
Staff Code of Conduct

Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)
Juvenile Justice Services (JJS)
Statewide Policy

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| POLICY NUMBER: | DCFS/JJS 100.02 |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: | February 20, 2025 |
| APPROVED BY: | Sharon Anderson, Deputy Administrator |
| DATE: | February 20, 2025 |
| SUPERSEDES: | DCFS/JJS 100.02 effective August 30, 2022 |
| REVIEWED BY: | Cynthia Casselman, Social Services Chief Chet George, Superintendent David Laity, Youth Parole Chief Patrick Mendez, Superintendent |
| REFERENCES: | NRS 193.308; NRS 233B.050 Nevada DHHS Division of Child and Family Services Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual; Use of Force (DCFS/JJS 300.02); Youth Rights (DCFS/JJS 300.03); Searches of Youth and Property (State Facilities) (DCFS/JJS 300.14) Use of Force – Youth Parole Bureau, DCFS/JJS 600.03 |
| ATTACHMENTS: | None |

I. PURPOSE

To establish standards of appropriate staff behavior for DCFS Juvenile Justice facility staff that prioritize the effective supervision of youth and ensures that actions do not interfere with the care, custody, and control of youth. In addition, to ensure that DCFS Juvenile Justice staff act ethically and responsibly and do not use their official position for personal gain.

II. DEFINITIONS

As used in this document, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. **Code of Conduct:** A system of principles governing a facility or program which conforms to accepted professional standards of conduct.
- B. **Contraband:** Any item(s) introduced or found in a facility, which are expressly prohibited by those legally charged with the responsibility for the administration and/or operation of a facility. This includes:
 - 1. *Weapons* - Items which have been made or adapted for use as a weapon and may cause injury or bodily harm.

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2. *Drugs and/or Alcohol* - Possessing or using any legal or illegal unauthorized substance, including controlled substance or intoxicants (including alcohol) and medications which have not been prescribed.
 3. *Other contraband* - All items prohibited by agency or facility management based on written policy.
- C. Program Participant: Any individual, or their designated representative, who is an applicant, client, household member of a client, recipient, provider, or employee of a provider, or licensee for any Nevada DCFS program.

III. STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. DCFS Human Resource staff shall ensure all new hires receive and acknowledge receipt of the most current Nevada DHHS Division of Child and Family Services *Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual*, specifically Section 230.6: Employee Conduct and Relationship with Program Participants and Section 230.6.1: Client Relationships.
- B. Juvenile justice staff **shall**:
- a. Leave their personal electronic devices (e.g., phone, tablet, laptop) in their vehicle or in their locker (if available) when their primary assignment is to provide supervision of children and maintain the safety, control, and security of the facility.
 - b. Address other staff members, visitors, and youth in a professional, respectful manner at all times without the use of disrespectful or abusive language, cursing, racially discriminatory language or any other name calling/ridiculing/ humiliating or demeaning references to gender, physical or mental capacity, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, family of origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or LGBTQ+ status.
 - c. Maintain appropriate and professional relationships with all youth and all family members of youth.
 - d. Cultivate professional cooperation with other agencies, both internal and external to DCFS.
 - e. Complete all written reports factually, honestly, accurately, and timely.
 - f. Maintain the integrity of confidential information. Staff shall neither obtain personal data beyond what is needed to perform their responsibilities nor reveal case information to other youth or anyone not having proper professional authorization and need for such information. Refer to DCFS/JJS 300.11 Confidentiality and Release of Information.
 - g. Respect and protect federal, civil, state and legal rights of all youth (Youth Rights, DCFS/JJS 300.03).
 - h. Report, without reservation, any corrupt or unethical behavior which could affect the health or safety of a youth, the integrity of the agency, or the safety and security of the facility – including, but not limited to, lapses in security due to inattention,

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lack of alertness, sleeping on duty, apparent or suspected intoxication; failure to timely or accurately report; and excessive use of force.

