



Youth justice custodial practice manual

Secure Services

(<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual>)

If you print and store this document, you may be looking at an outdated version and this may impact on your duty of care. Always check the latest version in the Youth justice custodial practice manual on the DHS intranet before taking action under this procedure. Please make sure the printed procedures are kept securely.

Youth Justice Custodial Services Practice Manual (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual>) > Sentence management (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management>) > Admission to custody (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody>) > Orientation to custody (<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody/orientation-to-custody>)

Orientation to custody

- Each young person entering a youth justice precinct needs a timely orientation program that meets their developmental and gender requirements.
- Comprehensive induction procedures ensure that young people are aware and well informed of:
 - youth justice precinct rules and regulations
 - their legislative rights
 - the availability of support services
 - the process for making complaints.
- This not only assists the young person to understand their new environment, but can also be a factor in the prevention of self-harm and suicide.

When to use this procedure

- When a young person enters a youth justice precinct for the first time.
- When a young person re-enters custody, consider whether aspects of the induction and orientation process should be repeated.

What else you need to know

Make sure you have read and understood the following procedures:

- [Admission procedure \(http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody/admission-procedure\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody/admission-procedure)
- [How we work with young people in custody \(http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody/orientation-to-custody\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/admission-to-custody/orientation-to-custody)

[custodial-manual/introduction-to-working-in-the-custodial-precincts/how-we-work-with-young-people-in-custody](#))

- [The importance of promoting positive behaviour \(http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/working-with-young-people-in-custody/promoting-positive-behaviour/the-importance-of-promoting-positive-behaviour\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/working-with-young-people-in-custody/promoting-positive-behaviour/the-importance-of-promoting-positive-behaviour)
 - [Grievance procedures \(http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/young-peoples-legal-entitlements/grievance-procedures\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/sentence-management/young-peoples-legal-entitlements/grievance-procedures)
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Staff responsibilities

Find your role below to see what your responsibilities are:

- [All staff](#)
 - [Unit Coordinator](#)
 - [Unit Manager](#)
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All staff

At all times when working with young people

- Be aware that young people entering custody may have a range of different emotions and reactions. Use your communication and engagement skills to help them feel safe and as comfortable as possible in the custodial environment.
- Be mindful of the need to establish positive working relationships with young people in order to work with them most effectively.

When going through the induction and orientation process with a newly arrived young person

- Answer the young person's questions, and direct them to the relevant information in the orientation kit.
 - Do not assume that they have understood all the information provided. Ask them questions about what you have told them, and check back later.
 - Be prepared to provide information more than once.
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Unit Coordinator

When supervising unit staff in their direct work with young people

- Monitor staff members' understanding of the young people they work with. If needed, identify opportunities to enhance staff members' knowledge and skills in working with young people.

- Ensure that staff engage positively with young people, and appropriately encourage and support young people during their orientation to custody.
 - Monitor and provide feedback on the skills and personal qualities staff bring to their work with young people.
 - Where it has been identified that staff need to improve their skills, support them through identified training, increased supervision, peer support or other appropriate methods.
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Unit Manager

When overseeing all staff and their direct work with young people in the unit

- Ensure that the unit is running smoothly and all staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
 - Monitor the implementation and provision of relevant policies and procedures such as the orientation process and the Promoting Positive Behaviour framework.
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The procedure in detail

- Orientation processes
 - Cultural and developmental considerations
 - Orientation booklet
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Orientation processes

Offer the young person a shower and a meal. This can occur during the admission process. If necessary, offer the young person contact with workers, parents and significant other people.

Give the young person an orientation booklet and explain its contents page by page verbally in simple language. Allow the young person to ask questions and answer them appropriately.

Introduce them to other young people and give them a tour of the unit (if an after-hours admission, this can be done the next morning).

Provide the young person with clothing.

Show the young person their bedroom, how to use the intercom, what to do in an emergency, including location of fire exits and evacuation points.

Explain to them that they will be on observation for the initial period in custody, and that this is done to keep them safe.

Assist the young person to complete the Room Condition Report and place it in the institutional information section of the client file.

Throughout this process, staff should answer the young person's questions, and direct them to the relevant information in the orientation kit.

Explain:

- rules of the precinct that affect them
- the responsibilities of staff
- information on what items are allowed, those that are prohibited, and the consequences of introducing prohibited items
- how Promoting Positive Behaviour works
- their entitlements in relation to telephone use, mail and visitors
- the health services available
- information on unit routine (for example, wake-up time, bedtimes, education times, and so on)
- the educational, recreational and program options available
- that searches of young people and of their bedrooms occur
- the smoking policy
- personal property rules.

For young Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Support Worker should assist in the orientation and induction process, if possible.

For young people from a culturally or linguistically diverse background, the Cultural Liaison Worker should be introduced to the young person during the induction process to provide an overview of their role and, if required, assist during the induction process.

If they are not available, the Cultural Liaison Worker should see the young person as soon as possible after the admission.

Cultural and developmental considerations

The orientation session must be:

- tailored to the young person's age, developmental level and gender
- targeted to appropriate levels of thinking and understanding
- translated for young people who cannot understand the information in English (either a written or verbal translation)
- reinforced over a number of sessions for young people who have difficulty understanding the contents of the kit in one sitting.

Orientation booklet

It is important that the worker conducting the induction gives the young person the orientation booklet upon admission to the precinct. The booklet is called **What I need to know: rights and rules in youth justice custodial precincts** (see **Additional information** below).

The youth justice worker must be satisfied that the young person understands all of the booklet, and must ensure that the young person can ask questions at any later stage.

The booklet covers the following topics:

- What's this booklet about?
- Why do we have youth justice precincts?
- Who works at the precinct?
- What can I expect from my worker?
- What is expected of me at this precinct?
- What are my rights?
- What are the rules?
- Can staff search me?
- What about my personal clothing and property?
- Who can visit me and when?
- What about letters and phone calls?
- What supports are there?
- Legal representation and the police
- What is a client assessment and plan (CAP)?
- What about my personal information?
- What will I be doing at the precinct?
- Am I allowed to have leave from the precinct?
- What happens to prepare for my release?
- When can I return to the community?
- If I have an issue or complaint, what can I do?
- My information

Additional Information

- [What I need to know: rights and rules in youth justice custodial precincts \(829.0 KB, PDF\)](http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/additional-information/other-resources/departmental2/What-I-need-to-know-client-induction-booklet.pdf)
(<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/youth-justice-custodial-manual/additional-information/other-resources/departmental2/What-I-need-to-know-client-induction-booklet.pdf>)
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