

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES  
JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS**

<b>Subject:</b> Special Management Unit - Behavior Modification Unit BMU		<b>Policy Number:</b> 8
<b>Number of Pages:</b> 6		<b>Section:</b> XIII
<b>Attachments</b>		<b>Related Standards &amp; References</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A. BMU Referral Form</b></li> <li><b>B. BMU Orientation Form</b></li> <li><b>C. Individual Behavior Modification Form</b></li> <li><b>D. Chronological Note (C-Note) Form</b></li> <li><b>E. Youth Transfer Application Form</b></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ACA 4-JCF-3C-01</b></li> <li><b>ACA 4-JCF-3C-04</b></li> <li><b>ACA 4-JCF-4B-01</b></li> </ul>
<b>Effective Date:</b> April 04, 2008 Revised: April 5, 2013		<b>Approved:</b>  James Maccarone, Director

**I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services, to provide a specialized housing unit for youth with chronic assaultive behaviors. The Unit provides intensive structure, services, treatment and programs to help youth develop the skills they need to increase positive behaviors and control negative behaviors so they can be re-integrated into the general population.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this policy and procedure, the following definitions apply:

- A. Behavior Modification Unit (BMU)** - A specialized program, segregated from the general population, designed to provide a high level of supervision and structure, assist youth in learning to manage their emotions, thinking, and actions to reduce the likelihood of committing acts of aggression.
- B. Unit Coordinator** - The counselor who has been assigned to manage and monitor daily operations of a program and the youths assigned to that program. The Unit Coordinator monitors daily operations and brings concerns to the attention of the appropriate supervisor.
- C. Treatment Team** – An appointed group of staff members responsible for developing and coordinating the implementation of a youth’s determined services. (*See DYS Policy XIII.4: Treatment Teams.*)
- D. Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP)** – A mental health care provider licensed and sufficiently trained to provide the necessary mental health program services.
- E. Due Process Isolation (DPI)** – A sanction where a youth is confined in a locked room as a result of a due process hearing. (*See DYS Policy VII.11: Due Process Isolation.*)

Subject	Policy #	Page
Special Mgt Unit – Behavior Modification Unit	XIII.8	2 of 6

**F. Behavior Management Isolation (BMI)** – A “cooling-off” period for youth; where youth is placed in a room (either locked or unlocked) for the purposes of controlling out-of-control behavior, restoring order, correcting undesirable behavior, and to achieve compliance with behavioral rules and expectations. *(See DYS Policy VII.10: Behavior Management Isolation.)*

**G. Chronological Note (C-Note)** - A form used daily to monitor change in youths’ behavior and to inform the Treatment Team about readiness for transitioning to a regular housing unit. *(Attachment D)*

**H. Good Day** – A time period of no more than 24 hours, when the youth satisfies the required number of behavioral objectives within that particular times and gets credit for his progress.

### III. PROCEDURE

A. To be assigned to the BMU, youth must pose a serious safety risk to staff, other youth and/or the facility. A youth who meets the following criteria shall be referred for assignment to the BMU;

1. Assaulting another person causing an injury that required medical treatment;
2. Engaging in two minor fights or assaults within the past thirty (30) days;
3. Involvement in two or more major incidents of disruptive behavior within the past 30 days, including but not limited to:
  - a. Property damage over \$100, and
  - b. Acts of aggression or uncontrollable behavior which require the vacating of all other youth from the area
  - c. Waving a potential weapon, forcing staff to take emergency action to protect themselves or others. If a weapon is actually used to inflict harm, the youth should be referred after the first incident.
4. Instigating a serious group disturbance.

B. Youths who meet the eligibility criteria for the BMU may be assigned to the program upon the recommendation of the youth’s Treatment Team and the approval of the Facility Administrator/designee.

1. Prior to being referred to the BMU, the youth will be assessed by a QMHP to ascertain whether placement on the BMU is contraindicated. If determined by the QMHP that placement would be inappropriate, the treatment team will review and consider development of an alternative placement.

Subject	Policy #	Page
Special Mgt Unit – Behavior Modification Unit	XIII.8	3 of 6

2. The BMU Referral Form (*Attachment A*) will be completed by the counselor of the current housing unit and forwarded, with the Pre-BMU Placement Assessment Report and supporting documentation, to that youth's current Treatment Team who will convene no later than the next scheduled multidisciplinary treatment team meeting or an ad hoc treatment team will convene after receiving at least one working day notice. The Treatment Team shall also include the Disciplinary Officer/designee and a representative from the BMU.
  
3. The Treatment Team will review the request for assignment. Their recommendations, which are included in the BMU Packet, will be forwarded to the Classification Chairperson for immediate processing of the required placement paperwork (*DYS Policy XIII.2 – DYS Youth Transfer form and BMU Packet information*) to be remitted for signature of the Facility Administrator/designee, who will approve, amend, or deny these recommendations. When assignment is approved, the youth will be transferred to the BMU within 24 hours. The BMU Packet must include:
  - a. The BMU Referral Form (Policy XIII.8 Attachment A) and attached documentation;
  - b. Treatment Team Form with BMU recommendations (Policy XIII.4 Attachment A);
  - c. Placement Form (Policy XIII.10 Attachment E).
  
