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Oakland Co. attorneys: Judges unfairly jailing too many minors for drinking

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A pair of Oakland County attorneys have filed suit seeking to stop several district court judges from sending minors to jail for violating probation after their first conviction for possessing alcohol.

Attorney Jim Amberg of Keego Harbor said Friday evening that the judges of the 48th District Court in Bloomfield Township and the 52-3 District Court in Rochester Hills are "intentionally circumventing the law" by imposing harsh rules on first-time offenders, such as excessive probation reporting requirements and mandatory drug and alcohol testing -- with the intent of eventually jailing them.

In many other parts of the state, such arrests result in nothing more than a fine and an alcohol awareness class.

The lawsuit asks the Oakland County Circuit Court to take over all minor in possession cases that show up in those specific district courts.

The circuit court lawsuit was assigned to Judge Leo Bowman, who has, in the past, stopped the jailing of underage defendants.

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