

*Youth Justice Policy Determination 5.1:  
Young People At Risk*

REFERENCE	61:F2018/286-23	
POLICY APPROVER	Name Title	Jeanette Kerr Deputy Chief Executive Officer Operations
	Date	18 January 2018
POLICY OWNER		Executive Director Youth Justice
POLICY RESPONSIBILITY		Senior Director Youth Justice Programs
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY		Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent

*Document Control*

VERSION HISTORY	EFFECTIVE DATE	REASON FOR UPDATE
Version 1.01	January 2018	Update to position titles and policy determination references
Version 1.0	January 2018	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Operations approval

NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2020, or as directed prior to the scheduled review date.
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## Policy Purpose

To provide guidance on the identification, care and management of young people who are at risk of self-harm or suicide.

## Authority / Responsibility

The Executive Leadership Group and Senior Managers have responsibility for ensuring that supervisors and employees understand and comply with this policy.

This policy determination applies to all Territory Families staff, contractors, visitors and young people admitted into a detention centre.

This policy determination is complimented by the [Procedure: Identifying and Managing Young People At Risk](#).

## Policy Statement

All staff employed in a youth detention centre have a duty of care with regard to the safety and protection of young people accommodated in the centre. This includes fostering an environment where young people are encouraged to care for each other and speak with a member of staff should they feel concerned about their own, or another young person's, wellbeing.

The identification, response and management of young people at risk of self-harm or suicide is a complex issue which encompasses both youth justice and health services, requiring an integrated and collaborative approach.

It is imperative that Territory Families staff and Department of Health staff work together to:

- Provide an environment that recognises the trauma young people experience during a period of detention and implement programs focused on the psychological wellbeing of young people;
- Develop and implement strategies which aim to minimise the number of young people reaching the threshold required to implement at risk procedures;
- Respond quickly and professionally to at risk incidents;
- Utilise strengths based, trauma informed practices which address the acute care needs of an at risk young person; and
- Implement timely assessments and review processes to minimise the time young people are managed under an At Risk Management Plan.

### *Identification of a Young Person At Risk*

A young person may be identified as at risk through the following possible avenues:

- A court at risk warrant;
- On admission into a detention centre through the Initial Risk Needs Assessment;
- The presence of at risk indicators; and/or
- An actual at risk episode.

A young person may be identified as at risk of self-harm or suicide by any youth detention staff member. Other people who interact with the young person may also identify that a young person is at-risk. This includes the Court, Department of Health staff, Department of Education staff, personal or professional visitors, the young person's parents or their child protection worker.

Where a youth detention staff member who is not a Youth Justice Officer has concerns for a young person's wellbeing, this must be reported to a Youth Justice Officer immediately.

It is the responsibility of the Youth Justice Officer to make the determination that a young person is at risk and initiate the at risk response.

### *Responding to a Young Person At Risk*

Immediately upon identifying that a young person is at risk, the Youth Justice Officer is responsible for initiating the at risk response.

Young people are to be initially managed in accordance with Regulation 42 of the Youth Justice Regulations, which provides that an Emergency Management Protocol is to be implemented until such time an At Risk Management Plan is developed by an appropriate medical professional. Youth Justice Officers must immediately commence the Observation Record.

Youth Justice Officers must record the at risk placement by completing a Notification of Concern on IOMS which:

- Informs all staff of the placement and the reasons that the young person is at risk;
- Highlights any safety and security concerns that may require addressing;
- Acts as the official record of the commencement of the at risk placement; and
- Provides relevant information for the Primary Health Care Provider to assist their assessment of the young person.

It is imperative that the Notification of Concern contains comprehensive information about the at risk placement, including a detailed summary of the actions or events that led to the young person being identified as risk.

### *Assessment of a Young Person At Risk*

In accordance with Regulation 43 of the Youth Justice Regulations, a young person is required to be assessed by a medical practitioner where an at risk placement has been commenced. This assessment is to be conducted within 24 hours of the commencement of the at risk placement. It is the responsibility of the Primary Health Care Provider to arrange for a medical practitioner to conduct an at risk assessment of the young person.

