

YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Title: Escorted Absence	Type: C. Field Operations Sub Type: 4. Juvenile Institutions Number: C.4.7
	Page 1 of 12
References: ACA Standards 4-JCF-2A-05, and 54-JCF-5I-05 (Performance Based Standards For Juvenile Correctional Facilities); YS Policy Nos. A.1.14 "Unusual Occurrence Reports", B.2.1 "Assignment, Reassignment, and Release of Youth", B.2.7 "LAMOD Program and Youth Stage Procedures", B.2.14 "Secure Care SAVRY", B.2.20 "Non-Discriminatory Services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning (LGBTIQ), and Nonconforming Youth", B.3.1 "Secure Care Youth Records; Composition and Maintenance", B.5.1 "Youth Code of Conduct – Secure Care", B.7.2 "Programs for Post-Secondary Education-Secure Care ", C.2.1 "Escapes, Runaways, Apprehensions and Reporting", C.2.3 "Searches of Youth", C.2.6 "Use of Interventions - Secure Care", C.2.7 "Youth Drug/Alcohol Testing", C.2.24 "Electronic Monitoring Program (EMP)"	
STATUS: Approved	
Approved By: <i>James Bueche, Ph.D., Deputy Secretary</i>	Date of Approval: 02/14/2019

I. AUTHORITY:

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services (YS) as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

II. PURPOSE:

To establish the Deputy Secretary's policy regarding escorted leave for therapeutic purposes and incentive based rewards for youth.

III. APPLICABILITY:

Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Deputy Undersecretary, Chief of Operations, Executive Management Advisor, Regional Directors, Facility Directors, Regional Managers, Contracted Health Care Provider (CHP), and Intensive Residential Contract Providers.

Facility Directors are responsible for compliance with the established guidelines outlined in this policy.

IV. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Deputy Secretary that escorted leave may be approved by the Facility Director, and granted to a youth for a therapeutic purpose and/or an incentive based reward, including the opportunity to visit with family before the release date to set realistic goals and expectations; to show youth acceptable and

socially appropriate behavior, allow youth to participate in training opportunities, and to participate in special events in the community. Family emergency absences are permitted for visits of terminally ill family or attendance for special, private family viewing and/or visitation of a deceased family member. The Assistant Secretary may grant special permission for a youth to attend funeral services.

V. DEFINITIONS:

Electronic Monitoring Program (EMP) - The use of electronic technology to monitor the movements of a youth.

Escorted Absence - A temporary absence authorized by the Facility Director, in which a youth is escorted off-campus by qualified personnel for a therapeutic purpose.

Family Emergency Absence - An escorted absence prompted by the death or life-threatening illness or injury of a family member or legal custodian which is beneficial in meeting the needs of the youth and family.

Individualized Intervention Plan (IIP) – Initial and Formal – A statement of goals, objectives, and methods used to obtain them that is created for each youth in secure care. The IIP is dynamic and is updated depending on the identified needs and specialized treatment required while in secure care. The IIP also identifies follow-up services needed by the youth on release and is coordinated with Community Based Services to provide the proper level of aftercare.

Juvenile Electronic Tracking System (JETS) - The centralized database utilized to track all youth under OJJ supervision or in OJJ custody and to record all case record activity.

Juvenile Justice Specialists (JJS) – Provide security of youth and assist in application of clinical treatment in accomplishing the overall goal of evaluation and/or treatment of individuals placed in a YS secure care facility.

LAMOD- A philosophical approach utilized by OJJ to engage, work with and treat youth, families and communities. One of the core principles is the group treatment process.

Qualified Personnel - Employees approved by the Facility Director who have completed safety training provided by OJJ Staff Development personnel, including at a minimum, State Travel Guidelines, Defensive Driving, Supervision of Juveniles and Safe Crisis Management. An employee who has not completed these classes shall not be allowed to escort youth off campus.

