



Department of
Children's Services



Youth Handbook

For a Tennessee Youth Development Center

Tennessee Department of Children's Services | Office of Juvenile Justice | April 2024



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THE YDC PROGRAM

We've worked with thousands of youth to find a different path for their lives, and we're committed to helping you find yours. We know that you might not be excited to be here. Even so, we want this to be a positive experience for you.

We'll spell out our expectations. We'll do everything we can to help you achieve them. It's going to be up to you, though, to make it work. You're probably going to face some real challenges here, but like the many, many before you, it is nothing you can't handle.

We'll teach job skills and independent living skills that will help you to be successful once you have completed your program. You will learn how to take better care of yourself and how to grow into confident young men.

Doing that requires taking responsibility for your actions. It means learning that future success relies on understanding the value of hard work and having the desire to change.

What We Offer

- High School Education
- High School Equivalency Test
- Tutoring
- Medical and dental services
- Therapy (Individual, Family and Group)
- Case management
- Medication management
- Substance abuse treatment and relapse prevention
- Anger management courses
- Community service programs
- Independent living skills instruction
- Vocational training
- Job skills training
- Parenting classes
- Recreational activities

Emergencies

All staff members have received training in emergency situations, including first aid and CPR. **If an emergency arises, tell a staff person immediately.**

In case of fire or other disaster, follow staff directions. Stay calm and orderly. Each building has posted evacuation plans. Follow them if the situation arises.

Cameras

The facility has many cameras in various locations. The cameras are here for the safety of youth and staff. **Information recorded may be used to review activity on the campus and in the dorms.**

Determinate Sentence

If you received a determinate sentence from your judge you are eligible to earn Youth Commitment Reduction Credits. Each month the treatment team will review your behavior and performance in the treatment program. If you do well in both areas you will receive eight days for good behavior and eight days for working

your program. This means 16 days can be subtracted from your sentence end date and you can go home earlier. Your RCM will calculate your earned credits each month and let you know your new release date. Previously earned credits can be lost if you are found guilty of a major offense or if you refuse to participate in your program.

Refusal to Participate in Your Treatment Program

When you fail to make progress in the treatment program for long periods of time, a maximum of 20 previously earned credits can be removed. The following ranges will be used by treatment team when considering the removal of previously earned youth commitment reduction credits for habitual refusal to participate in the treatment program:

Time period	Range of Credits
30 Days	0-8
60 Days	9-16
90 Days	17-20

Commission of a Major Offense

The following ranges will be used by the disciplinary committee when considering the removal of previously earned youth commitment reduction credits:

Charge	Range of Credits
Aggravated Battery	10-20
Arson	10-20
Assault (Physical Contact Only)	5-10
Assault & Battery	5-15
Attempted Escape	5-10
Damaging/Destroying State Property	1-5
Escape	15-20
Extortion	1-10
Participation in a Riot	10-20
Possession of a Weapon	5-15
Use of Drugs/ Inhalants/Intoxicants	5-10
Possession Drugs/ Inhalants/Intoxicants	1-5
Rape	10-20
Selling Inhalants/Drugs/Intoxicants	5-20

You have Right to be Treated Well

This YDC promotes **respect, healing and positive behavior** and prevents the need for restrictive behavior management interventions. To provide that environment, the following practices are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment
- Chemical restraint
- Withholding food or water for punishment
- Use of demeaning or degrading language
- Physical or mechanical restraint as punishment or for the convenience of staff
- Forced physical exercise as punishment
- Cancellation of visitation as disciplinary action
- Punishment by peers

- Group punishment for individual behavior
- Unwarranted use of invasive procedures or activities as a disciplinary action

We have **zero tolerance for harassment and bullying**. If you're being harassed or bullied – or if you see someone else being harassed or bullied – find a way to let us know.

Report it to a staff member you trust. File a grievance according to the directions below. Send a note to the superintendent. We are experienced at handling these situations, and we know how to put a stop to it.

Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment

We have zero tolerance for sexual misconduct, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. We also have many methods to monitor and report any potential instances of these. Let's be clear about what we mean:

Sexual misconduct is youth-on-youth sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and consensual sex acts. It also includes staff-on-youth sexual harassment, staff sexual misconduct, and staff misconduct of a sexual nature.

For instance, sexual misconduct occurs when one or more youth are involved in or attempt to involve themselves in a sex act. It includes but is not limited to asking for, paying for, promising, or threatening another person to have sex. Sexual misconduct also includes exposing, kissing, touching, or gesturing to your own private parts or using sexual words. Talking about sex, using language with sexual overtones, using disrespectful language or curse words may be considered sexual misconduct. Watching other youth undress and/or use the bathroom is another form of sexual misconduct.

This Applies to Staff Too

- They would be guilty of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse if they were to participate in the above behaviors.
- They would be guilty if they knew of youth sexual or staff sexual misconduct and didn't report it.
- They would be guilty if they promised favors for sexual acts or they threatened youth for refusing sexual advances.

How to Report

Talk to someone. You can speak to any staff member. All adults, including staff members, volunteers, and contract employees, are required by law to report allegations of child abuse or neglect.

If you are not comfortable speaking with staff members you can speak to the John L. Attorney who is available to represent you. You may also speak to therapists, peers, the chaplain, volunteers, your family members, friends or anyone you are comfortable speaking with to make a report of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Staff are required to document reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment made verbally, in writing, anonymously and from other people made on your behalf (third parties).

Call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-877-237-0004. Points to remember:

- A staff member cannot ask you any questions or say anything to you about calling the abuse hotline. A staff member cannot deny you access to call the abuse hotline.
- A staff member will dial the hotline number for you, but no staff or other person will remain in hearing distance of your phone call. A staff member will watch you while you are making the phone call, but will not be able to hear what you say on the phone.

- If you have any questions or concerns please contact any staff member or the YDC's **Prison Rape Elimination Act Compliance Manager**.
- **File a grievance.** Write your report on a grievance form and place it in the grievance box. All reports regarding sexual activity are kept confidential and treated very seriously. Please include your name and a short description of what happened and who was involved so that someone can contact you to find out what happened.
- **Write directly to the Superintendent.** You can send the Superintendent a letter reporting sexual misconduct. You may also send a letter to the Commissioner of Tennessee's Department of Children's Services.

How to Protect Yourself

- **Do not** enter another youth's room.
- **Do not** allow another youth into your room.
- **Do not** talk about sex.
- **Do not** horseplay.
- **Do not** keep sexual misconduct a secret.
- Stand up for yourself. Say, "No!"

Prison Rape Elimination Act

The Prison Rape Elimination Act prohibits retaliation against youth or staff who report sexual misconduct. This means that the PREA Compliance Manager will follow up with youth and staff who report sexual misconduct in at least 90 days. The PREA Compliance Manager will be following up in person and will be keeping track of the meetings. This is done to make sure that no one is trying to threaten or get back at you for reporting the sexual misconduct. You will continuously be informed about the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) through conversations with staff and with written and/or audiovisual materials. Information about PREA is posted throughout the facility for easy access.

Law on False Reporting

Prohibits false reports of sexual abuse. TCA 37-1-413 states, "Any person who either verbally or by written/printed communication reports false accusations of sexual abuse commits a Class E Felony." This means that you should not lie about being sexually abused or about others being sexually abused. If you do, your IPP will be reviewed and revisions made to your programming to address the behavior and you may be charged with a **Class E Felony**.

DCS policy 18.8 explains that "A report made in good faith upon reasonable belief of the alleged incident will not constitute a false report and may not be used as grounds for disciplinary action." For example: You have been, or truly believe that another youth has been abused and you make a report of sexual misconduct. The report is investigated and it is found that there is not enough evidence to support the claim. You will not be disciplined.

What Happens if You Make a Report of Sexual Abuse?

