# Youth Handbook




COLORADO

Division of Youth Services

Office of Children, Youth & Families

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## What is the Division of Youth Services?

The Division of Youth Services (DYS) provides a residential and non-residential continuum of services that encompasses juvenile detention, commitment and parole. DYS is the agency defined by law to provide for the care and supervision of youth committed by the District Court to the custody of the Colorado Department of Human Services. The Division operates 15 secure facilities that serve youth between the ages of 10 and 21, who are pre-adjudicated, sentenced, or committed. For pre-adjudicated youth, the Division is also responsible for the management and oversight of the Colorado Youth Detention Continuum; a State-funded, locally administered program that provides services to youth at risk of further progressing into the juvenile justice system. In addition to residential programming, the Division administers juvenile parole services throughout the state.

## The Division of Youth Services Vision Statement

"Achieving Youth Success and Safer Colorado Communities"

## The Division of Youth Services Mission Statement

The mission of the Division of Youth Services is to protect, restore, and improve public safety utilizing a continuum of care that provides effective supervision, promotes accountability to victims and communities, and helps youth lead constructive lives through positive youth development.

## Division of Youth Services 7 Commitments and 5 Key Strategies



## Safe and Healthy Environments

Entering a secure youth center is difficult. You will need support and tools to help you cope and build skills while with us and upon return home. DYS seeks to promote practices that serve to increase both youth and staff's ability to withstand and recover from difficulty. Supportive practices promote safety within our facilities and include any practices that allow all of us to cope with and address challenges. These include, but are not limited to, having tools to identify and express emotions, to communicate openly, resolve conflict, and to build hope for a bright future. Safe and healthy environments support and contribute to your ability to identify and make progress toward goals. We are committed to nonviolence, emotional intelligence, social learning, democracy, open communication, social responsibility, and growth and change. You will learn more about the meaning of these seven commitments during your time with us.

The Division has a few tools you will learn about, and we'll encourage you to use as much as possible. They are intended to assist you in experiencing the highest level of safety while with us, and to give you and others placed here with you the opportunity to problem solve proactively.

Some tools you will learn about:

- "Community meetings" – a group check-in to see how you and others are feeling, to set goals for your day, and to identify who can help you if needed.
- "Safety Plans" – a list of things you can do on your own to calm anxiety, stress, or discomfort.
- "Problem Solving Groups" – a quick meeting that can be called by anyone to address a concern, hopefully prior to the concern becoming a big problem for everyone in your youth center's living unit or community.
- "S.E.L.F. (an acronym that stands for Safety, Emotions, Loss and Future) is a problem-solving approach that gives you, your family, staff and others working with you a way to maintain safety and to address distress through language everyone can understand.

We encourage you to talk with youth center staff and positive peers in your youth center community about how they help support safe and healthy environments every day!

## The DYS Treatment Model

Youth Centers across the State have begun to implement a new treatment model based on science and designed to improve the services that youth receive while at DYS to improve your readiness for success. The treatment model unites the work of all DYS staff – be they client managers, direct care staff, teachers, or behavioral health staff – in being a well-connected part of the care and services you receive. Individual treatment, group treatment and family engagement services focus on reducing the risk factors that resulted in your placement with DYS and engage both you and your family or other people important in your life in your care and treatment. Skills focused education is a primary way to achieve these goals and if you haven't already, you will begin to learn "DBT Skills" (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy) – that can help you with controlling your emotions and will greatly improve

your ability to handle distress without losing control or acting destructively. You will learn about distress tolerance, mindfulness, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness which are all ways that can lead you towards lasting and meaningful positive change in your life.

## Classifications

**Detained and Pre-adjudicated:** Youth who have been charged with a crime, have an outstanding warrant, or are awaiting a court hearing are considered to be detained. Most detained youth have not had a hearing and will have their detention hearing within 48 hours of their admission (excluding weekends and holidays). The purpose of this detention hearing will be to determine whether a youth will remain detained, be released, or moved to another placement that will benefit their situation.

**Sentenced:** Youth that have been to court and must serve a specific number of days in detention are considered to be sentenced. Youth will be released at the end of their sentence unless they have other legal actions pending. At the end of their sentence, the youth's parent or legal guardian will be expected to sign them out of the youth center. If a youth is unsure of when their sentence ends, they may ask a staff member to obtain this information.

