Justice Health and
Forensic Mental Health Network

Justice Health NSW Policy

Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios

Issue Date: 04 May 2023

Together for
Healthier Tomorrows

Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios

Policy Number 5.035

Policy Function Safe Practice and Environment

Issue Date 04 May 2023

Next Review Date 04 May 2026

Risk Rating High

Summary This policy relates to the use of personal duress alarms and two-way radios in all Correctional Centres, Periodic Detention Centres, Police Cells, Courts and Youth Justice Centres.
For the Forensic Hospital, staff must refer to procedure 9.044 Alarm, Pager, Two-Way Radio and Sterile Zone Use and Management.

Responsible Officer Director, People and Culture

Applies to
☐ Administration Centres
☐ Community Sites and programs
☒ Health Centres - Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells
☒ Health Centres - Youth Justice Centres
☒ Long Bay Hospital
☐ Forensic Hospital

CM Reference POLJH/5035

Change summary
- Changes to formatting and layout
- Changes to policy reference
- Minor changes to wording

Authorised by Chair, Policy Steering Committee

Revision History

#	Issue Date	Number and Name	Change Summary
6	May 2023	5.035 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• Changes to formatting and layout • Changes to policy reference • Minor changes to wording
5	November 2018	5.035 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• Rewrite of various sections • Minor changes
4	November 2014	5.035 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• Update legislative requirements • Reformatting and rewording of sections • Name change
3	May 2009	5.035 Personal Durees Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• Name change • Minor edits

2	June 2005	5.035 Durees Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• Minor edits
1	February 2004	5.035 Durees Alarms and Two-Way Radios	• New policy

PRINT WARNING

Printed copies of this document, or parts thereof, must not be relied on as a current reference document.

Always refer to the electronic copy for the latest version.

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1. Preface

This policy relates to the use of personal duress alarms and two-way radios in all Correctional Centres, Periodic Detention Centres, Police Cells, Courts and Youth Justice Centres. Personal duress alarms and two-way radios provide additional safety and security for staff, and ***do not*** replace the role of Correctional officers, Sheriffs or youth officers or security/aggression management training responsible for the provision of security and supervision of inmates whom enter the health centre.

For the Forensic Hospital, staff must refer to the

- Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (Justice Health NSW) procedure 9.044 *Alarm, Pager, Two-Way Radio and Sterile Zone Use and Management*.

A risk management approach to security must be adopted by each Health Centre. Ensuring an internal system of control, supervision and accountability is important in correctional centre Health Centres in reducing the risk of:

- Violence directed at personnel, visitors and other inmates
- Theft, loss, or diversion of needles, syringes, clinical equipment, and medication.

A periodic review of Health Centre security in consultation with providers of security services within Correctional and/or Youth Justice facilities is essential to identify any risks, assess them and implement remedial strategies for continuous improvement of Health Centre security.

2. Policy Content

2.1 Mandatory Requirements

This policy applies to all workers, contractors and visitors who are attending Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (Justice Health NSW) sites. This policy applies to all Network activities and includes workers, contractors, visitors and other stakeholders.

2.2 Implementation – Roles and Responsibilities

2.2.1 Chief Executive and Executives

Have a duty to exercise due diligence to ensure that the business complies with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017.

The Chief Executive and Executives must ensure that:

- Provisions of this policy are implemented;
- Training programs are developed and delivered to relevant Justice Health NSW workers and contractors;
- Sufficient resources are allocated and available to ensure the requirements of this policy are able to be met; and
- The Work Health and Safety management system provides for periodic auditing of this policy to ensure compliance and relevance with industry best practice.

2.2.2 Managers

(Includes Departmental Managers, Nursing Unit Managers (NUM) and Nurse Managers)

Have a duty to exercise due diligence to ensure that business complies with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act 2011) and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (WHS Reg. 2017).

Managers ***must*** ensure:

- The requirements of this policy are implemented and adhered to throughout their area of responsibility;
- All Justice Health NSW workers, contractors and visitors comply with the requirements of this procedure.
- A culture of risk management / risk assessment is actively promoted and encouraged throughout Network operations;
- Risks to health and safety are eliminated and/or reduced to as low as reasonable practicable (ALARP);
- Consultation with workers and other stakeholders occurs when making decisions about eliminating or minimising risks in the workplace
- Adequate resources are available where required to enable compliance with this procedure and to allow for implementation of effective risk minimisation controls;
- Work practices are continuously monitored and required improvements initiated
- All risk assessments are developed and approved in order to reduce the associated risks to ALARP;
- All identified hazards and associated risks are captured in the workplace WHS Risk Register
- Ensuring workers, when in a facility where personal duress alarms or two-way radios are available, wear a duress alarm and two-way radio at all times;
- Consulting with the provider of security services within correctional or Youth Justice facility to conduct regular testing of the equipment and systems;
- Actioning reports of faulty equipment; and
- Ensuring that workers receive appropriate instruction and training, including location-specific orientation.

