# **Implementation of the Framework to reduce criminalisation of young people in residential care**

Residential care reporting template - Frequently Asked Questions

**Do I need to record all contact with police for young people in residential care?**

The intent of the Framework is to reduce the risk of criminalisation of young people in residential care through contact with police. However, you do not need to record all contact with police for young people in residential care in the reporting template.

The reporting template focuses on police callouts or attendance to the home in relation to young people’s behaviour, such as crisis incidents, or where police speak to a young person about their behaviour or behaviour/s of concern, such as at a police station, or when the young person is in the community.

A guide to reporting for residential care workers flowchart is available to help you know when to record police contact in the reporting template. If you have concerns as to whether to record police contact, speak with a house supervisor.

**If the police are called but do not take further action, should this still be recorded?**

Yes, each instance of police contact related to a young person's behaviour should be recorded, even if police do not take any formal or further action. The outcome of each police contact is captured on the reporting template. This is a point in time assessment, based on information known at the time of the incident (for example, police speak with the young person and/or staff and leave without further action).

**Should I record police contact where more than one young person is involved?**

Yes, all young people involved in the home whose behaviour was the subject of the call out/contact should be recorded. You should also record if, while attending the home, police speak to another young person and an incident arises, even if they were not the reason for the police contact. You do not need to record contact with young people who were a witness or victim only.

**What is the decision-making guide for residential care workers, and how does it influence police involvement?**

The Framework includes a [decision-making guide](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-02/A%20Framework%20to%20reduce%20criminalisation%20of%20young%20people%20in%20residential%20care.PDF) for residential care workers to guide the decision as to whether a police response is required. The guide sets out relevant factors to decide if a police response is necessary and/or appropriate to the circumstances. An assessment against the decision-making guide has been built into the reporting template.

**What is "behaviour support planning" for young people with a history of police contact?**

A behaviour support plan (BSP) includes a range of strategies to support a child or young person to build on their strengths and increase their life skills. Young people with a history of police contact should have a BSP in place that includes strategies to help the young person manage their behaviour and prevent further police involvement whilst focusing on their individual needs and circumstances.

A BSP is different to a ‘safety plan’ or ‘crisis plan’ which outline strategies or interventions in response to a behaviour of concern that has escalated to a critical point. However, safety or crisis plans may form part of a BSP.

**How can I support a child or young person to make a complaint or access legal supports if needed following an incident in the home?**

The Framework reinforces the need for residential care staff to provide information to young people about raising complaints or issues of concern to them.

Young people should be advised of their right to make a complaint, raise concerns, and how to access legal supports if needed, following incidents in the home and following police contact.

Refer to your organisation’s complaints processes in providing advice to young people. The department’s [complaints page](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/making-complaint-children-and-young-people-out-home-care-care-services) for young people has been updated to include information about external organisations that can support young people to raise complaints and/or legal supports that may be available to them.

Young people can be supported to make a complaint about a poor experience with [Victoria Police](https://www.police.vic.gov.au/complaints#types-of-complaints) or to report the actions or behaviour of police staff.

**How frequently should the spreadsheet be updated?**

The reporting template should be used to record each police call out/contact following an incident. Further police contact, even in relation to the same incident, should also be recorded. Data will be collated every 3 months to support monitoring of implementation of the Framework.

**What steps will be taken to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the data collected through the reporting template?**

Information collected through the reporting template may be shared with government agencies/Victoria Police to monitor outcomes of police contact for young people in residential care. Collated and de-identified data will inform localised action planning through new local multi-agency partnerships across DFFH divisions/areas and a planned review of the Framework and 18-month action plan. All data will be kept secure and confidential, following information sharing and privacy guidelines. If you, or a young person are concerned about the use, privacy and confidentiality of the data please contact theframework@dffh.vic.gov.au.

**How do I submit completed templates?**

For the 2-week period of implementation, completed templates are to be submitted by organisations, with data collated at an area level. Templates and feedback must be submitted by **10 October 2023**.

From 16 October 2023, completed templates will be submitted by organisations on a quarterly basis, with data collated at an area level.

Please submit data and/or any questions to theframework@dffh.vic.gov.au.