**Committed:** Youth that have been committed to the Division of Youth Services for a period of time. During this time, youth will be evaluated and tested to help determine individual treatment needs. During the assessment phase, committed youth will be assigned a client manager.

**Parole:** Colorado Statute requires that every committed youth exiting the Division of Youth Services must serve six months mandatory parole. Cases that meet certain criteria may be extended by 15 months. Independent of the Division of Youth Services, the Colorado Juvenile Parole Board hears the cases of each youth preparing for parole, sets terms and conditions and has the authority to modify, suspend or revoke parole

## Common Terms

**Contraband:** Any item that can be used as a weapon or be used for the purposes of escape, bodily harm, physical injury, or death. This includes but it not limited to any item that has not been officially approved or authorized.

**Escape:** Any action or plan that results in one's physical departure or failure to return to the youth center without proper authorization.

**Grievance**: Complaint to address what is considered to be unjust.

**Individual Growth and Change Plan:** The placement of a youth onto a specialized, behavior management program for the purpose of helping the youth change problematic behavior which is considered to be a safety risk to the individual youth or others, or for assisting a youth in need of

specialized care.

**Mediation:** A process to arrive at a decision which involves a staff who hears both sides of the issue.

**Orientation**: The process whereby new youth are informed of basic rights and responsibilities and what they may expect while in placement, what is expected of them, how the program operates, and how they may access various services and resources.

**Restorative Community Justice (RCJ):** Is a balanced approach concept that helps to repair the harm done to victims and/or the community by a youth in the custody of DYS through competency development, community safety and accountability.

**Rule Violation: Major:** Actions which pose a clear threat to self, others, or property. Actions that are against the law, such as escape, assault, fighting, intimidation, or other similar behaviors

**Rule Violation: Minor:** Behavior that is not immediately threatening to staff, self, other youth, or property, but which is inappropriate or unacceptable within the program.

**Seclusion:** Placement of a youth in a locked room to control behavior as a precaution when they pose a serious, probable, imminent threat to of bodily harm to self or others, and where there is the present ability to affect such bodily harm.

**Sexual Misconduct**: Any behavior or act of a sexual nature, either consensual or nonconsensual.

**Staff Directed Time-out**: Remaining in a designated area for a period of time, up to 60 minutes as determined by youth center staff. Staff directed time-out is not a consequence but is used to allow the youth to regain their control and composure.

**Self-Initiated Time-out:** A period of separation from the group for a period of time, up to 60 minutes as negotiated between the youth and staff. Self-initiated time-out is not a consequence but is used to allow the youth to regain their control and composure and may be taken in the youth's sleeping room or another designated room or area.

**Youth Responsibilities**: Each youth must follow the rules, procedures, schedules, and directions of staff while in the youth center.

**Youth Rights:** Rights afforded by law only denied for safety or security purposes.

## Youth Rights and Responsibilities

All youth will be informed of their rights and responsibilities during the intake/orientation process. Solutions for complaints of a violation of any right will be heard through the youths'

grievance procedure. Youth who do not accept responsibilities will be subject to the youth center's intervention process. The rights listed will not be denied for punitive reasons.

## Basic Rights of Youth

### Youth have the right:

- To not be discriminated against because of race, natural origin, color, creed, sex, handicap, political affiliation, sexual orientation or gender identity.
- To be treated respectfully, impartially, and fairly.
- To be informed of the rules, procedures, and schedules of the youth center within 24 hours of placement into the youth center.
- To not be subjected to corporal punishment, harassment, mental or physical abuse, personal injury, intimidation, property damage, threats, harm, assault, humiliation, or interference with the normal bodily functions of eating, sleeping or bathroom functions.
- To practice their faith and to participate in religious services and religious counseling on a voluntary basis, subject only to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security.
- To meet voting requirements and vote if 18 years of age or older.
- To reasonable access to information available through the media and to reasonable access to the general public through the media, subject only to the limitations necessary to maintain youth center order and security.
- To not be compelled to participate in uncompensated work assignments unless the work is related to youth center housekeeping, maintenance of the youth center, personal hygiene needs, restorative community justice programs or the work is part of an approved vocational training program.
- To participate in youth center programs, subject to State and local laws concerning education or other relevant, governing requirements.
- To full, fair, and equal opportunity to participate in educational and/or vocational programs.
- To review your case file while in a youth center or the community. A guardian and his/her attorney may, upon request, review the case file. The youth, if 18 years of age, must give their written approval for a review of the case file by the parents or guardians.
- To freedom of expression, as long as it does not interfere with the rights of others or the safety and security of the youth center.
- To equal access to programs and services.
- To a minimum of one hour of daily exercise involving large muscle activity. Daily structured leisure time opportunities will also be available to alleviate boredom and to provide opportunities for positive interaction with others.