- Someone from DCS Special Investigations Unit or DCS PREA Unit will meet with you to discuss the allegations in private and to ensure a fair investigation.
- You may be asked to speak with Law Enforcement as part of the SIU/PREA investigation.
- You may be asked to participate in an on-site forensic medical exam by a qualified Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, unless an injury has been sustained and verified by medical staff.
- If it is determined that you require medical treatment outside the facility, you will be taken to the Emergency Room.

- A Safety Plan may be developed to provide you with additional safeguards against re-victimization and retaliation. The alleged perpetrator and victim will be placed in separate living units as part of the Safety Plan.
- Any youth alleging to be a victim of sexual abuse may speak to a community-based Victim Advocate who will provide you additional emotional support and support during the forensic medical exam and interviews. You will be able to communicate with the advocate and these organizations in as confidential a manner as possible. The staff member will dial the number to the advocacy center and allow you to speak directly with them. Tennessee law requires that any person who suspects a child has been abused or neglected report the abuse to the Department of Children's Services. Because of this law, the staff at the crisis center is required to report sexual abuse to the child abuse hotline, so some of the information you share with the staff at the crisis center may be shared for that purpose.

Grievance Procedures

Writing a grievance is one of your most important rights. You can file one at any time. We care about you and want you to tell us about things that you think are unfair or being done the wrong way. You may tell us these things by writing a grievance. You do not have to worry about anyone trying to get even with you or pay you back for writing it; a grievance is an okay way to solve a problem. Before you use your right to file a grievance, we encourage you to try to solve the problem yourself with the help of staff. **Talking to staff about the problem is the best way to solve problems.** You should also know that there are some things you cannot use the grievance process for. For example, about disciplinary reports and any treatment plan disagreement or concerns can be dealt with through the appeals process.

A staff member will tell you where you can find a grievance form. They are available in many locations throughout the campus, including most common areas. A staff member can also help you write the grievance if you need help. There is a grievance chairperson who collects grievance forms regularly. Your grievance will be sent to someone who will investigate and help you resolve the grievance informally. If it can't be resolved informally, you may ask for a hearing with the Grievance Committee.

You may also use the grievance form to report sexual abuse and harassment. If you are reporting sexual abuse or sexual harassment and want to remain anonymous, you do not have to fill in your name, dorm or case manager on the grievance form as the reporter but will need to identify the name of the victim of the abuse and as much information as possible so the matter can be investigated. You have access to pencils, paper and envelopes. If you would prefer to report the sexual abuse or sexual harassment directly to an outside agency without notifying facility staff you can send the written grievance to the following address:

**Attention: Director of Nursing
Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center
1060 Madison Avenue
Memphis, TN 38104**

If you would prefer to report the sexual abuse or sexual harassment directly to the DCS Child Abuse Hotline without notifying facility staff you can send the written grievance to the following address:

**Department of Children's Services
Office of Child Safety**

TN Child Abuse Hotline
200 Athens Way Suite E
Nashville, TN 37243

There are envelopes with the above addresses already typed up for you beside each grievance box where you can place your written grievance, seal it and place it in the grievance box. Only designated staff will pick up the sealed envelope out of the box and mail it without opening it.

The Grievance Committee has five members: a chairperson, two staff members elected by the students and two students elected by staff. At the hearing you have the right to have an advocate, which is someone to help you tell your side of the story. The Grievance Committee will read the form and hear verbal information and make a decision within five days of the hearing. You can appeal if you do not agree with the decision. Staff or the John L attorney will help you if you want to file an appeal.

Your Civil Rights

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that programs that receive money from the federal government be free of discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

The Tennessee Department of Children's Services also requires that its services be offered to all eligible persons. Should you feel you have been discriminated against, contact the YDC Title VI representative. Any staff member can help you get in touch with that person.

DCS also complies with Title IX of The Education Amendments of 1972, and ensures that its educational programs and activities are offered without discrimination on the basis of sex.

Getting in Touch with an Attorney

You may contact your attorney by phone or by mail. To contact your attorney by mail, write a letter and we will mail it for you. If you need to talk to your attorney by phone, tell your RCM. If your attorney comes to Wilder, you can meet with him or her in private.

