# Administrative Policies and Procedures: 31.15

**Subject:** Guidelines for Transportation of Child/Youth by Regional Employees  

**Authority:** TCA 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106, 55-9-602  

**Standards:** COA: PA-JJCM 6.05, PA-ASE 6.02, PA-ASE 6.03 (a-b) (d-f); PA-ASE 7.01 (g); PA-JJCM 6.05  

**Application:** To All Department of Children’s Services Regional Employees and Contract Agency Employees Who Transport Children/Youth  

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## Policy Statement:

Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Personnel who transport children/youth shall be trained to transport safely and securely and shall comply with applicable Federal and State laws, rules and regulations related to child restraint, seat belt and secure hardware. Any DCS employee transporting children/youth shall maintain a valid driver’s license and adequate automobile insurance coverage as required by law.

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## Purpose:

To establish requirements, procedures and guidelines for employees who transport children/youth.

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## Procedures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Responsibilities for transportation of children/youth</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All DCS regional and contract agency employees, as applicable, are able to transport children/youth as the need arises.</td>
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<td>2. Any employee trained in search techniques and the use of mechanical restraints is required to transport delinquent child/youth.</td>
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<td>3. Every effort is made to provide and use state vehicles to transport children/youth. If a state vehicle is not available, employees may be required to transport in their personal vehicle if transport cannot be delayed until a state vehicle is available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Employees who are required to transport children/youth in their personal vehicles are responsible for maintaining a valid driver’s license and providing adequate automobile insurance coverage and vehicle registration. Use of personal vehicles in the performance of an employee’s job duties are authorized and approved by the employee’s Supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Employees who are responsible for the transporting in state or personal vehicles adhere to all child restraint and seat belt laws as outlined in TCA 55-9-602.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. The following guidelines apply for employee labor during transportation:

a) Employees always have the option to request a co-driver when safety is in question. It is recommended an employee request a co-driver when unique child-specific safety concerns are present and/or when an employee’s work time extends beyond 12 hours in a single shift. Additionally, it is recommended an employee have a co-driver in the following circumstances:

- If the youth is of a different gender than the transporter;
- If the transporter feels unsafe due to youth’s history and/or current behaviors exhibited.
- When the child poses a safety risk to themselves or others,
- When there is a history of false reporting on the part of the child/youth
- When the child/youth is at risk of running away
- When there is a history of mental health issues which may include disruptive behavior, self-harm, suicidal or homicidal ideation
- When the transport involves more than two children
- When it is in the best interest of the child’s safety

Note: All transportation is documented on form CS-0350, Transportation Report. Contract Providers may continue to document transports in TFACTS.

b) Escorting staff/co-rider duties consist of the following:

- Maintaining a constant visual of the youth
- Be willing to assist in maintaining a constant visual observation as well as verbal checks with the child/youth in restraints at least every fifteen (15) minutes to determine if the restraints are presenting any discomfort. This is then documented on form CS-0350, Transportation Report.
- Co-rider must offer relief driving when needed or requested by primary transporter.

c) If a transport will cause an employee to transport beyond 12 hours in a single shift and the return trip is more than 2 hours to home, either of the following will occur (discretion on which is given to the Team Coordinator/Investigative Coordinator or their designee):

- A co-driver is designated to assist with the transport, or
- An employee rents a direct bill hotel room, if available for in-state transport, or other hotel room for out-of-state transport or when a direct bill hotel is not available.
**Note:** Identifying fatigue and minimizing associated risks should be routine conversation between all frontline DCS employees and supervisors. If a DCS employee has been transporting a child without a co-driver and works more than 14 hours in a single shift, the employee should be offered a minimum of 8 consecutive hours off-work whenever possible, especially if the upcoming work shift will involve face-to-face oversight of a child (e.g. meeting a CPS response, transporting, monitoring).

d) Employees co-driving rent a direct bill hotel room (for in-state transport) or other hotel room (for out-of-state transport) when the employee’s work time extends beyond 12 hours in a single shift at the time the child/youth is dropped off at placement and the return trip is more than 2 hours to home for each driver.

**Note:** Employees renting a hotel room notify their direct supervisor prior to renting a hotel room to communicate the hours the employee will be working, where they will be staying and to share any other important information about the trip. This is not to obtain supervisor approval of the rental, but instead, to ensure good communication about employee whereabouts and work time for safety purposes.

