

Youth detention centre

OPERATIONAL POLICY

Title: YD-3-11 Youth detention – Mandatory competencies for youth detention operational staff

Policy statement

To ensure the safe and secure management of youth detention centres, the department requires all youth detention operational staff to be competent in the essential skills required as part of their role and responsibilities. The required essential skills are referred to below as mandatory competencies.

Accordingly, the department will:

- provide fair and equitable opportunities to youth detention operational staff to undertake annual competency based assessment and/or training in the mandatory competencies
- provide fair and equitable support to existing and new youth detention operational staff to achieve competency
- provide fair and equitable support to youth detention operational staff who are assessed as not yet competent to achieve competency
- fairly and equitably manage youth detention operational staff who are unable to achieve the required level of competence.

Principles

1. Mandatory competencies for youth detention operational staff

The mandatory competencies are subject to annual review and change.

Maintaining a flexible approach to defining, training and assessing the mandatory competencies ensures the department is able to respond to the needs of young people, youth detention operational staff and other business needs as required.

Mandatory competencies include skills and capabilities across the following practice areas:

- first aid
- fire safety
- emergency management
- youth detention protective actions continuum (PAC)
- suicide response
- any other practice skill that the department endorses as part of mandatory competencies curriculum for a designated training year.

2. Assessment of competence

All youth detention operational staff must maintain the required level of competence in the mandatory competencies. Youth detention operational staff must undergo annual assessment and/or training to provide them an opportunity to demonstrate their competence. All staff will be afforded three attempts to demonstrate their competency in each practice area above.

Employees must safely, effectively and/or accurately demonstrate all of the skills outlined in the relevant mandatory competency curriculum to demonstrate their competence.

3. Process and guidelines for the assessment in mandatory competency training

All employees will be supported and assisted throughout all mandatory competency training in order to provide them the best opportunity to achieve competency. Individual and circumstantial assessments will be made to allow for reasonable accommodation of those staff members that have a supported reason for their inability to attend or engage in mandatory competency training sessions. Such circumstances may include, but not be limited to:

- approved leave
- extenuating or unforeseen personal matters
- injury or illness (work or non-work related)
- attendance to cultural matters.

4. Management of employees undertaking mandatory competency training

All employees will be consulted and informed of any assessments or decisions made regarding their attendance, deferment and/or completion of mandatory competency training. Staff that are granted approved deferment of attendance at mandatory competency training will be provided the first available opportunity to undertake the required training session(s) when circumstances permit.

Employees who are unable to attend must provide approved or supporting documentation to verify their absence or inability to undertake the training.

Employees who are absent from scheduled mandatory competency training in a specific practice area (competency), without approved or supported documentation verifying their absence, will be assessed as not yet competent in that particular competency. The employee will then be required to be rescheduled for their second or third training and assessment of that competency practice area.

All mandatory competency practice areas involve the provision of adequate training and coaching to undertake the relevant and required competency based assessment. Employees must achieve full and complete competency in all assessable elements in any one of the three attempts (assessments) afforded. Employees assessed as not yet competent will be provided with training, support and coaching opportunities to build their skills and capability to assist them achieve competency prior to their next attempt. Employees will be consulted and engaged in the provision of additional support and coaching. Each competency assessment will be assessed by an independent different assessor as distinct from previous assessments in that mandatory competency.

Centre management must ensure that all employees are made aware of, and supported where possible after, being assessed as not yet competent in a practice area assessment. Executive directors must ensure that:

- staff members are informed in writing of their assessment outcome
- all staff members are supported and provided assistance that will assist them through the process
- employees are regularly informed and updated of their individual circumstances during the assessment and management of the assessment stages.

If a staff member is unable to achieve full and complete competency on any of their three attempts the following circumstances will be applied:

Existing tenured, temporary and long term casual employees¹ will be provided alternate duties² until either:

- they demonstrate full and complete competency in that practice area, or
- they unsuccessfully completed their third attempt at assessment.

¹ As defined under the *Industrial Relations Act 1999*

² Reasonable and meaningful work

If an employee is unable to complete the mandatory competency training assessment due to an assessed workplace injury³, the employee will be managed as per workplace injury management process. Upon receipt of medical advice that the employee is fit to return to full duties⁴ that employee will be scheduled for any mandatory competency training that is required at that time.

5. Failure to achieve competency

Employees who cannot achieve full and complete competency after three attempts cannot continue to be employed by the department in a youth detention operational role and will be subject to normal departmental performance or medical management processes. While these processes take place, existing permanent, temporary and long-term casual employees will be provided with alternative duties, if practicable, or suspended on full pay.

New permanent employees to the department who are completing their probationary period will be subject to normal probation processes if they fail to achieve full and complete competency after three assessment attempts in a mandatory competency practice area.

If an employee wishes to dispute the outcome of their assessment, a complaint can be made by following the department's complaint process.

Staff can also access the Employee Assistance Program if they need support during this process.

