



Youth Offending Service

Case Allocation and Case Load Management Practice Guidance

Effective Date:	TBC
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Document Author:	TBC
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1. Context

This guidance is for YOS managers and case workers to help them to effectively manage their caseloads.

We recognise that the Youth Offending Service workforce can only do the quality of work that they want to do, and the service needs them to do if their caseloads are actively managed and maintained at a reasonable level. Enfield Youth Offending Service is a demand led statutory service and this is unlikely to change. The service does not employ a strict caseload management system because demands are too fluid to impose any workable system. Consequently, we need workers who are essentially flexible and responsive professionals. Case load management is a core activity that all team managers they should know about and manage the changing demands on team member's time. The key purpose of this guidance is to enable:

- the Youth Offending Service to allocate cases timely and effectively to ensure good journey of the child through the criminal justice system, enabling all young people and their families to receive an excellent high quality service that helps them to achieve desistance and good outcomes.
- achieve optimum utilisation of the case work capacity and resources within the YOS with focus on efficient use of the resources and sufficiency of responding to the demand on local youth justice services; and
- consideration and maximisation of our workforce capabilities, work life balance needs and resilience as part of our aspiration to provide high quality services. To deliver on this aspiration, we want to ensure that all of our employees have an equal chance to perform high quality youth justice service direct work and interventions that will achieve the right outcomes, at the right time for children and young people involved in Youth Offending Service and victims impacted by youth offending.

2. Case definition

Any young person / family or victim who is expected to receive direct/ indirect work / intervention from the Youth Offending service.

3. Case allocation practice guidance for managers

When a manager receives a case that needs allocating, there are various factors that need to be considered within the allocation process. These are as follows:

- **Experience** – Does the worker have the required skills to manage the case appropriately based on their skills and experience.
- **Capacity**– Does the worker have the capacity to manage the safety and risks of this young person effectively alongside their current workload
- **Case closures** – Does the worker have cases that are due for closure
- **Reduced caseload** – Does the worker have due to circumstances i.e new starter; ASYE etc or engaged in other duties which would warrant a reduced caseload
- **Needs of service** – There may be a time where the allocation has to take place due to the needs of service i.e long term sick; A/L; capacity

The allocated manager will use the Allocation list (see appendix 1) to assist with case allocation and to ensure fairness.

Case allocation time frames

All cases should be allocated within 24 hours of receipt of case. No cases should be unallocated where this occurs and there is a delay in the allocation process, there should be a Management Oversight on CVYJ stating the reason for the delay.

4. Case allocation and management principles for managers to follow

- All managers are expected to follow the following key principles to enable optimum utilisation of resources whilst responding to the needs of children and young people within youth justice and supporting the workforce to deliver high

quality service: Ensure that all cases are allocated in a timely manner and where there is a risk that case is not allocated, this must be escalated to the Head of Service or their deputy immediately who will agree a resolution.

- All case allocations will be based on the needs of the service, however, it should take into an account employee's areas of interest, skills and development.
- Effectively manage and drive case progression and case management process, ensuring timely case closures and timely transfers take place, consideration of early revocation where appropriate happens and timely and effective delivery of interventions.
- regularly review all case allocations and workloads as part of the supervision process with each employee and monitor the level of complexity and employee's capacity and experience unless there is a clear rationale for a reduced caseloads i.e employee working reduced hours, due to occupational health reasons.
- all employees should have full caseloads as per their qualification and experience.

5. Reallocation of cases guidance for managers to follow

At times it will be required to re-allocate or care take cases due to specific reasons outside of the control of the service, for instance, staff leaving the service or being absent from work. We recognise that the relational practice is critical to positive engagement of young people in youth justice to enable a good journey of the child and therefore all re-allocations will be carefully considered to ensure any detriment to the young person's engagement as a result of re-allocation is minimised.

5.1 Staff leaving service

It is important where a member of staff is leaving the service that there is a timely communication provided about this to the young person and their family to provide enough time to plan the exit strategy and introduction of a new case worker. It is important that there is a good handover between the departing case worker and new allocate case worker to ensure the journey of the child continues to be unaffected by this change. It is important

that managers allocated the new case worker at the earliest opportunity to enable smooth transition and good exit strategy.

5.2 Absence from work (due to annual leave of sickness)

Managers should not allocate cases to workers who are on Annual Leave and should also avoid allocating cases to workers who are due to go on Annual Leave.

Prior to the worker going on leave, they should consider the needs of young people on their caseloads and meet with their manager and agree how their cases will be managed in their absence. This meeting will include discussions in relation to intervention delivery; enforcement procedures; report writing, home visits and attending meetings.

No cases should be left unsupervised and all young people/ parents' carers should be told of their workers absence and given alternative contact details for the service in case they need to make contact.

If a worker is off due to sickness for a week or less, then in their absence their case should be seen by duty.

If the worker is due to be off for a much longer period, then the manager will need to make arrangements for the ongoing management of their caseload. This could be through other workers overseeing particular cases and case work or depending on the length of absence the manager may need to re allocate the case.

6. What can YOS workers expect?

- Case allocation process will take place through a direct 1:1 discussion via teams/telephone, or in person).
- Within the demands of the service, which must always take a precedence, allocation process will pay full regard to the interests and professional development needs of individual practitioners.
- Allocation will reflect the needs and experience of staff and those returning from extended absences and other individual circumstances.
- Case work supervision to monitor and review individual's caseloads and its demands and challenges in a supportive environment

- Managers can explore the opportunities to jointly allocate work and or identify some activities as lending themselves to co-working as a way of sharing different skills and experiences.

7. Overall service case load management

Overall service case load management responsibility sits with the Head of Service to ensure that service is appropriately resourced and configured to respond to the demands. Where concerns are identified about the service not being able to meet the demands, demand analysis will be undertaken to inform the most appropriate corrective action which could be:

- developing a business case for additional resources to meet the demands
- putting in place a temporary resource
- re-configuring the service resources/restructure to re-organise the resources to
- achieve optimum resource utilisation
- increase caseloads on a temporary basis

In every case of demand exceeding the resource, this must be escalated to the senior management team (Head of Young People and Community Safety, Director of Children and Families)

Service caseloads are monitored weekly through the Knowledge and Insight Hub.

8. Caseload matrix guidance

Appendix 1.

Allocations Lists

Please complete the form below stating your order of preference for who can be allocated a case/PSR in your team.

Form to be sent to allocating manager on Friday's on a fortnightly basis.

Once this list has been completed it will be used for two weeks. A number of cases arrive during the week so this list can be utilised until we have our allocations meetings which will continue on Monday's.

Name of Worker – Order of allocations within the team:	Allocation of a case or a PSR?	Reports/PSR's/Breaches Outstanding? (State Report Type)	Date given?	Date due?	Cases ending w/I month – Yes/No? Date	Case/PSR Allocated? Yes/No Initials of person allocating
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						