## Voting Rights

If you are a United States Citizen, Colorado resident and are 18 years old or older, your youth center director is responsible for providing you with the opportunity to register to

vote and to participate in elections. The registration process will normally be handled in your youth center's school program and voting will be done by mail. This process will be completed a minimum of 60 days before Election Day (for general elections, approximately the first week in September). If you are eligible to vote, an election is approaching and you have not learned about how you can vote in it, please speak to your school principal or youth center director to learn how you can exercise this important right.

## Basic Responsibilities of Youth:

### Youth Have the Responsibility:

- To follow the rules, procedures, schedules, and directions of staff while in the youth center. Youth will treat staff members and other youth with respect and will not engage in activity which is designed to be disruptive to the living environment.
- To clean and maintain their living quarters. Youth are expected not to damage public or privately owned property located within the living quarters.
- To ask for medical and dental care when needed.
- To maintain their clothes and hair in a clean and odor free condition.
- To respect the rights of other youth and staff.
- To obey all orders of the Court, to remain in placement and to participate fully, to the best of their ability and to follow their individual case plan.
- To promote the physical, emotional, social and moral safety and security of others through the use of self-discipline.
- To not possess any kind of contraband, weapons, or objects which could be used as a weapon.
- To refrain from and discourage others from using, buying, selling, or otherwise providing or having alcohol, narcotics, or any illegal drugs, or from abusing any other substance as an intoxicant or stimulant.
- To practice and encourage honesty in all interactions.
- To respect peers and staff by obeying all reasonable staff requests and by refraining from the use of verbal abuse, ethnic slurs, slander, and/or obscene gestures.
- To fully participate in all areas of treatment, educational and transitional programming.

## Food Services

You will be provided three nutritionally well-balanced meals each day, (two which are hot), as well as a daily snack. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines will be used to prepare the menus.

The Food Services unit will make provisions for special diets as follows:

**1) Therapeutic Diet:**
This is a diet to support special medical conditions that require the addition or elimination of certain foods. An example would be a diabetic diet or one to treat high blood pressure.

**2) Special Diet:**
This is a preference for certain foods such as a vegetarian diet or the elimination of certain foods as dictated by religious beliefs.

**3) Food Allergies:**
Those foods that create some negative physical reaction in a person's body that is damaging to their health.

**If you require any of the above diets, you must inform the Medical Care Provider within 24 hours of admission.**

## Medical, Mental Health and Dental Care

Youths' medical, dental, and behavioral health complaints are received and reviewed daily by qualified health care professionals who determine within 24 hours (72 hours on weekends and holidays) how to prioritize the evaluation of your health needs. Qualified health care professionals are available daily, either on-site or on call to respond to your requests for medical assistance and to monitor reported medical complaints.

All staff has training in basic first aid and CPR. Some youth center staff have additional training in certain aspects of health care such as obtaining blood pressures and other vital signs. If medical staff is not on site, arrangements have been made to have a physician on call for urgent and emergency health care needs. If you have an urgent medical need at any time, report this to the staff or a youth center supervisor and they will take appropriate action. If you have any other health care questions, please notify medical staff.

If there is a medical emergency, a staff member must be informed immediately so medical care personnel can be notified. Medical information is kept confidential between youth and medical staff though portions may be shared with a Multi-disciplinary team to assure appropriate care is ordered and delivered.

If you need to see a mental health professional or counselor, you should let a youth center supervisor know and they will ensure you receive the help you need.

Youth can see a Medical Care Provider….

1. Anytime they feel sick or if they have an injury.
2. If a youth has questions or concerns about their health or health issues, including mental health and dental needs.
3. For STD testing (as necessary), education, and follow-up treatment if needed.
4. HIV testing (as necessary), education, and follow-up treatment where required.
5. Medication concerns.
6. If staff encourages a youth to see a Medical Care Provider.

