

Field Work Safety Procedure

Essential Summary:

Audience

- Youth Justice Caseworker (Community)
- Youth Justice Sessional Supervisor
- Youth Justice Mentors
- Youth Justice Conference Convenor
- Assistant Manager (Community)
- Area Manager

When to use this procedure:

Use this procedure when undertaking field work in the community.

When using CIMS refer to [CIMS Click \(CIMS Online Help\)](#) for step by step instructions

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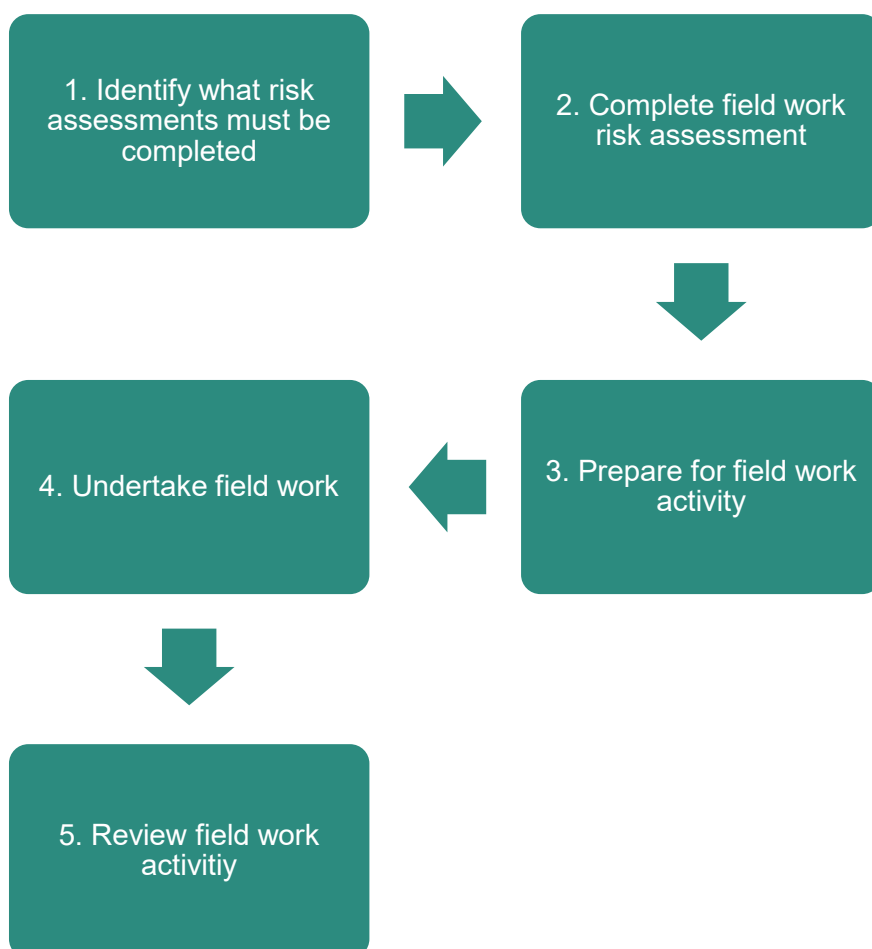
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1 Purpose

This procedure applies to all YJNSW employees who undertake field work in the course of their employment, including caseworkers, sessional supervisors, youth justice conferencing convenors, mentors and their managers and supervisors. This procedure outlines the steps employees must complete to assess and address field work safety.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the *Field Work Safety Policy* and the *Field Work Risk Assessment Form*.

2 Process Map



3 Procedural Steps

Step 1 – Identify what risk assessments must be completed

Responsibility: Employee

Tasks

Plan your field work, identifying where you will be going, who you will be meeting with, and what risk assessments need to occur.



Step 2 – Complete field work risk assessment

Responsibility: Employee

Tasks

If no risk assessment is in place:

If there is little information known about the fieldwork (e.g. transporting a young person who is not known to YJNSW), refer 7.6 of the *Field Work Safety Policy*.

Check your office risk register (or YJC referral form) and identify any hazards and control measures that should be implemented for the type of field work you are completing, and/ or the location you are attending.

Complete a new *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* or *YJC Field Work Risk Assessment* if there is no existing risk assessment for the field work you are undertaking or if significant changes are required (e.g. new hazards/risks have been identified or new control measures are to be put in place).

In exceptional circumstances, when a *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* is not able to be completed, identify whether a verbal risk assessment can occur with the Assistant Manager, taking into account section 7.7 of the *Field Work Safety Policy*. All hazards, risks and control measures must be recorded accurately as soon as possible after the field work.

For group programs or other site based activities, consider conducting a site inspection to adequately identify all hazards. Request a copy of any site or venue specific risk assessments from the venue owner (if applicable).

Use the appropriate *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* and eliminate or control hazards and risks using the hierarchy of controls.

Discuss identified risks with employees who have previously undertaken the same field work activities, if relevant.

Discuss the identified risks and control measures with your area or assistant manager and record the discussion and action taken.

Assess whether there are any health matters that may impact on the field work. If necessary, discuss with your manager and/or seek medical advice. Do not record this information on the young person's file.

Update alerts in CIMS if required.

Record in CIMS case note that the risk assessment was completed.

Submit *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* to the manager for approval.

Store approved copy of the *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* on the young person's C file (non-YJC clients only).

If a current risk assessment is in place:

Request a copy of any risk assessment that may be in place from your manager, or co-worker if applicable.

Review the *Field Work Risk Assessment Form* to ensure that it is accurate and addresses all hazards.

Review the control measures in the risk assessment and local risk register.

Discuss any concerns you have about field work with your manager

Responsibility: Manager

Tasks

If no risk assessment is in place:

Assist employee to identify and address any risks.

Review completed *Field Work Risk Assessment Form*. In exceptional circumstances, when the form is not able to be completed, undertake a verbal risk assessment with the caseworker, adhering to the risk assessment process outlined in the *Field Work Safety Policy* and addressing all areas outlined in the *Field Work Risk Assessment Form*.

Comment on any additional control measures that should be put in place.

Update the risk assessment to include any other risks/ control measures identified.

Assess competency of employee to undertake field work activities i.e. current licence, adequate vehicle, aware of local safety requirements and processes, health issues.

Advise employee of risk assessment outcome.

Store copies of the completed *Field Work Risk Assessment* documents, including the *Convenor Field Work Visit Record* on the young person's YJC file.

Provide YJC convenors with any new risk information as it becomes available.

Ensure that employees and convenors have access to the relevant sections of the local risk register.

Update risk register as required.



Step 3 – Prepare for field work

Responsibility: Employee

Tasks

After receiving manager approval, implement any identified pre field work control measures identified in the risk assessment or risk register.

Ensure that all relevant information is available in the Community Director approved *field work tracking system*, for the manager or person who is assigned to monitor field workers activities.

Check and be aware of the local communication and emergency plans prior to undertaking field work.

YJC convenors must complete the *Convenor Field Visit Record* and submit to the Assistant Manager or Area Manager for approval. If a convenor's assistant manager and area manager are not available at the time of the proposed field work, the convenor must not undertake the field work activity.

Provide relevant safety briefings to other field workers or young people when required (i.e. group programs, staff meetings occurring at another location, CSO sites).

The driver of the vehicle must ensure that the car is in safe working order with enough fuel to undertake the field visit.

Carry YJNSW photo identification.



Step 4 – Undertake field work

Responsibility: Employee

Tasks

Undertake field work activity while complying with the identified controls in place in the *Field Work Safety Risk Assessment Form*.

Follow the communication process in place at local office and obtain approval for any deviation from the approved field work activity as per local *field work tracking system*.

YJC convenors must check-in with the allocated manager monitoring the *Convenor Field Visit Record* before and after face-to-face field work activities.

Cease field work if it becomes unsafe, or if a new hazard is identified that has not been risk assessed.

