

Chapter: Rules for State-Operated Programs and Facilities	Effective Date: 6/20/22 Page: 1 of 3 Replaces: GAP.380.9501, 10/1/15 GAP.380.9502, 10/1/15
Subchapter: Behavior Management and Youth Discipline	
Division: Behavior Management	
Rule: Behavior Management System Overview	
Statutes: N/A	

RULE

(a) Purpose.

This rule establishes the basic principles on which the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) operates its behavior management system.

(b) General Provisions.

TJJD's behavior management system uses positive reinforcement as well as appropriate interventions and consequences to promote a system of positive behavior that meets expectations. The system is designed to:

- (1) maintain order and security;
- (2) promote safety, respect for self and others, fairness, and protection of rights;
- (3) provide constructive discipline and a system of incentives and consequences to encourage youth to meet expectations for behavior;
- (4) provide opportunities for positive reinforcement and recognition for accomplishments and positive behaviors;
- (5) promote prosocial means for youth to meet their needs;
- (6) promote constructive dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution;
- (7) minimize separation of youth from the general population; and
- (8) limit the need to use force when responding to youth behavior.

(c) Positive Reinforcement System.

- (1) Each facility must establish a system for:
 - (A) assigning privileges based on the youth's progress in the rehabilitation program; and
 - (B) earning incentives for positive behavior that are not tied to the youth's progress in the rehabilitation program.
- (2) The specific privileges and incentives offered may vary between facilities. The system must be developed in a manner that considers youth interests and includes age-appropriate, gender-responsive, and gender-neutral options.
- (3) Youth may be subject to a loss of privileges and incentives based on behavior.

(d) Engagement Strategies.

- (1) Staff members address dysregulated behavior by progressively applying the most appropriate engagement strategies. Engagement strategies are designed to promote prosocial skills that reduce risk of continued dysregulation and contribute to positive decision making.
- (2) Staff members determine which strategies are employed based on their knowledge of the current situation and the youth involved. Strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (A) verbal prompts;
 - (B) assisting youth to regulate their behavior;
 - (C) use of calming rooms/spaces;
 - (D) discussion with staff;
 - (E) discussion with peer group;
 - (F) completion of an assignment designed to assist youth in processing behaviors and promote prosocial means for youth to meet their needs;
 - (G) movement to a designated area within the educational setting to refocus behavior and discuss strategies for success in the classroom; and
 - (H) referral to the security unit.

(e) Disciplinary Consequences.

- (1) Disciplinary consequences are issued with the goal of imposing only the least restrictive consequences that are effective in correcting the dysregulated behavior and promoting safety and order. Where feasible and appropriate, the consequences are directly related to the nature and seriousness of the violation. Extenuating circumstances of the violation are considered. See [§380.9503](#) and [§380.9504](#) of this title for procedures relating to issuing disciplinary consequences.
- (2) Youth are made aware of rules and disciplinary consequences through verbal instruction and written documents.
- (3) No disciplinary consequences may be imposed except in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.
- (4) The following are prohibited as consequences:
 - (A) corporal or unusual punishment;
 - (B) subjecting a youth to humiliation, harassment, or physical or mental abuse;
 - (C) subjecting a youth to personal injury;
 - (D) subjecting a youth to property damage or disease;
 - (E) punitive interference with the daily functions of living, such as eating or sleeping;
 - (F) purposeless or degrading work, including group exercise as a consequence;
 - (G) disciplinary isolation; and
 - (H) extending a youth's stay in a TJJJ facility.
- (5) Youth are not permitted to impose disciplinary consequences against other youth. Youth or groups of youth are not given control or authority over other youth.
- (6) Consequences are applied on an individual basis and only for a youth's own action or failure to act when responsible for doing so. Group discipline is prohibited. Actions taken for the purpose of

maintaining safety and security (e.g., temporary lockdown to locate a missing tool, dorm activity restriction to address deteriorating dorm culture) are not considered group discipline.

- (7) Disciplinary consequences shall not deny youth the following:
- (A) regular meals (from the established menu) or snacks;
 - (B) sufficient sleep;
 - (C) physical exercise;
 - (D) mail;
 - (E) contact through visitation or telephone with parents, attorneys, or personal clergy;
 - (F) legal assistance;
 - (G) medical attention;
 - (H) mental health services;
 - (I) educational services; or
 - (J) religious services.
- (8) More than one disciplinary consequence may be imposed for the same rule violation if:
- (A) the criteria and conditions for the imposition of each disciplinary consequence are met; and
 - (B) the appropriate level of due process is provided based on the most severe of the disciplinary consequences imposed.
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