



**New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual**  
**2054 WATCH ASSESSMENT - INITIATION, COMMUNICATION, AND DUTIES**

Chapter: Sununu Youth Services Center

Section: Safety and Security

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **23-03**

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**References Of Note**

Federal Authority:

Statutes: [RSA 621](#), and [RSA 621-A](#)

Administrative Rules:

Case Law:

This policy establishes practice for assessing youth to identify and initiate appropriate watch levels for safety, communicating the watch to the necessary parties, and defining how staff supervise youth on a watch.

**Required Practices**

*Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.*

- I. Watches are initiated upon admission to SYSC to observe the youth and assist with safe integration/transition into the facility.
  - A. Upon admission, medical personnel will speak with the transporting officer regarding their assessment of the youth's mental health or suicide risk, and will conduct an admission watch assessment, pursuant to policy [2279 Nursing Services at Admission](#).
  - B. All new admissions and newly committed youth will be placed on an Administrative B-Watch for at least 24-hours for observation.
    1. If the newly admitted/committed youth describes current or recent suicidal ideation, plan, or intent, or has engaged in suicidal or self-harming behaviors, an A-Watch will be initiated until the youth can be evaluated by a clinical staff.
      - (a) Staff will not exclusively rely on a youth self-reporting that they are not suicidal or their potential history of mental illness or suicidal behavior, particularly when their behavior or actions (including at a previous placement at the facility) suggest otherwise.
- II. Anytime a new admission or newly committed youth is placed on watch status, the On-Duty Supervisor will:

- A. Document the watch in YouthCenter using the Watch Initiation Report (Form 2054A);
  - B. Initiate the Clinical/Medical Watch Report (Form 2057);
  - C. Notify residential staff as soon as possible; and
  - D. Provide the initiated Form 2057 to the receiving residential staff.
- III. Watches may be initiated by staff anytime a youth has verbalized or exhibited signs that they are currently unsafe, or an additional level of monitoring is believed necessary to keep the youth safe. Additional reasons for watch initiation by staff include, but are not limited to:
- A. Suicide prevention;
  - B. Monitoring following a concern for sexual safety, pursuant to policy [2055 PREA – Immediate Response to Sexual Abuse and first Responder Duties](#); and
  - C. Monitoring for safety following a behavioral incident or intervention, pursuant to policy [2040 PREA General Provisions](#).
- IV. Staff will inform the On-Duty Supervisor immediately after initiating a watch pursuant to III above, and:
- A. Document the watch in YouthCenter, using Form 2054A; and
  - B. Initiate the Form 2057.
- V. Any time a youth is placed on watch status, the On-Duty Supervisor will contact the Administrator On-Call, clinical staff, and medical personnel.
- VI. On-Duty Supervisors will document all youth on watch status on the SYSC Shift Summary Report (Form 2371) and will distribute it to the appropriate parties.
- A. Form 2371 is reviewed at roll call during shift change, along with any additional safety plans related to the watch.
- VII. When a residential staff assumes duties on a residential unit floor, they will inquire as to which youth are on watch status, and will follow all supervision requirements, including additional conditions approved by the appropriate authority.
- VIII. When a residential staff assumes school monitoring duties, they will inquire as to which youth are on watch status, and will follow all watch protocols, including timely observation and sign-off on Form 2057, and additional conditions approved by the appropriate authority.

- IX. All youth on watch status will be re-evaluated by clinical staff as follows:
  - A. A-Watch: At least once every 24 hours;
  - B. B-Watch/Administrative B-Watch: At least once every 48 hours; and
  - C. C-Watch: At least once every 72 hours.
  
- X. Clinical staff will document any change in a youth's watch level, or discontinuation of the watch after re-evaluation, by:
  - A. Completing Form 2054A in YouthCenter;
  - B. Documenting the change on the youth's current watch log and updating the SYSC Central Control Watch log (Form 2054L) to reflect the adjustment;
  - C. Documenting the change(s) in the Clinical Record;
  - D. Immediately notifying the On-Duty Supervisor and residential staff; and
  - E. Requesting that residential staff enter any changes on the Unit white board and unit communication log.
  
