

## *Youth Justice Policy Determination 1.2: Records Management*

REFERENCE	61:F2018/286-2	
POLICY APPROVER	Name Title	Jeanette Kerr Deputy Chief Executive Officer Operations
	Date	4 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 ensure the creation of appropriate and detailed contemporaneous records related to all young people in detention, and the retention of records in accordance with Territory Families and Northern Territory Government policy.

## 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 applies to all Territory Families staff.

## Policy Statement

Information regarding a young person in detention must be recorded accurately, in a timely manner and detail the involvement of Youth Justice staff with the young person, their family and significant other people in the young person's life.

Information must be recorded in a non-stigmatising way that differentiates between fact, opinion and third-party information. Youth Justice staff should ensure that they give an accurate account of all decisions made or actions taken. Options and conclusions drawn should be supported by evidence.

### *Maintaining quality client records*

Client notes and records must:

- be accurate and factual;
- be written clearly, concisely and in a well-structured style;
- be made in a timely manner and kept up to date;
- be legible - care must be taken with any hand-written notes;
- refer to the date and time when the related event occurred;
- include the name, signature and delegation of the author and where required, similar details for the approving officer;
- avoid using unnecessary abbreviations, jargon, judgmental or labelling language and
- be written in a respectful and professional manner, keeping in mind the possibility that the client and/or a related party may be given access to read their file in the future.

*Information can be classified as either fact or opinion.*

### FACT

Facts are information that is known to be true. They can be observed by someone, substantiated by an expert or by documentation such as a birth certificate or medical record. Care must be taken to avoid confusing facts with opinion.

### OPINION

Opinion is judgement or belief thought to be true. It can be reported by a client, reported by a third party or can be second-hand information or an impression gained from first-hand experience e.g. the Case Manager gained the impression that the person was affected by alcohol.

It should be clearly noted when information is hearsay or opinion and when there is no proof that the information is factual. The basis for an opinion or assessment should also be noted.

### *Reasons for recording information*

Information regarding a client is collected for a variety of reasons, creating and maintaining up to date client and case records in order to:

- Document a record of the young person's needs, contacts and the services provided;
- Retain a detailed history of the young person's time in detention;
- Promote continuity of care over time, in various settings, programs and service types;
- Maintain an accountable record of key decisions made in respect of the young person and the rationale upon which those decisions were made; and
- Document a history of Territory Families management of the young person to enable the quality of care to be monitored and evaluated.

### *Management of Records*

The [Information Act](#) requires Territory Families to keep full and accurate records of its activities and operations, and articulate the parameters in which records are to be maintained.

In Territory Families, client information is managed and maintained in two ways:

- Hard copy file kept in the various offices; and
- Electronic records in the relevant client management system (IOMS, CCIS and/or SupportLink).

The hard copy and electronic records are complementary. Together, they provide the complete, integrated record. The electronic record is the primary method of recording client information and case records.

The legal requirements in regard to how client information is maintained and shared are prescribed by legislation including the [Information Act](#), the [Youth Justice Act](#), the [Care and Protection of Children Act](#) and the [Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993](#). All staff must comply with this legislation.

All Youth Justice Staff must document case events and information related to the young person in the following records:

#### *Young Person's Hard Copy File*

A hard copy file must be created for every young person in detention and linked to other Territory Families Client files. Refer to [Records Management](#) for assistance on how to create a new hard copy file. The hard copy file must be stored securely. Hard copies of pertinent written information such as reports, referrals, emails and any other relevant material must be placed in the client file in chronological order.

#### *Electronic Records*

Case information stored in the electronic records (including in IOMS, CCIS and/or SupportLink) should contain all relevant information about the young person and be as detailed as possible while remaining objective. Case notes must always contain:

- Client's name and date of birth;
- The purpose and the outcome of the event;
- Key issues discussed or arising adhering to professional standards;
- Decisions made;
- Action taken or required;
- Services provided and referrals made; and
- Reference to any other relevant information.

### *Audio and video recordings*

Audio and video recordings are made throughout the detention centre to ensure security and to appropriately manage and support young people at risk.

In the event of a reportable incident involving a young person in detention the relevant audio and video files must be downloaded to a secure area of the file server, logged and made available to senior staff to support any subsequent inquiry or investigation.

It is essential that all audio and video recordings routinely made by the systems within the centre are retained for a minimum of 12 months. This is to ensure that allegations that may be made in the future, about past events, may be investigated.

To maintain access to past recordings audio and video files must be archived onto removable media and stored in a secure location that is certified as suitable for maintaining the integrity of the recordings. All archived recordings must be catalogued and their location recorded in TRIM. Recordings should not be overwritten by new recordings without an archive copy being made first.

### Records Management Standards

All Northern Territory public sector employees must comply with mandatory standards for managing the records they create and receive as part of their work. The Records Management Standards for Public Sector Organisations in the NT are part of the [Information Act](#). Refer to Territory Families' [Records Management](#) to ensure compliance with all mandatory requirements.

### *Disposing of Personal Information and Records*

Personal client Information that is not required to be stored in the young person's file must be shredded and disposed of appropriately.

### Confidentiality

Client information must be maintained in such a way as to uphold the principle of client confidentiality. Refer to [Youth Justice Policy Determination 3.4: Confidentiality and Client Information Management](#).

Breaches of confidentiality are Reportable Incidents and must be reported in accordance with [Youth Justice Policy Determination 2.3: Incident Recording and Reporting](#).