

HOME AND FIELD VISITS

POLICY NO. C20

ACT CORRECTIVE SERVICES



ACT
Government

Justice and Community Safety

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1 PURPOSE

ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS) is committed to contributing to a safer community by undertaking home assessments and home and field visits to identify risks and/or protective factors associated with offenders and detainees. Home and field visits are conducted with primary consideration to the safety of staff, offenders, victims of crime and the community.

This policy outlines the requirements for home assessments and home and field visits for Community Corrections.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to ACTCS staff.

Where required, the Assistant Commissioner Community Corrections will establish community instruction/s under this policy.

3 DEFINITIONS

Community Based Order

A sentenced order made by the Court or Sentence Administration Board and entered into by an offender.

Home Visit

A visit to an offender's permanent or temporary residence during the supervision period of a community-based order.

Field Visit

A visit to the offender that is conducted outside of their home during the supervision period of a community-based order e.g. at the offender's workplace.

Home Assessment

A visit to an offender's/detainee's proposed accommodation, which is undertaken to determine suitability of accommodation for a community-based order.

Offender

Any person being supervised on a community-based order.

Detainee

Any person serving a custodial sentence who requires a home assessment be undertaken in relation to their release to the community.

Community Corrections Officer

An Officer who has delegation to:

- a. supervise offenders
- b. undertake home and field visits
- c. be an Assessor as per the *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005*
- d. author a report required by regulation in relation to the granting of parole to the offender as per the *Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act 2005*.

Child or Young Person Offender

An offender who has been convicted of an offence against a child or young person that has:

- a. a sexual or sexually motivated offence

- b. an offence involving violence or abuse.

4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 ACTCS recognises the importance of home assessments and home and field visits in relation to the assessment and management of offenders and detainees.
- 4.2 When undertaking home assessments and visits, Community Correction Officers (CCOs) must assess and consider the offender's protective factors and risks, specifically how these factors may be influenced by the residence or presence of co-residents, visitors, etc.
- 4.3 When undertaking home assessments and visits, CCOs must consider and assess the risk the offender may pose to the residence, co-residents, visitors, pets, etc.
- 4.4 Home assessments and home and field visits are to be conducted in a respectful manner with regard to the privacy of offenders and others.
- 4.5 ACTCS is committed to ensuring that home visits and assessments are conducted where appropriate consideration is given to identified risks and safety of staff.
- 4.6 Home assessments or visits must be conducted by a minimum of two people, unless otherwise agreed by a Team Leader or management and should not be conducted without assessing and mitigating any possible risks.
- 4.7 When undertaking a home visit or assessment for child or young person offenders, primary consideration must be given to the safety, welfare and best interests of the children or young people and managing and mitigating any risk posed by the offender.
- 4.8 Child and Youth Protection Services must be contacted if concerns regarding potential abuse or neglect of a child or young person are raised during 4.7.

5 HOME AND FIELD VISITS

- 5.1 Home and field visits may be conducted for offenders who are subject to:
 - a. Parole Orders
 - b. Good Behaviour Orders
 - c. Intensive Correction Orders
 - d. Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders.
- 5.2 Home and field visit contact guidelines are to occur in accordance with the Supervision Contact Levels.
- 5.3 Where required, a Team Leader or management may approve extensions to, or excuse contact guidelines in 5.2.
- 5.4 In the event of any unsafe or life-threatening situation arising during a home or field visit, emergency services (police or ambulance) should be contacted immediately.
- 5.5 If any other concerns or safety issues arise from a home or field visit, a Team Leader must be contacted when it is safe and appropriate to do so. This contact is to discuss the response and action required.
- 5.6 All home and field visits will be recorded as per the Case Note Policy.

6 HOME ASSESSMENTS

- 6.1 The purpose of a home assessment is to determine the suitability of the proposed accommodation noting risks to the offender, victims of crime, the community and likelihood of reoffending.
- 6.2 Home assessments must be undertaken during the assessment or Parole period for:
 - a. Pre-Release Reports
 - b. Intensive Correction Order Assessment Reports
 - c. Drug and Alcohol Treatment Assessment Reports
 - d. Transfer home visit requests
 - e. Parolee relocation.
- 6.3 Circumstances where home assessments are not required to be undertaken include but are not limited to:
 - a. a report or assessment where the offender/detainee is being released directly into residential rehabilitation
 - b. a report or assessment where the offender/detainee is to be detained by Police, Immigration, or placed into a mental health facility upon their release
 - c. circumstances where the offender/detainee has failed to provide sufficient details to undertake or arrange a home assessment
 - d. circumstances where the offender is being released into managed accommodation
 - e. circumstances where the detainee is the sole resident of the proposed address and no access can be granted.
- 6.4 Where possible, home assessments in relation to Pre-Release Reports should be undertaken at least two (2) weeks prior the report's due date to allow other residential options to be assessed if the initial residence is found unsuitable.
- 6.5 After conducting a home assessment, the CCO must notify the detainee and their Sentence Management Office (SMO) of the suitability as soon as practicable and no longer than one week after the suitability is determined, to allow further residential options to be assessed if necessary.
- 6.6 Prior to attending the accommodation, CCOs must contact the co-resident to arrange a suitable time for a home assessment appointment to occur. If the co-resident cannot be contacted the CCO must notify the offender and their SMO to obtain further contact details.
- 6.7 The Sentence Administration Board is unable to make Parole Orders until a proposed residence has been found suitable.
- 6.8 All home assessments will be recorded as per the Case Note Policy.

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Supervision Contact Levels
- Case Note Policy
- *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005*
- Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act 2005

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Commissioner
ACT Corrective Services
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