

**Justice Involved Youth****28-1-8****Policy**

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) shall share bifurcated case management between the area office and the DCF Department of Corrections (DOC) liaisons for DCF committed youth within DOC facilities. The DCF case shall remain open until the youth's 21st birthday.

To be eligible for services while incarcerated or detained, the youth shall:

- be committed as abused, neglected or uncared for
- have been in a DCF out-of-home placement immediately prior to detention or incarceration
- be under the age of 18 or a SPM youth
- be a prior DCF youth who is requesting re-entry under an exception.

**Youth Re-Entry**

A re-entry request under an exception applies to a previously committed DCF youth, held within a DOC facility, who is no longer under DCF care. The youth may request re-entry before their 21st birthday for support once the youth leave the DOC.

The youth shall call the DCF Careline to ask for re-entry. The Careline staff shall review the referral request and if the criteria are met, it shall be assigned to the Re-entry Program Lead. The Program Lead will assign to the case to the last area office that was assigned to work with the youth.

Available continued services for eligible youth who have completed their DOC sentence and returned to the community is based on the anticipated length of time they have before they launch from DCF care. While incarcerated, the youth, the DCF DOC Liaison and the Transitional Support Social Worker (TSS) shall develop a plan for the youth upon their release.

A youth with one year or more before launching from care may be eligible for community housing employment enrichment resource (CHEER) or community housing assistance program (CHAP) placement.

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**Justice Involved Youth****28-1-8****DCF DOC Liaisons**

If the youth is sentenced to longer than one year, the case oversight shall be transitioned to the DCF DOC liaison. In the computer system, the DCF DOC liaison shall be given a non-applicable (NA) assignment to assist in supporting the youth. The area office will close the primary assignment.

Four to six months before the youth is scheduled to leave the DOC, the youth's case shall transfer back to an area office. The DCF DOC liaisons shall contact the program supervisor to initiate the transfer back to the office.

The program supervisor shall assign the case to a TSS. The area office assignment is based on where the youth will be residing upon their discharge from the DOC. The TSS, the DCF DOC Liaison and the youth shall meet at the DOC facility to facilitate the transition. Additional meetings shall be scheduled as needed.

Once the youth leave the DOC facility, the NA case assignment to the DCF DOC Liaison will be closed. The case shall become a primary assignment to the TSS.

The DCF DOC liaisons' responsibility for separated case management is youth-centered and focused on planning for discharge from the DOC. The DCF DOC liaisons shall be responsible for:

- conducting visits twice a month with the youth while they are incarcerated and entering narratives documenting the visits in the computer system
- referring the youth for a life skills assessment
- completing permanency work with the youth, focusing on the permanency pact toolkit
- developing a re-entry plan for the youth in collaboration with the area office. The re-entry plan is based on the needs of the youth and length of time the youth has prior to turning 21 years old
- for youth moving to a DOC halfway house from a DOC facility, visiting the youth twice monthly at the community halfway house along with the TSS. Engagement with community providers will begin while the youth is in the DOC and continue in the halfway house
- ensuring monthly commissary payments are made for eligible youth throughout their stay at DOC.

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**Justice Involved Youth****28-1-8****DCF DOC  
Liaisons,  
continued**

**Cross Reference:** V.I.T.A.L Practice Guide, Supporting Young Adults in Correctional Settings.

**Bail Policy**

In cases in which a DCF youth is incarcerated while on the pre-trial docket and bail has been set for their release, DCF shall not post the bond.

Consultations with the legal department are recommended any time a young adult is detained with bail set. The purpose of the consult is to review the case and seek alternative bail funding or options for the youth.

**Incarcerated  
Youth Not  
Committed  
to DCF**

In cases in which an incarcerated youth or the youth's family is involved with DCF but the youth is not committed to DCF or is not in a DCF out-of-home placement, the TSS shall assist the family by providing reasonable and available services such as transportation to visit the youth and accompanying the family to court hearings.

**Planning for  
Incarcerated  
Youth**

The DCF-DOC liaison shall arrange for, invite participants to, and attend an initial planning conference (IPC) for a youth prior to the next criminal court hearing.

The IPC shall be held at the correctional facility whenever possible and include appropriate correctional staff.

Other invitees shall include the youth whenever possible, all appropriate DCF staff, service providers, family members and the youth's attorney and guardian ad litem, if applicable. For those youth having significant mental health or addiction problems or who are cognitively limited, invitees may also include DCF central office staff, as well as staff from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) or the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

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**Justice Involved Youth****28-1-8****DCF Youth  
Services  
upon  
Release  
from DOC**

In collaboration with the youth's primary DOC clinician and the DCF-DOC liaison, the TSS shall make timely referrals to appropriate community resources to promote a successful transition from DOC custody and continuity of care.

The TSS, along with the DCF-DOC liaison, shall develop a plan to fill the youth's medication prescriptions at the time of release.