



Youth detention centre

OPERATIONAL POLICY

Title: YD-1-15 Youth detention – Independent living units

Policy statement:

The department is committed to providing young people in youth detention access to a range of programs and supports that assist to address their offending behaviours and successful reintegration back into the community. The use of independent living units is a key mechanism to achieve this.

Accordingly, the department will ensure that young people in youth detention are provided with opportunities to develop independent living skills in accordance with assessed case plan needs.

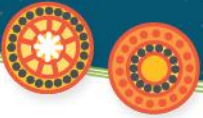
Principles:

1. General principles

- 1.1 Independent living units are designed to provide opportunities for young people to learn independent living skills while detained in a secure environment.
- 1.2 Independent living units will be considered for young people (remanded or sentenced) where assessed as beneficial to the young person through the case planning process.
- 1.3 Independent living units can also be used for:
 - a reward for young people who demonstrate positive behaviours consistent with the behaviour development framework
 - purposes in accordance with the operational needs of the centre (following a satisfactory risk assessment of the discrete needs of young people, individual unit design and capacity).

2. Purpose of independent living units

- 2.1 Independent living units are designed to promote and support young people to self-manage their day to day requirements within a secure environment.
- 2.2 While accommodated in these units, young people will be provided with interventions based on their assessed case planning needs. These interventions may focus on (but are not limited to):
 - developing independent living skills including but not limited to contributing to a young person's healing in ways that are meaningful to regain their safety, confidence and optimism
 - developing coping and problem solving skills
 - developing group and individual decision-making and social skills
 - building self-esteem and self-management skills
 - assisting young people to transition back into mainstream educational, vocational and employment programs
 - establishing links with relevant community based services such as health and mental health services



- supporting the establishment of non-offending social networks with, for example, sporting clubs and cultural and religious groups
- establishing links with family, community members or mentors – leaves of absence should be facilitated for this purpose, as appropriate
- supporting young people to find suitable accommodation upon release.

2.3 In accordance with the reintegration and transition planning process, a range of staff across Youth Justice and other government and non-government agencies will be engaged to delivering these interventions and supports.

2.4 Whilst in the independent living unit young people are expected to participate in programs that address their offending behaviour and assessed needs.

3. Casework, risk and security assessment

3.1 Independent living unit placements must be managed in a way that balances the needs of the young person with safety and security risks.

3.2 The department acknowledges the risks inherent in providing young people with the opportunity to experience independent living within a secure youth detention environment.

3.3 To mitigate these risks, the multi-disciplinary team will:

- assess young people identified in 1.2 and 1.3 to determine whether they can be safely accommodated in the independent living unit in accordance with the independent living unit risk assessment framework (refer to Appendix A)
- immediately re-assess a young person's suitability for the independent living unit if individual risk factors change
- record the risk assessment outcome and rationale on DCOIS
- establish a risk minimisation strategy for each independent living unit occupant, inclusive of required staff arrangements, that is regularly reviewed for the duration of the placement in the independent living unit.

3.4 The multi-disciplinary team will comprise appropriate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation to ensure that cultural considerations are factored into risk assessments and decision making relevant to the independent living unit.

3.5 Young people's views about residing in the independent living unit will also be taken into account at all stages of the planning and assessment process to the fullest extent possible.

3.6 The multi-disciplinary team will recommend a young person's placement in the independent living unit to the executive director following consideration of the case and security risk assessment and development of risk minimisation strategies.

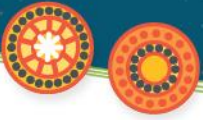
3.7 Based on the advice and recommendation of the multi-disciplinary team, the executive director will determine whether to approve or not approve the placement of each young person in the independent living unit.

4. Induction

4.1 Prior to transferring into an independent living unit, the unit manager, accommodation (or as delegated) will meet with the young person, in the presence of their caseworker, to discuss:

- purpose and responsibilities of the independent living unit
- inventory and supplies
- routine, programs, services and skills instruction
- meals
- safety and security
- contact and communication within the independent living unit
- exiting the independent living unit.

4.2 The young person must agree to the conditions of the independent living unit. In order to assist them to make an informed decision the unit manager, accommodation, or delegate will make



arrangements for eligible young people to visit the independent living unit and meet with other young people accommodated in the unit (where applicable) prior to making their decision.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1 The multi-disciplinary team will:

- monitor the young person's behaviour, wellbeing and progress against case planning and goals on a weekly basis (or more frequently as required)
- determine the consequences for a young person who breaches the agreed expectations of living in an independent living unit. Transfer from the independent living unit may be considered where appropriate.

