

Safety Checks

931.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose is to establish and implement written policy and procedures that provide for direct visual observation of youth confined to a room, holding cell or bed in a dormitory in a juvenile facility. The primary purpose of conducting safety checks is to ensure youth are safe, are not engaged in self-harming behavior and have not escaped. It is through personal supervision, observation, and intervention that safety, order and control are maintained. This policy applies to all juvenile facility staff.

931.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Buttons - The Guard1 Plus system utilizes three types of buttons each having its own unique identifier.

- (a) **Officer buttons** - A metal control nodule inserted in a plastic tab, assigned to an individual staff, which verifies or confirms who conducted a safety check (or rounds).
- (b) **Location buttons** - A button that is mounted or affixed to a specific site, area, room or other key point within the facility.
- (c) **Incident buttons** - A button used to record a specific observation, incident, or event. The following types of incident buttons are designated:
 1. **In** - button used to record when a youth is placed in a room. This button will be embedded in a green plastic holder that is labeled with the word "in."
 2. **Out** - button used to record when a youth is removed from a room. This button will be embedded in a red plastic holder that is labeled with the word "out."
 3. **Vacant** - button used to record when a room is empty. This button will be embedded in a black plastic holder that is labeled with the word "vacant."

Button sequence - A specific sequence must be followed when conducting safety checks. The sequence of button scanning is officer, location, and then incident (OLI). The incident buttons are not needed in every situation (e.g., perimeter checks or conducting regular rounds).

Closed Circuit Television Security System (CCTSS) - A security camera system which continually maintains and records critical areas of juvenile detention or treatment facilities.

Direct visual observation - Staff shall personally see the youth's movement and/or skin. Audio/video monitoring and mirrors may supplement, but not substitute, for direct visual observation.

Docking station - The Guard1 Plus data transfer port used to download the recorded safety check information contained in the pipe to the server for storage and processing.

Guard1 Plus system - A system utilizing data collection devices and programmed buttons, interfaced with computer programming and technology to accurately capture the time of staff safety

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checks on youth, perimeter checks and duty officer (DO) or supervising probation officer (SPO) rounds.

Pipe - The Guard1 Plus data collection device.

Rounds report - A report that can be generated from the Guard1 Plus system or the accompanying rounds tracker program which provides supervisors and managers the ability to accurately analyze compliance with the safety check policy.

Ten minute option - A ten minute timer is programmed into the pipe to help remind staff a safety check is due or coming due. The timer is set on a ten minute cycle based on the actual time of day, NOT when the last door check was completed. Utilizing this option is at the discretion of management.

931.2 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

- Board of State and Community Corrections Title 15 § 1328

931.3 POLICY

All staff responsible for supervising youth shall provide direct visual observation of youth at a minimum of every 15 minutes, at random or varied intervals when youth are in their rooms or confined in holding cells. When youth are confined to their beds in a dormitory, staff shall provide direct visual observation at all times. In the absence of the Guard 1 Plus system, all safety checks shall require the following information:

- (a) The staff who completed the check; and
- (b) The actual time the check is completed.

Improper documentation may result in disciplinary action.

931.4 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All room or dormitory safety checks shall be at random or varied intervals and conducted at a minimum of every 15 minutes. Staff shall conduct safety checks by walking the dormitory, unit, or hallways in the unit, confirming youth are present and safe by direct visual observation. Staff assigned to conduct safety checks shall be noted on the daily log. This staff is responsible for placing youth into rooms and removing them from rooms.

Prior to all unit movement (meal times, physical education, recreation, school, etc.), unit staff shall document, on the unit log, the names and room numbers of any youth left behind in rooms and the reason why (i.e. room confinement, medical separation, self-placed separation, etc.). Unit staff shall verbally report this information to the staff assigned to perform safety checks on youth in their rooms. Unit staff communicating unit movement to control shall state the number of youth and staff remaining on the unit.

In the event of an emergency (11-88, Code Green, etc.), the DO can re-assign or authorize additional staff to conduct safety checks using additional pipes. Additionally, the DO can authorize

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youth to be placed in a room, or removed from a room, by staff without the use of a pipe. If this occurs, the reason must be documented in an incident report and the electronic safety check must be completed as soon as it is safe to do so. A printed safety check form must be attached to the door whenever staff are completing manual documentation without the use of the Guard 1 Plus system.

The pipe shall be downloaded at shift change, any time it changes hands, or at the direction of the manager, or designee. When a pipe is downloaded all its data is cleared, including the staff's information. Therefore, immediately after a pipe is downloaded, the responsible designated safety checks staff shall touch his/her officer button to the pipe to ensure the staff's information is loaded into the pipe.

Audio/visual monitoring and mirrors may supplement, but not substitute, for direct visual observation. Youth shall be advised that obstructing room windows is not permitted. Should youth block or cover the window, staff shall direct them to remove the item/material immediately. If the youth persists, staff shall immediately notify the DO and ensure back-up staff are present prior to opening the youth's door for the purpose of removing the item/material.