- XI. Youth on watch will not be released, furloughed, or taken off grounds unless such action is administratively approved or ordered by a court.
  - A. In the event that a youth on watch will be released, furloughed, or taken off-grounds residential unit staff will:
    - 1. Indicate the watch level and the reason on the Temporary Release of Custody (Form 2342); and
    - 2. Provide Form 2342 to medical personnel for review to ensure that the watch has been properly documented prior to release.
  - B. In the event that a youth on a watch is released, furloughed, or taken off-grounds, staff will inform the transporting personnel of the youth's watch status and the reason for the watch.
  
- XII. Staff monitoring youth on A-Watch will:
  - A. Maintain a constant visual and be within 5-feet of the youth at all times, including when sleeping, using the bathroom or shower, or changing clothes;
    - 1. Any youth on A-Watch needing to use the bathroom (for toileting or showering) will have same sex staff monitoring them while in the bathroom, or be sent to the medical department for monitoring;

- B. Sign-off every 5-minutes on Form 2057;
  - 1. Not engage in any activities that may distract their attention from the youth on A-Watch;
- C. Allow no barrier (i.e. door, wall, piece of furniture) to separate the youth from the staff at any time;
  - 1. Youth will have a bed frame, mattress, sheets, blanket(s), and a pillow;
  - 2. While sleeping, the youth will be permitted to have covers but will not be allowed to pull the covers over their head; and
- D. Remove potentially dangerous items from the youth's room.

XIII. To mitigate risk for youth on A-Watch:

- A. Youth will wear tear-resistant strong clothing only, without undergarments;
- B. Youth may have hazard-free reading materials;
- C. Youth will not attend school;
- D. Youth may use school and recreational materials with close supervision, as well as safety pencils, but never sharp objects. Such items include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Scissors;
  - 2. Knitting needles;
  - 3. Pencils or pens; or
  - 4. Knives, unless there is a specified plan in place;
- E. Youth will be provided only safety spoons with meals (no plasticware); and
- F. Youth will be provided at least an hour of safe daily exercise within the confines of SYSC as deemed appropriate and safe by clinical and medical staff.

XIV. Staff monitoring youth on B-Watch (or Administrative B-Watch) will conduct a visual check of the youth and sign-off on Form 2057 every 5-minutes, 24-hours a day.

- A. When youth on B-Watch are in their assigned room, staff will:
  - 1. Ensure all potentially harmful items, including, but not limited to, sharps, staples, easily torn clothing, undergarments, sheets, furniture, and utensils are removed from the youth's room;
  - 2. Provide youth with hazard-free reading materials, when requested; and

3. Provide the youth with strong clothes and undergarments.
- B. When youth are using the bathroom or shower, staff shall conduct a verbal check-in requiring a clear audible response from the youth every 5-minutes.
1. If no clear audible response is made by the youth, staff will conduct a visual check to ensure the youth is safe.
- XV. Staff monitoring youth on C-Watch will visually observe the youth and sign-off on Form 2057 every 15-minutes, 24-hours a day.
- A. No alteration of youth activities, personal items, utensils, or bedding is required.

<b>Applicable Forms</b>	
<b>Form</b>	<b>Title</b>
2054A	Watch Initiation Report
2054L	SYSC Central Control Watch Log
2057	Clinical/Medical Watch Report
2342	Temporary Receipt of Custody
2371	SYSC Shift Summary Report

**Glossary and Document Specific Definitions**

[A-B](#)   [C-D](#)   [E-F](#)   [G-I](#)   [J-L](#)   [M-N](#)   [O-Q](#)   [R-S](#)   [T-V](#)   [W-Z](#)

<b>Document Change Log</b>			
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