7. For DCS employees, a maximum of two (2) children/youth may be transported in one vehicle with a single driver if no safety risks are noted. For transport of three (3) or more children/youth, the driver is accompanied by an additional employee. Transportation of three (3) or more children/youth without an additional employee is permitted at the discretion/approval of the Regional Administrator/ Director/designee.

8. At the discretion of the Regional Administrator/Director/ Contract Agency Director/designee, when warranted, an additional employee may be assigned to assist in the transportation of three (3) or more children.

9. At the discretion of the Regional Administrator/ Director/ Contract Agency/designee another employee is designated to travel with the employee assigned transportation duties who has worked beyond their regularly scheduled hours (refer number six (6) above).

**Note:** Employees, who need to make a request for additional assistance in coordinating transportation, refer to the Protocol for Cross-Regional Social Services Transportation for coordination in long distances or across multiple regions or the Protocol for Juvenile Justice Centralized Transportation for safe and secure transports of juvenile justice youth.

10. All children/youth are transported in a child passenger restraint system, a belt positioning booster seat system, or seat belt as age appropriate by law.

11. The applicable Regional Administrator/Director/Contract Agency/ designee and Central Office Executive Director approve the transporting of children/youth out-of-state in excess of 50 miles (one-way). Requests and approvals are documented in TFACTS.
12. Secure vehicles may be used to transport other adjudication types (unruly or dependent and neglected) if their behavior presents the need for security and protection. **See Section C below, Criteria and Requirements for Secure Transportation.**

13. Children who are not adjudicated as delinquent may not be shackled or handcuffed with mechanical restraints without a written court order specifying it for that specific child.

14. When transporting a child over the age of twelve (12), an additional employee can be requested to assist with the transportation. The employee requests permission from the supervisor and documents the approval in case notes.

15. When transport involves a new placement or change of placement, it is the sending FSW/designee’s responsibility to communicate with the receiving facility regarding medication a child/youth is taking. Any medications a child/youth is taking must be transported with them together with a completed Medication Transfer form (CS-0813). If a thirty (30) day supply or a refill of the medication is not available, the sending facility coordinates with the new placement regarding continued medication maintenance and appointments. **(See DCS Policy 20.15, Medication Administration, Storage and Disposal.)**

16. Other medical requirements during transport:
   a) If the child/youth being transported has medication scheduled to be taken during the transport, the FSW and transport officer/employee consults with the regional well-being nurse for instructions prior to the trip.
   b) Any child/youth having a surgical procedure, including surgical extraction of teeth, waits forty-eight (48) hours before transferring to a new placement. The FSW consults with the regional well-being nurse for instructions prior to the trip.

17. **FOR ALL CHILDREN/YOUTH (Secure and Non-Secure Transporting):**

When transport involves a new placement or a change of placement for the child/youth, the sending FSW/designee ensures that all applicable and necessary requests, admission forms and documents required for appointments, referrals and placements are completed prior to requesting transport and given to the transportation employee. The documents/forms listed below are required to accompany the child/youth being transported:

   a) **Court order/commitment order** or, in the case of child recently removed due to D/N issues, documentation from the file (for example the petition) or from the Regional Administrator or DCS attorney handling the case stating that a removal has occurred and DCS has the legal authority to transport;

   b) **CS-0351, Transportation Request;**

   a) **CS-0206, Authorization for Routine Health Services for Minors;**
   b) **CS-0627, Informed Consent for Psychotropic Medication** (when the child/youth is prescribed psychotropic medication);
   c) **CS-0813, Medication Transfer** (when medication is being transported with the child/youth);
### B. Criteria and requirements for secure transportation

1. Children/youth requiring transportation in a secure state vehicle meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:
   - a) Adjudication of delinquency even if not committed as a delinquent child *(i.e., a child/youth that has been adjudicated delinquent does not mean that he/she is COMMITTED as a delinquent child, etc.)*;
   - b) Documented historical or recent assaultive behavior;
   - c) Documented history of runaway;
   - d) Documented history of incidents of self-harm; or
   - e) The child/youth’s current behavior is deemed to present a threat to the safe operation of a non-secure vehicle or a threat to the safety of the employee.

