





San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department

Juvenile Hall Policy and Procedures Manual

Chapter 9 - Rules and Discipline

Policy Number:	9.03
Policy Name:	Separation
Authority:	Title 15, 1354
Replaces:	9.03 Separation (1/01/2019)
Effective Date:	12/18/2020
Related Policies and Procedures:	8.03 - Discipline and Discipline Process 9.05 - Room Confinement
Related Forms:	
Director of Juvenile Hall:	Bobby Uppal 
Chief Probation Officer:	Katherine Weinstein Miller 

I. POLICY

The separation of youth from a group activity or the general population may be necessary for reasons that include, but are not limited to, the safety of the youth and the general population, medical and mental health conditions (including close observation), assaultive behavior, disciplinary consequences, and/or protective custody.

Staff shall take into consideration positive youth development and trauma-informed care guidelines when separating youth, as well as when reintegrating them.

When youth are separated, the separation must be documented according to the procedures contained in this policy.

Separated youth shall not be denied their basic rights at the facility, including but not limited to, bed and bedding, daily shower, access to a drinking fountain, toilet, personal hygiene products and clean clothing, full nutrition, contact with a parent or attorney, exercise, medical services and counseling, religious services, clean and sanitary conditions, the right to send and receive mail, education, recreation, and rehabilitative programming.

Separated youth shall not be denied normal privileges available at the facility, unless there is a nexus to the goals and objectives of the separation, and it is necessary to mitigate or address potential harm.

When the objective of the separation is discipline, Title 15 Sections 1390 and 1391, Discipline and Discipline Process, shall apply.

When separation results in room confinement, the separation shall occur in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 208.3 and Title 15 Section 1354.5.

Separated youth should be reviewed every eight (8) hours by a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day. A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day should consult with living unit staff and review the youth's case folder to determine if separation remains necessary until the separation

concludes. A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day shall document their findings in the youth's Separation Log within the youth's case folder.

The Director of Juvenile Hall or designee shall conduct a weekly review of the number of youth on separation programs each month, the number of days each youth spent on the separation programs, and the number of youth who required a Reintegration and Safety Plan.

II. PURPOSE

The San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department (SFJPD) endeavors to treat all youth in its care with dignity and respect and utilizes evidence-based practices and trauma-informed care guidelines to manage crisis. Such interventions include counseling, positive behavioral management strategies, rewards, incentives, privilege enhancements and restrictions. While the department strives to manage or defuse crisis while utilizing the least restrictive methods, the separation of youth is sometimes necessary when there is an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff. With this philosophy in mind, SFJPD will maintain policies and procedures for the separation and reintegration of youth.

Definitions

Direct Visual Supervision: Juvenile Hall staff are constantly in the presence of the youth. Audio/video monitoring and mirrors may supplement, but not substitute, for direct visual supervision.

Group Separation: A period of separation outside of the youth's assigned room that limits the youth's participation in a group activity when there is a presence of an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff. Group separation may include limiting a youth's participation in whole or partial group contact, to or from a specific area, and/or from an activity.

Medical and/or Mental Health Observation: A period of separation that may be ordered by SPY for medical or mental health concerns.

Protective Custody: An indeterminate period of separation that occurs when there is an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff. The

indeterminate period of separation will conclude immediately when the imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff has been eliminated. Separation from the general population for the purpose of protective custody may be at the direction of the Department, the Medical Department, the Court, or upon the youth's request.

Reintegration and Safety Plan: A collaborative plan developed by Juvenile Hall staff, SPY, the youth, and any other relevant staff clearly identifying what specific goals and objectives must be met for a youth to successfully transition back into regular programming.

Room Confinement: The placement of youth in a locked room with minimal or no contact with persons other than Juvenile Hall staff and attorneys. Room Confinement does not include confinement of a youth in a locked single person room for brief periods as may be necessary for required institutional operations.

Safety Checks: Pursuant to Title 15 Section 1328, Juvenile Hall staff shall physically check on the youth at random and varied intervals within 15-minute increments as appropriate when youth are asleep, in their assigned rooms or confined in holding cells.

Temporary Separation: A brief separation that may be utilized to allow the youth to refocus/regulate their emotions. Temporary separation shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes and may involve restricting youth to a designated area.

III. PROCEDURES

A. General Guidelines for Separating Youth

When a youth is separated, Juvenile Hall staff shall document the date, time, and reason for the separation by the end of the assigned shift, and, if available, the documentation should be entered into the electronic case management system:

- On the youth's Separation Log in the youth's Case Folder.

- In the Unit Logbook.
- In an Incident Report (if required)

When a youth returns to the activity or general population after a period of separation, Juvenile Hall staff shall document the date, time, and intervention(s) provided to the youth by the end of the assigned shift, and, if available, the documentation should be entered into the electronic case management system:

- On the youth's Separation Log in the youth's Case Folder.
- In the Unit Logbook
- Reintegration and Safety Plan (if required)

As soon as the youth achieves the goals and objectives of the separation, the youth shall be reintegrated into group activities and regular programming.

