

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

21.7 Contemporaneous notebooks

Policy summary

Contemporaneous Notebooks (the Notebook) are provided to custodial staff to assist them to take notes at the time of an incident or event. Recording incidents in a Notebook does not remove the obligation for staff to complete required reports but can be used to assist to recall facts at a later time.

In some cases, the facts recorded in the Notebook may be required for judicial, coronial or other investigative processes being conducted months or years, after the incident. For this reason that any information recorded in the Notebook must be must fully accurate and relevant to the incident.

Completed Notebooks are to remain in the possession of the officer to whom they were assigned.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specification	Professionalism and accountability Safety and security
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Scope

This section applies to all correctional centres and other facilities administered by or on behalf of Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW).

It also applies to all CSNSW employees, and where relevant to other personnel such as Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN), contractors, subcontractors, and visitors.

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1 Contemporaneous notebooks

1.1 Policy

The Notebook is provided to custodial staff to enable them to document incidents at the time they occur when immediate access to online reporting is limited or not practical.

In all instances, documenting information in the notebook does not remove the obligation of custodial staff to develop a report in the Offender Integrated Management System (OIMS) Incident Reporting Module (IRM) or write *Incident/witness reports* and complete other documentation as required in **COPP section 13.1 Serious incident reporting**.

1.2 Procedures for notebook entries

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Begin each entry in the Notebook with the time, date and place of the incident. All entries must be in chronological order. Do not make notes elsewhere - use the notebook only and record particulars of incidents for future reference.	CSNSW officer
2.	Ensure to apply the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• rule a 12mm margin on the left-hand side of each page to record the action taken for each entry• write neatly and do not use shorthand• underline surnames.	CSNSW officer
3.	Record the exact words used by a suspect and those of a witness identifying or describing a suspect.	CSNSW officer
4.	Rule a line under the completed entry.	CSNSW officer
5.	Complete required reports and associated on-line reporting detailed in <i>Table of reportable incidents</i> .	CSNSW officer

1.3 Procedures for altering notebook entries

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Rule a line through the original entry, leaving it legible Do not tear out any part of the book or erase any information, or make frivolous or vexatious comments.	CSNSW officer
2.	Make the new entry.	CSNSW officer
3.	If the alteration is important, it should be brought to the notice of a Senior Correctional Officer (SCO) or witness, and a signature should be obtained to verify its accuracy.	CSNSW officer

2 Issue of the notebook

2.1 Policy

The Notebooks is:

- initially supplied during primary training
- replaced when full by the Functional Manager (FM) at the officers location
- to be carried at all times when on duty
- for official use only

When issued with the Notebook, officers must complete the particulars on the inside cover.

2.2 Procedures for re-issue of notebooks

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Arrange with the FM for a replacement Notebook to be issued when the notebook is nearly complete.	CSNSW officer
2.	Issue a new Notebook. The completed Notebook must be produced at the time of replacement or an officer report is provided detailing its whereabouts.	FM
3.	Retain the completed Notebook.	CSNSW officer

3 Attendance at a court or hearing

3.1 Policy

It may be necessary for an officer to give evidence at a court or hearing. In either criminal or civil matters, the Notebook could be subpoenaed for court, or a Magistrate may order its production. For these reasons, officers must fully and accurately record all relevant information.

The officer may be permitted by the court to refer to their notebook:

- to refresh their memory about the evidence they are giving; and
- refer to notes or statements were made at the time of the incident or at the first reasonable opportunity afterwards, while their memory of the event was fresh.

When an officer attends court or other hearing, they must have with them the Notebook in which they recorded the details of the matter before the court or hearing. This applies to all courts and to all types of hearings.

4 Quick links

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

5 Definitions

COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
FM	Functional Manager
IRM	Incident Reporting Module
JH&FMHN	Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network
OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
SCO	Senior Correctional Officer

6 Document information

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1.1	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements