

Supervision of Young People Policy

Essential Summary

Youth Justice NSW (YJNSW) is legislatively accountable for the care and supervision of young people detained in a YJNSW centre

Effective supervision, in line with centre routines, programs and activities assists with maintaining a safe and secure environment for young people, employees and community visitors.

Consistent daily and weekly routines provide stability within a centre, a sense of order is established for centre operations. Routines serve as a schedule for managing time and activities. The stability offered by routines provides for an effectively and efficiently managed and supervised environment.

Time-framed thorough room checks, and headcounts are conducted at YJNSW centres to further safeguard young people at all times.

Employee supervision responsibilities during external movements, including escorted absences and leave is out of scope of this policy. Supervision during these times can be found in the *Escorted Absence Policy* and *Leave Policy* respectively.

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Table of Contents

1	Scope	3
2	Purpose	3
3	Definitions	3
4	Supervision principles	4
6	Congregation	5
7	Headcounts	5
8	Internal movements supervision	6
9	Program and activity supervision	6
	9.1 Momentarily completing an external task	6
	9.2 Education and Training Unit (School)	7
	9.3 Internal room programs	7
	9.4 Outdoor programs and activities	7
10	Room checks	8
	10.1 Frequency of room checks	9
	10.2 Room check requirements	9
	10.3 If the young person is not visible	9
11	Recording supervision details	10
12	Electronic supervision	12
	12.1 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)	12
	12.2 Digitool	12
13	References	12
	13.1 Legislation	12
	13.2 Policies	12
	13.3 Procedures	13
	13.4 Forms	13
	13.5 Resources	13
14	Document information	13
15	Document history	13

1 Scope

This policy applies to all YJNSW custodial employees responsible for the operational supervision of young people within a Youth Justice NSW Centre.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform YJNSW employees of legislative, duty of care and operational risk management responsibilities related to the supervision of young people held within a YJNSW centre.

The policy is designed to:

- provide a framework for the supervision of young people within the secure area of a YJNSW centre
- promote the accountability of young people and YJNSW employees
- safeguard the wellbeing of young people and YJNSW employees
- Provide a safe and secure working environment for employees and young people in a YJNSW centre
- set out how officers of JJNSW are to carry out their work in order to assist the Secretary to discharge his or her functions under the *Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987* and *Children (Detention Centres) Regulations 2015* (NSW).

3 Definitions

Centre Manager means the person for the time being in charge of the centre.¹

Daily Activity Planner (DAP) is the timetable used for the YJNSW centres to inform employees of daily programs and activities that are being run, including school on a given day and who is attending.

Digitool is an electronic attendance verification system used at YJNSW centres, also known as the *tour point* or *tour guard*. The tool records room check time details.

Employee means all JJNSW centre employees whether employed on an ongoing, temporary or casual basis

Free time refers to times where young people are not engaged in a scheduled program or activity and are permitted to socialise with other young people under the supervision of unit employees.

Shift Hand-Over is the process of exchanging information and the transfer of responsibilities and accountability between unit employees prior to the commencement of a shift.

Headcount is a technique used by employees to account for the number of young people under their supervision at any given time.

Must indicates a mandatory action to be complied with

¹ Section 3, the *Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987*, Part 1

Room check means the process of checking the well-being of young people when in their rooms within routine and / or specifically identified risk assessment timeframes

Routine means a usual series of things that are done at a particular time. A routine is also the practice of regularly doing things in a fixed order.²

Should indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action

Standard Operating Process (SOP). A SOP details processes not found in YJNSW operational procedures, in relation to centre specific requirements, to meet YJNSW procedural directions. They must not include information found in a related operational procedure. 0-0

Unit Strength refers the total number of all young people that are housed on a unit on a given day, whether currently present in the unit or absent from the unit / centre. This includes all young people who are in transit to other centres and those that are on escorted absence or leave.

4 Supervision principles

The following principles must be adhered to during the supervision of young people within a YJNSW centre:

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

5 Importance of routines for supervision

Routines provide structure and consistency for both young people and employees and bring order to centres on a day to day basis. When routines are followed they bring normality and increase safety and security as stability is established.

In regard to the effective supervision of young people, routines include the required ratio of employees to young people, positioning and supervision roles and responsibilities.

Routines outline where a young person and employees are at a given time, which allows other frontline employees and management to quickly address unplanned events as they arise. (*Developing Centre Routines Policy*).

² Collins English Dictionary. collinsdictionary.com

6 Congregation

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7 Headcounts

Headcounts include physically counting each young person accommodated in each unit, at specific times throughout a shift.

Headcounts must be conducted:

- at the end of each shift by the outgoing team
- at the beginning of each shift by the oncoming team
- in line with centre movement, program and activity routines
- during any movement within the centre routine lock downs (sleeping periods, shower, preparation for meals or activities)
- emergency lockdowns

At all times unit employees must keep track of the number of young people under their supervision (unit strength) in the unit and where they are located. During a headcount

9.2 Education and Training Unit (School)

Each centre has its own unique environment and each centre must have a local centre routine or Standard Operating Process (SOP) in place for the supervision of young people during school hours.

The Education and Training Unit should provide unit employees with its own DAP Sheet on a daily basis. This planner will include but not be limited to the following information:

- comprehensive list of young people who are attending classes on the day
- the classrooms that each young person will be assigned to
- the teaching staff who will be teaching the young people
- a timetable for the day
- the name of the head teacher who will be on duty to liaise with YJ staff throughout the day
- the names of the young people who are not attending classes for various reasons including court visits and escorted absences

[Redacted]

The DAP sheet must be disseminated to all YJNSW unit employees prior to school starting every morning.

9.3 Internal room programs

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

9.4 Outdoor programs and activities

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

10 Room checks

Room checks form part of a centre’s responsibilities and an employee’s supervision duties.

A young person may be in a room during:

- daily routines
- sleeping periods
- personal time requests (requested by the young person and approved by the Unit Supervisor, *Request for Personal Time Procedure*)
- segregation
- separation
- confinement (*Misbehaviour Procedure*), or
- for medical reasons.

When a young person is in their rooms, they do not have the ability to come out of their rooms or communicate with other people, as they please. This can be a very stressful environment for some young people. It is therefore the responsibility of YJNSW employees to check on young people in their rooms to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained.

The primary objectives of checking on young people in their rooms is to confirm the Young Person:

- has a means to occupy themselves and is not bored in their rooms
- is not harming themselves
- appears well and healthy
- has their communication needs met and is able to speak to an employee if required or desired

[REDACTED]

10.1 Frequency of room checks

10.1.1 Routine Supervision

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

10.1.2 Close supervision

[REDACTED]

10.2 Room check requirements

Room checks are conducted visually through the viewing window of each young person's room. Employees must make sure they have a clear view of the young person. Checking through the CCTV cameras is not sufficient to meet room check requirements, as the young person could be injured or ill and lying on their bed in pain.

Employees must make minimal disruption to the young person during the room check, where possible.

During night shift, the night light or room light must be turned on so that the employee can see the young person properly during the room check. A young person may be objective to a night light being on. As per the *Child Safe Policy*, all decisions that affect the young person must be made in consultation with the young person, and where a necessary action may have an adverse impact on the young person, employees must work with the young person to find a workable solution for both parties.

During the room check, employees must check the door of the room to make sure it is locked and secure.

All room checks must be documented by the employee conducting the check in the *Record of Checks Book* or *Unit Log Book* according to the type of search being conducted.. (Section 11.2 *Recording Supervision Details* in this Policy)

10.3 If the young person is not visible

If the young person is not visible during a room check, employees should speak calmly to the young person and negotiate with the young person to enable a room check to be conducted.

When employees are considering placing a young person in confinement, segregation or separation employees must review the Record of Check Book to assess a young person's prior total time in room (alone).

Centre management must conduct a daily review all *Record of Checks Book* entries and sign the required section of the *Record of Checks Book*, to ensure compliance with the correct record keeping of checks, as stated above for quality assurance and transparency reasons.

12 Electronic supervision

12.1 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

CCTV footage is a more reliable source of data for checking employee compliance with room checks, as it shows the actions of the employee and the actions of the young person (if the young person is in a camera room). The actions of the young person, employee, and the recorded information in the *Record of Checks Book* should match at all times.

CCTV does not dispense with the requirement for in-person checks on young people in their rooms. Employees must attend each young person's room and visually sight them and speak with them, on or before the required check times.

12.2 Digitool

The Digitool is the electronic attendance verification system used at YJNSW centres, also known as the tour point or tour guard. It is available for use by management to ensure employee compliance in doing timely room checks.

This system is predominately used when a young person for reasons other than confinement, segregation, separation or personal time, is in their own room. All checks using this system are recorded digitalyl in a database which can be checked for inconsistencies.

The digitool must be stored in a secure area away from young people when it is not being used to conduct checks. Employees must only have the digitool on them during a check, and return it to it's cradle immediately after the check has been completed.

Centre management must check digiTool recorded data at least weekly to ensure compliance with supeervison requirements.

13 References

13.1 Legislation

Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987
Children (Detention Centres) Regulation 2015

13.2 Policies

Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Policy
Misbehaviour Policy
Developing Centre Routines Policy
Child Safe Policy

13.3 Procedures

Supervision of Young People Procedure
Internal Movements Procedure
Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Procedure (Custody)
Request for Personal Time Procedure
Misbehaviour Procedure

13.4 Forms

Record of Checks Book template
Unit Log Book
Daily Activity Planner

13.5 Resources

Executive memorandum: D13/05423 Supervision of detainees in rooms
Digitool Data Record

14 Document information

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15 Document history

Version	Date	Reason for Amendment
1	31 October 2020	New policy in line with LS-9 and 10 recommendations of the Shearer Report