931.4.1 SAFETY CHECK RESPONSIBILITY

The following process shall be utilized when exchanging safety check responsibility:

- (a) The out-going staff shall ensure the pipe is downloaded in the docking station prior to relinquishing the pipe to the oncoming staff. The oncoming staff shall witness this process to ensure it is completed by the out-going staff.
- (b) The oncoming staff designated to conduct safety checks shall initially review the unit log to verify the unit youth count and obtain the pipe and incident buttons from the out-going staff.
- (c) The oncoming staff shall then synchronize his/her assigned officer button with the pipe. The out-going staff shall witness this process to ensure it is completed by the oncoming staff. The oncoming staff will then complete an initial round of room and/or dormitory safety checks.
- (d) When staff rotate safety check responsibility during the shift, this process shall be repeated and must be noted on the daily log.

931.4.2 CONDUCTING SAFETY CHECKS

The following process shall be utilized when conducting safety check rounds:

- (a) To begin the initial safety check round, the assigned staff will follow the OLI pattern. The staff first touches his/her officer button to the pipe and then proceeds to the first room. The staff shall touch the pipe to the location button affixed outside the youth's room and/or the dormitory area. Doing this records the staff's information, location checked, and incident (room is vacant) with the actual time and date. This will be done for each room and/or dormitory in the unit during the first round conducted upon assuming responsibility as the designated safety check staff.

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- (b) During each subsequent safety check round, the staff touches his/her officer button once; this signifies the start of each round and ensures the staff's information is loaded into the pipe. The staff then only needs to touch the pipe to the location button of occupied rooms or dormitory as he/she completes the round.
- (c) When a youth is removed from a room, the staff will touch the pipe to the location button of the room and then to the incident button labeled "out." When a youth is placed in a room, the staff will touch the pipe to the location button of the room and then to the incident button labeled "in."

931.4.3 INCOMPLETE SAFETY CHECKS

If a safety check is missed, beyond the 15 minute limit, the responsible staff shall:

- (a) Ensure youth who are in their rooms, confined in holding cells or confined to their bed in a dormitory are safe and document a safety check with the actual time it was completed;
- (b) Report the incident to the DO; and
- (c) Complete an incident report in the Juvenile and Adult Management System (JAMS) indicating why the safety check was missed.

931.4.4 CONDUCTING PERIMETER CHECKS

To begin the perimeter check, the assigned staff will follow the OLI pattern described in the button sequence definition section. The following process shall be utilized when conducting perimeter checks:

- (a) The staff first touches his/her officer button to the pipe and then proceeds to all perimeter locations; and
- (b) The staff shall touch the pipe to the location button affixed at each perimeter check point. Doing this records the staff's information and location checked.

There is no need to use incident buttons during a perimeter check. Refer to Juvenile Facility Services Policy: Security for further guidance on perimeter check requirements and documentation.

931.4.5 DOCUMENTATION

Safety checks with the Guard1 Plus system are electronically stored in the server.

In the event the Guard1 Plus system becomes inoperable, staff shall manually document the room or dormitory checks on a paper Safety Checks form (attachment) with the actual time the check is completed. Staff utilizing this form shall legibly print their first initial and last name and sign their initials on the bottom of the form.

Vacant rooms do not need to be checked every 15 minutes. If the room is vacant at the start of the shift, staff shall indicate this by writing "vacant." When placing a youth in a room, the actual time the youth is placed shall be documented on the Safety Checks form as well as the word "in." When removing a youth from a room, the actual time the youth is removed shall be documented on the Safety Checks form as well as the word "out." Shift one staff shall ensure that a new Safety

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Checks form is posted on each room door at the beginning of the shift. The forms from the prior day shall be forwarded to the unit SPO.

931.5 DUTY OFFICER (DO) RESPONSIBILITIES

The DO shall ensure safety checks are in compliance by conducting a rounds report at least once per shift. Prior to conducting the rounds report, the DO shall direct a download of all pipes. The DO shall take immediate corrective action if staff are overdue or missed a safety check.

When conducting unannounced rounds, the DO shall conduct a safety check of all unit rooms and dormitories.

In the event the Guard1 Plus system becomes inoperable, the DO shall ensure staff manually document the room or dormitory checks on a paper Safety Checks form (attachment). The DO shall ensure safety checks are completed by initialing the Safety Checks forms while conducting their rounds, at least once per shift. The DO shall ensure that staff legibly print their first initial and last name, sign their initials on the bottom of the form and that all safety checks reflect the actual times they were completed. The DO shall take immediate corrective action if it appears staff are reporting false or inaccurate information regarding safety checks or if safety checks are overdue.

931.6 SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER (SPO) RESPONSIBILITIES

On a monthly basis, unit SPOs shall randomly compare the safety checks documented in the computer or on the Safety Checks form with recorded CCTSS surveillance video of safety checks being completed by staff to validate the documentation's accuracy. This shall be documented on a SPO Safety Check Monitoring Log (attachment).

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Attachments:

[1. Safety Checks](#)

[2. SPO Safety Check Monitoring Log](#)