DCS has a contract attorney called a John L. attorney. If you do not have an attorney, you can ask to meet with the contract attorney.

If you need help, complete a legal aid form and the attorney will set a time to meet with you. These forms are in various locations throughout the campus and made be requested from staff if you are unable to locate one. The contract attorney is at your facility at least once per week.

Contraband

Contraband is defined as any item which is not permitted in the facility. Items considered contraband include but are not limited to are **drugs, tobacco, alcohol, money, aerosol cans, medication not prescribed for you, glass containers, jewelry, cell phones, pornography, gambling items, gang-related materials, items used as weapons** - to name a few.

A staff member can search a youth and his property when there is suspicion of contraband but also search the facility and your room on a regular basis. Follow the rules and do not have contraband in your possession.

Medical, Dental and Vision Care

You will have access to health care services while here. When you arrive, you should make the staff aware of any special medical concerns or needs, allergies and/or medications you are currently taking. Bring these up at your initial CFTM, so that we can note them in your Individual Program Plan.

You will receive a physical exam, a vision and hearing screening, a tuberculosis test, tests for sexually transmitted diseases, blood tests and a dental exam. This process will be repeated once a year for a physical and twice a year for dental exams.

You will have access to emergency and routine medical care 24 hours a day. This includes treatment for physical, dental, and mental health concerns.

A nurse is available for routine medical needs daily. Doctors, dentists and mental health providers are available on a regular schedule. Any specialized treatments or procedures must be authorized by the doctor or dentist.

All emergencies (including after hours) are handled as they occur. (On call nurses are available after hours. All other complaints will be added to the next sick call or medicine pass.

For any emergency treatment, notify any staff member immediately. First aid measures will be provided by staff on duty and should further treatment be needed, staff will make arrangements for immediate treatment through the ER or local doctor, depending upon the severity of injury or illness and time of day. We will notify your parent or guardian in the event of serious illness or injury.

If you wake up ill, you should request a sick call form from medical staff. **Medical staff will decide on whether a youth is seen by the doctor.**

Fingernails are to be maintained at a length deemed appropriate by nursing staff for the safety of all youth and staff.

Special Diet

If you have a request for a special diet due to medical needs you must inform the nurse. The nursing staff will evaluate your request and handle each request accordingly.

Requests for religious diets must be submitted to the superintendent.

Sick Call

Sick call is held after breakfast and at after-dinner medicine pass seven days a week. If you are sick, here is what to do:

- Ask the staff member assigned to your dorm to give you a sick call form.
- Fill out the form by putting your first name, last name and the name of your dorm at the top of the form.
- Write down any problems you are having in the correct area of the form.
- Drop your filled in form into the locked box when you enter the cafeteria for breakfast or dinner. A nurse will collect the sick call forms from the box while you eat to make sure the forms remain confidential.
- If you are on the TRU dorm, place the filled in form in the Sick call box located on the dorm.

If you take medication regularly you will take it when staff calls you for medication pass. If you refuse to take your medication the staff will write that down on the medication form. You will also be required to complete a **CS- 0093 Release from Medical Responsibility** form.

Sunscreen is available and youth are encouraged to request it when they are outside for a period of recreation or work.

Mental Health

Mental Health counseling is available for youth. Our therapists offer weekly sessions and provide individual counseling. We also offer group therapy session and family therapy. All counseling is held on site and everyone is expected to participate. Mobile Crisis services are available for youth who are showing signs of harming themselves or others. These services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Drug and Alcohol Treatment

We offer drug and alcohol treatment programs. Substance abuse is a pattern of drug or alcohol use which interferes with daily functioning, and you'll be assessed to see if you need treatment. We treat youth based on their level of need. You may be asked to submit to a drug screen.

