



Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) Policies and Procedures (P&P)

Title Client Escapes from Secure Facilities

Category Safety and Emergency Operations

Procedure P.05.32 B

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1 Overview Statement

“JJS maintains written emergency plans and distributes and trains key personnel in the manner which these plans are to be carried out during an emergency. Emergency procedures shall include plans for... escapes.” (8.14.5.32 NMAC)

2 Purpose

- 2.1 This Procedure outlines JJS employees’ requirements and processes to prevent, respond to, and report on client escapes or attempted escapes from secure facilities.
- 2.2 This Procedure does not apply to clients who abscond or walk away from Juvenile Reintegration Centers (JRCs).

3 Prevention

- 3.1 Superintendents ensure that resources, staffing patterns, program schedules, and safety plans are designed to reduce the likelihood of escapes.
- 3.2 Master Control, in coordination with Physical Plant, monitor and approve the issuance of all facility keys.

- 3.3 Daily, security employees ensure the facility perimeter is secure and monitored, inspect all security devices (locks, doors, fence lines, radio equipment, security equipment, and surveillance equipment), and initiate corrective actions and/or work orders for any deficiencies.
- 3.4 The facility management team monitors and evaluates staffing patterns and client supervision to confirm that required employee:client ratios are met.
- 3.5 Supervisors ensure that client movement is regulated, approved, and documented.
- 3.6 All employees are responsible for maintaining eyes and ears on with clients they directly supervise, engage with, and monitor, so that they are aware of any escape clues (for example, drawings of the facility or maps or clients intently walking or studying the perimeter).
- 3.7 All employees report any statements by clients about wanting to escape or planning to escape to the shift supervisor.

4 Suspected Escapes

- 4.1 If an employee does not witness an escape but there is an alleged escape, suspected escape, possible missing client, or discovery of a possible escape egress, the employee calls Master Control.
- 4.2 Master Control calls 10-3 and directs all clients back to their assigned living areas, one unit at a time.
- 4.3 Upon confirmation that all clients have returned to their assigned living units, the unit employees conduct a physical flesh count (a count where the Youth Care Specialist [YCS] must physically see the client, have them stand or make some gesture to demonstrate they are real and alive, and verify that the client is in fact the right client being counted).
- 4.4 If all clients are accounted for, Master Control indicates an all's clear.

5 Escapes or Attempted Escapes

- 5.1 If the flesh count confirms there is a missing client, or if an escape or attempted escape is in progress or has occurred, an employee calls 10-90 over the radio. If radio communication is not available, the employee seeks the quickest available means to notify the shift supervisor and Master Control of the incident.
- 5.2 Witnessing employees immediately report to the shift supervisor the number of clients, name(s), physical description(s), clothing worn (including jackets and undershirts), other identifying characteristics, the direction taken, the means of escape, and any other relevant details.
- 5.3 Security employees are expected to pursue and physically restrain an escaping client if the employees have maintained reliable visual contact and believe it is safe to pursue. When possible, at least 2 employees are involved in regaining custody.

- 5.4 To prevent additional escapes and disorderly conduct, however, employees do not leave other clients unattended or leave an escape egress unattended to chase escaping clients.
- 5.5 All employees onsite are expected to assist during the incident as directed by the shift supervisor who serves as the Incident Commander. This includes supervising clients, maintaining order in the living units, and any other responsibilities and tasks assigned by the Incident Commander.

6 Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor Serving as Incident Commander

- 6.1 Upon notification of an escape, an escape in progress, or clients discussing or planning an escape, the shift supervisor assumes the responsibility of Incident Commander and coordinates an immediate response that includes the following actions:
 - Initiates an Emergency Notification Protocol (ENP);
 - Notifies the Officer in Charge (OIC);
 - Calls 911;
 - Calls the designated response team;
 - Coordinates ongoing facility operations;
 - Prepares for law enforcement and on-call employees to arrive;
 - Maintains a chronological record of all the actions taken in connection with the escape including times, assigned employees, documentation of contacts, searches, evidence, information collected, and any actions taken;
 - Collects and prepares the following information to share with administration and law enforcement:
 - Face Sheet with last known address, photograph, and offense history,
 - Shift log from the location of escape, area of supervision, or client's living unit,
 - Phone log,
 - Visitation log, and
 - Any other relevant information and documentation;
 - Notifies the client's assigned Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO);
 - Conducts a complete search of the facility grounds, a vehicle inventory, and a key inventory;
 - Coordinates with law enforcement and other authorized persons;
 - Notifies the JJS Deputy Director for Facilities;
 - Assigns employees, as necessary or requested, to assist law enforcement in a search for the missing client(s);
 - Secures and searches the client's room, living area, and property (including mail and journals) for any evidence or information pertaining to the escape; and
 - Interviews and questions the client's known friends and employees assigned to the living unit for any evidence or information pertaining to the escape.
- 6.2 Initially, the onsite shift supervisor serves as the Incident Commander unless or until relieved of those duties.
- 6.3 JJS employees, including the Incident Commander, shall not release any information to the media regarding the escape. Any media inquiries are referred to the CYFD Public Information Officers (PIOs).

7 Responsibilities of the JJS Deputy Director for Facilities

As soon as possible or practical, the JJS Deputy Director for Facilities notifies the following individuals of the escape, attempted escape, or missing client(s):

JJS Deputy Director for Field Services,
JJS Director,
CYFD Deputy Cabinet Secretary,
CYFD Cabinet Secretary, and
CYFD PIO(s).

8 Intra-agency Cross-Reporting

- 8.1 Facility employees work with the client's assigned JPO to ensure that all required legal and court notifications are made and paperwork is filed.
- 8.2 If the client is apprehended/detained outside of NM, the facility classification officer contacts the Interstate Compact Administrator for CYFD to coordinate the client's return.
- 8.3 If necessary, the facility classification officer notifies the CYFD data unit that the victim notification mechanism/database needs updating.

9 Incident Debriefing and Final Report

- 9.1 As appropriate, the Incident Commander notifies the client's parent/guardian/custodian (p/g/c).
- 9.2 The Incident Commander, in coordination with the Superintendent, conducts a debriefing to address immediate safety risks as well as long-term corrective action plans that may include a facility improvement plan (FIP), physical plant modifications, and/or policy and procedure updates. Additionally, these debriefings give leadership an opportunity to identify and discuss positive and effective employee practices and actions during the incident.
- 9.3 The Incident Commander prepares a final incident report for administration that includes the following information, documentation, and completed forms:
 - Narrative description of the incident,
 - Chronology of the incident,
 - Video footage,
 - Photographs of the facility, event location, perimeter, and egress,
 - Search reports and findings,
 - A list of issues identified and/or addressed in debriefing,
 - Face Sheet with last known address, photograph, and offense history,
 - Shift log from the location of escape, area of supervision, or client's living unit,
 - Phone log,
 - Visitation log,
 - Additional, relevant information,
 - ENP form,
 - Disciplinary Incident Reports (DIRs),
 - Serious Incident Reports (SIRs), and
 - Possible High Profile Case/Incident (PHPC/I) notification email.

10 Consequences of Noncompliance

An employee who fails to follow this Procedure may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the CYFD Code of Conduct and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between AFSCME and the State of New Mexico.

11 Issue Date

May 1, 2021

12 Effective Date

June 1, 2021

13 Replaced Procedure

P.5.32 B Client Escapes, issued 11/01/2010

14 Applicable Policy (Rule)

NMAC 8.14.5 Safety & Emergency Operations

15 Authorizing Signatures



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