


GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 23-4	Policy # 8.20
Applicability: { } All DJJ Staff { } Administration { } Community Services {x} Secure Facilities	Related Standards & References: DJJ 5.1, 8.5, 12.21, 12.22, 18.10 ACA Standards: 3-JDF-3C-07, 4-JCF-3C-03	
Chapter 8: SAFETY, SECURITY, AND CONTROL	Effective Date: 8/8/23 Scheduled Review Date: 8/8/24	
Subject: YOUTH AND LOCATION CHECKS	Replaces: 7/22/21 Secure Facilities	
Attachments: A –Youth Observation Form	APPROVED:  _____ Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

All youth in a secure facility shall be visually checked at least once every 30 minutes, or more frequently as ordered by supervisory, mental health, or health care staff. An electronic monitoring system will be used to document the visual checks of youth and designated areas of the facility. All staff utilizing the system shall be trained in its use.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Close Observation: Level of supervision requiring a clear, continuous and unobstructed view of the youth at all times. Close observation will be documented every 15 minutes while in the room or removed from regular programming.

Data Acquisition Unit: A portable device used to identify the staff member performing the security check or direct observation, and the behavior or status of an observed youth.

Data Station: A Data Button or tag with a unique identifier located at the room, door, or area to be checked.

Data Button: A portable device containing a unique bar code or radio frequency identification (RFID) chip used to identify a staff member, location, or the behavior or status of a youth.

Electronic Security Monitoring System: A computer-driven system used to document security checks and direct observations of youth.

Isolation: Placing a youth in a locked room for a period of 15 minutes or more, unless it is a scheduled sleep period or there is a medical or security operational need (i.e. administrative reasons).

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One to One Observation: A special precaution prescribed as part of close observation requiring one youth to be assigned to one designated staff member at all times in order for that staff member to closely and directly supervise all of that youth's activities in an effort to protect him/her from harm. One to one observation will be documented every 15 minutes while the youth is in the room or removed from regular programming.

Youth Check: The act of physically viewing the youth, assessing his/her safety, ensuring the door is locked and secured, taking any needed action(s), and documenting a comment either electronically or manually.

Routine Observation: Level of supervision requiring no special services or precautions due to the absence of any apparent risk of harm. Direct observation and documentation of youth's behaviors occurs at irregular intervals at least every 30 minutes while in their room.

Safety Protocol: A safety-oriented, written protocol for each youth who is on special (Level 2) or close (Level 3) observation. A safety protocol may be developed and initiated only by a qualified mental health professional (QMHP) or by direct care staff under the direction of a QMHP.

Location Check: Ensuring perimeter security and that exterior and interior doors and gates are locked and secured. Discrepancies will be verbally reported and documented.

Special Management Plan: A treatment-oriented, written plan by a qualified mental health professional that includes a description of the youth's typical response to crisis, known events that may precipitate a crisis, behaviors that suggest the youth may be beginning to escalate or lose control, personal issues that may increase the youth's vulnerability to stressful situations, and specific actions for preventing and managing crisis.

Special Observation: Level of supervision requiring direct observation and documentation of the youth's behavior at irregular intervals at least every 15 minutes.

III. PROCEDURES:

A. Data Stations:

1. Data stations will be mounted in such a manner that the staff can visually check the youth and simultaneously record the observation.
2. Fresh air doors and perimeter gates will have a station located near them.

B. In case of system failure, the Director will document failure and make immediate arrangements to have the system repaired.

C. Monitoring Tours:

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1. The staff will ensure that the door is locked and secured, and that there are no other youth in the room. The staff will ensure the youth is physically present and shows no signs of distress.
2. The staff will take any needed action(s) and document observed behaviors before moving to the next room.
3. During each check of doors and gates, all exterior/interior doors will be checked by the staff performing the monitoring tour. The staff will push against the door to ensure that it is secure before scanning the station. Any discrepancies will be reported to the shift supervisor/ADO and a Special Incident Report (DJJ 8.5, Attachment A) will be completed by the end of the shift.

D. Youth checks will be made as follows when the youth are in the room:

Status	IV. Frequency of Room Check
Routine Observation	Every 30 minutes
Special Observation	Every 15 minutes (Must be increased to close observation if placed in isolation)
Close Observation (visual) & One-to-One Observation (arm's length)	Continuous, clear, and unobstructed visual observation, to be documented every 15 minutes
Medical Isolation	Every 15 minutes

1. Staff members will observe each youth in the unit a minimum of once every 30 minutes and record the observation utilizing the electronic security monitoring system. Youth checks will be made more frequently if required by a safety protocol, Special Management Plan, licensed healthcare professional, or if mandated by supervisory staff.
2. A youth with an active special observation (Level 2) Safety Protocol who is placed in isolation will be increased to close observation (Level 3) as soon as they are placed in isolation and will remain on Level 3 for the duration of their isolation and for no fewer than 24 hours in accordance with DJJ 12.21, Suicide Prevention.
3. For youth placed on close observation, the clinician may consider one-to-one observation as an intervention to protect the youth. One-to-one observation

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should be considered only in extreme circumstances when the youth cannot be safely managed with close observation. When the clinician is considering the use of one-to-one observation, he/she will coordinate the management of the youth with the facility Director or designee (DJJ 12.21, Suicide Prevention).

G. Review of Electronic Monitoring Data:

1. Each hand-held data acquisition unit will be downloaded or placed on the docking station daily.
2. Documentation of youth checks will be maintained electronically in accordance with DJJ 5.1, Records Management.
3. Failure to conduct the required direct observation must be noted and immediately forwarded to the Assistant Director or Director.
4. The Assistant Director will submit a weekly report to the Director of any failure to make required direct observation, the reason for such failure and the corrective action taken. The Director will review, sign, and date the weekly report.
5. The Director will review a random electronic security monitoring system report at least once each month. The Director will sign and date the reviewed report.

H. In the event of a malfunction of the electronic security monitoring system equipment, youth will continue to be monitored in accordance with the time periods indicated in section E.

1. Documentation will be made using the Youth Observation Form (Attachment A). (The Youth Observation Form will never be used when the system is functioning.)
2. The facility Director or designee will receive immediate verbal notification when the system malfunctions. A work order and an In-house Special Incident Report will be completed by the end of the shift.
3. If the electronic security monitoring system malfunctions for more than 24 hours, the facility Director will notify his/her immediate supervisor.

IV. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: NO