6. Supervision of the independent living unit

6.1 The unit manager, accommodation, will determine supervision arrangements as required in consultation with the multi-disciplinary team. Supervision arrangements should be culturally appropriate and gender specific.

6.2 The unit manager, accommodation, will review supervision arrangements as required in consultation with the multi-disciplinary team noting that the level of support young people will require should reduce over time as they learn the skills associated with independent living.

6.3 The executive director will approve additional funding for staff as necessary.

7. Exiting the independent living unit

7.1 The unit manager, accommodation, in conjunction with the case worker, will conduct an exit interview with the young person about their experience in the independent living unit.

7.2 The unit manager, accommodation, will coordinate an inspection of the condition of the independent living unit with the young person.

8. Record keeping

8.1 All assessments, forms and other records relating to the young person residing in the independent living unit must be scanned and uploaded onto DCOIS. Originals must be filed on the young person's file and provided to the case worker.

Objectives:

Brisbane and Cleveland youth detention centres have permanently constructed independent living units, which are included as part of each centre's built capacity.

This policy aims to ensure the independent living units are used in accordance with the charter of youth justice principle 20(h) that requires that a child detained in a detention centre should receive appropriate help in making the transition from being in detention to independence and case management requirements to support young people as they move towards their release date.

This policy aims to ensure that independent living units are used in accordance with section 263 of the *Youth Justice Act 1992*, which requires that the Executive Director:

- provides services and supports that promote the social and cultural development of young people, and
- maintains the security and management of the centre.

Scope:

This policy applies to young people remanded or sentenced in youth detention who are accommodated or will be accommodated in an independent living unit.



The policy is part of a suite of policies and procedures developed to encourage and support independent living skills that will assist young people's reintegration through access to independent living units. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Youth Detention Centre Operations Manual, in particular Chapter 1 – Care and management of young people.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Youth detention operational staff – assist young people to learn independent living skills through mentoring and practical guidance and support the principles of the unit; complete audits of dangerous goods and restricted articles; assist with food request and bulk stores forms.
- Unit manager, accommodation – discuss individual and group progress in the unit; security and risk assessment; ensure young people are receiving the assistance they require to successfully participate in the unit, ensure that an individual induction program is provided to each young person residing in the independent living unit; establish supervision requirements; manage exit process.
- Multi-disciplinary team – through case planning identify, assess and recommend young people who are eligible for transfer to an independent living unit; undertake casework and security risk assessment and risk minimisation strategies; ensure the young person's case plan is being implemented; monitor and review the young person's progress in the unit and provide feedback to young people on their progress in the unit; make decisions in relation to young people exiting the independent living unit where expectations of the unit are not met.
- Executive Director – ensure the use of independent living units are implemented in accordance with this policy and legislative requirements; approval of placement in the independent living unit; approval of staff and supervision requirements.
- Director, Secure Services Operations and Practice - provide practice support and advice to youth detention staff and youth detention management about issues relating to compliance with this policy.

Authority:

Youth Justice Act 1992
Youth Justice Regulation 2016

Delegations:

Position	Delegation
Senior Executive Director, Youth Justice Executive director, youth detention centre Director, Secure Services Operations and Practice	<i>Youth Justice Act 1992</i> Section 263 (5), the chief executive must ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the youth justice principles are complied with in relation to each child detained in a detention centre.

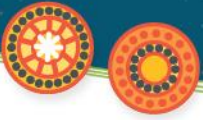
Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Term	Definition
Independent living unit	Means an accommodation unit in a youth detention centre that has been constructed to reflect the living conditions more typically found in a community setting. The units will have shared bathroom, laundry and kitchen facilities.



Multi-disciplinary team	Means the youth detention centre multi-disciplinary team which includes the youth detention centre caseworker, youth detention centre psychologist, programs staff, Hospital and Health Service and Department of Education and Training staff, relevant youth detention staff including detention youth workers, and other stakeholders including youth justice service caseworkers, child safety officers and other community members.
Reintegration and transition	Means the process of progressively preparing a young person for release by making sure support is individualised to meet each young person's needs. Reintegration and transition activities are built into the case plan and should start when a young person's release date is approaching. These activities may include work experience, shopping trips, visits to community organisations, Centrelink, and other social supports.
SIYP	Means special interest young person and refers to young people that have been identified through a risk assessment that they pose a risk to the safety and security of the centre.



Records file no.: nil
Date of approval: 17 September 2019
Date of operation: 2 November 2016
Date to be reviewed: 17 September 2020

Links:

[Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators \(AYJA\) service standards for juvenile custodial facilities](#)
[United Nations Rules for the Protection of Young People Deprived of Their Liberty 1990](#)
[Youth Justice Policies](#)

Bob Gee

Director-General