Therapeutic Purposes - Educational, recreational, training, religious, special events, family reintegration or to serve as an incentive (refer to YS Policy No. B.7.2). Escorted absences for family reintegration allows a youth to meet with family prior to release, and to set goals for return to the community. Educational escorted absences may be used for such activities as school trips or testing. Youth are escorted to participate in sports events at OJJ facilities. Youth attend church services at various churches, sometimes singing in the choir. Escorted absences may also serve as an incentive for compliance with treatment goals and also to encourage positive behavior as outlined in the LAMOD program (refer to YS Policy No. B. 2.7).

Unit Management Team - The team of individuals, i.e. Group Leader, Juvenile Justice Specialist, etc. assigned to the youth's housing unit.

Unusual Occurrence Report (UOR) – A document that must be completed by staff to report incidents or observations of events that may have an impact on any aspect of the agency. UOR forms shall be made available to all employees, working all areas at all times. Employees must complete and submit a UOR prior to the end of their tour of duty on the day the incident was observed or comes to the employee's attention in any way. If a UOR form is not available, the employee must use any paper available to report the pertinent information. UORs may also be submitted by email. (Refer to YS Policy No. A.1.14)

VI. FAMILY EMERGENCY ESCORTED ABSENCES:

This type of escorted absence may be granted to a youth by the Facility Director in the event of a death or a life-threatening illness or injury to a family member or legal custodian. The information concerning the emergency must be confirmed by staff. The family emergency escorted absence assists the youth and family in meeting their needs in times of crisis.

In the event of a death, the Facility Director may grant approval for attendance for a special, private viewing with the family only. Exceptions for special consideration shall require approval of the Assistant Secretary in order for the youth to attend the funeral services, which shall be documented on the "Escorted Absence Request Form" [see Attachment C.4.7 (a)]. If permission is granted, necessary security precautions will be taken which may include the use of handcuffs and shackles.

VII. ESCORTED ABSENCE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA; EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA; PROCEDURE:

A. Family Reintegration Visits

Criteria:

1. Youth must be on a "Low" or "Moderate" Custody Level; and

2. Youth must be appropriately participating in all programming (housing unit, school, treatment, mental health, medical or specialized treatment programs). This must be confirmed by the facility treatment team, educational staff and/or Wellpath (WP) mental health staff. The “Escorted Absence Request Form” must be completed.

Exclusionary Criteria:

1. Within the last 30 calendar days of the proposed escorted absence, the youth shall not receive, engage in, or incur:
 - A code of conduct violation for Youth/Youth assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.
 - A code of conduct violation for Youth/Staff assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.
 - A contraband violation involving a positive drug screen, cell phone, or weapon.
 - A major disturbance involving three or more youth which threatens the safety and security of the facility, staff, and youth. It shall be documented in a UOR and through a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.
 - A code of conduct violation for sexual misconduct involving exposing of genitals to others; masturbation directed toward others; making sexually aggressive statements directed at a staff member or other youth; or groping, touching or fondling the physical body of another person. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.
 - Be on a behavioral intervention plan due to ongoing and chronic behavioral issues. The youth shall be eligible once he is no longer on a behavioral intervention plan.

2. Youth with one (1) escape within past 12 months prior to the proposed escorted absence shall not be considered

Exceptions:

1. Youth who have a “High” risk rating and meet the criteria (VII.A.2), may be allowed to participate in an escorted absence for family reintegration purposes. The “Escorted Absence Request Form” must be reviewed and approved by the Unit Management Team, the Regional Manager, the youth’s Probation and Parole Officer/Juvenile (PPO/J), the Probation and Parole Officer/Supervisor (PPS), the Director of Treatment, and the Facility Director/designee.

Sites:

1. Only one youth shall be allowed on an escorted absence on the same site. The only exception is that siblings at the same facility who both meet the criteria for an escorted leave may participate in the leave at the same time at the same site.
2. Escorted absences shall be held at locations such as, but not limited to, restaurants, local parks and churches.
3. Reintegration visits shall be limited to two parent(s) / legal guardian(s) and siblings approved by the Facility Director/designee. If anyone arrives who was not previously approved in writing by the Facility Director, the leave shall be terminated and the youth immediately returned to the facility.

B. Group Escorted Absences

Facilities shall be allowed to escort youth in groups to participate in community service/restorative justice projects, educational visits, positive behavior incentive rewards, or reintegration activities according to the following mandatory guidelines:

Criteria:

1. Youth must be on a “Low” or “Moderate” Custody Level;
2. Youth must be appropriately participating in all programming (housing unit, school, treatment, mental health, medical or specialized treatment programs). This must be confirmed by the facility treatment team, educational staff and/or WP mental health staff. The “Escorted Absence Request Form” must be completed; and

2. Per the LAMOD Youth Manual, the youth must be on the Emerging Stage of LAMOD or higher to participate in off-campus incentive activities.

Exclusionary Criteria:

1. Within the last 30 calendar days of the proposed escorted absence, the youth shall not receive, engage in, or incur:
 - A code of conduct violation for Youth/Youth assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.
 - A code of conduct violation for Youth/Staff assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.
 - A contraband violation involving a positive drug screen, cell phone, or weapon.
 - Participated in a major disturbance involving three or more youth which threatens the safety and security of the facility, staff, and youth. It shall be documented in a UOR and through a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.
 - A code of conduct violation for sexual misconduct involving exposing of genitals to others; masturbation directed toward others; making sexually aggressive statements directed at a staff member or other youth; groping, touching or fondling the physical body of another person. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.
 - Be on a behavioral intervention plan due to ongoing and chronic behavioral issues. The youth shall be eligible once he is no longer on a behavioral intervention plan.
2. Youth with one (1) escape within the last 12 months prior to the proposed escorted absence shall not be considered;
3. Youth with a detainer are not eligible to participate in group off-campus activities; and

Sites:

1. If a crowded large venue is selected for the visit, the location's security staff must be informed of the visit two (2) days prior to arrival, and a time for the activity should be selected when crowds will not be heavy. The group should also be limited to six (6) youth for this type of setting.
2. Examples of appropriate small group LAMOD incentive activities include: outings to movie theatres (not in mall locations) during the day hours, outings to restaurants during the day hours, outings to local civic organizations or restorative justice community activities.
3. Large group activities may include: organized facility team sporting events, family fun day related activities, fishing trips.
4. The Facility Director or a high-level administrator shall accompany the group.
5. Public safety is always the first priority when considering off-campus activities.

D. Required Staffing Ratios

The chart below must be adhered to during escorted absences. Any deviation must be approved by the Regional Director.

# of Youth	# of JJS	# of Other Staff	Requirements
1-2	1	1 SS	1 same sex
2-3	2	1 SS	1 same sex
4-5	2	1 SS	1 same sex
6-7	2	1 SS	1 same sex
8-9	2	1 SS	1 same sex
10-11	3	3 SS	2 same sex
12+	3	3 SS	2 same sex

VIII. PROCEDURE FOR PRE-ESCORTED ABSENCE APPROVAL

A. Initiation of Escorted Absence Process

1. Any staff member may request an escorted absence for a youth by filling out the top portion of the "Escorted Absence Request Form" and providing the request to the youth's Case Manager.
2. The Case Manager shall bring the request to the housing unit's Group Leader.
3. The Group Leader shall discuss the request with the Unit Management Team staff during the Weekly Team Meeting. Staff should discuss any factor relevant to the escorted absence, including but not limited to, the youth's risk to public safety, including the probability of the use of EMP due to escape/runaway history, pursuant to YS Policy No. C.2.24.
4. If the Unit Management Team approves the request, the Case Manager shall complete his/her portion of the "Escorted Absence Request Form".
5. If the youth is participating in specialized services, the specialized treatment provider shall complete the appropriate portion of the "Escorted Absence Request Form".
6. The Case Manager shall then bring the request to the appropriate Unit Management Team members (i.e. school Principal, Treatment Director) for approval.
7. The Case Manager shall then forward the youth's name to medical via email or hard copy for physical and mental health clearance. The response by medical shall be retained by the Case Manager.
8. Once the "Escorted Absence Request Form" is completed and signed, and the youth has been cleared by Medical, the Case Manager shall bring the request to the Facility Director for review and approval.