2.2.3 Workers, students, visitors and others including shared duty holders

Workers and others undertaking activities must:

- Comply with the requirements of this policy;
- Take reasonable care for their own safety and for the health and safety of all persons at the workplace;
- Continually assess their respective work areas for hazards and report as necessary;
- Actively participate in risk assessments in activities affecting them or likely to affect them
- Report hazards, unsafe conditions/practices and faulty/unsafe equipment to their manager or the relevant Health and Safety Representative (HSR);
- Notify managers of all injuries, incidents and near misses;
- Participate and co-operate in the resolution of WHS issues in accordance with Justice Health NSW procedures and systems; and
- Log a record of all incidents in the Incident Information Management System (ims+)
- In facilities where it is required, wearing a duress alarm or two-way radio at all times when entering a facility and not removing them until they are exiting the facility and

- Cooperating with the provider of security services within the correctional or Youth Justice facility, and their notification procedures in the event of a false alarm.

3. Procedure Content

The management of risk is recognised as a statutory and integral part of good management practice. It is an interactive process consisting of defined steps, which when undertaken correctly will lead to improved decision making. Risk management is central to any WHS Management System and all workers have legislative obligations to ensure health and safety in the workplace and must demonstrate its application. A key requirement of managing risks in the workplace is consulting with workers affected by a health and safety matter. Workers should be involved in the hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control processes. Where workers are represented by a HSR, this HSR must be involved in the consultation process.

The legislation also requires that where several Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs) share duties for a health and safety matter, these PCBUs must consult, cooperate and coordinate their risk management activities to ensure effective management of the health and safety matters.

3.1 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios

Personal duress alarms and two-way radios are the property of each individual facility. Each facility, controlled by the provider of security services within the correctional or Youth Justice facility, will determine which staff and/or visitors require a personal duress alarm or two-way radio. Justice Health NSW must comply with the facility's policy and procedures. A staff member must accompany Justice Health NSW visitors at all times. Staff visiting facilities that they do not usually work in must request a duress alarm or be accompanied by a permanent staff member of the facility.

When required, personal duress alarms are to be worn at all times, attached to the person's clothing or belt. They are not to be worn around the neck. Personal duress alarms are either activated by pushing a button or the man down feature (staff member falling or being knocked to the ground)

Justice Health NSW staff working in Youth Justice Centres will be issued with a two-way radio as a form of personal alarm. The radios must be turned on at all times and worn attached to a belt provided by YJNSW. In centres where earpieces are provided, the earpiece must be worn at all times ensuring communication lines are open.

3.2 Maintenance/Records

It is the responsibility of the provider of security services within the correctional or Youth Justice facility to supply the duress alarm or two-way radio, and to maintain and service the equipment. Justice Health NSW workers must report any faults with alarms to their manager or to a delegated person in charge of duress alarms or two-way radios at the individual facility. Workers must not deliberately tamper with or damage any equipment supplied to them.

Organisations who supply a personal duress alarm or two-way radio are also responsible for recording which alarm or radio is issued to each individual.

3.3 Training

Justice Health NSW must ensure appropriate training specific to the safe use, handling and storage of communication equipment.

For facilities where personal duress alarms are issued, workplace induction is to include:

- how to activate the alarm;
- what to do if an alarm is accidentally set off;
- where to record the number of the duress alarm issued to a staff member; and
- the facility's policy and procedure on personal duress alarms if applicable.

Where two-way radios are supplied in Youth Justice Centres, workplace induction is to include how to operate the radio and earpiece, how to call for assistance and the facility's policy and procedure on radios if applicable.

Each location site or facility where two-way radios and duress alarms are provided must develop a Safe Work Practice in consultation with the department they are working with e.g. CSNSW or YJNSW and include it as part of workplace induction training.

Staff must note that there may be areas within centres with 'blind spots' where equipment cannot be monitored. Duress alarms and two-way radios should therefore not be a replacement for good situational awareness. Good judgement should treat radios and portable duress alarms as a secondary line of defence whenever possible. Additionally, staff must exercise caution by ensuring that another colleague is aware of their location at all times.

3.4 When to Activate a Duress Alarm or Radio

Duress alarms and radios should be activated when staff feel threatened or unsafe, are unable to de-escalatea potentially violent situation, and/or are unable to retreat. All staff should feel assured that in the event of their triggering a duress alarm or radio or seeking urgent assistance in a threatening situation, an appropriate response is available. When activating a personal duress alarm or radio staff are to act in accordance with the agreed immediate response as determined by each facility.

After the event staff must:

- Be provided with medical attention if required;
- Report the incident to their manager; and
- Submit a notification on the Incident Information Management System (IIMS+). After the event, managers should:
- Ensure staff are aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services;
- Organise for staff to be debriefed if necessary;
- Notify NSW Police if required and;
- Investigate, notify and follow up as per PD2020_047 *Incident Management*.

All systems need to be monitored and reviewed; if system failures occur, all stakeholders should be consulted and improvements or issues addressed.

4. Definitions

Communication

Is the provision of information by the PCBU to its stakeholders (both internal and external) in a form that is appropriate for the understanding of the target audience?

Contractor

A person who does not work directly for Justice Health NSW.

Consultation

Is the provision of information by the PCBU to its stakeholders (both internal and external) in a form that is appropriate for the understanding of the target audience?

Duty Holder

The WHS Act requires that where more than one person has a duty for the same matter, each person retains responsibility for their duty in relation to the matter and must discharge the duty to the extent to which the person can influence and control the matter.

In these situations, each person with the duty/shared duty must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with all other persons who have a work health or safety duty in relation to the same matter.

Hazard(s)

A thing or a situation with potential to cause injury or illness to a person.

HSR

Health and Safety Representative (HSR) is an elected representative for the work group.

WHS Issue

A health and safety issue is a matter concerning workplace risks/hazards/risk management that has not been able to be resolved locally after discussion between workers and others undertaking work and workplace managers.

Must

Indicates a mandatory action required that must be complied with.

PCBU

Person conducting a business or undertaking (Duty Holder).

Reasonably Practicable

Is a legal requirement for employers under health and safety legislation? Employers and businesses (and other PCBUs) always need to try to eliminate, so far as is

reasonably practicable, any health and safety risks in the workplace.

Records

Recorded information in any form, on any media, created or received and maintained by the organisation or person (whether a worker or, where they are under a relevant contractual obligation, contractor, consultant or other third party) in the transaction.

Risk

Risk is the possibility that harm (death, injury, illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.

Risk Assessment

The process of determining the severity of a hazard and the likelihood of it occasioning harm.

Risk Control

Taking action to either eliminate or minimise health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard will also eliminate any risks associated with that hazard.

Risk Management

The process of identifying hazards, assessing risks and eliminating or controlling risks in the workplace.

Shared Duty Holder

Organisations that have a duty in relation to the same matter as the PCBU.

Should

Indicates a recommended action that should be followed unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS)

A WHSMS is a particular, organisational wide approach, instituted by a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), in order to minimise the risk of injury and illness arising from the conduct of their undertaking.

Worker

This term 'worker' includes any person who works as an:

- employee
- trainee
- volunteer
- outworker
- apprentice
- work experience student
- contractor or sub-contractor
- employees of a contractor or sub-contractor
- employee of a labour hire company assigned to work for a PCBU.

Workplace

A workplace is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any places where a worker goes, or is likely to go, while at work.

5. Related Documents

Legislations	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017* *Workers Compensation Act 1987* *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998* *Code of Practice 2019: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks* *Code of Practice 2019: Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work* *Code of Practice 2022: Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination* *Code of Practice 2019: Managing the Work Environment and Facilities*
Justice Health NSW Policies, Guidelines and Procedures	2.135 *Framework for Policy Documents* 5.110 *Work Health and Safety* 7.025 *Code of Conduct* 9.003 *Work Health and Safety Consultation and Communication* 9.044 *Alarm, Pager, Two-Way Radio and Sterile Zone Use and Management*
Justice Health NSW Forms	
NSW Health Policy Directives and Guidelines	PD2015_001 *Preventing and Managing Violence in the NSW Health Workplace – A Zero Tolerance Approach* PD2020_047 *Incident Management* IB2022_039 *Protecting People and Property: NSW Health Policy and Standards for Security Risk Management*
Other documents and resources	*Youth Justice Alarm Procedure* *Youth Justice CCTV & Radio Surveillance Policy* *Youth Justice CCTV & Radio Surveillance Procedure* *Youth Justice Individual Centre's Emergency Manuals.* *CSNSW Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures:* *CSNSW 15.1 Safe work practises* *CSNSW 16.8 Health centre security* *SafeWork NSW – Guide Preventing and Responding to work-related Violence 2017*