget shortfalls and reduced services.
- Some argue that the imposition of court fees has a deterrent effect which will no longer be relevant if this law were to pass.