Student Work Program

We offer opportunities for youth to work on campus. There are full-time and part-time positions available in the **On Campus Work Program**. To participate in the work program, you will be required to submit a work application to your treatment team. Once approved, you will sign off on the work goals and objectives in your IPP and youth work contract. You will review and sign the job plan developed by the Work Site Supervisor for your new position. Your job performance will be evaluated on a weekly basis. The following is the criteria to participate in the on campus work program, refer to policy 18.3 for more specific information on the program:

Part-time Positions:

- You must be at least 14 years old.
- If you have not graduated from high school or completed the HiSet Exam, then you will only be allowed to work after regular school hours, on weekends and holidays.

Full-time Positions:

- You must be at least 17 years old.
- You must have received your High School Diploma or GED/HISET.

Recreation

Youth will be allowed at least one hour of planned recreation/leisure activities each day. There will be a combination of large-muscle activity such as basketball, aerobic exercise, volleyball and other scheduled activities such as board games, cards, pool or table tennis. These activities will be planned and organized by recreational staff. Please provide input regarding your interests. A schedule of activities will be posted.

Volunteering

Community volunteers are people from the community who care about you. These volunteers assist the programs where needed and provide a friendly relationship with the youth.

For example, tutors volunteer in the school; pen-pals can write to you; individual and group volunteers hold Sunday school and bible study classes, recreational programs, special activities; and volunteers visit youth who may otherwise not have family to visit.

You may ask your RCM, school staff, Youth Service Officer or other staff members to take part in any of these programs.

School

You will be placed in an educational program based on a review of your assessment testing, prior school records, and your educational objective. The school will request school records from your prior placements and will develop a schedule that will allow you to transition back into a public school program.

The school principal will be able to answer any questions regarding the number of credits you earn or help you develop an educational program that meets your needs. Library services are provided and are available to all youth. We offer:

- LANGUAGE ARTS: English I, II, III, IV
- MATH: Algebra I, II, Geometry, Bridge Math
- SCIENCE: Biology, Physics, Chemistry
- SOCIAL STUDIES: World Geography, Economics, US History, US Government
- OTHER COURSES: Physical Education, Lifetime Wellness, Content Area Reading, Personal Finance, Marketing, Audio Visual Production, Barbering, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts and Music Theory

Computer Use

Use of the computers is a privilege, and we have rules and guidelines for using them.

Computers with Internet access are available for youth use, for researching projects for school, finding community resources, and gaining information on topics you may have questions about. Not all websites are appropriate, and we have restricted access to those. Fail to follow the guidelines, and you will lose your computer privileges. Teachers and other staff will be watching how you use the computers and what sites you are on during class. **What you do online is not private.**

Below are examples of things you are **not allowed** to do with computers or on the Internet. You may not:

- Look at, send, print, or show pictures, words, or messages that show sexual and/or gang activity. If you are sent these types of things, you should tell a teacher or other adult in the school.
- Go to web sites that are not part of your school work like social networking sites, chat rooms, and bulletin boards.
- Harass, threaten, make fun of, and/or bully others (cyber bullying). If you see behavior like this, or if someone is doing this to you, you should tell a teacher or other adult in the school.
- Damage computers or anything that is used with a computer.
- Change passwords
- Copy others' work and claim it as your own.
- Use other people's work without permission or without giving them credit.
- Share personal information about others
- Buy things from the Internet
- Do anything illegal on the Internet

Sleeping Accommodations

You will be provided with adequate and appropriate sleeping accommodations.

- Sleeping areas and bathroom enclosures contain doors or other closures to promote your privacy unless there is clear, written justification from a mental health professional to remove the doors.
- In your assigned room, you will have adequate furnishings to keep personal belongings and can lock your room door to safely secure your property.
- Youth will be provided 1 mattress, 2 sheets, 1 pillow, 1 pillow case and sufficient blankets when needed.

Clothing and Shoes

The YDC will supply all of your clothing needs. You must keep them clean and wear them appropriately. No sagging. You will have opportunity during each week to wash/dry clothes to maintain clean clothes at all times.

