

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 12-04	Policy # 17.23
Applicability: { } All DJJ Users { } Administration {x} Community Services {x} Secure Facilities (RYDCs and YDCs)	Related Standards & References: O.C.G.A. §§ 15-11-63, 16-5-93, 17-17-3 (5), 17-17-5, 49-4A-8, 49-4A-9(b), 49-5-3 (12) ACA Standards: 4-JCF-3A-22, 23, 25, 26 DJJ 5.1, 8.24, 10.10, 10.11, 11.10, 11.26, 12.10, 12.21, 14.11, 15.9, 17.21, 18.21, 18.22, 20.20, 20.31,	
Chapter 17: ADMISSION AND RELEASE	Effective Date: 2/1/12 Scheduled Review Date: 2/1/13	
Subject: RELEASE FROM SECURESFACILITIES	APPROVED:	
Attachments: A – Authorization for Release B – Youth Status Report		
	L. Gale Buckner, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

The Department of Juvenile Justice shall prepare for the successful release and transition of youth to the community beginning at the time of commitment.

II. DEFINITION:

Community Case Manager: Juvenile Probation/Parole Specialist I, II or III (JPPS), who provides direct supervision and coordination of services for a youth; any member of an established case management team may perform case management tasks.

Detainer: Order of Detention, DJJ Request for Apprehension and Detention, warrant or other legal request that places a hold against a youth and notifies the holding facility of the jurisdiction's intent to take custody of the youth when he or she is released.

Early Release: Release before the minimum length of stay.

Facility Case Manager: The RYDC or YDC employee, with case management responsibilities for a youth, who shares joint service planning responsibilities with the community case manager.

Length of Stay: The amount of time a youth is to serve in restrictive custody, as ordered by the court or specified by DJJ within the term of the court order.

Maximum Length of Stay: The DJJ-calculated maximum amount of time a youth can stay in a YDC.

Minimum Length of Stay: The DJJ-calculated minimum amount of time a youth should serve in a YDC.

Release: Discharge from any secure or non-secure residential facility or program.

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Transition Team: A team of DJJ staff from each of the program areas (facility case manager, community case manager, security, medical, mental health, education) responsible for youth case review and the recommendation of release or extension of length of stay.

Transition Team Meeting: A meeting of the transition team to determine the youth's readiness for release. The youth's community case manager and parent/guardian will be invited to join the transition team for the release review meeting.

Youth Status Report: A written report that summarizes the services provided to a youth and the progress of the youth, and makes recommendations for transition.

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. Transition and aftercare planning will begin at the time of commitment. (See DJJ 17.21, Transition Planning and Aftercare Services) The Service Plan for aftercare services will be completed in accordance with DJJ 20.31, Service Planning for Youth Under Community Supervision.
- B. Required Release Procedures: (for all residential facilities and programs)
 1. Prior to a release, designated staff will verify that a release is properly and legally authorized. Releases may be authorized by court order or other legal documents issued by courts or law enforcement agencies.
 - a. The community case manager or Case Expeditor may authorize a release using the Authorization for Release Form (Attachment A). The community case manager will scan the Authorization Form into the Correspondence Module of JTS. The Authorization is required for releasing youth from a secure facility to the community or an alternate placement, including non-secure detention.
 2. All holds will be scanned into the Correspondence Module of the Juvenile Tracking System (JTS) and the Hold alert will be set by the facility case manager immediately upon becoming aware of the hold. If the community case manager becomes aware of a hold that is not entered in JTS, he/she will notify the facility case manager.
 3. The facility staff will check the release date set by the Office of Classifications and/or the Correspondence Module for a scanned Authorization Form before releasing the youth.
 4. Before release, designated staff will check the youth's file for any detainers (holds, charges, warrants, etc.) and contact the filing agency about continued interest in assuming custody.
 5. At the time of release, facility staff will verify the identity of the youth (via the JTS picture) to be released and the person or agency to whom the youth is

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being released. The picture identification of person to whom the youth is being released will be copied and filed in the youth's case record, with the exception of law enforcement or DJJ personnel.