B. Director's Approval

The Director/designee shall give final approval/disapproval of an "Escorted Absence Request Form" after fully considering the information provided by the Unit Management Team. If there is disagreement between the Unit Management Team and the Facility Director/designee regarding a youth's eligibility to participate in a group escorted absence activity, the "Escorted Absence Request Form" and all pertinent information should be sent to the

Program Manager 4 at Central Office within 24 hours. A committee shall be convened with the Program Manager 4, the Director of Treatment for facilities and the Assistant Secretary in order to make a determination if the youth will participate in the escorted absence activity.

Further, the Deputy Secretary or his designee further reserves the right to cancel a youth's participation in a group activity at any time based upon information that the youth may be a significant behavioral problem or a high public safety risk.

The "Escorted Absence Request Form" with the Facility Director's or designee signature shall be filed under Clip VII of the Master Record.

C. Pulling/Cancelling an Approved Escorted Absence

The Facility Director shall have the sole authority to pull/cancel an approved escorted absence. The Facility Director shall carefully vet the reason(s) for the pulling of any approved escorted absences, especially the pulling of the escorted absence at the "last minute", within 5 days or less from the approved date of the escorted absence. The pulling/canceling of a Family Reintegration visit shall not be canceled for minor offenses such as failure to follow staff directives, out of place of assignment, or other similar types of offenses/incidents due to the purpose of the escorted absence being family reintegration.

D. Pulling/Cancelling a Positive Behavior Incentive Escorted Absence

Where escorted absences are the result of a positive behavior incentive either for a group of youth or for an individual youth it shall not be canceled if the group or individual youth have met the behavioral expectation.

The only exception would be if the youth received or engaged in any of the following instances 48 hours prior to the date of the approved escorted absences:

1. A code of conduct violation for Youth/Staff assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.
2. A code of conduct violation for Youth/Staff assault with injury. It must be a category A or B injury. It shall be documented by a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee and through the A&I Injury form.

3. Participated in major disturbance involving three or more youth which threaten the safety and security of the facility, staff, and youth. It shall be documented in a UOR and through a finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.
4. A code of conduct violation for sexual misconduct involving exposing of genitals to other; masturbation directed toward others; making sexual aggressive statements directed at a staff member or other youth; groping, touching or fondling the physical body of another person. It shall be documented by finding of guilty by the Code of Conduct Committee.

E. Case Manager Contacts

For purposes of family reintegration, the youth's Case Manager must contact the involved family members 48 hours prior to the escorted absence to explain the rules and expectations for the visit.

The Case Manager shall also notify the Regional Manager, PPO/J and PPS, via email, at least 48 hours in advance that the youth will be on an escorted absence to allow the PPO/J to participate, if possible. If the PPO/J is not available to participate in person, he shall indicate knowledge of the escort in a Case Narrative in JETS.

IX. PROCEDURES WHILE ON ESCORTED ABSENCE:

A. Mechanical Restraints

Staff shall have belts and cuffs with them on any type of escorted absence. Occasions when restraints may be used include, but are not limited to:

1. Youth is found with contraband;
2. Engages in self-harming behavior or exhibits other types of behavior problems; or
3. Attempts to escape or escapes and is recaptured, or the visit is unexpectedly terminated.

When restraints are used, the procedures outlined in YS Policy C.2.6 shall be followed.

B. Proximity to Youth

Staff shall be no more than 3 feet away from the youth and in the line of sight of the youth they are supervising at all times. Youth shall be escorted and supervised on bathroom visits by a staff member of the same gender.

C. Food

Food consumed during the escorted absence shall be purchased at the time of the visit.