REMEMBER, YOUR HEALTH IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!

## Educational Services

Educational services and programs are provided to all youth. The education program is supported by a written, standardized, competency-based curriculum and by appropriate materials and classroom resources. Youth will have an education plan designed for short-term program participation. Youth are expected to participate in the school program with the following exceptions:

A. Illness, as approved by the Medical Staff or Shift Supervisor.
B. Court proceedings.
C. If a youth is committed and over the age of 18, they must be offered to work on curriculum specific to areas such as life skills or GED type programming.
D. If a youth has graduated from high school or obtained a GED, they must be offered to work on Life Skills, and in some programs, vocational programming, provided by the teachers.

## Behavioral Expectations

All DYS facilities share a framework for behavior management that is based upon defining, teaching, learning, and practicing the DYS Behavioral Expectations. Individual facilities may have an "acronym" or easy way to learn and remember the behavioral expectations. The acronym will be specific to your youth center and will be used to define positive expectations for behavior throughout various settings and activities. Positive re-enforcement is used throughout DYS so that staff can recognize and reward youth when they exhibit the behaviors expected.

Ask one of your staff to explain how behavior management works in your youth center. Once you have learned how it works at one youth center, it will help you learn how it works at another should you move within DYS.

## Religious Services

Non-denominational religious programming is held weekly. If you have spiritual needs that are not routinely met, you may submit a special request to staff. Participation in religious counseling, whether on an individual basis or during youth center services, will be conducted on a voluntary basis. You have the right to decline participation in any individual or group religious activity. If participation is declined, you will be separated from the group to sit quietly and work on some assigned activity in a different part of the youth center. Non-participation in religious services does not mean free time. Upon request, youth are allowed visitation with verifiable religious personnel. Access will not be denied solely because of a disciplinary action; but it can be denied due to an identified and documented safety related concern. Youth have the right to contact a religious representative as part of their professional call list, and/or during non-structured program hours.

## Restorative Community Justice (RCJ)

Restorative Community Justice (RCJ) is the area in which a youth demonstrates their social and community responsibility through ongoing dedication and efforts to repair harm they have done in the past. Harm is measured in many ways. Generally, it is looked at as harm done to friends, family, peers, the community, property, persons, or emotions of others. As part of a successful stay within the Division of Youth Services, youth will be addressing these areas, and will be demonstrating efforts to repair the harm and restore the damage done. If youth are involved in incidents while in the youth center, they will be expected to repair that harm.

## Sexual Contact Prevention

**What is Sexual Abuse?**
Sexual abuse is an undesired sexual act by another youth or staff. It is often referred to as "bad touch." Types of sexual abuse include forced sexual behavior, verbal behavior, and the use of a position of trust to engage in sexual behavior.

**What is Sexual Harassment?**
Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature.

Sexual abuse or sexual harassment affects everyone, either directly or through the experiences of those we care about. It can affect any male or female of any age, race, ethnic group, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or disability.

The Division of Youth Services has a zero tolerance for sexual abuse, sexual harassment, assault, and misconduct. Incidents like this are rare because we have comprehensive ways to ensure physical and psychological safety.

**Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Prevention:**

- Be aware of situations that make you feel uncomfortable. Trust your instincts. If it feels wrong, TELL A STAFF MEMBER YOU TRUST, write a grievance, medical slip or tell a trusted adult.
- Don't be afraid to say, "NO" or "STOP IT NOW."
- Walk and stand with confidence.
- Avoid talking about sex or being partially dressed. These things may make another youth believe that you have an interest in a sexual relationship.
- Avoid secluded areas. Position yourself in plain view of staff members. If you are being pressured for sex or simply being made to feel "creepy" by someone's words or actions, report it to a staff person immediately.
- Avoid horseplay or other physical contact.
- Be completely open and honest with intake or assessment staff when asked regarding personal behaviors. They can't help if they have wrong information.
- Develop trust and rapport.

**What to do if you are sexually abused:**

***If the assault has just happened…***

- Get in a safe place. Report the abuse to a trusted adult.
- Request immediate medical attention. You may have serious injuries that you aren't aware of, and any sexual contact can expose you to sexually transmitted diseases.
- Do not shower, brush your teeth, use the restroom, eat, or change your clothes. You may destroy important evidence.
- Report the abuse to a trusted staff immediately.

If you have been abused, witnessed abuse, or experienced sexual harassment but you are unwilling to report it to staff, then you may fill out a grievance form; write a letter to Administration, request to see the Chaplain, talk to your Client Manager, parent, or a trusted adult or call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. If you have a disability, either physical or mental, you may report sexual abuse to: The Legal Center for People with Disabilities, 455 Sherman Street, Suite 130 or by phone to 303-722-0300 Ext. 228. Youth do not need to turn in a grievance or report of abuse or harassment to the staff the complaint involves.

***Later on…***

- Seek assistance from a staff member or trusted adult, including clinicians.
- Seek the support of a trusted friend or family member. The days ahead can be traumatic, and it helps to have people who care about you supporting you.
- Develop a Safety Plan with staff.
- File charges!
- Seek ongoing counseling support.
- Seek Victim Assistance.

**Did You Know**…

- Sexual abuse happens to people of all ages.
- Sexual abuse can happen to males and females.
- Sexual abuse may be motivated by factors such as power, social and interpersonal deficits, and low self-esteem.
- Sexual abuse has nothing to do with sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Victims and offenders may be either heterosexual or homosexual.
- The fact that a victim of sexual abuse became sexually aroused does not mean they were not sexually abused or that they gave consent. These are normal, involuntary reactions.
- Any sexual contact between staff and youth is against the law.
- It is common for survivors of sexual assault to have feelings of embarrassment, anger, guilt, panic, depression, and fear even several months or years after an attack.

If you sexually abuse a youth, you should know…

The Division of Youth Services has a ZERO tolerance for sexual abuse, assault, sexual harassment and misconduct. You will be held responsible if you choose to hurt another youth. If you are charged and adjudicated your sentence could be increased. Also, if you make false allegations, you will be held accountable.

If you are hurt by another youth or staff, please let a trusted adult know. We will support and ensure your safety.

**Victim Support Services**:

There are victim support services, access to community advocates, and medical treatment that are offered free of charge to youth and families. The following community victim support agencies can be contacted confidentially and from the facility's "blue phone system".

- The Blue Bench: (Gilliam, Foote, Adams, Summit, Aspire, Clear Creek, Golden Peak, and Mt. View), 303-322-7273 or 303-329-0031 (Spanish)
- TESSA: (Spring Creek, Zeb Pike), 719-633-3819
- Pueblo Rape Crisis Services: (Pueblo), 719-549-0549
- SAVA, Sexual Assault Victim Advocate Center: (Platte), 970-472-4200
- The Center Empowering Children: (Grand Mesa), 970-242-1211

## Visitation

All youth in the Division of Youth Services' programs have the right to a reasonable amount of visitation with their legal guardian and immediate family members. Each youth center encourages youth to maintain contact with family and other positive individuals in their lives through flexible and extended visiting hours. Visitation rights will not be permanently denied but may be temporarily limited due to the availability of staff for supervision, the amount of visiting space available, or by current, overriding security considerations. Youth may refuse to participate in visitation. The youth center will provide the opportunity for youth to visit at least once per week with approved family members. Each youth center has procedures for temporarily denying visitation, which include the causes for the cancellation or denial of a visit and procedures for appealing a decision to cancel or deny visitation.

**Professional Visit Information**: Youth are allowed special visits with their attorney(s), government officials, legislators, or counselors/agents/workers who are assigned to supervise or to deliver services in the community. Professional visitation is permitted at times other than the normal scheduled visiting times and can occur in addition to regular scheduled visitation with family and/or a guardian.

## Mail

The Division of Youth Services will provide postage for the mailing of a minimum of two letters per week for each youth, when requested. Additional postage is provided for legal and family correspondence.

When a youth receives or sends mail, their letters will not be routinely read. However, when a staff member has determined that a threat to the safety and security of other youth, staff, or the general public exists, or is deemed inappropriate, the mail will be read in the presence of the youth and may be withheld, censored, or rejected at that time.

Youth are permitted to send sealed letters to specified persons and organizations, including but not limited to:

1. Courts
2. Legal counsel
3. Division of Youth Services' administrative officials
4. The administrator of the grievance system
5. Parole Board.

Incoming mail from these sources is considered "protected" and will be opened and scanned in the presence of the youth, but not read.

Each youth center director or designee has the discretion of allowing youth to receive postage stamps from sources outside the youth center.

Outgoing letters must be sealed and addressed with only the sender's name and address information and the address information of the person receiving the mail.

## Telephone

Upon admission to a Division of Youth Services' youth center, you may make two telephone calls to your parents or legal guardians, foster parents, or custodians and to an attorney or legal representative.

Scheduled Phone calls: You will be able to make or receive routine local and collect long distance calls to parents, legal guardians, foster parents or custodians weekly during established hours. Youth may also receive calls from court workers, social workers, law enforcement officials, probation officers, and lawyers at any time, unless they pose an immediate safety risk. Youth may telephone an attorney on an agency phone at any reasonable time and as often as the attorney agrees is necessary and will accept charges for the calls if the calls are long distance. For calls with an attorney the youth center will allow for a reasonable amount of privacy and no time limits will be placed on the calls.

## Searches

Consistently applied search practices are essential to the safety and security of the youth center and will be designed to prevent, control, and intercept the introduction of weapons or other contraband; however, indiscriminate body searches of youth are prohibited in all Division of Youth Services' youth centers. Searches shall be conducted upon a youth's admission or return to the youth center from supervised or unsupervised passes or activities, following family visits,

or whenever there is reason to believe that the security of the youth center may be endangered or that contraband may be present.

**Types of searches:**

Frisk/Pat Search: A search during which a youth is not required to remove their clothing but where the clothing and the youth's body is searched by sight and touch and is conducted by a staff member of the same sex or gender identity as the youth being searched

Personal Search: A search during which a youth is required to remove their clothing and where the clothing is carefully searched by sight and touch and the youth is searched by sight only while wearing a gown.

Full Search: A search during which a youth is searched by sight only after removing both clothing and gown.

Body Cavity Search: A visual, manual or instrument inspection of a youth's oral, anal or vaginal cavity shall only be conducted at a local medical center by a licensed medical professional, when authorized by both the youth center medical staff and the youth center director.

Searches of housing, program areas and visitors: Searches of living areas, sleeping rooms and general program areas will be performed on an unannounced and irregular schedule. Visitors may also be pat searched and will pass through the metal detector. Only personal items that have been approved by the youth center director or their designee may be brought into the youth center. Visitors found with contraband in their possession or found exchanging contraband with youth will be denied visitation privileges and may also receive criminal charges.

Mail Search: All mail and packages for youth are subject to inspection. Letters and packages may be opened and inspected for contraband in front of a youth.

## Contraband

Contraband is defined in policy as, "Any item that can be used as a weapon or be used for the purposes of escape, bodily harm, physical injury or death. This includes but it not limited to any item that has not been officially approved or authorized."

Items considered to be contraband include but are not limited to:

- Firearms or ammunition
- Knives, razor blades (including multi-tool handheld tools)
- Items designed to be a weapon
- Explosives and fireworks
- Drugs and drug paraphernalia
- Tobacco products, lighters or matches
- Unauthorized medication

- Alcoholic beverages
- Inhalants
- Unauthorized food or beverages
- Cash, credit cards, or other monetary exchange items
- Pornography
- Unauthorized electronic devices
- Cell phones or cell watches
- Additional items may be considered contraband at the discretion of the youth center administration.

## Rule Violations: Minor

Minor rule violations are for "behavior that is not immediately threatening to staff, self, other youth, or property, but which is inappropriate or unacceptable within the youth center."

Examples of minor rule violations include but are not limited to:

- Failure to comply/program
- Horseplay
- Inappropriate language
- Minor destruction of property
- Minor youth sexual misconduct
- Nuisance contraband
- Other – other program specific infractions identified by Youth Center Administrators or their designees

## Rule Violations: Major

Major rule violations are actions which pose a clear threat to self, others, or property; actions that are against the law, such as escape, assault, fighting, intimidation or other similar behaviors.

Examples of major rule violations include but are not limited to:

- Attempted escape/escape – a criminal act that is a substantial step toward escaping from custody, any action of an escape effort as well as successful escape from a youth center, program, home visit, work program or supervised activity.
- Dangerous contraband – possession of any item considered contraband that can reasonably be seen or used as a threat to safety and security of the youth center or anyone in the youth center.
- Major destruction of property – the act of defacing state property by any method (e.g., paint, spray paint, ink or any other substance or object. Includes but is not limited to punching holes in walls, damaging equipment, door locks and furniture.
- Fighting – Mutually aggressive physical contact.

- Gang related activity – any direct or indirect action, comment, or gesture, by an individual or group that demonstrates association with an identified group for antisocial purposes.
- Harassment or threatening– To trouble, torment or confuse through consistent persistent attacks and/or questions and any written, verbal and/or gesture of menacing intent, derogatory comments about race, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation or gender identification.

  Inappropriate sexual behavior – the intentional sexual touching or displaying of one's own or another's body parts, regardless of consent; sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse. Any statement or action whose intent is to mock, put down or degrade someone on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Includes hugging, kissing and completed, attempted or requested sexual acts.
- Medication abuse – any intentional use of medication in a way not intended by the prescribing provider. Taking medications not administered to you or giving your medications to another person.
- Physical assault – any intentional act of physical aggression, whether unprovoked or provoked.
- Security violation - any action that endangers the safety and security of others or the youth center.
- Sexual abuse- any sexual contact where the victim does not consent, is coerced into such an act by overt or implied threats of violence or is unable to consent or refuse.
- Sexual harassment – repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature.
- Other – program specific infractions identified by Youth Center Administrators or their designees.

## Behavioral Interventions

When a youth violates a major rule of the youth center, a Youth Services Specialist II or higher position will assign an intervention that addresses the behavior, provides a restorative community justice component (RCJ) to address and repair the harm and an opportunity for individual growth and change. Youth have the right to be informed of the rule violation and to participate in an intervention process to discuss what would be a meaningful intervention(s). If a youth disagrees with the interventions, they are assigned they may use the youth center's grievance process to have it reviewed by an impartial staff member.

## Intervention Procedures for Major Rule Violations

- Behaviors identified as violation(s) to a major rule may be addressed through an Incident Report.

- If the situation is an unlawful act, Supervisory/Administrative staff shall determine if law enforcement will be contacted and information will be turned over to them for investigation and possible criminal charges or whether an internal process will be used to repair the harm.
- If at any time youth need assistance in reading the Incident Report, completing an intervention, or writing a grievance regarding the matter, they may ask for assistance.
- A copy of the Incident Report will be provided to youth involved in an incident. It will describe the incident and identify the major rule violations and the Sanctuary commitment it violates.
- Youth will be asked to review, sign, and place the date and time on the Incident Report indicating they received the report. Signing the Incident Report is not the same as admitting to the violation but verifies notification of the alleged violation.
- If at any time youth need assistance in reading the Incident Report, completing an intervention, or writing a grievance regarding the matter, they may ask for assistance.
- All Incident Reports and interventions are reviewed by Supervisory/Administrative staff to ensure youth's rights are not being violated and the process was fair and appropriate.

## Grievances

A youth has the right to make a complaint called a grievance and staff must permit you to do so. Since most complaints may be quickly resolved informally, they are encouraged to talk to a staff member or ask to speak to a supervisor about their concern. Staff is readily available to youth to listen to their concerns and/or complaints. A youth may also fill out a grievance form. Grievance forms are located in easily accessible areas in each youth center. Youth may submit a grievance on a sheet of paper if forms are unavailable. If you need help, any staff person can assist you in writing your grievance. Once the grievance is written, youth should place it in the locked grievance box. A person will not be disciplined for filing a grievance. All grievances will be investigated. The grievance specialist will notify a youth in writing within three days, excluding weekends and holidays, of the decision. If the decision is in favor of the griever, the program will make sure that appropriate action is taken to remedy the situation.

If your grievance has to do with sexual abuse or an imminent threat to safety, you may present it immediately and directly to your Youth Center Director. You will not be required to talk to the staff member who is the subject of the grievance and other staff is prohibited from asking you about the contents of the grievance.

Youth may submit a grievance anonymously or on behalf of another youth. Or a parent, guardian, or other relation may file a grievance on your behalf by submitting it verbally or in writing to a supervisor or youth center administrator.

## Asking for Help

It can be tough to know where to turn if you need help during your time with DYS. Please use the following references as a starting point.

In case of Medical emergencies: Contact any staff member right away. If the on-site medical personnel can't help, then DYS does have outside medical providers that can be a resource.

