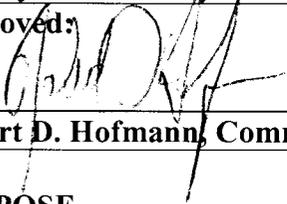


<p align="center">State of Vermont Agency of Human Services Department of Corrections</p>	<p>Title: Case Documentation - Electronic</p>	<p align="right">Page 1 of 7</p>
<p>Chapter Management Information Systems</p>	<p align="center"># 254.04</p>	<p>Supersedes # 371.07, Case Management Documentation, dated 11/06/2000; and Interim Procedure for the Modification and Deletion to Existing Case Notes dated 1/2/07. History: This document was #371.07 dated 11/06/2000. This number was taken by a new directive, <i>Offender Risk Assessments</i>, in 2002.</p>
<p>Attachments, Forms & Companion Documents: 1. Quality Assurance Standards</p>		
<p>Local Procedure(s) Required: No Applicability: All staff (including contractors and volunteers). Security Level "B"- Anyone may have access to this document.</p>		
<p>Approved:  <hr/>Robert D. Hofmann, Commissioner</p> <p align="center"><u>December 19, 2007</u> Date Signed</p> <p align="right"><u>February 4, 2008</u> Date Effective</p>		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this administrative directive is to establish guidelines for defining, recording, and maintaining electronic case management documentation for inmates in correctional facilities and offenders under supervision in the community by correctional staff and other authorized persons. This includes narratives in case notes, victim case notes, parole summaries, graduated sanction reports, incident reports, case summaries, violations, revocations, and other associated case information.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Corrections to ensure that all documentation is standardized, recorded electronically, objective, supported by fact and in compliance with any federal and state mandates regarding confidentiality of information on offenders under our supervision and the victims of their crimes.

AUTHORITY

3 V.S.A. § 3052 (a); 28 V.S.A. §102 (b) (2) and (c) (1), §204 (d), and § 601 (10). 42 C.F.R Part 2. Department of Corrections Web-based *Case Note Modification User Guide*.

REFERENCE

Department of Corrections Administrative Directives #253 *Disclosure*, #254 *Access to Offender Information*, #254.01 *Access to Offender Case and Criminal History and Treatment Information*, #254.03 *Substance Abuse Treatment Services Confidentiality and Ethics*, #257.01 *Computer User Security Responsibilities*, #371.05 *Offender Responsibility Planning*, and #502.01 *Victims' Rights to Release Notification*. Federal HIPAA Privacy Standards.

DEFINITIONS

Additional Case Information: Information related to an offender's case that is not considered a contact. Examples of additional case information are reviewing an offender's sentence computation or an inmate's financial account.

Associated Case Information: Standardized contact information related to case narratives to provide context. Examples of associated case information are dates, times, and personal IDs (such as employee name, codes, and work site).

Author: The person who writes the narrative case information or enters other associated case information.

Case Documentation: A form of correctional documentation that contains both narrative and associated case information, and documents case activity. Examples of case documentation include, but are not limited to, case notes, parole summaries, graduated sanction reports, incident reports, case summaries, violations, and revocations.

Case Note: An electronic note pertaining to an offender's case written by Caseworkers, Probation Officers, supervising staff, or other staff with relevant information, which documents activity relating to that offender. Examples include, but are not limited to, details about a meeting with an offender, notes on a phone call with a victim or another staff person, recording that the offender called the Social Security Administration regarding transition planning, results of an alco-sensor, results of a case staffing, or pertinent information which may influence case planning or case status.

Delete: To permanently remove an entire case note whose content is duplicated, predominantly incorrect, or unprofessional, which may only be done by a supervisor.

Modify: To move a case note as a result of an incorrect placement of a note under the wrong offender, or to change a note to the correct Date, Purpose, Type, Location, or Service Provider. The narrative content of a note cannot be modified. It must be deleted and then reentered correctly by a supervisor.

Narrative Case Information: Descriptive information regarding a case, which is entered and maintained electronically by Department staff and other authorized persons. This information documents events, administrative actions, professional opinions/assessments, and evaluations.