6. At the time of release, any stored personal property will be returned to the youth. The property will be verified as correct using the DJJ Personal Property Inventory (see DJJ 8.24, Youth Property and State Issued Items), which requires the signatures of the youth and processing staff.
7. For youth being transported via a DJJ Transportation Officer, property will be transported in accordance with DJJ 10.10, Secure Movement of Youth. All youth transported by a Transportation Officer and released to a community case manager at an RYDC will have their medication released to the intake officer at the RYDC in which the youth is being delivered to.
 - a. The nurse at the RYDC will check the Projected Placement Report to determine if youth leaving the facility and being transported by the Office of Transportation are being transferred or released.
 - b. If the youth is being released, the medical staff will only send the youth's current medication and/or prescription with the transportation officer. The youth's health record will not be sent with youth who are being transported for the sole purpose of release.
 - c. All youth will be dropped off at the intake area for the receiving facility; however, the youth will not be admitted to the receiving RYDC. The youth will not be placed in a holding cell.
 - d. If available, the nurse at the receiving RYDC will receive the medication packet and will sign for receipt of the packet and will fax the receipt to the sending RYDC. If the nurse is not available, the intake officer will receive the medication packet, sign the receipt and deliver the receipt to the nurse, within 24 hours, for faxing to the sending facility. The nurse will fax the receipt back to the sending RYDC within 48 hours of the youth's release.
 - e. The Transportation Officer will contact the community case manager/court staff by telephone to give an estimated time of arrival at least one hour before he/she arrives at the youth's final destination. If the community case manager/court staff can not be reached, the Transportation Headquarters will be immediately notified for assistance. (See DJJ 10.11, Secure Movement of Youth). Transportation Headquarters staff will immediately contact Central Office staff in the Division of Youth Services.

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1. The community case manager/court staff will receive the youth at the intake area of the receiving facility at the time agreed upon with the Transportation Officer.
 2. The community case manager will deliver the youth's medications with the youth at the time of the subsequent placement.
8. For youth being released to the Department of Corrections or a jail, the facility staff will either mail the youth's property to the parent/guardian or will arrange for pick-up of the property by the youth's parent/guardian or community case manager.
 9. The youth will be given a copy of his/her Transition Plan at the time of his/her release.
 10. Youth records will be retained in accordance with DJJ 5.1, Records Management.
 11. Necessary medical and mental health follow-up appointments will be made in accordance with DJJ 11.10, Medical Treatment Planning, DJJ 12.10, Treatment Planning. Medications will be handled in accordance with DJJ 11.26 Medication Administration.
 12. When a youth who is on close or special observation is to be removed from the facility for any reason (i.e., release to parent/guardian, transportation to court, etc.), the facility staff provide the receiving officer/person with a copy of the Notification of Precautions Letter in accordance with DJJ 12.21, Suicide Prevention.
 13. Designated facility staff will complete any pending grievances and/or provide information on how to file claims for lost or damaged property prior to the youth's release (see DJJ 15.9, Youth Property and State Issued Items).
 14. When possible, any pending disciplinary sanctions will be completed prior to the youth's release.
 15. Immediately after the youth's release the facility staff will enter the release into the Juvenile Tracking System (JTS).
 16. Victim(s) will be notified, as required by law, in accordance with DJJ 14.11, Victim Notification.
- C. The DJJ Office of Classification Services will calculate the youth's minimum and maximum release dates at the time of placement and enter into the Juvenile Tracking System (JTS).

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1. For youth sentenced to a Short Term Program, Probation Management Program, and Designated Felons, the minimum and maximum release dates will be calculated based upon the court order.
 2. For committed youth, the minimum and maximum release dates will be calculated based upon the established length of stay for the screening committee's recommended placement. (See DJJ 20.20, Screening of Committed Youth)
- D. All youth will be released on the minimum release date unless an extension is granted, in writing, by the approving authority.
1. DJJ may extend the length of stay beyond the periods specified by the court within the term of the order (see DJJ 18.21, Designated Felons in Secure Facilities. No extension of the youth's length of stay may continue beyond the youth's twenty-first birthday.
- E. For regularly committed youth, in special circumstances, consideration may be given to the release of a youth before the minimum release date at the request of the youth's community case manager or facility case manager.
1. The Transition Team will make the recommendation for early release to the facility Director using the Youth Status Report (Attachment B). The facility Director will submit the recommendation to the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services or designee.
- F. YDC Releases:
1. Beginning with the initial admission to a secure facility, the Transition Team will meet with the youth and family within the first 30 days, and then every 90 days thereafter. The Transition Team will discuss the youth's identified needs and plan for the youth's successful transition to the community and aftercare services.
 - a. The facility case manager will complete the Youth Status Report prior to the Transition Team Meeting.
 - b. The community case manager must participate in each Transition Team meeting. If the community case manager cannot participate, the case manager's supervisor will designate someone to participate in their place.
 - c. The community case manager and family may participate via conference call and/or teleconferencing.
 - d. The next Transition Team meeting date and time will be established at the end of each meeting. The facility case manager will notify the

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community case manager and parent/guardian of the date and time of the next meeting.