In case of trouble with other youth: Find the staff member that you feel most comfortable talking to. Explain the problem to them and work together to find a healthy solution. Your Client Manager is a great resource if you are unsure of which staff you want to talk to about it.

If you have questions or concerns about your case: Of all staff, your client manager has the most up to date information on your case. Leave a message for them or ask a staff member for help in contacting them.

If you feel you are being mistreated: Grievances are part of your voice. Use them to communicate your concerns about the program or how you are being treated. Grievances have several steps in the review processes, so don't be afraid to express your concerns!

If you need medication or a medication change: Ask the medical staff or your case manager. They can refer you to be seen by a doctor.

If you have been abused, witnessed abuse or been sexually harassed, but you are unwilling to report it to staff, then you may fill out a grievance form, write a letter to Administration, request to see the Chaplain, talk to a Client Manager, parent, or a trusted adult. All staff within the Division of Youth Services are "Mandated Reporters" which means that all staff are required by law to report allegations of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. You can also use the blue phones in your unit to make your own confidential report to the Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (1-844-264-5437). If you have a disability, either physical or mental, you may report abuse to: Disability Law Colorado, 455 Sherman Street, Suite 130 or by phone to 303-722-0300 or 800-288-1376

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| the blue bench<br>Gilliam, Foote, Adams, Summit, Aspire, Golden Peak,, Mt.View<br>303-322-7273<br>Spanish:303-329-0031<br>P.O. Box 18951<br>Denver, CO 80218 | the Center<br>Grand Mesa<br>970-242-1211<br>2350 G Road<br>Grand Junction, CO 81505 | PRCS<br>Pueblo<br>719-549-0549<br>503 N. Main St., Ste 526 Pueblo, CO 81003 |

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| SAVA<br>Platte<br>970-472-4200<br>1570 W 1st St, Loveland, CO 80537 | TESSA<br>Spring Creek & Zeb Pike<br>719-633-3819<br>435 Gold Pass Heights, Colorado Springs, CO 80906 |

If you are a sexual abuse survivor, or someone who needs the support of this type of outside service, you have the right to access one of the above outside support services. The PREA standards require that DYS provide you with access to outside victim advocates for emotional support services related to sexual abuse. DYS shall enable communication between yourself and the outside support services provider in as confidential a manner as possible but are unable to provide absolute anonymity.

If you disagree with a DYS policy, you may submit feedback or policy recommendations through the youth advisory council at your youth center. Or your written recommendations may be provided to your youth center director to be forwarded to the DYS Policy Coordinator. Lastly, if you prefer, you are also permitted to submit a sealed letter with your feedback addressed to the DYS Policy Coordinator.

If you feel you have experienced any type of discrimination or Civil Rights violation you may also file a complaint with the Center for Equal Opportunity, Room 737, 1575 Sherman St., Denver, Colorado 80203, 303-866-6047 or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, 1961 Stout St., Room 08-148, Denver, CO 80294-3538, or via phone at 1-800-368-1019.

If you have a food related civil rights complaint you may file a complaint directly with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or via phone at 1-866-632-9992.

## Office of the Child Ombudsman

Effective August 25, 2020

Any youth living in a Division of Youth Services (DYS) youth center who has concerns regarding their safety, placement, treatment, rights and well-being may file a complaint with the Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO). A complaint to the CPO can be made by a third-party on the youth's behalf. Examples of concerns that can be reviewed:

- Living conditions
- Access to medical, dental, vision and mental health services
- Visitation

The CPO office accepts complaints by telephone Monday – Friday, 8:00AM-05:00PM. All calls made to the CPO are confidential. You can reach the CPO toll-free on the DYS Blue Phones.

Please understand that by leaving a message with our office, you authorize the CPO to return your call at the facility, using your name.

How to File a Complaint with the CPO:
a) Office Phone –720-625-8640
b) Call toll-free: 1-866-276-8640 or 1-866-CPO-8640 direct from the DYS facility Blue Phones
c) Email – info@coloradocpo.org

d) Mail – Complaints may be mailed to the Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman, 1300 Broadway, Suite 430, Denver, Colorado 80203 (no drop offs allowed)
e) Online – Electronic complaint form is located on the Ombudsman webpage at https://www.coloradocpo.org/complaint-form/

**If you suspect child abuse or neglect, immediately report these concerns to the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-844-CO-4-KIDS or 1-844-264-5437.**