2. Mechanical restraints are used for transporting delinquent children/youth that pose a serious security risk or in emergency situations to secure facilities *(e.g., detention, youth development center, secure A & D program, secure psychiatric placement, etc.)* or from a secure facility to an outside appointment. Refer to DCS Policy **13.4, Use of Mechanical Restraints for Youth Committed Delinquent**.

3. Delinquent child/youth transported to a hardware secure facility *(i.e., detention, youth development center, secure A & D program, secure psychiatric placement, etc.)* or in mechanical restraints are transported in a secure state vehicle (equipped with a security screen, interior door handles removed, etc.).

4. If a secure state car is not available and a state car that is not secure will be utilized, a second employee also assists in transporting. The child/youth is seated in the rear passenger side seat with the second employee seated in the rear driver side.
5. A delinquent child/youth in mechanical restraints and transported in a state van that is not secure is seated in the last row or seat so that there is a seat between the driver and the child/youth. The child/youth sits on the driver’s side and the second employee sits on the same seat as the child/youth on the passenger side so that the child/youth does not have immediate access to the door.

6. A delinquent child/youth in mechanical restraints is monitored during transport. The employee maintains continual visual observation as well as verbal checks with the child/youth at least every fifteen (15) minutes to determine if the restraints are presenting any discomfort. If there is a reported or noted hampering of circulation or undue discomfort, the restraints are adjusted immediately. The child/youth is monitored and evaluated for injuries as outlined in DCS Policy 13.4, Use of Mechanical Restraints for Youth Committed Delinquent.

7. A child/youth's personal belongings are not accessible to them during a secure transport.

8. All transport employees document the transport on CS-0350, Transportation Report.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Search procedures for child/youth prior to transport</th>
<th>Refer to DCS Policy 31.4, Search Procedures, for information regarding searches of children/youth in the custody of DCS.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| D. Operator responsibilities in state and personal vehicles | 1. All vehicles used to transport a child/youth are functionally and mechanically safe (e.g., brakes function properly, turn signals are operational, etc.).

2. Vehicle operators adhere to all state and local traffic laws and operate the vehicle in a safe, responsible manner.


4. All DCS employees with the specific job title of “transportation officer” are uniformed as outlined in DCS policy 1.18, Uniformed Employee Grooming Requirements and Provisions for Uniforms. |

| E. Emergency Situations during transporting | 1. If, during transportation a child/youth attempts to runaway or escape, the safe operation of the vehicle takes precedence over preventing a runaway or escape.

2. If a child/youth escapes, the vehicle operator immediately notifies local law enforcement authorities and his/her supervisor. The incident is reported as outlined in DCS policies 1.4 Incident Reporting and 31.2 Responsibilities Regarding Runaways and Escapees.

3. If a child/youth becomes seriously ill or injured in an accident or has a mental health emergency while being transported 911 should be contacted immediately. The vehicle operator then contacts his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible. |
4. If an equipment malfunction interrupts transportation of the child/youth, the vehicle operator notifies his/her immediate supervisor to obtain assistance.

5. Employees involved in an accident while transporting a child/youth in a state-owned vehicle immediately report the accident to their Supervisor and follows procedures as outlined in DCS Policy 1.13, Use, Maintenance and Responsibilities of Operating State Vehicles.

6. Employees involved in an accident while transporting a child/youth in their personal vehicle immediately report the accident to their Supervisor and follows procedures as outlined in DCS Policy 18.5, Control of Youth Personal Property in a Youth Development Center for damages sustained to their personal vehicle.

7. Employees injured while in the performance of their duties follow procedures for reporting and filing worker’s compensation claims as outlined in the Department of Human Resources Employee Handbook.

8. The following actions are to be taken during inclement weather:
   a) Employees are not expected to transport during any weather warning advisory (weather watch - means there is a threat, weather warning - means there is imminent danger); if a weather emergency arises during a transport, a supervisor should be contacted immediately to advise.
   b) Regional protocol should be followed if there is a strong possibility of a threat to safety; and
   c) If caught in a weather emergency:
      ♦ Immediately contact your supervisor and let them know where you are;
      ♦ Seek shelter/identify a safe area to go; and
      ♦ Follow the regional emergency response preparedness plan.

9. Emergency/After-hours assistance
   In the event there is a vehicle emergency you may contact the following:
   a) Day time emergency contact/ Motor Vehicle Maintenance (MVM): Dial 615-532-8903
   b) After hours emergency contact: Dial 1-800-447-2277
   c) TN Highway Patrol- Dial *847

Note: For a list of statewide DCS offices and resources, refer to the Transportation Resource List.