- i. Use only DCFS-approved electronic equipment to record or photograph evidence, youth activities, facility events, etc.
- j. Use camera technology only for authorized purposes, including recording use of force incidents, viewing live footage for safety and security, viewing past footage for safety and security, investigative work, or training (e.g., PREA, use of force), or at the explicit direction of a supervisor.
- k. Use State technology only for approved purposes, including, but not limited to, video game systems, routers, Wi-Fi, network cables, educational tools, electronic devices.

C. Juvenile justice staff **shall not**:

- a. Use their official position to secure special privileges or advantages in the community, through the family members of committed youth, or through any other interested parties, including, but not limited to, contractors or service providers.
- b. Disclose confidential information about any youth without authorization.
- c. Use information regarding youth for personal benefit.
- d. Use their official position to promote any partisan political purposes.
- e. Make any public statements on behalf of the agency without prior approval from the Deputy Administrator and the Public Information Officer.
- f. Make any public statements against the agency while on duty or in uniform.
- g. Make any public statements against the agency on social media platforms while on duty and/or in uniform.
- h. Reference information obtained because of their official duties in their personal social media accounts.
- i. Allow their personal interests to impair objectivity in the performance of duty.
- j. Offer legal advice to youth.
- k. Possess any item listed on the contraband list which is not properly secured while on duty, excluding breaks and lunchtime when youth are not present.
- l. Initiate contact with a youth who has left, exited, or been terminated from DCFS supervision for a minimum of two years from termination of parole or until the youth has reached the age of majority, whichever is later.
 - i. Should a youth reach out to a DCFS staff member within those two years or prior to the age of majority, the staff shall report it to their supervisor, and the contact shall be documented as a New Activity in the web-based case management system.

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- m. Engage in any activity which:
 - a. Causes a lapse in supervision of youth
 - b. Creates an unsafe space for youth
 - c. Causes a staff member to respond or intervene in an untimely manner
 - d. Is incompatible with the DCFS Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual
- n. Access social media on any device while on duty.
 - a. Superintendents or the Chief of Parole may authorize the use of an agency-assigned social media platform in the course of their job duties upon approval from the Deputy Administrator.
- o. Allow youth to view, handle, or use any unauthorized electronic device, or allow youth to access any social media platform on any device.

D. Superintendents **can not** make exceptions to any part of this policy.

E. Violation(s) of any of the above will result in progressive discipline.

IV. PHYSICAL TOUCH

- A. Physical touch between staff and youth is a component of the job under appropriate circumstances. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure any physical touch is safe and appropriate.
- B. Physical touch is allowed in accordance with Use of Force (DCFS/JJS 300.02) policy and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and Searches of Youth and Property (State Facilities) (DCFS/JJS 300.14) policy and SOPs.
- C. Staff should never intentionally touch a youth on an area of their body normally covered by a bathing suit unless it is necessary due to a clear medical need (Refer to DCFS/JJS 300.09 Prison Rape Elimination Act).
- D. The following physical touch is prohibited, including, but not limited to:
 - Tickling
 - Wrestling
 - Hitting
 - Punching
 - Kicking
 - Poking
 - Pinching
 - Massaging
 - Rubbing
 - Pushing
 - Tripping
 - Caressing
 - Kissing
- E. Any staff member witnessing an inappropriate touch is mandated to report the incident to their supervisor or appropriate authority to include child protective services and/or local law enforcement, as applicable (DCFS/JJS 300.06, Abuse and Neglect Reporting).

V. SUPERVISOR/MANAGER CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Supervisors/managers shall enforce the staff code of conduct and shall take appropriate actions, when necessary, as outlined in the Division's Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual, this policy, and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

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VI. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- A. Each facility and the Youth Parole Bureau shall create standard operating procedures consistent with this policy, to include:
 - 1. Process for training staff on the DCFS/JJS Staff Code of Conduct policy, applicable SOPs, and agency policies, including documentation of training.
- B. The DCFS Juvenile Justice Programs Office shall review this policy every three years, or sooner if deemed necessary (NRS 233B.050).