



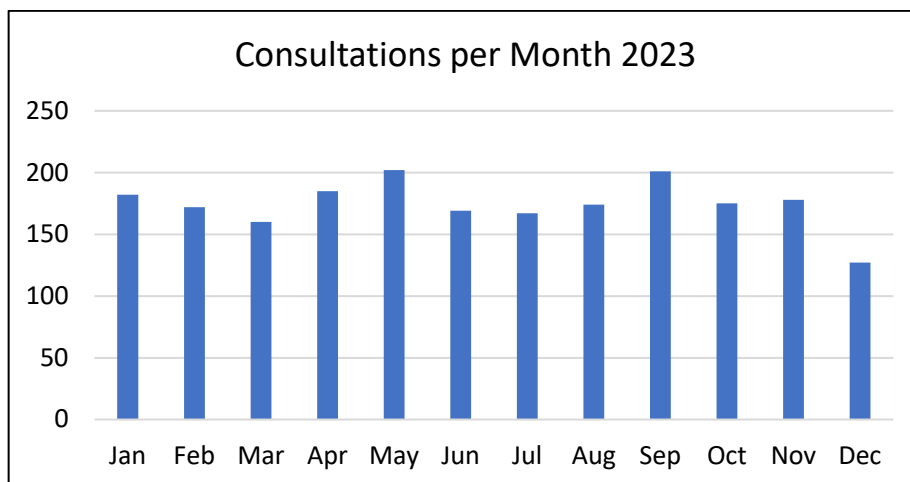
Washington State  
**Office of  
Public  
Defense**

## OPD's Youth Access to Counsel Program: 2023 Update

The Youth Access to Counsel (YAC) Program was launched on January 1, 2022 in order to make interactions with law enforcement more fair for Washington youth by providing them with a way to understand their constitutional rights during stressful interactions with officers. [RCW 13.40.740](#) created a non-waivable affirmative requirement that law enforcement put youth into contact with an attorney during certain phases of an investigation, such as prior to custodial interrogation or when seeking permission to search. The Office of Public Defense (OPD) created the YAC Line to provide these consultations statewide with attorneys available 24/7. Officers reach an attorney by calling 1-877-JPUB-DEF (1-877-578-2333).

### How many calls come into the YAC Line?

YAC Attorneys provided **2,092 consultations** to youth in 2023 and **4,419 consultations** since the program launched on Jan 1, 2022.<sup>1</sup>



Average consultations per day: 6  
Most consultations in one day: 16  
Lowest number of calls in a day: 0

### How long does it take Law Enforcement to reach a YAC attorney?



- Over 70% of calls that resulted in YAC consultations were answered by an attorney in under one minute.
- About 96% of those calls were answered by an attorney in less than 2 minutes.
- Once in touch with an attorney, about 66% of consultations are completed within 20 minutes.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, data in this document represents the period between January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

### What do YAC Attorneys do?

- Gather information from the officer calling into the line in order to provide advice to the youth and then speak with the youth in a confidential setting.
- Provide the youth with information about their constitutional rights and how they apply to the youth's current situation to help them decide what to do.
- Engage in stated-interest representation, which means they give information and guidance about the law as applied to the youth's unique situation, but ultimately the youth chooses if they want to assert their rights or not.

### How does the YAC Line work?

- Nine experienced attorneys/nonprofit firms from across the state staff the YAC Line.
- The Line is staffed by four of these attorneys at all times. Calls are routed to the attorneys through a call chain allowing every call to be answered without requiring a recall by the officer.
- Between 60% and 70% of calls are answered by the attorney in Position A.

### Where do the calls come from?

- Since January 2022, calls have come from every county in the state except one.
- Over 200 law enforcement agencies have utilized the YAC Line statewide since 2022.

### Who are the youth consulting with YAC Attorneys?

- The youth ranged in age from 9 to 17.
- 2% of youth required an interpreter. (The YAC Line provides interpreter services.)
- The youth consulted identify as the following races and ethnicities:

