

Official Visitors

Policy Determination 3.2

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1.0	January 2018	Operational Policy	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Operations approval
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1.1	6/04/2022	Operational Policy	Rebranding and administrative updates.

Acronyms	Full form
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Department	The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities
The Minister	The Minister of Territory Families, Housing and Communities
YDC	Youth Detention Centre

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1. Policy Purpose

- 1.1. Independent review of the treatment, behaviour and conditions of young people accommodated in a Youth Detention Centre (YDC) is essential to ensuring procedural fairness, transparency and accountability.

2. Authority / Responsibility

- 2.1. The Executive Leadership Board and Senior Managers have responsibility for ensuring that supervisors and employees understand and comply with this policy.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. This policy applies to all staff employed, and all young people accommodated in a YDC.
- 3.2. Section 169 of the *Youth Justice Act 2005* provides for the Minister of Territory Families, Housing and Communities to appoint a person as an Official Visitor for a YDC. Not less than three (3) Official Visitors must be appointed for each YDC.

4. Functions of the Official Visitor

- 4.1. Official Visitors are required to visit the YDC to which they are assigned for the purpose of inquiring into the treatment and behaviour of young people in the centre. Official Visitors must also inquire into the conditions young people are experiencing in the YDC. Official Visitors may interview young people in the YDC with their consent.
- 4.2. The Official Visitor is to provide a written report regarding their visit to the Minister.
- 4.3. The Minister may direct an Official Visitor to report on a specified matter at the YDC to the CEO. In this instance, the Official Visitor must provide the CEO with a written report following the visit to the YDC.
- 4.4. Official Visitors must attend the YDC to which they are assigned at least once every month and allow sufficient duration to review each inquiry from anyone who wishes to see them.
- 4.5. A young person is not compelled to speak with an Official Visitor, however, if they express a desire to do so, staff must ensure that the young person is given the opportunity to meet with the Official Visitor.
- 4.6. In accordance with Section 172 of the *Youth Justice Act 2005*, Official Visitors do not have the authority to interfere with the duties of a member of staff, or give them instructions, regarding the management, discipline or treatment of young people admitted to the YDC.
- 4.7. Official Visits
 - (1). Official Visitors must contact the Superintendent or their delegate one week prior to their preferred visits date.
 - (2). The Official Visitor must meet with the Superintendent or Officer in Charge at the commencement and conclusion of the visit. This allows for the Official Visitor to be briefed on the conditions of the YDC prior to their review and allows for issues to be discussed following their review.
 - (3). The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring support is provided to the Official Visitors to allow them to carry out their obligations.

4.8. Official Visitor Reports

- (1). Official Visitors are accountable to the Minister and must provide a written report to the Minister within 14 days of a visit to a YDC.
- (2). To ensure the effectiveness of the Official Visitor program, the Superintendent should ensure that issues raised are addressed by the relevant operational areas and recommendations are actioned and responded to. An appropriate register should be maintained to record issues raised and actions taken.

5. Remuneration and Claims

- 5.1. Each YDC is responsible for the administration and payment of an Official Visitor's remuneration claims. To facilitate this, a register of Official Visitor attendance must be maintained at each YDC.
- 5.2. Claims may not be paid unless a performance of service signed by the Superintendent or delegate, verifying that the Official Visitors attended the facility on the date and duration for which the claim is made. Official Visitors are entitled for payment for the time spent at the YDC and for one (1) additional hour for the purpose of report writing. Official Visitors are not paid for travel time to and from a YDC.
- 5.3. Official Visitors are requested to submit claims for payment after each visit. Remuneration rates are determined by the Minister.

6. Legislative Basis

[Youth Justice Act 2005](#)

[Youth Justice Regulations 2006](#)