F. Prohibitions regarding transportation of child/youth

Employee actions that are PROHIBITED when transporting a child/youth include, but are not limited to:

1. Leaving a child/youth unattended in a vehicle;
2. Mechanically restraining a child/youth to a vehicle;
3. Using mechanical restraints on children/youth adjudicated dependent/neglect or unruly without a written court order specifying them to be used for the specific child/youth (refer to DCS policy 19.9, Psychiatric Emergency Use of Mechanical Restraints);
4. Transporting a child or infant without a child passenger restraint system, a belt positioning booster seat system, or seat belt, as age appropriate by law;
5. Allowing a child/youth to travel without the use of seat belts, as age appropriate by law;
6. Transporting a child/youth in the front seat of a secure vehicle; and
7. Providing secure transportation for a child under the age of 12 without the approval of the Regional Administrator/Director/Contract Agency Director/designee.

G. Training on safely transporting children/youth

1. All employees transporting children/youth are properly trained. DCS Juvenile Justice training staff, trained DCS transportation officers, or other appropriately trained employees conduct training for other employees who are assigned transport duties.
2. Training includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a) Installation and maintenance of child restraint seats;
   b) Proper placement of children/youth in a child passenger restraint system, a belt positioning booster seat system, or seat belt;
   c) The use of handcuffs and shackles or other type approved restraints for youth committed delinquent. See DCS Policy 13.4, Use of Mechanical Restraints for Youth Committed Delinquent for additional information regarding the use of restraints;
   d) Use of transportation assistants;
   e) Proper placement of a child/youth with presenting behavioral problems when transporting in a non-secure vehicle;
   f) Safety precautions and potential risks that may be encountered while transporting;
   g) Control and disposal of contraband and preservation of physical evidence;
   h) Emergency contact protocols; and
   i) Search procedures.
3. Training is documented on the employees’ training record with DCS Professional Development and Training.

H. Local written procedures

1. Each region and Contract Agency develop written local procedures to include the following:
   a) Process for requesting and coordinating transportation;
   b) Responsibilities and requirements of the vehicle operator;
   c) Security requirements of the child/youth being transported;
   d) Procedures to ensure that the child/youth is restrained in safety seats and/or seat belts at all times while the vehicle is in motion;
### Guidelines for Transportation of Child/Youth by Regional Employees

#### 2. Requirements for written local procedures are documented on form **CS-0251, Local Administrative Procedures and Instructions.**

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<th>Forms:</th>
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<td><strong>CS-0206 Authorization for Routine Health Services for Minors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CS-0251 Local Administrative Procedures and Instructions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CS-0351 Transportation Request</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CS-0350 Transportation Report</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CS-0627 Informed Consent for Psychotropic Medication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CS-0657 Education Passport and School Enrollment Letter</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CS-0727 Initial Intake, Placement and Well-Being Information and History</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CS-0813 Medication Transfer</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CS-0827 Non-Custodial Consent for Transport</strong></td>
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<thead>
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<th>Collateral documents:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Department of Human Resources Employee Handbook</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DCS Policy 13.4 Use of Mechanical Restraints for Youth Committed Delinquent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DCS Policy 19.9 Psychiatric Emergency Use of Mechanical Restraint</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Local Regional Procedures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Protocol for Cross-Regional Social Services Transportation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Protocol for Juvenile Justice Centralized Transportation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Transportation Resource List</strong></td>
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### Glossary:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contraband:</strong></td>
<td>Any item possessed by an individual or found within a facility that is illegal or that is expressly prohibited by those legally charged with the responsibility for the administration and operation of the facility or program.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>“Pat down” Search:</strong></td>
<td>A search of a person for something (as a concealed weapon) by running the hand rapidly over the clothing and through the pockets (also known as &quot;pat down&quot;). The person being searched is not required to undress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanical restraint:</strong></td>
<td>The use of a mechanical device that is designed to restrict the movement of an individual. Examples of mechanical restraints include handcuffs or wristlets, chains, anklets, or ankle cuffs, or any other DCS approved or authorized device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secure Facilities:</strong></td>
<td><strong>For the purpose of this policy:</strong> A youth development center, detention centers, psychiatric hospitals, or mental health residential treatment facilities.</td>
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