



Youth detention centre

OPERATIONAL POLICY

Title: YD-1-8 Youth detention – Visits to young people

Policy statement:

The department will promote and support a young person's right to receive visits from their parents, guardians, family members, Elders, kin, community members, peers and other persons of significance in the young person's life.

The department recognises that positive family, peer and community relationships are critical to a young person's successful transition back into their community.

In particular, youth detention centres will actively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to strengthen their relationships with their families and communities. Elders and respected community members will be proactively engaged to support young people and promote their sense of cultural identity and belonging.

Principles:

1. General Principles

- 1.1 Young people in youth detention will be supported to maintain appropriate relationships and establish new relationships that will provide them support while in youth detention and when they return to their community.
- 1.2 Young people's views on visits and visitors will be actively sought and taken into consideration.
- 1.3 Youth detention centres will work with young people and their support networks to facilitate appropriate visits and contact via other means (such as phone calls and Skype).
- 1.4 The Cultural Unit will enhance these processes through kinship mapping and other engagement activities that promote positive support networks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.
- 1.5 Appropriate family, peer, community and professional visits will also be considered through restorative practice processes and Visits Beyond Visits¹.

2. People who may visit a young person in detention

- 2.1 Parents, care providers and other family, friends and significant support people
- 2.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and respected persons
- 2.3 Professional visitors
- 2.4 Accredited visitors

¹ Refer to Chapter 1, Section 11.3.17 of the Youth Detention Operations Manual for more information.



2.5 Staff from non-government agencies

2.1 Religious and spiritual counsellors.

3. Approval process

3.1 All visitors must be approved prior to a visit being scheduled.

3.2 A criminal history check may be conducted at the request of the executive director as part of the approval process.

3.3 Approval may be conditional on contact restrictions if there is reasonable suspicion a visitor may pass restricted, prohibited or illegal articles to a young person during the visit.

3.4 People who do not receive approval to visit a young person in youth detention will be advised in writing of their non-approval and informed that they have the right to appeal the decision by submitting a written statement to the executive director (which will enact the complaints process).

3.5 Any visitor under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a legal guardian, unless explicitly approved by the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Visits Coordinator or Unit Manager (Operations) in consultation with Client Services.

3.6 Personal visitors will be provided a centre brochure or personalised letter that includes information about the visits process and visiting conditions.

4. Consideration of young people's views on visits and visitors

4.1 As part of the admissions process, young people must:

- be informed of visiting times and booking arrangements
- be provided the opportunity to nominate people who they would like to have contact with, including via visits.

4.2 Young people will be informed of any nominated personal visitor who has not been approved and the reasons for non-approval, unless the disclosure poses an extenuating security risk to the centre, staff or other young people. When disclosing information to young people about non-approval of personal visitors, due consideration must be given to the young person's age, ability to comprehend and confidentiality to the personal visitor's background information.

4.3 Young people have the right to refuse a visit at any time. The only exception to this applies to Queensland Police Service (QPS) officers acting under instructions from a court.²

4.4 If QPS wish to interview a young person on centre, the youth detention centre must:

- inform the young person that QPS cannot question them without their consent
- facilitate a support person for the young person
- provide the young person an opportunity to speak with their legal representative prior to the interview
- case note the young person's consent if they wish to proceed with the interview
- debrief with the young person following the interview.

5. Conditions of entry

5.1 Prior to entry, all approved visitors will be advised of the following obligations and responsibilities that apply for the duration of their visit, including that they must:

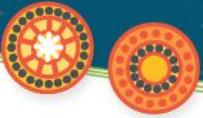
- complete the visitors register and provide photographic proof of identity

² For example, delivering a Notice to Appear.