Use pro-active, active and reactive protective behaviours (appendix B) as required and utilise emergency processes if needed.

Advise your manager of any incidents or safety issues as soon as practicable.

Fatigue management

Follow fatigue management strategies, including having a break from driving every two hours, or rotating drivers.

Responsibility: Manager

Tasks

Follow the office communication process for field work activity, including monitoring, or assigning another employee to monitor the field work tracking system.

Ensure the *field work tracking system* is accessible in case of emergency.

Ensure that the most up to date field work risk assessment documents are stored on the young person's YJC file, or C file as appropriate; including the *Convenor Field Work Visit Record* and the *Conference Day Risk Assessment*.

Managers (or the assigned employee) must be aware of where convenors are when they are undertaking field work. If a convenor fails to check-in, managers must follow their local communication process.



Step 5 – Review

Responsibility: Employee

Tasks

Review the risk assessment and update it if new hazards/ risks were identified, or if the controls in place were not adequate and at least every six months.

Notify your manager of any changes required to the local risk register.

Inform other relevant employees of any changes to the risk assessment (e.g. if another employee uses the same site for field work or visits the same family home).

Follow *Incident Management Policy* and *Incident Management Procedure* if an incident or a near miss occurs.

Update alerts if required, or inform manager of potential alerts if you do not have access to CIMS

Responsibility: Manager

Tasks

Facilitate the review and update the office's risk register.

Review any updated risk assessments.

Support employee in following the *Incident Management Policy and Procedure* if required.

Enter and approve alerts for any people that do not have access to CIMS.

4 Legislation

This procedure is supported by the following legislation:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017*
- *Workers Compensation Act 1987*
- *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998*

5 Supporting documents:

This procedure is supported by the following documents:

Related Policies

Field Work Safety Policy

Youth Justice Conference Convenor Management Policy


Related Documents

Field Work Risk Assessment Form

Field Work Tracking Form

Youth Justice Conference Manual

6 Document Information

Title:	Field Work Safety Procedure
Business Centre:	Operations Unit
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7 Document History

Version	Date	Reason for Amendment
1	December 2019	<i>New procedure developed to replace the Safe Operating Procedure Field Work Safety (D19/10289/YJ).</i>
1.1	February 2020	<i>Minor changes regarding storing items on the YJC file (D19/10289/YJ).</i>
2.0	October 2021	<i>Change to step 2, to include assessing when little information is available – based on post implementation review feedback process. D21/34100/YJ</i>

Appendix A - Accountabilities

Position	Accountabilities
Executive Director	Provides the necessary resources to ensure that the <i>Field Work Safety Policy</i> can be adhered to by all employees
Director Policy and Practice	Put in place an effective safe field work policy and procedure
Community Director	Ensure effective field work tracking systems are approved and in place at a local level. Undertake assurance activities to confirm that safe field work practices are being undertaken and local safety plans are in place.
Operational Training Unit	Develop and review the field work safety training package, ensuring it is accessible to all YJNSW employees who may undertake field work.
Area Managers and Assistant Managers	<p>Approve field work activities.</p> <p>Ensure and support all employees undertaking field work to be aware of and comply with their responsibilities regarding work, health and safety and this <i>Field Work Safety Policy</i> and Procedure.</p> <p>Ensure that all appropriate records relating to field work are kept including, risk registers, communication process, emergency process, field work safety plans, risk assessments, safe work procedures, training records, contacts with NSW Police Force etc.</p> <p>Ensure equipment required by employees is in good, working order and is maintained as required i.e. vehicles, mobile phones.</p> <p>Develop and implement a local field work tracking system and ensure an employee is allocated to monitor check in times for employees undertaking approved field work</p>
Manager, Safety	<p>Provide technical support and advice</p> <p>Audit compliance to the <i>Field Work Safety Policy</i> as part of the internal audit function of the safety management system</p>
All YJNSW employees undertaking field work	<p>Comply with this <i>Field Work Safety Policy</i> and the <i>Field Work Safety Procedure</i>.</p> <p>Comply with local specific operational procedures for undertaking field work including local safety strategies.</p> <p>Participate in mandatory WHS training and comply with relevant policy, procedure and safe work instructions.</p>
Young people	<p>Young people are sometimes considered employees (under current WH&S legislation) when undertaking work – e.g. when removing graffiti.</p> <p>Young people must be provided with risk information that is relevant to their health and safety; however this information is to be provided without compromising confidentiality and security requirements. This may take the form of a site induction or safety briefing.</p>