6. Record keeping, oversight and reassessment

Records of competence will be maintained by Youth Justice Capability, Learning and Systems. Any assessments of not yet competent will be reviewed and approved by the Director, Youth Justice Capability, Learning and Systems.

Any subsequent reassessments will be undertaken by a different assessor from the original assessment and approved by the Director, Youth Justice Capability, Learning and Systems.

Objectives

This policy aims to provide youth detention centre management and other relevant stakeholders with guidelines regarding safe practices and procedures and the assessment and management of mandatory competencies to ensure that youth detention operational staff are competent to fulfil their role.

Scope

This policy applies to all youth detention operational staff (including full-time, part-time and casual).

All youth detention operational staff must be competent in the essential skills required as part of their role and responsibilities.

The required essential skills are referred to as mandatory competencies and this policy establishes what the mandatory competencies are in a youth detention context, the process for the assessment of competence and the support available to assist youth detention operational staff achieve and maintain competence.

This policy is part of a suite of policies and processes developed to support competence in essential skills by detention centre operational staff including:

- Policy YD-1-6: Suicide and self-harming behaviours
- Policy YD-3-1: Duty of care obligations to youth detention operational staff and detained young people involved in incidents
- Policy YD-3-3: Reporting critical incidents that relate to youth detention centre service delivery
- Policy YD-3-4: Protective actions continuum

³ Accepted claim by Workcover Queensland

⁴ Inclusive of all mandatory competency training

- Policy YD-4-5: Storage and carriage of rescue knives
- Chapter 3: Incident Management, Youth Detention Centre Operations Manual.
- Appendix 0-1:Statement of intent

Roles and responsibilities

- Youth detention operational staff are responsible for:
 - attending and participating in all training associated with the mandatory competencies curriculum
 - achieving and maintaining competency in the mandatory competencies, as defined in the annual mandatory competency curriculum
 - maintaining the appropriate level of fitness to undertake training.
- The manager, human resources, in the youth detention centre is responsible for:
 - managing the workforce to ensure youth detention operational staff have time to undertake annual training and assessment
 - coordinating with Capability, Learning and Systems to ensure appropriate management of enrolment processes, recording of attendance and assessment outcomes
 - coordinating with Capability, Learning and Systems to develop and manage the annual training and assessment calendar
 - liaising with the human resource and governance branch regarding the management of staff who fail to reach the required level of competence after three attempts.
- The executive director is responsible for:
 - ensuring that youth detention operational staff are provided with fair and equitable opportunities to attend annual training
 - accepting and actioning referrals from the Director, Youth Justice Capability, Learning and Systems where an operational staff member is not yet competent or has failed to reach the required level of competence
 - ensuring that youth detention operational staff are provided with fair and equitable opportunities and support to achieve and maintain competency in the mandatory competencies in accordance with this policy
 - providing input into and endorsing the annual mandatory competencies curriculum
 - ensuring staff members are informed in writing of their assessment outcome.
- The Director, Practice, Program and Design is responsible for:
 - providing input into and endorsing the annual mandatory competencies curriculum.
- The Director, Youth Justice Capability, Learning and Systems is responsible for:
 - developing an annual mandatory competencies curriculum that will be endorsed by the Youth Detention Governance committee and the Assistant Director-General, Youth Justice
 - coordinating the training and/or assessment of all youth detention operational staff in the endorsed mandatory competencies
 - coordinating record keeping of mandatory competency assessments
 - referring all assessments of not yet competent and failure to reach the required level of competence to the executive director
 - coordinating additional support and/or retraining of staff who are assessed as not yet competent
 - personally reviewing and approving all assessments of not yet competent.

Authority

Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Youth Justice Act 1992
Youth Justice Regulation 2016

*Industrial Relations Act 2016***Definitions**

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

Term	Definition
Executive director	Means the director of the youth detention centre.
Youth Detention Governance committee	Refers to the executive directors, Director, Practice, Program and Design and Director, Capability, Learning and Systems.
Youth detention operational staff	Refers to staff who work at Brisbane Youth Detention Centre or Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and are involved in the direct provision of services to young people - youth workers, section supervisors and shift supervisors.
Full and complete competency	Means competently demonstrating all assessable techniques, aspects or elements of a mandatory competency in one continuous session. Three attempts are available to reach full and complete competency.
Supporting documentation	May include but not be limited to medical certificates, approved leave forms, approved higher duties.

Records file number: nil

Version number: 1.2

Date of approval: 16 November 2017

Approved by: 1.0 Director-General DJAG (22 November 2012)

1.1 Assistant Director-General, Youth Justice (19 March 2014)

1.2 Director, Practice, Program and Design (16 November 2017)

Date of operation: Cleveland Youth Detention Centre (1 September 2013)

Brisbane Youth Detention Centre (1 November 2013)

Date to be reviewed: 16 November 2020

Office: Youth Justice Practice, Program and Design

Links:

[Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators \(AJJA\) service standards for juvenile custodial facilities](#)

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

[Youth Justice policies](#)