- C. The program is for the treatment and behavior modification of aggressive youth that is based on an integrated set of activities, outlined in a Behavior Modification Plan that focuses on managing behavior while teaching youth to develop and implement cognitive and social skills to reduce aggressive behavior and acting out.
  1. The goal is to create a therapeutic community where all staff (counseling, QMHPs, juvenile care workers, education, recreation, etc.) understand the skills being taught and work together to assist the youth in learning these skills.
  2. All services, excluding medical treatment, are performed on the unit including education, treatment groups, therapy, recreation, and other activities. A schedule of activities will be developed to fill the hours of 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM, and during the days on weekends and holidays. In general, it is expected these activities will be conducted in the unit day room.
  
- D. In order to provide appropriate supervision for youth assigned to the program, there will never be less than two Juvenile Care Workers assigned to BMU.

Subject	Policy #	Page
Special Mgt Unit – Behavior Modification Unit	XIII.8	4 of 6

1. Juvenile Care Workers will be in the day room between the hours of 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM when youth are out of their rooms.
  2. From 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM, the Juvenile Care Worker assigned to the BMU will move throughout the entire unit checking on youth's safety, inspecting doors and security devices, and monitoring the operation of the unit.
  3. All staff working the BMU will have specialized training including guidance on the supervision of the Behavior Modification Plan.
- E. After the youth has been transferred to the BMU the following steps shall take place.
1. Within one working day of transfer to the program, youth will be oriented (verbally and in writing) to the BMU procedures, BMU schedule, and BMU rules by staff. The orientation process will be documented on the BMU Orientation Form (*Attachment B*) and included in the youth's Master File. Youth will be afforded an opportunity to discuss this information with the Treatment Team.
  2. Within three working days of transfer to the program, the Treatment Team (including the QMHP) will meet with the youth to develop his individualized Behavior Modification Plan, to be implemented by the JCW and counselor.
  3. Chronological notes (C-Notes) will be completed daily by the JCW and education staff members in order to monitor behavior change. The Treatment Team will review the C-Notes to determine the youth's progress and readiness to return to a regular housing unit.
    - a. The Chronological notes provide an ongoing measure of compliance and positive problem-solving and social behaviors. The C-Notes are completed everyday during the youth's placement on the BMU. The Unit Coordinator and QMHP review daily the C-Notes to assess progress.
    - b. The C-Notes shall be completed by representatives of Direct Care, Education, and Counseling/Rehabilitation in order to provide a comprehensive assessment of the youth's behavior while placed on the BMU.
    - c. After the youth has completed successfully daily behavior modification plans for seven (7) consecutive days, the youth applies for transfer to Transition Status. During the youth's participation in Transition, the C-Notes will be used to determine readiness for transfer to a regular housing unit.
- F. A Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP) will work with the Treatment Team to develop an individualized Behavior Modification Plan to include the following:
1. A brief history of the youth's problem behaviors that highlight the behaviors needing to be addressed in the Behavior Modification Plan.

Subject	Policy #	Page
Special Mgt Unit – Behavior Modification Unit	XIII.8	5 of 6

2. Any behavioral rewards and consequences for day-to-day behavior modification of the youth.
  3. Specific behaviors expected of the youth during a particular period of time.
    - a. Direct care staff will monitor compliance with the Behavior Modification Plan by checking off behaviors as these are demonstrated or when these tasks are completed.
    - b. When the youth satisfies the required number of behavioral objectives within a particular time period of no more than 24 hours, he will receive a reward, which will be administered by the youth service counselor.
    - c. If he fails to satisfy the behavioral objectives, then he will not receive credit for progress (i.e., “Good Day”) which is required for an application for transfer to a regular housing unit.
  4. When the youth has complied with the individualized Behavior Modification Plan for at least seven (7) consecutive days without a BMI for seriously out-of-control behavior, he may request that the treatment team move him to Transition (Pre-Transfer) status.
  5. If the youth receives a DPI for aggressive or destructive behavior as determined by the Due Process Hearing Officer, then the youth will start over the individualized Behavior Modification Plan and must have at least seven (7) consecutive good days before applying for Transition Status.
- G. Youths assigned to the program will meet formally with the Treatment Team a minimum of once a week. The treatment team will discuss each of the youth’s behavioral objectives and his progress toward meeting these objectives. In the event that the youth is not meeting the objectives, the team will seek to understand the reasons the youth has been unable or unwilling to comply and will modify the treatment approach accordingly.
- H. Youths who are eligible for movement to the Transition status will present an application to the unit coordinator and request the change in the next scheduled treatment team meeting. If the treatment team approves the youth’s request, then the youth will be eligible for unit-level group privileges. Ongoing progress in behavior change will now be monitored by the C-Notes, completed by staff members who interact with the youth on a daily basis.
1. Youths participating in Transition on the BMU will be eligible for unit-level group privileges including selected off-unit recreational activities.
  2. Youths in Transition may participate in trial attendance in school as determined by the treatment team on a case-by-case basis.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Special Mgt Unit – Behavior Modification Unit	XIII.8	6 of 6

- I. Youths who evidence at least seven (7) consecutive days with more than 50 percent positive behaviors as reported in the daily C-Note shall be eligible to apply for transfer to a regular housing unit. The treatment team will meet to review the youth's request and recommend to the Facility Administrator assignment to another housing unit. If the youth's request is denied by the treatment team, the unit coordinator will indicate the reasons for the denial in writing and an individualized Behavior Modification Plan will be written to clearly specify the behavioral objectives that must be accomplished within a particular time period for an application for re-assignment.
- J. Youth assigned to the BMU will follow the campus disciplinary procedures and be entitled to the same rights (telephone calls, grievance procedures, educational services, large muscle exercise, etc.) and subject to the same sanctions (loss of privileges, room restriction, BMI, DPI, etc) as youth assigned to the general population.