Professional: Case documentation which includes the following: respectful language with accurate spelling, grammar, and language usage; opinions supported by observed behaviors; narratives concise and clear in their meaning; only information pertinent to the case included in the narrative.

Published: The placement of narrative and other case information into a permanent, standardized, shareable, electronic format.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

The purpose of case documentation is to record pertinent information about offender case management, behavior, and attitudes while in custody or under supervision; compliance with conditions; and participation in risk-reducing activities as relevant. This information is intended for the exclusive use of the Department of Corrections and the entities that it interacts with as permitted by law, rule, or administrative directive. Case documentation will not be shared unless permitted

(see Section 5). All Department personnel will maintain narrative and other case information in the standardized statewide electronic format.

1. The Purpose of Electronic Case Notes

There are several reasons to write and maintain case notes.

- a. Documentation: Staff will document risk-related or other pertinent information in a timely and chronological manner, about offenders and/or victims as a record to ensure personal and institutional memory. Additional paper documents may be kept in the offender's file, as appropriate, but must be referenced in case notes as received.
- b. Communication: Case notes provide information to authorized internal and external parties to enhance collaborative supervision.
- c. Supervision: Supervisors monitor case notes to ensure that casework staff are following all case note documentation standards, and to support them in their roles.
- d. Systems Evaluation: Electronic case notes allow for an analysis of associated case information, process and outcome evaluation, and continuous improvement.

2. Standards for All Case Narratives (case notes, parole summaries, graduated sanctions, incident reports, case summaries, violations, and revocations)

- a. Staff will write case narratives using respectful language, and appropriate spelling, grammar, and language usage. The author may use phrases rather than complete sentences if the message is clear and understandable (e.g., followed up with his landlord).
- b. Staff will use language that is understandable to others, succinct, and void of slang or labeling (e.g., stating that an offender is a "druggie").
- c. Information must distinguish between objective facts and assessments based on professional standards and judgment.
- d. All expressed opinions must be supported by observed behaviors, and labeled as the author's opinion.
- e. Case narrative information will comply with federal HIPAA Privacy Standards.
- f. When quoting another person or source, the author will use quotation marks around the words.
- g. When referencing e-mails, memos, or letters from other people in case narratives, authors will use only those words which are relevant to the narrative summary and enclose those with quotation marks. Authors should not cut and paste complete e-mails, memos, or letters unless the entire document is relevant.

3. Standards for Victim-Related Narratives (case notes, parole summaries, graduated sanctions, incident reports, case summaries, violations, and revocations)

The same guidelines for all case narratives will be followed for victim-related narratives with the following additions:

- a. Only the victim's initials will be used in any case note and will be coded under Victim Services/Contacts.
- b. A victim's contact information (address and/or phone number) or any other identifying information will never be written in a case narrative and is confidential. It will be kept in the offender's file under Victim Information.
- c. If a victim provides updated contact information to staff, it will be sent to the Coordinator of Victim Services who will enter the information into the appropriate sections of the offender database.
- d. When a victim notification is attempted or completed, staff will enter a case note to reflect this.

4. Components of an Electronic Case Note

Standardized contact information is coded in the Department case management database under the following headings:

- a. Date - mm/dd/yy
- b. Time - using military time (e.g., 22:45)
- c. Duration - in minutes, how long the contact took
- d. Author - automatically fills in staff name and worksite
- e. Type
 - i. Collateral – Attempted: anyone else involved with the offender (such as victim, family, employer, co-worker, service provider, landlord, police, neighbor, attorney, Judge, etc.); an unsuccessful attempt to establish contact, such as an unanswered phone or “nobody home” visit;
 - ii. Collateral – Direct: anyone else involved with the offender (such as victim, family, employer, co-worker, service provider, landlord, police, neighbor, attorney, Judge, etc.); face-to-face interaction;
 - iii. Collateral – Indirect: anyone else involved with the offender (such as victim, family, employer, co-worker, service provider, landlord, police, neighbor, attorney, Judge, etc.); a communication by phone, mail, email, or means other than face-to-face;
 - iv. Offender – Attempted: the offender themselves; an unsuccessful attempt to establish contact, such as an unanswered phone or “nobody home” visit;

- v. Offender – Direct: the offender themselves; face-to-face interaction;
- vi. Offender – Indirect: the offender themselves; a communication by phone, mail, email, or means other than face-to-face.
- f. Location - includes the field and non-field locations where the contact occurred; (e.g., Probation office, offender home, facility staff office, living unit, ect.)
- g. Purpose - indicates the nature of the contact; (e.g., furlough issue, graduated sanction, intake, ORP, development, ect.)

