

6.2 Terminology Used in this Chapter

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Complainant is the person who files a complaint with the juvenile court counselor. It is also the term used for the person who signs the petition that is filed with the clerk of superior court. The person who signs the petition can be someone other than the person who originally filed the complaint. In either instance it is not required that the alleged victim be the complainant.

Complaint is the report from a law enforcement officer or from a member of the community made to the juvenile court counselor's office alleging delinquent acts committed by a juvenile. The complaint is typically recorded on the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) juvenile petition form.

Petition is the document filed in the office of the clerk of superior court initiating a juvenile court proceeding. The petition is analogous to a pleading such as a warrant or indictment against an adult in criminal court. See [AOC-J-310 through AOC-J-337](#) (juvenile delinquency petition forms).

Summons is the document issued by the clerk of superior court after the petition has been filed. The juvenile must be personally served with the summons and the petition for the court to obtain personal jurisdiction over the juvenile. The parent, guardian, or custodian of the juvenile must also be personally served unless they cannot be found through diligent effort, in which case the court may authorize summons by mail or publication. G.S. 7B-1806. In most jurisdictions the summons will include the name and telephone number of the attorney appointed to represent the juvenile. See [AOC-J-340](#) (Juvenile Summons and Notice of Hearing (Undisciplined/Delinquent)) (May 2014).