- Each youth will be issued three (3) complete sets of clothes to include shirts, plain white t-shirts, pants/scrubs. In addition, youth will receive 2 pair of shorts, 1 pair of sweatpants, and set of thermal underwear. Youth will receive socks and underwear for daily use. Youth will receive 2 pair of shoes (white laced shoes and slides). Seasonal clothing will include 1 coat, 1 pair of gloves, 1 toboggan and 1 ball cap.
- Shoes will be worn at all times when outside of the dormitory. All shoes will be worn properly and in accordance with their design. Shoes must have white laces or straps and remain intact. Shoe flaps must be fastened.
- Bedroom slides may be worn in the dormitory but will not be worn outside of the dormitory.
- Special footwear may be required as determined by work area or athletic event.
- Steel-toe shoes are not allowed, except as issued through vocational classes.
- No jewelry is permitted, with one exception. A legally married youth may wear a wedding band.
- No youth will pierce his ears or other body parts while here at the YDC.
- Youth are not allowed to wear straws in their ear or any other type of adornment, paper clip, or staples.
- Hair nets will not be worn outside of the dormitory, except when working in food service.
- Youth can have a comb/brush no longer than 6" or with handles. Youth can also have a plastic pick. Youth are not allowed to wear hair combs/picks. Youth are not allowed to comb hair during school hours in the school area or gym.
- Hair will be kept clean and groomed at all times.
- Youth will be allowed to get a haircut once a month.
- Youth will be neatly groomed at all times.
- Hair MUST be groomed daily if not braided.
- If braided, hair MUST be braided completely.
- Culturally competent hair care services are available to all youth.
- Youth will be given the opportunity and personal hygiene products to shave on a weekly basis.
- Youth shall not be required to wear a particular hairstyle in a particular manner for purposes of public embarrassment or punishment.
- The Superintendent may designate other areas requiring the use of a hair net or a head covering.
- Youth who wear their hair below the collar and who are assigned to work near machinery shall be required to wear a hair net or a head covering.
- Protective clothing and equipment are issued to youth assigned to work in other areas of the facility (e.g., physical plant, maintenance, vocational education and other special work areas).
- No youth will be allowed to tattoo or possess tattoo supplies or equipment.

Property and Receiving Packages

Your personal property is kept in a secure location until you are discharged from the YDC. As you progress in your treatment plan, you may be allowed to keep additional items in your room. All property that enters the facility is searched. You are allowed to receive packages on a quarterly basis. Only white, grey and a mixture of white/grey tennis shoes may be worn in the facility. Upon admission, it will be explained to you the amount of property you may receive. After admission, all property family or friends which to provide to you must be mailed, as it is not permissible for items to be personally brought to the facility. If your property is damaged/destroyed/lost, your RCM will aid you in filing a claim with the Tennessee Division of Claims Administration. If you are transferred to another placement your property will be forwarded to your new placement. If you are released from the facility, you will be allowed to sign out your property confirming that all items have been received. In the event you do not take all of your property, you will be notified by mail and given 30 days to pick it up. After 30 days, it will be disposed/ donated. For any other information, please refer to Policy [18.5, Control of Youth Personal Property in a Youth Development Center.](#)

Visitation

All youth can or may receive visits from family members. Visitation will be limited to immediate family members to include children of youth, parents, brothers and sisters, stepparents, spouse, and foster parents.

Your treatment team will determine whether others should be permitted to visit with you. Talk with your case worker if you have any suggestions or questions.

We encourage your family/legal guardians to visit you. We feel keeping contact with them is important and all youth are allowed to have the visitors according to visitor's schedule and their approved visitor's list.