Juvenile Hall staff shall follow all procedures related to the safety checks on separated youth, including the direct visual observation of the youth at random and varied intervals within 15-minute increments as appropriate.

Juvenile Hall staff shall also monitor whether the youth is eating, taking fluids, and exercising daily while separated, and document these observations in the Living Unit Logbook and in the youth's case folder.

Youth shall not be denied basic rights during separation, including bed and bedding, daily shower, access to a drinking fountain, toilet, personal hygiene products and clean clothing, full nutrition, contact with a parent or attorney, exercise, medical services and counseling, religious services, clean and sanitary conditions, the right to send and receive mail, education, recreation, and rehabilitative programming. The large muscle exercise may only be suspended upon written finding in the youth's case folder by the Officer of the Day or the Director of Juvenile Hall that the youth presents an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff.

Youth who are separated shall not be denied normal privileges available within the facility, except when necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the separation.

If a youth is placed on separation three (3) or more times within an eight (8) hour period, Juvenile Hall staff must confer with a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day to determine alternative activities and/or interventions. An Incident Report and a Reintegration and Safety Plan may be required.

If separation results in room confinement, Juvenile Hall staff shall follow guidelines and mandates outlined in Policy 9.05 of this manual regarding Room Confinement and Reintegration and Safety Planning.

B. Review of Youth on Separation

Separated youth should be reviewed every eight (8) hours by a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day. A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day should consult with living unit staff and review the youth's case folder to determine if separation remains necessary until the separation concludes. A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day shall document their findings in the youth's Separation Log within the youth's case folder.

On a weekly basis, the Director of Juvenile Hall or designee shall review the number of youths who were separated, how long they were separated, as well as those who required a Reintegration and Safety Plan.

C. Types of Separation

- i. Level One Separation: Level One Separation periods may involve restricting a youth to a designated area of the housing unit for a specified amount of time to allow for de-escalation. SPY shall be notified immediately when a youth shows decompensation or mental health

concerns, expresses suicidal thoughts, or exhibits self-harming behaviors during the temporary separation.

Senior Counselor approval is not required for the utilization of Level One Separation except as indicated below.

If a youth is placed on Level One Separation three (3) or more times within an eight (8) hour period, Juvenile Hall staff must confer with a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day to determine alternative activities and/or interventions. An Incident Report and a Reintegration and Safety Plan may be required.

- ii. **Level Two Separation:** Level Two Separation is similar to Level One Separation as it restricts a youth to a designated area of the housing unit for a specified amount of time to allow for de-escalation and requires a higher level of intervention, documentation, and authorization. Level Two Separation results in loss of privileges as the youth is failing to follow the basic rules and orders of the facility resulting in risk to others. If Level Two Separation occurs, the following steps shall be taken:
 - Immediately notify a Senior Counselor of the separation for approval.
 - Juvenile Hall staff and the Senior Counselor will meet with the youth to address the behaviors that resulted in the separation and develop a Reintegration and Safety Plan as appropriate. The Senior Counselor should notify SPY and request assistance with the development of a Reintegration and Safety Plan as required.

- If required, a Senior Counselor should complete all aspects of the Reintegration and Safety Plan to modify a youth's program to ensure the youth's programs, services, and the environment suits the youth's needs. The youth's modified program should be equivalent and/or equal to his/her peers given the circumstances of the separation. Juvenile Hall staff, Senior Counselors, SPY Clinicians, the youth, the Officer of the Day, and any other additional staff must sign the Reintegration and Safety Plan after reviewing the modifications to the youth's programming.
- iii. **Room Confinement:** If separation results in room confinement, Juvenile Hall staff shall follow guidelines and mandates outlined in Policy 9.05 of this manual regarding Room Confinement and Reintegration and Safety Planning.
- iv. **Protective Custody:** An indeterminate period of separation that occurs when there is an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff. The indeterminate period of separation will conclude immediately when the imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff has been eliminated. Separation from the general population for the purpose of protective custody may be at the direction of the Department, the Medical Department, the Court, or upon the youth's request.

Protective Custody may be initiated in the following ways:

- The Department determines the need for protective custody status when information provided by the youth's attorney, law

enforcement, Probation Officer, mental health or medical staff, community-based organization or a parent alerts the Department of an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff.

- SPY discloses information to Juvenile Hall staff, a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day of an imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff.
- A Court Order.
- A youth requests to be placed on protective custody.

A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day shall investigate to determine if protective custody is warranted. If appropriate, a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day shall consider transferring the youth to a different living unit to alleviate the imminent or substantial threat.

After the investigation has concluded and if protective custody is warranted, a Senior Counselor may need to develop a Reintegration and Safety Plan as appropriate to ensure the youth will be separated from the general population and/or from the individual(s) who present the imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff.

A Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day should review the youth's protective custody status every eight (8) hours to determine if the imminent or substantial threat to the youths or staff has been eliminated and document their findings, date, and time in the youth's case folder until the protective custody concludes or when the youth is returned to full group activities.

Protective Custody Programs must be individualized while ensuring the youth's programs, services, and the environment suits the youth's needs. The program may be outlined in the Incident Report and a Reintegration and Safety Plan may be developed and posted at the Counselor Station on the living unit. The youth's individualized program should be equivalent and/or equal to his/her peers.

Youths placed in Protective Custody shall not be denied their basic rights at the facility, including but not limited to, bed and bedding, daily shower, access to a drinking fountain, toilet, personal hygiene products and clean clothing, full nutrition, contact with a parent or attorney, exercise, medical services and counseling, religious services, clean and sanitary conditions, the right to send and receive mail, education, recreation, and rehabilitative programming.

Youths placed in Protective Custody shall not be denied normal privileges available at the facility, unless there is a nexus to the objective of the separation, and it is necessary to mitigate or address potential harm.

v. **Medical/Mental Health Observation:**

Youth shall remain separated from group activities until the medical and/or mental concerns have been cleared by SPY.

The youth's individualized program should be equivalent and/or equal to his/her peers.

If the separated youth is on a hunger strike, Juvenile Hall staff should consider whether the hunger strike is motivated by something other than mental health and/or medical issues, and if so, Juvenile Hall staff should attempt to resolve the issues that led to the

hunger strike. Juvenile Hall staff should notify a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day of their findings, document their findings in an incident report, the Living Unit Logbook, and in the youth's case folder and immediately refer the youth for a SPY assessment.

Youths placed on Medical and/or Mental Health observation shall not be denied their basic rights at the facility, including but not limited to, bed and bedding, daily shower, access to a drinking fountain, toilet, personal hygiene products and clean clothing, full nutrition, contact with a parent or attorney, exercise, medical services and counseling, religious services, clean and sanitary conditions, the right to send and receive mail, education, recreation, and rehabilitative programming.

Youths placed on Medical and/or Mental Health observation shall not be denied normal privileges available at the facility, unless there is a nexus to the objective of the separation, and it is necessary to mitigate or address potential harm.

vi. Voluntary Separation

Voluntary Separation is an intermediate period of separation which occurs at the request of a youth. If the youth requests a voluntary separation, Juvenile Hall staff, Senior Counselors, and the youth should discuss the reasoning behind the request for the voluntary separation from his/her group or choosing to remain in his/her assigned room. Juvenile Hall staff and Senior Counselors should attempt to establish timelines for the voluntary separation to conclude. Juvenile Hall staff shall immediately notify SPY to conduct an assessment on all youths who have requested a voluntary separation.

If a youth requests to be placed on a voluntary separation, Juvenile Hall staff shall assist the youth complete a Self-Place Separation form. The form shall include the reason for the separation, when the separation began (date and time), and the youth's signature (date and time). The form shall also include the date and time the youth returned to full program.

A youth who has requested voluntary separation from the general population who appears depressed or who has given no substantive reason for wishing to avoid the group shall be counseled by Juvenile Hall staff and immediately referred to SPY for an assessment. SPY shall be notified immediately when a youth shows decompensation or mental health concerns, expresses suicidal thoughts, or exhibits self-harming behaviors during the voluntary separation.

Juvenile Hall staff should encourage and/or assist the youth in exploring alternatives to voluntary separation so the youth remains involved in group activities rather than separating from the general population. Juvenile Hall staff shall document the youth's request in the Living Unit Logbook, in the youth's case folder, and immediately notify a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day of the separation.

Unless otherwise indicated, a youth who has requested voluntary separation is expected to join the general population for meals. If the youth chooses to eat in his/her assigned room, Juvenile Hall staff shall provide the youth with a meal tray. If the youth chooses not to consume the food, Juvenile Hall staff shall discard the meal at the conclusion of meal service. The youth's eating pattern shall be documented in the Living Unit Logbook, in the youth's case folder, and staff shall notify a Senior Counselor and/or the Officer of the Day.

Youths on Voluntary Separation shall not be denied their basic rights at the facility, including but not limited to, bed and bedding, daily shower, access to a drinking fountain, toilet, personal hygiene products and clean clothing, full nutrition, contact with a parent or attorney, exercise, medical services and counseling, religious services, clean and sanitary conditions, the right to send and receive mail, education, recreation, and rehabilitative programming.

Youths on Voluntary Separation shall not be denied normal privileges available at the facility, unless there is a nexus to the objective of the separation, and it is necessary to mitigate or address potential harm.