- wear appropriate clothing³ and safe, enclosed footwear
 - submit items in their possession to be searched upon request of youth detention staff
 - comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by youth detention staff.
- 5.2 Visitors will be made aware that CCTV and body worn camera audio and video footage may be captured during their visit through appropriate signage and notifications.
- 5.3 The following list prescribes the only items visitors are authorised to bring into the youth detention centre without prior approval of the Executive Director:
- coins for vending machines
 - photographs
 - letters
 - baby bottles and/or baby food for parents with infants
 - items required for the visit, such as paper files and notebooks.
- 5.4 Visitors are also permitted to bring:
- a young person's clothes for a court appearance
 - a young person's clothes for a funeral attendance, Sorry Business or Sad News
 - money for a young person for deposit into their personal account.
- 5.5 Any clothes brought by a visitor for the purpose of a court appearance, must be inspected by youth detention staff prior to providing them to a young person.
- 5.6 The youth detention centre may reject any other item a visitor brings for a young person.
- 5.7 If professional, accredited or personal visitors wish to bring a restricted item into the visits area, approval must be sought from the executive director by completing the Request for restricted item approval form. Refer to Policy 4-1: Management of restricted and prohibited articles for more information.
- 6. Entry to detention centre may be refused or terminated**
- 6.1 The Executive Director, Deputy Director, Unit Manager, Shift Supervisor or Visits Coordinator may refuse an approved visitor entry or request a visitor to leave for any of the following reasons:
- they fail to comply with a reasonable direction
 - they engage in any behaviour or action that poses a safety and security risk or may disrupt the good order of the centre
 - their presence would not be in the best interest of the young person
 - they appear to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs
 - they attend the detention centre without a booking
 - upon request, they do not or refuse to provide his or her name and address and photographic proof of identify, and
 - upon request, they refuse to allow anything in their possession to be searched.
- 6.2 Youth detention centres have the right to terminate a visit if it is determined that the person may pose a risk to the safety and security of the centre, including failing to comply with a direction of the Chief Executive or refusing to submit to an external physical search or to a search of their possessions.
- 6.3 If a person refuses to leave after they are requested to do so, a Police Officer or detention centre staff member may use force that is reasonable and necessary to remove the visitor from the centre.

³ Refer to definitions table.



6.4 Visitor misconduct that may constitute a potential criminal offence (e.g. bringing in an illicit substance) should be referred to the Queensland Police Service via the Client Relations Manager.

7. Visit facilitation, restrictions and supervision

7.1 Youth detention centres will ensure the visits area provides a welcoming atmosphere for visitors and provides the following facilities:

- tea and coffee
- access to BBQ areas and BBQ packs for special occasions
- access to a birthday cake if personal visitors attend to celebrate a young person's birthday
- photographic facilities.

7.2 Youth detention centres must provide flexible visiting hours.

7.3 The Visits Coordinator and/or Visits Officer will ensure visits are supervised in the least intrusive manner while having regard to safety and security considerations. The use of CCTV surveillance systems for this supervision is permitted.

7.4 A risk assessment is undertaken to ascertain the type of visit to be conducted.

7.5 Clear behavioural expectations are reiterated to young people and visitors prior to the commencement of the scheduled visit.

7.6 Where misconduct occurred in a previous visit, young people and visitors will be advised of any visit restrictions applicable, at the time of booking and prior to the commencement of the scheduled visit.

7.7 Where a safety and security risk has been identified that cannot be managed in another way, use of a non-contact visits room will be provided at the approval of the Deputy Director.⁴

8. Financial assistance for personal visitors

8.1 Personal visitors may apply for financial assistance for associated travel expenses if they are experiencing financial difficulties and without such assistance, would be unable or seldom able to visit the young person.

8.2 Relevant travel expenses may include:

- flights
- accommodation
- taxi, bus or train fare
- meals provided on centre for specified visits
- fuel reimbursement.

8.3 Personal visitors will be assisted to apply for financial assistance by the Cultural Unit, the young person's Caseworker, or the Visits Coordinator.

8.4 The Executive Director or Deputy Director will approve or decline the application for financial assistance based on the following considerations:

- young person's needs
- whether the visitors' residence is a significant distance from the centre
- if the visit is in relation to a significant event
- available transport options

⁴ Obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019* will be fully considered in relation to any non-contact visits.



- number of people attending visit
- any previous visits

8.5 A written response will be provided to the applicant by the Manager, Finance and Administration, (coordinated with Client Services and the Visits Coordinator) about the outcome. If declined, the reasons why will also be provided. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome, they can escalate their concerns through the complaints process.

8.6 Ongoing financial assistance will be assessed by Client Services and/or the Visits Coordinator and recommended as resources permit and subject to application approval.

9. Other types of visits

9.1 Young people are permitted to take a leave of absence from a youth detention centre to attend a visit. This includes visits to other correctional facilities. Refer to the [Policy YD-2-2: Leave of absence](#) for further information.

9.2 The Visits Beyond Visits (VBV) program provides opportunities for youth justice service centre staff around Queensland to visit young people in detention beyond the Visits Centre and connect with youth detention staff to share information and improve transitional processes for young people. Refer to Chapter 1 – Care and management of young people.

10. Record keeping

10.1 The following details must be recorded on DCOIS:

- the scheduled visit, arrival, departure, assistance or non-attendance of all visitors
- assisted visits application and decision
- each young person's approved visitors list
- contact restrictions related to personal visitors.

Objectives:

Fundamental to a young person's rights, wellbeing and rehabilitation while in youth detention is the maintenance of their relationships with family, friends, Elders, kinship carers, respected members, local community members and other people of significance and the establishment of professional relationships with stakeholders such as legal representatives, non-government agency support workers and the Office of the Public Guardian Community Visitors. These relationships provide young people support and maintain important connections while in youth detention and upon their return to their community.

Accordingly, this policy establishes the fundamental principles to ensure these relationships are supported and maintained in a manner that is culturally safe and in the best interests of the young person while ensuring the safety and security of the centre.

This policy also aims to protect and promote young people's rights in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Scope:

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- Policy YD-1-1: Casework
- Policy YD-1-2: Behaviour support



- Policy YD-1-4: Room sharing
- Policy YD-1-16: Restorative practice
- Policy YD-3-4: Protective actions continuum
- Policy YD-3-9: Identifying and reporting harm in a youth detention centre
- Policy YD-4-1: Management of restricted and prohibited articles
- Chapter 1: Care and management of young people, Youth Detention Centre Operations Manual
- Chapter 4: Security management, Youth Detention Centre Operations Manual.
- Appendix 02: Philosophy of youth detention services

Roles and responsibilities:

- Youth detention centre Caseworker:
 - conduct background checks and seek recommendations regarding personal visitors
 - include professional visitors on young person's visitors list
 - assist personal visitors to apply for financial assistance as appropriate
 - advise young person and youth justice service centre of any rejected personal visitors (without disclosing confidential information)
 - advise personal visitors of rejection of financial assistance
 - advise young person of rights if QPS wishes to interview them, case note young person's consent.
- Section Supervisor and detention Youth Worker:
 - draft visitors list based on young person's nominations.
- Cultural Unit:
 - proactively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young to connect with their family and community while in detention
 - work with communities and Elders to strengthen young people's connections with their family and community through kinship mapping and on-centre visits
 - liaise with Youth Justice Service Centres and community stakeholders for assistance in facilitating video conferencing, where required
 - conduct background checks and seek recommendations regarding personal visitors
 - include professional visitors on young person's visitors list
 - assist personal visitors to apply for financial assistance as appropriate
 - where possible, provide transport assistance to personal visitors
 - advise young person and youth justice service centre of any rejected personal visitors (without disclosing confidential information)
 - advise personal visitors of rejection of financial assistance
 - advise young person of rights if QPS wishes to interview them, case note young person's consent.
- Visits Coordinator:
 - oversee visits process
 - coordinates estimated expenditure for assisted visits request
 - record approved visitors on DCOIS and ICMS
 - record assisted visits application and decision on DCOIS
 - refer any suspicious activities to the Intelligence Officer for further review or evidence
 - approve a visitor under the age of 18 years to visit a young person.
- Senior Intelligence Officer and Intelligence Officer:



- inform Client Services and Visits Coordinator of any relevant intelligence relating to a young person's visit and recommend management strategies
- review CCTV if suspected restricted/illegal item has entered the visits area.
- Manager, Finance and Administration:
 - monitors 'Child Related Costs' cost centre and determines if sufficient funds are available for assisted visit requests and provides advice to Client Services and/or Visits Coordinator about the equity and reasonableness of request
 - ensure assisted visit requests comply with relevant departmental financial policies, procedures and delegations.
- Unit Manager, Accommodation:
 - advise young person of rights if QPS wish to interview them.
- Unit Manager, Operations:
 - record criminal history check results on DCOIS
 - notify the visitor in writing of any visit restrictions
 - advise visitor of non-approval for a visit
 - approve a visitor under the age of 18 years to visit a young person.
- Deputy Director
 - ensure information about the arrangements for visits is provided to parents, carers and/or other significant support people of young people, in either centre booklets/ brochures and/or personalised letters
 - approve financial assistance provided to personal visitors
 - approve visit in a non-contact room
 - approve a visitor under the age of 18 years to visit a young person.
- Executive Director:
 - request a criminal history check
 - approve contact restrictions; approve financial assistance provided to personal visitors
 - approve a visitor under the age of 18 years to visit a young person
 - ensure youth detention staff comply with this policy
 - provide resources to put this policy into practice.
- Director, Youth Detention Operations and Support:
 - provide practice support and advice to youth detention operational staff and youth detention management about issues relating to compliance with this policy.

Authority:

Youth Justice Act 1992
Youth Justice Regulation 2016

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Term	Definition
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Accredited visitor	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Minister • a Member of the Legislative Assembly • the Director-General • the Deputy Director-General • the Senior Executive Director, Youth Justice • the Principal Inspector and any other officer with a delegated authority under section 263(4) of the <i>Youth Justice Act 1992</i> • a member of the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNSPT) • a staff member from the Department of Youth Justice.
Appropriate clothing	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closed in shoes worn at all times - sandals, thongs or stiletto heels are not permitted • clothing displaying obscene or discriminatory slogans are not permitted • short skirts are not permitted • sleeveless shirts, tank tops and singlets are not permitted • excessively tight clothing, transparent fabric and clothing which is overly revealing is not permitted • minimal jewellery permitted.
Executive Director	The Executive Director of the youth detention centre.
Leave of absence	When a young person temporarily leaves a youth detention centre (i.e. there is an expectation of their return) and their custody has not been transferred to another party.
Non-contact visit	A visit where contact between the visitor and young person is restricted by use of the non-contact facility.
Personal visitor	Generally refers to parents, care givers, friends, community members and religious and spiritual counsellors.
Professional visitor	<p>A person who provides one on one support or services to a young person and is subject to criminal history screening as part of the conditions of their employment. Professional visitors generally refer to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a legal professional • a Queensland Police Service Officer • a casework professional from either Youth Justice or Child Safety • a commission Community Visitor. <p>A professional visitor may also fall into the category of accredited visitor and vice versa.</p>
Restricted contact visit	Visits that are facilitated at the restricted contact table.
Restricted article	<p>The following items are restricted within a youth detention centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tools • knives (including rescue knives) • scissors • keys and key fobs • chemicals, fuels and gas • mobile telephones and cameras • restraint equipment • gardening and grounds maintenance equipment • stationary • program equipment • medical items in the health services area • computers and telecommunication equipment (e.g. mobile phones, USB sticks, portable music players, cameras etc), • any other item that the executive director determines to be restricted.



Youth detention operational staff	A staff member who has direct care responsibility for young people. For example, a youth worker or section supervisor.
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Records file number:	nil
Version number:	1.5
Date of approval:	15 July 2020
Approved by:	1.0 Director-General (23 September 2013) 1.1 Assistant Director-General (17 March 2015) 1.2 Director, Practice Program and Design (16 November 2017) 1.3 Deputy Director-General (2 December 2019) 1.4 Youth Detention Executive Directors (14 May 2020) 1.5 Director, Youth Detention Operations and Support (15 July 2020)
Date of operation:	17 March 2015
Date to be reviewed:	3 years from the date of approval

Office:	Youth Detention Operations and Support
Help contact:	Youth Detention Operations

Links:

[Information for visitors](#)

[Information for parents and carers](#)

[Australasian Youth Justice Administrators \(AYJA\) service standards for juvenile custodial facilities](#)

[United Nations Rules for the Protection of Young People Deprived of Their Liberty 1990](#)

[Human Rights Act 2019](#)

[Queensland Human Rights Commission](#)

[Youth Justice policies](#)