- Visitors must be on your approved visitors list. Your treatment team, your Juvenile Service Worker (JSW) and you will prepare together a list of immediate family members who will be allowed to visit you.
- No visitor will be allowed to bring in any property other than identification and a purchased vending machine card for the Debitel electronic system that's available for all visitors. Visitors may purchase cards for \$3.00 in a machine provided in the Administration Building and follow the instructions on the machine to transfer money onto their cards. Purses, bags, wallets, etc. must be left in cars.
- This facility has a method to secure your keys. The visitation officer will not be able to "hold" anything for visitors who forget this requirement.
- All visitors over the age of 12 must show acceptable picture identification. If a young visitor does not have a picture ID, a JSW will take a picture of that person and include it in the youth's file.
- Except for your immediate family, all visitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by their parent /guardian.
- You and your visitors may embrace at the beginning and end of the visit.
- No outside food or drinks will be permitted. All snacks will have to be purchased with an electronic card from the vending machines in the visitation area.
- You are not allowed to visit with other youth's visitors unless approved by the Superintendent or their designee.
- The only former youth allowed to visit are those who presently have a sibling(s) at the YDC. (The sibling(s) must be on your visitors list and must have valid identification).
- Visitors cannot be under the influence of an intoxicant. Visitors who are unable to control themselves will be required to leave the campus.
- When visitors are on campus to attend meetings or Child Family Team Meetings, they are not permitted to bring money.

- Youth requesting special or extended visits outside the scheduled visitation time must make this request through the Treatment Team.
- Attorneys and clergy are not required to be on your approved visitation list. They may visit you during normal visiting hours or schedule a private visit with the help of your RCM.
- Visitation is scheduled around academic and vocational programming, meals and bedtime as to not interfere with your treatment program.
- Only your RCM can make changes to the authorized telephone list. You will be allowed 10 minutes per telephone call and your RCM will keep you informed of the schedule for telephone use. Notify any staff member in the event you have a hearing disability and arrangements will be made for you to have access to a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and a telephone with volume control.

Searches

YDC staff has the right to search your room and property at any time. The purpose of a search is to maintain a safe and secure environment for you and everyone that is within the facility. There are several types of searches that you may experience during your stay here, which are as follows:

- **Use of standard scanning equipment:** You may be asked to walk through metal detectors or stand still while staff moves a wand up and down next to you which is designed to find metallic objects.
- **Pat Down:** You may be asked to turn out your pockets, take off your shoes, shake out your hair and stand still while a same-gender staff pats you down.
- **Personal Property:** Your personal property, your room, and the clothes you are wearing may be searched at any time.
- **Unclothed search:** These do not happen often but are sometimes required. When you are admitted into a YDC, you will be asked to take off your clothes and allow staff to look in your mouth, ears, and have you show you are not hiding anything in your private body parts. An unclothed search must be approved by the Superintendent for reasons other than admission. If you leave campus for any reason, an unclothed search will occur when you return to campus.

*If you refuse to submit to a search and there is a perceived threat of danger, law enforcement may be contacted for assistance. Body Cavity searches are not allowed.

Letters

Youth are encouraged to write to family members at every opportunity. In some cases your Treatment team may limit who you can write to or who can write to you. This will be explained by your treatment team.

Do not use false names or return addresses or encourage others to do so in sending you correspondence. We will contact your JSW if we have questions about the appropriateness of someone you are corresponding with.

All your mail will be opened and inspected for unacceptable items. Contraband may be returned to sender, destroyed, or placed in your personal property for storage. You will not be allowed to receive books and magazines through the mail. You may not order CDs, DVDs, books and other items.

All outgoing letters must have your name and dormitory name over the return address with no extra writing or pictures; see below.

Your Name
Your Dormitory's Name
Name of Youth Development Center
Street address
City, State Zip Code

Name of Person Receiving the Letter
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Conclusion

We hope that this booklet is useful to you. You are now living within a structured program designed to help you learn acceptable and productive behaviors and skills. If you have any questions about the material in this booklet, your personal situation or problems, please contact any staff member.

Attachments

[*Youth Handbook Acknowledgement Form*](#)



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Youth Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Please print your name and sign:

My Name is: _____

☐ The youth handbook and the code of conduct have been explained to me.

☐ I understand the "Code of Conduct" and the "Point System".

Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ I agree to abide by the "Code of Conduct".

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Check the "Forms" Webpage for the current version and disregard previous versions. This form may not be altered without prior approval.

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RDA 2875