

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

8.10 Family video contact

Policy summary

Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) understands the importance for inmates of maintaining links to their families and communities whilst in custody.

Audio Visual Link (AVL) studios may be used to assist inmates in maintaining these links where distance, disability, lack of transport and/or funds or other factors inhibit physical contact with family and community.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specifications	<p>Decency and respect</p> <p>Professionalism and accountability</p> <p>Rehabilitation and reintegration</p>
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Scope

This section applies to all correctional centres and other facilities administered by or on behalf of CSNSW which have AVL provision.

This section also applies to all CSNSW employees located within these correctional centres and facilities.

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1 Family video contact

1.1 Policy

CSNSW understands the importance of inmates maintaining links to their families and communities whilst in custody.

Video Conferencing (VC) studios are operating within a number of NSW correctional centres with AVL provision. These AVL facilities can be utilised for a number of reasons (**refer to COPP section 20.4 AVL for legal and court matters**) including to conduct Family Video Contact (FVC) for inmates.



FVC assists inmates to maintain links with their families and communities where distance and/or lack of transport and funds, disability, or other factors that may inhibit a contact visit.

All correctional centre professional studios are limited to a maximum of five x 1 hour FVC per week. Each inmate is limited to one family Video Contact per month. The use of FVC is in addition to a normal visit and is not to be used as a substitute.

The Governor or authorised officer (who will most likely be the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the VC area), may approve an extra FVC for any inmate when special circumstances arise, such as where there is a death in the family.

High Security (HS), Extreme High Security (EHS), and Extreme High Risk Restricted (EHRR), National Security Interest (NSI) and AA inmates require approval from the Commissioner to have FVC.

2 Application, assessment and approval

2.1 Policy

Applications for all FVC in NSW including interstate and overseas is assessed on an individual basis by the Governor or Functional Manager (FM).

Interstate and overseas FVC's have a higher cost which will be considered by the Governor/ FM during the assessment process.

Inmates or other approved external agencies may lodge a *Family video contact application* form for FVC on behalf of an inmate's family or friends.

The external agencies will undertake their own assessments of the application, including the needs and circumstances of the attendee(s).

If a family member or friend(s) refuses an application, the external agency will inform the OIC of the VCA who will record this decision in the Offender Integrated Management System (OIMS) and advise the inmate.

All family members or friends taking part in the FVC **must** have a Visitor Identification Number (VIN). If they do not have a VIN, the OIC of the VCA will scan and email the form to vcenquiries@dcj.nsw.gov.au to obtain a VIN for that person(s).

The OIC of the VCA has the delegation to conduct an OIMS check and approve applications. All applications **must** be forwarded to the Governor for approval if an OIMS check indicates any of the following:

- the inmate has been found guilty of a correctional centre offence during the last 30 days
- an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) Type 2 which prohibits contact between the inmate and the intended attendee(s),
- the family attendee(s) are restricted visitors,
- there are child restrictions precluding contact;
- the attendee(s) are not able to access or attend one of the sites listed on Page 2 of the *Family Video Contact Application* form (This does not apply to interstate and overseas families).

2.2 Procedures

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Complete the application form with the inmate. Forward the form to the OIC/VCA if completed on behalf of the inmate by an external agency.	OIC/VCA External agency
2.	Advise the OIC/VCA if any of the attendees refuse the application, and include any reasons (If known). Record this in OIMS (including the reasons for refusal, if known).	External agency OIC/VCA
3.	If any of the attendees do not have a VIN, scan and email the form to vcenquiries@dcj.nsw.gov.au to obtain a VIN.	OIC/VCA
4.	Record a case note in OIMS indicating that the application has been lodged by the inmate.	OIC/VCA
5.	Complete Part C (OIMS check) of the <i>Family Video Contact Application</i> form, to check if there are any reasons why the FVC should not proceed. Forward the application with a recommendation to the Governor for determination and approval if the OIMS check is unsatisfactory.	OIC/VCA
6.	Schedule the FVC if the application is approved Note: If the FVC is not approved, advise the inmate and enter a case note into OIMS.	OIC/VCA
7.	File the application in the inmates Case Management File (CMF).	OIC/VCA

3 Booking, scheduling and facilitating

3.1 Booking

The OIC of the VCA or the external agency can book a FVC using the *JUST Connect* web based system (refer to the *JUST Connect Release 1 Booking Guide*).

3.2 Cancellations

Cancellation of a FVC by the attendees:

- if a FVC has been booked by an external agency, that agency must cancel the booking via the JUST Connect system and notify the OIC of the VCA.
- If a FVC has been booked by the OIC/VCA they must cancel the booking via the [JUST Connect](#) system.

Cancellation of a FVC by the inmate or correctional centre management:

- The OIC of the VCA must cancel the booking via the JUST Connect system and notify the external agency.
- The external agency must notify the family/friends and advise of the cancellation.

If an inmate is transferred to another correctional centre before the booking takes place, the approved application remains active and every effort must be made to facilitate the FVC at the new correctional centre.

3.3 Scheduling

The OIC of the VCA is required to perform the role of scheduling all FVC and to ensure compliance with the JUST Connect protocols.

3.4 Facilitating

The OIC of the VCA may terminate the FVC if any unacceptable behaviour occurs by either the inmate or the attendees, such as sexual nature, verbal abuse or threats.

The OIC of the VCA **must** inform the Manager of Security (MOS) and record in OIMS – Incident Report Module (IRM).

3.5 Procedures

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Book the FVC utilising the JUST Connect system (If approved). Note: The JUST Connect system will automatically inform the OIC/VCA of all required details.	OIC/VCA or External agency
2.	Complete a final OIMS check on all attendee(s) prior to the FVC taking place.	OIC/VCA
3.	Ensure all bookings are accurate with the scheduled times on the JUST Connect system.	OIC/VCA

	Procedure	Responsibility
4.	Ensure all required inmates on the FVC list are at the VCA 1 hour prior to the booking time.	OIC/VCA
5.	Confirm all attendees are identified in line with the bookings on the JUST Connect system, including their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • names • dates of birth. 	OIC/VCA
6.	Supervise the FVC.	OIC/VCA
7.	Record the FVC in the OIMS <i>Visits module</i> on completion and create appropriate case notes.	OIC/VCA

4 Quick links

- [Related COPP](#)
- [Forms and annexures](#)
- [Related documents](#)

5 Definitions

Visual Link	Facilities (including telephone) that enable audio communication between persons at different places.
Audio Visual Link (AVL)	Facilities that enable real time audio and visual communication between persons at different places, e.g. communication between the court house and a designated correctional centre.
Authorised officer	The officer authorised by the Governor to perform the functions set out in this part of the Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures Manual. The most likely officer for this function would be the OIC of the Video Conferencing Area.
AVO	Apprehended Violence Order
COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
EHS	Extreme High Security
EHRR	Extreme High Risk Restricted
FVC	Family Video Conferencing
HS	High Security
IRM	Incident Report Module
MOS	Manager of Security
NSI	National Security Interest
OIC	Officer in Charge
OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
JUST Connect	Web based video conference scheduling system
VCA	Video Conferencing Area
VC	Video Conferencing
VIN	Visitor Identification Number

6 Document information

Business centre:	Custodial Operations	
Approver:	Kevin Corcoran	
Date of effect:	24/04/2018	
EDRMS container:	18/7213	
Version	Date	Reason for amendment
1.0		Initial publication (<i>Replaces section 8.32 of the superseded Operations Procedure Manual</i>)
1.1	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements