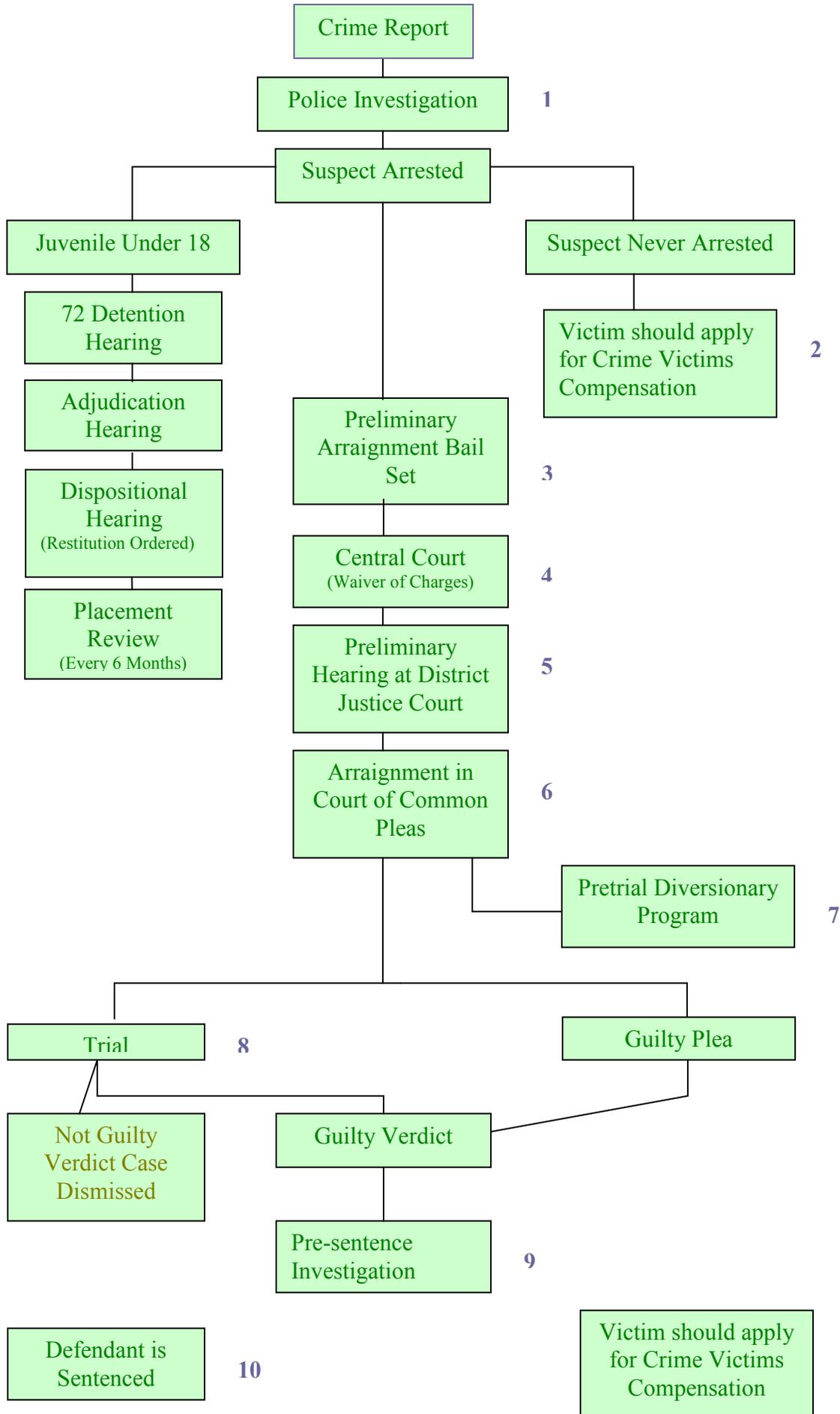


# CASE PROCEDURE



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1. May continue until trial
2. If you have sustained physical injury as a direct result of a crime of violence, or are legally dependent for support upon a person who has sustained physical injury or death as a direct result of crime of violence, or have legally assumed or voluntarily paid the medical or burial expenses incurred as a direct result thereof, you may qualify for indemnification by the State of Pennsylvania for the out-of-the-pocket wages, medical or burial expenses which you have incurred as a result of the crime. Call the Crime Victim Advocate at 242-3372 for more information and for the necessary forms to file a claim.
3. Before a District Justice. The District Justice reads charges to the defendant, advises him of his rights, accepts his plea, sets bail and fixes a date for a preliminary hearing. Neither the victim nor the witnesses need to appear at the preliminary Arraignment.
4. At Central Court, the defendant comes into the court in front of a Magisterial District Judge and either requests a preliminary hearing or waives his/her charges through to the Court of Common Pleas.
5. At the Preliminary Hearing before a District Justice, the District Attorney will represent the Commonwealth. Victims and witnesses may appear and give testimony in response to questions from the District Attorney and defense counsel. (Note: the defendant may appear choose to give up his right to a preliminary hearing and the case will be sent on to Court).
6. Defendant enters a plea to the criminal charges. Plea negotiations may begin at this time between the District Attorney and defense counsel. If a satisfactory agreement can be reached between parties, such as a plea of guilty to one charge and a dismissal of another charge, then there will be no trial and the next step will be sentencing.
7. Designed for specific cases and offenders, such as the ARD program for first offenders charged with driving under the influence, these programs eliminate the need for a trial and result in the offender being placed on probationary status.
8. At trial, the District Attorney must prove his case to the satisfaction of the Court and/or jury. You, as a victim or witness, will be questioned by the District Attorney and defense counsel concerning the crime charged against the defendant.
9. During the Pre-Sentence Investigation which takes between 4-6 weeks the Court's Probation Department will collect information about the defendant and the circumstances surrounding the crime. Part of the process includes a Victim Impact Statement. You will have the opportunity to provide pertinent information concerning the impact of the crime on you and your family. This information will enable the Court to see the full picture presented by the case and impose an appropriate sentence upon the defendant.
10. Based upon the Pre-Sentence report and all the circumstances of the case, the Court imposes sentence upon the defendant, e.g., imprisonment or probation, restitution, fines and court costs. The District Attorney represents the Commonwealth and the victim at the sentencing hearing. As a victim you may attend this hearing. You will also be notified by the District Attorney or the Crime Victim Advocate of the sentence imposed.