There may be instances where a medical practitioner is unable to attend the youth detention centre to conduct an at risk assessment within 24 hours of the commencement of the placement. This will usually occur when a young person has been placed at risk during a weekend or public holiday. In these circumstances the young person may require escort to the nearest Emergency Department for assessment by the Psychiatric Registrar.

If a young person is considered too volatile to be escorted by detention centre staff or Department of Health staff, and it is unlikely that a medical practitioner will assess the young person in the centre within 24 hours, alternative arrangements for the at risk assessment will be determined by the Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent and the Primary Health Care Provider.

The Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent must provide written advice to the Senior Director Youth Justice Programs when it is unlikely that young person at risk will not be assessed by a medical practitioner within 24 hours. The Senior Director Youth Justice Programs is required to report to the Children's Commissioner when a young person has not received an assessment by a medical practitioner within 24 hours of being identified as at risk.

### *Care and Protecting the Wellbeing of a Young Person At Risk*

#### AT RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

An At Risk Management Plan is an individual management plan for young people identified as at risk. The plan is developed by the medical practitioner during the assessment phase and recorded in IOMS by a Youth Justice Officer. The At Risk Management Plan provides guidance to staff on the management of the young person during their at risk placement. All young people who are identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm must have an At Risk Management Plan commenced in IOMS.

All staff must comply with the At Risk Management Plan and ensure that the young person is managed according to the plan.

## AT RISK ASSESSMENT TEAM

Every youth detention centre must have an At Risk Assessment Team comprised of:

- A member of the youth detention operations, such as the Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent or Assistant Manager Youth Programs - Deputy Superintendent;
- A member of the youth detention Case Management Assessment and Throughcare Services Team;
- A medical practitioner; and
- Any other relevant health professionals.

Where relevant, the At Risk Assessment Team must consult with other persons that have knowledge of the young person, or who are likely to play a key role in their care, including parents and caregivers.

The team is responsible for reviewing all At Risk Management Plans and ensuring they are accurate, up to date and address all relevant risks.

The membership, responsibilities and governance of the At Risk Assessment Team are set out in full in the [‘At Risk Assessment Team – Terms of Reference’](#).

A young person must not be refused access to their support network during an at risk placement, including access to the telephone system and visits.

### *Discontinuation of an At Risk Event*

Under Regulation 44 of the Youth Justice Regulations, a young person can only be removed from an at risk placement on the recommendation of a medical practitioner and after consultation with the Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent or member of staff authorised by the Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent for that purpose.

The discontinuation of a young person’s at risk placement must be clearly articulated in the At Risk Management Plan and signed by the medical practitioner and the Manager Youth Programs - Superintendent or Assistant Manager Youth Programs - Deputy Superintendent. The following points must also be documented:

- The date and time that the at-risk status was cancelled;
- The reason for the cancellation; and
- Any other relevant information or instructions.

After a young person’s at risk placement has been discontinued, the young person must be provided with appropriate follow-up attention by a health professional or other appropriate support service.

### *Incident Reporting*

All information relevant to the identification, response, assessment and management of a young person at risk is required to be entered into IOMS. This may include information from a health professional. The IOMS record of a young persons at risk placement must contain all information relating to the placement including, but not limited to:

- The Notification Of Concern;
- Records of the At Risk Assessment Team meetings and relevant decisions;
- The At Risk Management Plans;
- The Observation Record;
- Clinical at risk notes prepared by health professionals;
- Any written material produced (including art) by the young person during their at risk placement that may be relevant to the assessment of their risk of self-harm or their psychological wellbeing; and
- Any other reports/information relevant to the at risk placement.

Refer to [Youth Justice Policy Determination 2.3: Incident Recording and Reporting](#).

Youth Justice Officers are to continue to update the at risk record until the young person's at risk placement is discontinued. All information relating to a young person's at risk placement is to be maintained in a confidential manner.