



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2015 Wisconsin Act 144**  
[2015 Assembly Bill 574]

**Electronic Juvenile Court Records**

### **BACKGROUND**

The juvenile court is the court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under ch. 48, Stats., the Children's Code, and ch. 938, Stats., the Juvenile Justice Code.

In general, juvenile court records may not be open to inspection or their contents disclosed except by order of the juvenile court or as provided in the statutes. The statutes specify to which entities the juvenile court must make information relating to juvenile court proceedings available. For example, the statutes list to whom the juvenile court is required to make information available relating to a proceeding under the Children's Code or Juvenile Justice Code that is contained in the electronic records of the juvenile court, regardless of whether the person to whom the information is transferred is a party to or is otherwise involved in the proceedings in which the electronic records containing that information were created. Under prior law, a juvenile court was required to provide such information to the following entities:

- Any other juvenile court.
- A municipal court exercising jurisdiction under the Juvenile Justice Code.
- A court of criminal jurisdiction.
- A person representing the interests of the public under the Children's Code or the Juvenile Justice Code (e.g., a district attorney or corporation counsel).
- An attorney or guardian ad litem for a parent or child who is a party to a proceeding in a juvenile court or a municipal court.
- A district attorney prosecuting a criminal case.
- A law enforcement agency (only referenced in the Juvenile Justice Code).

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

- The Department of Children and Families.

Prior law also authorized the Director of State Courts to use the Circuit Court Automated Programs (CCAP), an electronic information system, to make information contained in the electronic records of the juvenile court available to the entities listed above.

### **2015 WISCONSIN ACT 144**

Wisconsin Act 144 (the Act) adds a county department of human or social services (county department) to the list of entities to which the juvenile court is required to make information available relating to a proceeding under the Children's Code or Juvenile Justice Code that is contained in the electronic records of the juvenile court. The county department must keep the information confidential and may only use or allow access to that information for the purposes of providing child welfare or juvenile justice intake or dispositional services. The Act also authorizes the Director of State Courts to use CCAP to make the electronic records of the juvenile court available to a county department.

*Effective date:* This Act took effect on February 6, 2016.

*Prepared by:* Melissa Schmidt, Senior Staff Attorney

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