X. POST ESCORTED ABSENCE PROCEDURES:

A. Purchased Items; Contraband

Youth shall not be allowed to return to the facility with unauthorized items purchased or given to them during an escorted absence. Staff shall ensure that youth have no contraband or unauthorized items before returning to the facility.

B. Strip Searches

Upon return to the facility, youth shall be strip searched pursuant to the guidelines established in YS Policy No. C.2.3.

The specific guidelines established in YS Policy No. C.2.3 must be adhered to for cross-gender and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, questioning (LGBTIQ), or nonconforming youth (refer to YS Policy No. B.2.20).

C. Drug/Alcohol Testing

Youth returning from an escorted off-campus activity may be required to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing, pursuant to YS Policy No. C.2.7.

D. Review by Medical

A medical examination following an escorted absence is not required. However, immediate medical attention shall be provided if there is a visual indication of an injury or illness or if the youth or escorting staff identifies a specific medical complaint.

If the youth is examined by Medical, all escorting staff shall complete an Unusual Occurrence Report (UOR) and turn it in to their supervisor prior to the end of their tour of duty (refer to YS Policy No. A.1.14).

XI. GUIDELINES FOR HOLDING YOUTH ACCOUNTABLE FOR A CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION DURING AN ESCORTED ABSENCE:

A. General

The sanctions listed below are to be used as guidelines to aid facility staff. Each case shall be decided based on its individual facts.

Types of violations:

1. Escape
 - a. Filing of criminal charges for escape and/or related charges
 - b. Twelve (12) months in YS custody prior to requesting a furlough and
 - c. Six months prior to approving another escorted absence.
 2. Positive Drug Screen
 - a. Code of Conduct violation for intoxication and/or contraband;
 - b. Three (3) months in YS custody prior to requesting a furlough or escorted absence; and
 - c. Individualized Intervention Plan (IIP) shall be modified to include substance abuse treatment (refer to YS Policy No, B.2.1).
 3. Commission of any Crime
 - a. Filing of criminal charges
 - b. Twelve (12) months in YS custody prior to requesting a furlough or escorted absence.
- B. Documentation of Code of Conduct Violations
1. Documentation of a Code of Conduct Violation shall be reported on a UOR, with a copy sent to the appropriate Regional Office.
 2. UORs shall also be written by the employee who discovers the violation, and all other staff who accompanied the escorted absence.
 3. A Code of Conduct Violation Report shall be completed.

Previous Regulation/Policy Number: C.4.7

Previous Effective Date: 01/25/2018

Attachments/References: C.4.7 (a) Escorted Absence Request Form.Jan2017.docx

Office of Juvenile Justice Escorted Absence Request Form

Date of Request: _____ Escorted Absence Date & Time: _____
 Name of Youth: _____ Client ID#: _____
 Offense(s): _____
 Judge(s): _____ Region of Origin: _____
 Requested By: _____
Name Position

TYPE OF ESCORTED ABSENCE

EMP Required: Yes No

Family Emergency (Indicate which: *Special Family Viewing* *Funeral*)

Location of Escorted Absence _____ Person who verified emergency info _____
 Nature of emergency: _____

Family Reintegration

Location of Escorted Absence _____ Names of 2 participating family members _____
 Other information: _____

Group/Special Event Escorted Absence

Location of Escorted Absence _____ High Level Admin Staff Accompanying _____
 Other information: _____

Education/ Work opportunity/ Work training

Location of Escorted Absence _____ Educational Purpose/Employer/Training Provider _____
 Work activity _____

Detainers and History of Escape and/or Runaway Episodes- (Note any concerns here):

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

Approved: _____ Date _____ Case Manager	Approved: _____ Date _____ Group Leader
Approved: _____ Date _____ School Principal	Approved: _____ Date _____ Facility Treatment Director
Approved: _____ Date _____ Specialized Treatment Provider (if applicable)	
Facility Director: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied Comments: (If denied note reasons)	_____ Date _____ Facility Director

FUNERAL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT:

Assistant Secretary: Approved Denied _____ Date _____
 Assistant Secretary
 Comments: _____