5. Access and Disclosure to Case Narratives (case notes, parole summaries, graduated sanctions, incident reports, case summaries, violations, and revocations)

- a. Department of Corrections staff access to case narratives is limited to professional, case-related concerns. No one may review case narratives without a legitimate, case management, staff supervision, or audit-related reason. Dissemination of information in narratives and their associated data must be in accordance with federal laws on confidentiality, Agency policy, and Department rules and administrative directives on access to, and disclosure of, offender information.
- b. Authors of narratives should be aware that, while these notes are considered confidential, they may be reviewed by parties outside the Department of Corrections in certain situations.
- c. The Department may institute practices to monitor the access to its case narratives and associated data.

6. Process of Modification and Deletion of Existing Case Notes

- a. While preparing a case note narrative entry, the author may modify and correct the text; however, once the entry has been “published,” it is considered to be a permanent record.
- b. In the event that an error has occurred (such as duplication, incorrect facts, misplacement, or unprofessional language) in published case notes, the author or staff person who found the error must inform a manager or supervisor.
- c. The exact editing request must be composed by the author and forwarded to the supervisor in an e-mail. In some cases, the supervisor may make the change(s) themselves.
- d. The supervisor will review the correction(s) and, if appropriate, make the necessary change(s) after the original note is deleted according to the *Case Note Modification User Guide* found on the Department’s Web site under “IT Database Manuals.” A case note may be deleted or modified up to two (2) months after it was originally written. After that, it must go through an override approval process through the Superintendent or District Manager.

- e. Information Technology staff will ensure that records of deletions are recorded, and that monthly reports are submitted electronically to the central Facility and Field Executives for review.

7. Other Case Management Documentation

Case management documentation also includes documents which do not include narratives. Examples of such documents are case plans, conditional re-entry agreements, and residence approval checklists. The same guidelines for all narratives will be followed for all case management documentation.

TRAINING

An e-Learning format and feedback process will be developed to ensure compliance with and understanding of this Directive.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. Supervisors will review case documentation from each staff member's case load at least twice per year. All performance evaluations will include the results of case documentation reviews.
 - a. Electronic case notes and all other documents not signed by a supervisor: Each month, each supervisor will select one (1) staff person's cases and review 10% of the cases (but no more than ten (10) cases), reviewing the last ten (10) case notes, and other documents not signed by a supervisor and written by the assigned staff person in that time period, for compliance with the *Quality Assurance Standards (Attachment 1)*. The supervisor will meet with the staff person within one (1) month of the review and provide constructive feedback, including development of corrective actions as needed.
 - b. Signed case documents: Supervisors and site managers will review reports, case plans, and other documents which require supervisory sign-off, for compliance with this directive before signing. The supervisor will review significant positive feedback with the PO/Caseworker and develop corrective actions as required, in a timely manner.
2. Site managers will use information from the supervisory reviews in supervisors' performance evaluations.
3. The Quality Management Unit will monitor the documentation review process annually for statewide consistency and will report to the Executive Management Team Quality Council.
4. The Quality Management Unit will provide technical assistance to supervisors and managers as needed.

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS

Each electronic case documentation will be reviewed against the following standards:

Professional Language:	
Respectful, void of labeling	
Accurate spelling, grammar, and language usage; quotes in quotation marks	
Understandable	
Succinct	
Specific and relevant	
Void of slang	
Opinions identified as opinions and supported by assessments and/or observed behaviors	
In compliance with confidentiality statutes, rules, and directives, including HIPAA	
Pertinent to the case being reviewed	
Victim-related Narratives:	
All of the above	
Only the victim's initials; no other identifying information	
Designated Victim Services/Contacts	
Coding:	
Information in electronic case note is fully completed and accurately coded	