

Records Management

Policy Determination 1.2

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Acronyms	Full form
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMS	Case Management System (IOMS, TRM, CCIS, CARE)
DCDD	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
Department	The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities
IOMS	Integrated Offender Management System
NT	Northern Territory
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
PSEMA	Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993
TRM	Territory Records Manager
YDC	Youth Detention Centre
YJ Act	Youth Justice Act 2005

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1. Policy Purpose

- 1.1. To ensure the creation of appropriate and detailed contemporaneous records related to all young people in a Youth Detention Centre (YDC), and the retention of records in accordance with the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (the Department) and Northern Territory Government (NTG) policy.

2. Authority / Responsibility

- 2.1. The Executive Leadership Board and Senior Managers (Executive Director of Youth Justice Operations and Superintendent) have the responsibility for ensuring that supervisors and employees understand and comply with this policy determination.
- 2.2. This Determination applies to all Departmental, Youth Justice Operations (Detention) staff.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. Information regarding a young person accommodated in a YDC must be recorded accurately, in a timely manner. It should detail the involvement of YDC staff with the young person, the young person's parents, their family, members of their natural support network, appropriate community members nominated by the young person or their parents, and significant involved professionals or other relevant participants.
- 3.2. Information must be recorded in a non-stigmatising way that differentiates between fact, opinion and third-party information. YDC 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.

4. Maintaining quality client records

- 4.1. Client notes and records must be:
 - (1). accurate and factual;
 - (2). written clearly, concisely and in a well-structured style;
 - (3). made in a timely manner and kept up to date;
 - (4). legible - care must be taken with any hand-written notes (uploaded to the CMS);
 - (5). recorded with reference to the date and time when the related event occurred;
 - (6). recorded with the name, signature and delegation of the author and where required, similar details for the approving officer;
 - (7). written avoiding unnecessary abbreviations, jargon, judgmental or labelling language; and
 - (8). written in a respectful and professional manner, keeping in mind the possibility that the young person, their family, the Court, and/or a related party may be given access to read their file in the future.

5. Information can be classified as either fact or opinion

- 5.1. Facts are information that can be proven with certainty. 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.
- 5.2. 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 staff member gained the impression that the person was affected by alcohol.
- 5.3. 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, e.g. the person smelt of alcohol and was slurring their words, but denied drinking alcohol.

6. Reasons for recording information

- 6.1. Information regarding a young person (or client) is collected for a variety of reasons, creating and maintaining up to date client and case records in order to:
 - (1). document a record of the young person's needs, contacts and the services provided;
 - (2). retain a detailed history of the young person's time in detention;
 - (3). promote continuity of care over time, in various settings, programs and service types;
 - (4). maintain an accountable record of key decisions made in respect of the young person and the rationale upon which those decisions were made; and
 - (5). document a history of the Department's support and management of the young person to enable the quality of care to be monitored and evaluated.

7. Management of Records

- 7.1. The *Information Act 2002* requires the Department to keep full and accurate records of its activities and operations, and articulate the parameters in which records are to be maintained.
- 7.2. In the Department, client information is managed and maintained in two ways:
 - (1). Hard copy file securely kept in the various offices until they are scanned or otherwise recorded into electronic records; and
 - (2). Electronic records in the relevant client management system (CMS) (e.g. CARE, IOMS, CCIS, TRM/InReach and/or SupportLink).
- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. The legal requirements in regard to how client information is maintained and shared are prescribed by legislation including the *Information Act 2002*, the *Youth Justice Act 2005*, the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* and the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993*. All staff must comply with this legislation.
- 7.5. The Department requires employees to maintain records in line with the internal Records Management Capability Framework.

8. Young Person's File

- 8.1. All YDC staff must document case events and information related to the young person in the following records:
- (1). A file must be created for every young person at the YDC and linked to their other Departmental Client files. Pertinent written information such as reports, referrals, emails and any other relevant material must be placed in the CMS in chronological order.
 - (2). Some documents that are electronic are still stored in H: drive. These should not be documents that should be on the young person's file.

9. Electronic Records

- 9.1. Case information stored in the CMS should contain all relevant information about the young person and be as detailed as possible while remaining objective.
- 9.2. Case notes must always contain:
- (1). Client's name and date of birth;
 - (2). The purpose and the outcome of the event;
 - (3). Key issues discussed or arising adhering to professional standards;
 - (4). Decisions made;
 - (5). Action taken or required;
 - (6). Services provided and referrals made; and
 - (7). Reference to any other relevant information.

10. Audio and video recordings

- 10.1. Audio and video (CCTV) recordings are made throughout the YDC to ensure security and to appropriately manage and support young people at risk.
- 10.2. 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 review, inquiry or investigation.
- 10.3. It is essential that all audio and video recordings routinely made by the systems within the YDC 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.
- 10.4. 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 CMS (e.g. TRM). Recordings should not be overwritten by new recordings without an archived copy being made first.

11. Records Management Standards

- 11.1. All Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) employees must comply with mandatory standards for managing the records they create and receive as part of their work. The NTPS Organisations and Information Management Standards are part of the *Information Act 2002*. Any questions can go

through this link <https://jira.nt.gov.au/servicedesk/customer/portal/44>. Refer to the [Department of Corporate and Digital Development \(DCDD\)](#)¹ to ensure compliance with all mandatory requirements.

- 11.2. Disposing of personal information and records: Personal client Information that is residual hard copy documents need to be scanned into CMS (e.g. IOMS/CARE/TRM) and either stored at Iron Mountain or disposed of properly.

12. Confidentiality

- 12.1. 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.
- 12.2. Breaches of confidentiality are Reportable Incidents and must be reported in accordance with Youth Justice Policy Determination 2.3: Incident Recording and Reporting. Breaches may also require a Newsflash. Refer to the Preparing a Newsflash Guideline.

13. Legislative basis and related documents

[Youth Justice Act 2005](#)²

[Youth Justice Regulations 2006](#)³

[Information Act 2002](#)⁴

[Care and Protection of Children Act 2007](#)⁵

[Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993](#)⁶

Records Management Capability Framework

Policy Determination 2.3 Incident Recording and Reporting

Policy Determination 3.4 Confidentiality and Client Information Management

¹ <https://dcdd.nt.gov.au/government-records/ntps-organisations-records-information-management-standards>

² <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/YOUTH-JUSTICE-ACT-2005>

³ <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/YOUTH-JUSTICE-REGULATIONS-2006>

⁴ <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/INFORMATION-ACT-2002>

⁵ <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/CARE-AND-PROTECTION-OF-CHILDREN-ACT-2007>

⁶ <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/PUBLIC-SECTOR-EMPLOYMENT-AND-MANAGEMENT-ACT-1993>