

If you want the help of a lawyer to talk about your options and other available resources, there are a number of places that may be able to offer you free legal help:

- Children's Law Center of Minnesota  
651-644-4438
- Legal Aid Society of MPLS– Youth Law Project—(Hennepin)  
612-334-5970
- Volunteer Lawyers Network—(Hennepin)  
612-752-6677
- Southern MN Regional Legal Services—(Ramsey & SW counties)  
651-222-4731
- Legal Rights Center—(Hennepin)  
612-337-0030
- Youthlink  
612-252-1200

## CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER OF MINNESOTA

Know Your Rights

# can I be EMANCIPATED?

CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER  
OF MINNESOTA  
450 Syndicate Street N.  
Suite 315  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651.644.4438  
[www.CLcmn.org](http://www.CLcmn.org)

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## WHAT IS EMANCIPATION?

Emancipation is the process of becoming free from control. In the family context, it results in parent(s) no longer having responsibility, custody, authority and control of a child.

A person generally is “emancipated” when they reach the age of majority (usually 18).

## What Does it Mean to be Emancipated?

### In Other States...

In some states, laws allow youth to be “emancipated” before they reach 18. This means they have all the legal rights of an adult, with a few exceptions—for example, they still cannot vote or drink alcohol until they are the appropriate age. This also means that their parents are no longer obligated to provide money, housing, food or health care, so the youth must support themselves.

### In Minnesota...

Youth in Minnesota generally emancipate when they reach the legal age of majority, at age 18. At this point, their parents are no longer obligated to provide money, housing or food.

**\*\*In Minnesota, there are no laws that give clear guidelines about how youth can be emancipated before they turn 18, or when a youth should be emancipated. There is no standard process a youth can follow to be emancipated before age 18.**

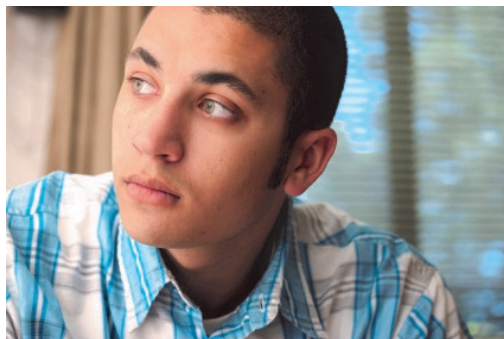
### I know a youth who was declared emancipated. How did she do it?

Her family probably had a problem that they solved through a lawsuit, and one issue was whether she was emancipated. The judge would have looked at factors such as whether her parents gave up the right to control her actions, or whether she lived on her own or had her own income. There are no standards on which a judge must base such a decision, so there is no certainty which youth will be declared emancipated.

She also may have lived in a state in which she was allowed to file a petition to become emancipated.

### So I can't just go to a judge and ask to be emancipated?

No. But if you feel your parents are not providing for you in the way they should be, there are other ways in which you can seek help.



## If Emancipation is Not an Option, What Do I Do Now?

**If you have been abused, neglected or feel unsafe at home, immediately contact your county's social services agency or the police.**

If you need a place to stay, ask your relatives and friends. There are also many places that will provide you with shelter and other resources, including food, medicine, or other things you need. Here are a few you could call or visit:

- **Avenues for Homeless Youth—612-522-1690**  
1708 Oak Park Ave. N.  
Minneapolis  
OPEN 24/7
- **The Bridge for Youth—612-377-8800**  
1111 W. 22nd St.  
Minneapolis  
OPEN 24/7
- **Safe House—651-644-3446**  
501 N. Ashbury St.  
St. Paul  
Housing for ages 16-21
- **Hope Street/St. Joseph's—612-204-8211 or 612-204-8250**  
1121 46th St. E.  
Minneapolis  
OPEN 24/7
- **LifeHaven—651-776-9805**
- **Face to Face—651-772-5555**  
501 N. Asbury St.                      1165 Arcade St.  
St. Paul                                      St. Paul
- **SafeZone Drop-In—651-224-9644**  
308 Prince St.  
St. Paul
- **Youthlink / Youth Opportunity Center—612-252-1200**  
41 N. 12th St.  
Minneapolis