

# YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

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| <b>Title:</b> Marriage Requests   | <b>Type:</b> B. Classification, Sentencing and Service Functions<br><b>Sub Type:</b> 8. Youth Related Services<br><b>Number:</b> B.8.6 |
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| <b>References:</b><br>La. R.S. 9:201 through 205 and 221; La. Civil Code, Articles 86, 90.1 and 2333; ACA Standards 4-JCF-5C-02, 4-JCF-5C-07, 4-JCF-4C-19 (Performance-based Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities); Turner v. Safley, 482 U.S, 78, 96 L.Ed.2d 64, 107S Ct 2254 (1987) |  |
| <b>STATUS: Approved</b>   |  |
| <b>Approved By:</b> <i>William A. Sommers, Deputy Secretary</i>   | <b>Date of Approval:</b> 02/16/2022  |

**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 concerning youth marriage requests.

**III. APPLICABILITY:**

Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chief of Operations, Secure Facilities Director, Facility Directors, Chaplains, facility staff and youth.

It is the Facility Director's responsibility to convey the contents of this policy to youth who make a request to be married while assigned to a secure care facility.

**IV. DEFINITION:**

**Marriage** – Marriage, as defined by La. Civil code, Article 86, is a legal relationship between a man and a woman that is created by civil contract. The relationship and the contract are subject to special rules prescribed by law.

**Officiant** – Person authorized by law to perform marriage ceremonies.

**V. POLICY:**

It is the Deputy Secretary's policy that youth marriage requests be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined herein. The legal age for obtaining a marriage license is 18 years.

**VI. PROCEDURES:**

- A. A youth's request to be married shall be submitted to the Deputy Secretary for final approval along with documentation referenced in Section B. below. The Deputy Secretary, in turn, shall notify the Facility Director, the Secure Facilities Director and the youth in writing of their decision.
- B. The youth must certify that both parties meet all legal qualifications for marriage:
  - 1. Minors under 16 cannot marry.
  - 2. Minors 16 and 17 years can marry if there is judicial authorization and written consent from both parents, the custodial parent or a tutor.
  - 3. Minors 16 and 17 years of age cannot marry anyone who is three or more years older.

It is the responsibility of the youth to gather this information; however, the youth may request assistance from their case manager.

- C. Once the marriage is approved by the Deputy Secretary, the Facility Director may set an appropriate time and place for the ceremony.
- D. Furloughs shall not be granted solely for a marriage ceremony.
- E. The youth is required to participate in at least one counseling session with the facility Chaplain or chosen religious volunteer, which is intended to assess the youth's level of responsibility to make the decision to get married. The Facility Director shall discuss the marriage proposal with both parties, either personally or through a Chaplain or chosen religious volunteer and document that the parties were counseled. In addition, the Facility Director or designee shall provide a courtesy notification to the parent/guardian of the youth's marriage request. Documentation of these actions must be filed in the youth's Master Record under Clip II.

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- F. If the Chaplain or chosen religious volunteer chooses not to perform the marriage, they shall speak with the matrimonial officiant who is to perform the marriage to ensure that they are fully aware of the youth's situation. Only approved and licensed authorities (clergy and judges) shall be permitted to perform the marriage ceremony. The officiant may not perform a marriage ceremony until they have received a license authorizing them to perform that marriage ceremony.
- G. If both parties are assigned to secure care facilities, the marriage shall be postponed until one of the parties has been released.
- H. The youth making the request must pay for all costs associated with the marriage.
- I. Nothing in this policy is intended to preclude staff from volunteering, with the Facility Director's approval, to assist the youth with the marriage ceremony, as long as such does not interfere with other facility activities and staff responsibilities.

**Previous Regulation/Policy Number:** B.8.6

**Previous Effective Date:** 02/05/2020

**Attachments/References:**