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2. ~~At least 90 days prior to the minimum release date, the facility case manager will collaborate with the community case manager in scheduling the Transition Team Meeting. The facility case manager will send written notification confirming the agreed upon meeting date and time to the community case manager, the youth's parents/legal guardian, and the youth.~~
3. ~~At least 60 days prior to the youth's minimum release date, the Transition Team will meet with the youth and family to discuss the youth's identified needs and plan for the youth's successful transition to the community and aftercare services.~~
2. At least 120 days prior to the minimum release date of a Designated Felon, Superior Court youth, or Regular Commitment youth from a secure facility, the transition team, including the assigned Community Case Manager, youth, parents/legal guardian (if possible), and community stakeholders will meet for a full review of the youth's progress toward his/her service plan goals, behavior records, and educational progress to determine if the youth is progressing in a manner appropriate to be considered for release upon the minimum release date, or if an extension should be filed in order to provide the youth additional time to make progress in these areas".
3. Following the 120 day release review, all youth will be reviewed at the 90 day mark, 60 day mark and 30 day mark to ensure that all transition needs are being addressed by facility, community, and family to allow for a successful reentry for the youth.
4. Juvenile Detention Counselor or designee will ensure meeting notification process is conducted in accordance with this policy.
 - a. The community case manager must participate in person. If the community case manager cannot participate, the case manager's supervisor will designate someone to participate in their place.
 - b. The family may participate via conference call and/or teleconferencing.
 - c. The community case manager will invite any community partners whose services may be needed (e.g., Department of Family and Children's Services, mental health, etc.) following the youth's release.
 - d. The Transition Team will consider the youth's needs to include, at a minimum:

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- Any legal holds, warrants, detainers, etc.
 - Mental health (see DJJ 12.20, Treatment Planning);
 - Education and vocational;
 - Medical;
 - Drug and alcohol;
 - Employment;
 - Where he/she will live;
 - Life skills;
 - Restitution;
 - Transportation arrangements;
 - Community supervision requirements; and
 - Overall behavior and progress toward meeting Individualized Plan of Care/Service Plan goals.
5. In the event the transition team determines a youth has had significant behavior issues and/or is placed in the BMU, ITU at the time of the release review, or the team determines the youth is in need of additional time to work on specific goals or to complete specific programming, an extension request shall be recommended by the transition team, and the Youth Status Report (Release Review) will be completed to include the specific justification of the extension. The extension request will be completed by the assigned JDC and submitted through the facility chain of command up to the Central Office for required signatures.
 6. The Juvenile Detention Counselor will send a copy of the approved Youth Status Report to the parent and the JPPS after all required signatures are obtained.
 7. The Juvenile Detention Counselor will send a copy of the Youth Status Report (Release Review) to the committing judge providing detailed justification of the extension and informing that a decision has been made to extend the youth beyond his/her minimum release date. This procedure will be used for all DF without distinction of disposition made prior to December 2013 or after January 2014.
 8. The Transition Team will plan for which members will be responsible for arranging services for particular needs. The community case manager will coordinate the youth's receipt of services following release.
 9. The next Transition Team meeting date and time will be established at the end of each meeting. The facility case manager will notify the community case manager and parent/guardian of the date and time of the next meeting,
 10. The Transition Team will meet with the youth and family 30 days prior to the youth's release date. A conference call may be used instead of a face to face meeting. The Transition Team will discuss the youth's identified needs and

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plan for the youth's successful transition to the community and aftercare services, and ensure that identified services have been arranged.

11. The community case manager must participate in each Transition Team (exception in Section F.3.a.) meeting. If the community case manager cannot participate, the case manager's supervisor will designate someone to participate in their place.
12. The community case manager and family may participate via conference call and/or teleconferencing.

G. In addition to the above requirements, Loss of Life Cases require the following:

1. The release of youth committed by the juvenile court for murder or felony murder (O.C.G.A. 16-5-1); voluntary manslaughter (O.C.G.A. 16-5-2); or homicide by vehicle, 1st degree (O.C.G.A. 40-6-393) will be reviewed no later than 60 days from the minimum release date.
2. Designated facility staff will notify via written correspondence the community case manager and the District Director of the 60-day Transition Team meeting. The community case manager and the respective District Director will attend the Release Review Meeting.
3. The Director of the Office of Legal Services or designee will be invited to all loss of life Transition Team meetings.
4. Following the Transition Team Meeting the following documents will be forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services, through the chain of command, no later than 30 days prior to the requested release date:
 - Youth Status Report;
 - Court order;
 - Most recent psychological evaluation, if applicable;
 - DJJ Service Plan;
 - Conditions of Supervision; and
 - Youth's written statement regarding the occurrence of the offense and his/her feelings about the offense.
5. The YDC will submit an addendum to the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Services, through the chain of command, in the following circumstances:
 - The youth has a founded (guilty) charge of escape, attempted escape, sexual activity, or assault/injury to others during a disciplinary hearing.
 - New information becomes available (e.g., new legal charges, updated information that was not available when the previous report was submitted, major changes to the aftercare plan, etc.).

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The addendum will be a narrative report that includes the reason for the addendum, progress reports on the youth and the revised Service Plan for aftercare.

- H. Designated felons with restrictive custody will be released in accordance with DJJ 18.21, Supervision of Designated Felons in Secure Facilities.
- I. Superior Court youth will be released in accordance with DJJ 18.22, Superior Court Youth.

IV. LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: YES