



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES
POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

POLICY NUMBER:	DYRS-018
RESPONSIBLE OFFICES:	Health Services Administration
EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICY:	September 19, 2013
SUPERSEDES POLICY:	N/A
SUBJECT:	Continuity of Care at Transfer of Youth Placed on Suicide Precaution Status

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the standards and practice guidelines for continuity of care at transfer for youth placed on suicide precaution status within the DYRS system (intra-system) and to and from off-site locations.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of DYRS Health Services Administration to ensure that youth that have been placed on "suicide precaution" status will remain on such status during and following all intra-system transfers within DYRS and to and from off-site locations.

III. AUTHORITY

This policy is governed by all applicable District of Columbia and Federal law including: DYRS Establishment Act (2004), D.C. Official Code §§ 2-1515.01 through 2-1515.10 (2001), Mental Health Consumers' Rights Protection, D.C. Official Code §7-1231 et seq. (2008), D.C. Mun. Regs. Public Health and Medicine 22, § 600 (2008), Jerry M. Final Approved Amended Comprehensive Work Plan, December 5, 2007, as revised by Revised Final Approved Amended Comprehensive Work Plan, January 26, 2010, and all amendments thereto; District of Columbia District Personnel Manual §16.

IV. SCOPE

This policy applies to all DYRS medical and behavioral health staff (including contract staff) and direct care operations staff that is responsible to coordinate suicide prevention protocols.



V. DEFINITIONS

Continuity of Care: A standard by which youth in DYRS custody who are placed on suicide precaution status receive continuous care and treatment from admission to discharge in all areas of mental health care.

Intra-system Transfer: A system in which juveniles are transferred from one DYRS facility to another.

Mental Health Staff: Qualified health care professionals who have received instruction and supervision in identifying and interacting with individuals in need of mental health services.

Qualified Mental Health Professionals: Include psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric social workers, psychiatric nurses, and others who by virtue of their education credentials and experience are permitted by law to evaluate and care for the mental health needs of youths.

Suicide Precaution Status: A supervision system used to ensure that youth identified as potentially suicidal are closely observed and receive appropriate behavioral health and medical services.

Suicide Precaution Observation Form: Form that is used to monitor and document youth's behavior while on suicide precaution status (See Attachment A).

VI. PROCEDURES

1. When a youth in DYRS custody is placed on suicide precaution status he/she will remain on suicide alert status during all intra-system transfers and the suicide prevention observation form will be utilized.
2. If a youth placed on suicide precaution status and residing in a secure DYRS facility is transferred to an outside location (i.e. court, hospital, medical appointments, etc.) that youth will remain on suicide precaution status during and after the transfer and the suicide prevention observation form will be utilized.
3. Youth returning from acute psychiatric hospital stays shall be brought to medical prior to being returned to their housing units. Youth shall remain on suicide precaution status from the time of transport from a psychiatric hospital through readmission to a DYRS facility until released from the suicide precaution status by behavioral health staff.



4. If on-site, behavioral health staff shall assess the youth's mental status and make a determination as to whether the youth requires being maintained on Suicide Precaution Status.

5. If behavioral health staff is not on-site, medical staff shall place the youth on suicide precaution status until behavioral health staff has conducted a face-to-face assessment of the youth, which shall occur within 24 hours of the youth's return.

VII. REFERENCES

NCCHC Y.E.12
NCCHC Y.E.03

Approval of the Agency Director:

Nila A. Stanley

DYRS Director

19 September 2013

Date