COPP 7.4 Detainees at Risk of Self-Harm or Requiring Additional Support and Monitoring

Youth Detention Centre

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| Principles In the context of the:  [Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators Juvenile Justice Standards 2019](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/department/standards/Pages/ops-standards.aspx):  The Australasian Juvenile Justice Standards (AJJA) have been developed to support jurisdictions to deliver services that: provide juvenile justice services in ways that optimise the health and wellbeing of children and young people.  Services provide a safe environment that minimises any form of harm or harassment.  The health and wellbeing of a child or young person is paramount during periods of isolation or separation.  Self-harm and suicide prevention and intervention strategies are in place.  [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 2019](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/department/standards/Pages/ops-standards.aspx):  Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.  Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.  The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people’s diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.  Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.  Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm. |

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# Scope

This Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedure (COPP) applies to all Youth Detention Centre (YDC) Custodial Officers and staff.

# Policy

The Department of Justice (the Department) is committed to the early identification and management of detainees in custody presenting either at risk to self, or as requiring multi-disciplinary intervention and additional support and monitoring.

The Department’s strategies aim to provide continuity of care and consistency in terms of the identification and management of detainees requiring additional support and monitoring whilst in custody. The key elements of the Department’s policy pertain to primary, secondary and tertiary prevention strategies.

Primary prevention strategies include those that are aimed at creating a physical and social environment that limits stress on detainees. Primary prevention strategies in place at the YDC include a comprehensive orientation process for detainees, placement considerations, anti-bullying policies, a structured day and encouragement to engage in recreation and daily programs. Staff actively engaging with young people with the aim of building positive relationships is considered a critical element of primary prevention. Primary prevention strategies also incorporate staff training, including mandatory Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention Training.

Secondary prevention strategies are those that are designed to provide support to detainees who are at statistically higher risk of suicide or self-harm. Secondary prevention strategies in place include the inclusion of self-harm/suicide risk screening in the admission process, automatic referrals for first admissions to Youth Justice Psychological Services (YJPS), and the communication of risk-relevant information to all staff via forums, such as the Self-Harm history alert, Disability flag and the Assessment and Planning checklist.

The **Support and Monitoring System (SAMS)** would be considered a secondary prevention strategy. SAMS provides a collaborative case management system for detainees who are considered vulnerable and in need of multi-disciplinary support. This may include detainees considered at chronic risk of suicide or non-suicide self-injury, those with significant cognitive impairment or those experiencing acute mental health issues.

Tertiary prevention strategies are those that are aimed directly at detainees who are identified as at risk of self-harm or suicide. Increased monitoring, the provision of psychological or mental health intervention, and/or placement in a safer environment are tertiary prevention strategies. To facilitate this, the Department has implemented the **At Risk Management System (ARMS)** to provide a framework for suicide prevention, with clear procedures to assist staff in the identification and management of detainees at risk to self. ARMS incorporates various preventative strategies and requires a whole of centre approach.

# Procedures

### Guidelines, procedures and the role and responsibilities of staff are outlined in the respective [ARMS Manual – Youth Version](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/youth-justice) and [SAMS Manual – Youth Version](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/youth-justice).

### All staff are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the requirements outlined in each of these manuals.

### The Deputy Commissioner Women and Young People, in consultation with the Superintendent and YJPS, shall approve and maintain operational procedures consistent with this policy, to be published as manuals or such other format as may be approved by the Deputy Commissioner.

# Annexures

## Related documents

* [At Risk Management System (ARMS) Manual – Youth Version](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/youth-justice)
* [SAMS Manual – Youth Version](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/youth-justice)
* [BHYDC Emergency Management Plan](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/security-intelligence/security-response/Pages/security-services.aspx)
* [Australasian Youth Justice Administrators Standards, 2009](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/department/standards/Pages/ops-standards.aspx)

## Definitions and acronyms

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| Term | Definition |
| At-risk | Refers to a detainee identified as at potential acute risk of self-harm or suicide. |
| Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedure (COPP) | Operational Instruments that provide instructions to staff how the relevant legislative requirements are implemented. |
| Custodial Officer | An Officer with custodial functions, appointed under s.11(1) of the *Young Offenders Act 1994*; or a person who is appointed under s. 11(1a)(a) as a Custodial Officer. This includes but is not limited to Youth Custodial Officers, Unit Managers and Senior Officers. |
| Detainee | Means a person who is detained in a detention centre as defined in s.3 of the *Young Offenders Act 1994*. |
| Department | The department of the Public Service principally assisting the Minister in the administration of the *Young Offenders Act 1994.* |
| Detention Offence | In accordance with s. 170 of the *Young Offenders Act 1994*. |
| Officers and Employees of Particular Classes | The following descriptions of classes of officers and employees are prescribed for the purpose of s. 11(1a)(b) of the *Young Offenders Act 1994*, in r.49(2) of the *Young Offender Regulations 1995*:  a) Medical staff persons who have undergone medical, nursing or health training and hold qualifications indicating successful completion of that training.  b) Teaching staff persons who provide recreation or sports supervision, teachers, vocational trainers and social trainers.  c) Program support staff counsellors, program facilitators and librarians.  d) Centre support staff cleaning staff, laundry staff, gardening staff, vehicle driving staff, maintenance staff and hairdressers. |
| Self-Harm | The practice of deliberately harming oneself without the intention to die. |
| Staff | Any employee or officer of the Department of Justice, including a Public Service Officer, Youth Custodial Officer or an employee of a particular class; and any contractor who provides services to the Department of Justice. |
| Superintendent | In accordance with s. 3 of the *Young Offenders Act 1994, ‘*The person in charge of a detention centre’. |
| Youth Detention Centre | A gazetted detention centre declared by the Minister to be a detention centre to accommodate male and female, remanded or sentenced detainees. Refer to section 13 of *Young Offenders Act 1994.* |
| Youth Justice Psychological Services (YJPS) | Provides psychological services to offenders and their families, and staff working with detainees. Psychological services include assessment, intervention and consultation. |

## Related legislation

* *Young Offenders Act 1994*
* *Young Offenders Regulations 1995*

# Assurance

It is expected that:

* The YDC will undertake local compliance in accordance with the [Compliance Manual](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/search/Pages/results.aspx?k=operational%20compliance&ql=3081).
* The relevant Deputy Commissioner will ensure that management oversight occurs as required.
* Operational Compliance Branch will undertake checks in accordance with the [Operational Compliance Framework.](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/search/Pages/results.aspx?k=operational%20compliance&ql=3081)
* Independent oversight will be undertaken as required.

# Document Version History

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version no | Primary author(s) | Description of version | Date completed | Effective Date |
| 1.0 | Operational Policy | Approved by A/Director Operational Projects, Policy, Compliance and Contracts | 1 October 2021 | 19 October 2021 |
| 2.0 | Operational Policy  Memo Reference:  D23/940474  Content Manager Reference:  S23/99511 | Endorsed by the  A/ Assistant Commissioner Women and Young People | 9 November 2023 | 18 December 2023 |
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