

§ 7B-2402. Open hearings.

All hearings authorized or required pursuant to this Subchapter shall be open to the public unless the court closes the hearing or part of the hearing for good cause, upon motion of a party or its own motion. If the court closes the hearing or part of the hearing to the public, the court may allow any victim, member of a victim's family, law enforcement officer, witness or any other person directly involved in the hearing to be present at the hearing.

In determining good cause to close a hearing or part of a hearing, the court shall consider the circumstances of the case, including, but not limited to, the following factors:

- (1) The nature of the allegations against the juvenile;
- (2) The age and maturity of the juvenile;
- (3) The benefit to the juvenile of confidentiality;
- (4) The benefit to the public of an open hearing; and
- (5) The extent to which the confidentiality of the juvenile's file will be compromised by an open hearing.

No hearing or part of a hearing shall be closed by the court if the juvenile requests that it remain open. (1979, c. 815, s. 1; 1998-202, s. 6; 1998-229, s. 5.)