Appendix B – Protective Behaviours

Proactive Protective Behaviours

- Always complete the field work tracking form prior to leaving the office and lodge it with the designated person
- Ensure mobile phones are pre-programmed with the contact number for the designated person and/or manager/supervisor as well as numbers for emergency services (000)
- Where there is no mobile coverage arrangements are to be made to use a public phone or local agency landline
- Keep car keys and mobile phone (switched on) on your person
- Do not enter areas of unrest or where there appears to be trouble in the neighbourhood
- Park close to the premises on the street
- Park the vehicle so that it is readily accessible from the client's dwelling and departure is not impeded
- Check Google Maps (or similar) for initial visits to confirm that the address exists and to identify any environmental concerns i.e.: isolated location or a problem with property entry points.
- Do not park in driveways that may allow your vehicle to be blocked in
- Lock the vehicle when making calls and case noting
- Upon arrival and prior to exiting the vehicle check there are no persons affected by AOD or behaving aggressively
- Place car keys in an easily accessible place on your person and NOT in a bag
- Check in with the person you are planning to visit over the phone before you meet them.
- Complete field work with another employee.
- Avoid walking in deserted places and do not take shortcuts through secluded alleys or vacant lots
- Evaluate the need to enter the premises and avoid entry where there is a risk of client-initiated violence or other health and safety risks - talk to the person at the door or on the veranda
- Check the ease of operation of gate latches and doors when entering premises– broken gates etc. may impede egress in an emergency or may cause injury
- Stand to the side of doors (not in front) when seeking entry and listen carefully before knocking
- Do not enter premises unless the client physically opens the door. (Unless information is known that that person has a disability and is unable to answer the door)
- Introduce yourself and explain where you are from and the purpose of the visit. Show identification.

Active Protective Behaviours

- Remove yourself immediately from the site when you identify risk factors not previously considered in the risk assessment
- Discontinue the field work until those risk factors are properly assessed and risk control are implemented
- Contact your manager/supervisor or designated person to consult over the newly identified risks and risk controls
- Enter a business establishment where possible, if you suspect you are being followed
- Drive to the nearest police, fire or petrol station and request assistance if you suspect you are being followed while driving
- Confirm the attendance and/or presence of other parties at the premises
- Conduct home visits in safest parts of the house, often this is the living room. Avoid kitchen areas and bedrooms if possible
- Position yourself close to exits and between the client and the exit
- Asses the appropriateness of any actions that may assist in alerting others or escaping from the situation where you are being held under duress or believe an incident is imminent
- Practice and implement behaviour intervention strategies such as;
 - active listening
 - empathic discussion
 - diversionary tactics
 - de-escalation techniques
 - interpersonal dynamic skills
 - conflict resolution and
 - negotiation

Reactive Protective Behaviours

- Practice and implement behaviour intervention strategies such as;
 - active listening
 - empathic discussion
 - diversionary tactics
 - de-escalation techniques
 - interpersonal dynamic skills
 - conflict resolution and
 - negotiation
- Inform the perpetrator of the need to report in to the office and that emergency processes will be implemented if no contact is made
- Call the designated person or manager/supervisor where able. Implement the use of code words to notify of an emergency situation if this has been previously arranged
- Immediately implement the incident management and emergency response procedure if you are the designated person or manager/supervisor receiving a distress call
- Remove yourself from the situation as soon as the opportunity arises, seek assistance from emergency services and contact your designation person and/or manager/supervisor as soon as safe to do so