

## Duress Alarms and Two-way Radios

**Policy Number** 5.035

**Policy Function** Safe Practice and Environment

**Issue Date** 12 November 2018

**Summary** This policy relates to the use of personal duress alarms and two-way radios in all Correctional Centres, Periodic Detention Centres, Police Cells, Courts and Juvenile Justice Centres.

For the Forensic Hospital, staff must refer to policy 5.005 Alarm, Pagers & Two-Way Radio Use and Management - Forensic Hospital

**Responsible Officer** ED Corporate Services

**Applicable Sites**

- Administration Centres
- Community Sites (e.g. Court Liaison Service, Community Integration Team, etc.)
- Health Centres (Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells)
- Health Centres (Juvenile Justice Centres)
- Long Bay Hospital
- Forensic Hospital

**Previous Issue(s)** Policy 5.035 (Nov 2014; May 2009)

**Change Summary**

- *Minor changes only*

**TRIM Reference** POLJH/5.035

**Authorised by** Chief Executive, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

## 1. Preface

This policy relates to the use of personal duress alarms and two-way radios in all Correctional Centres, Periodic Detention Centres, Police Cells, Courts and Juvenile Justice Centres. Personal duress alarms and two-way radios provide additional safety and security for staff, and do not replace the role of Correctional officers, Sheriffs or youth officers or security/aggression management training.

For the Forensic Hospital, staff must refer to the

- Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (the Network) policy [5.005 Alarm, Pager & Two-Way Radio Use and Management – Forensic Hospital](#).

A hazard management approach to security must be adopted by each Health Centre. Each Nursing Unit Manager (NUM) Health Centre must identify, assess and eliminate or control security issues within the facility in which they are working. To do this each Health Centre NUM must consult with workers and liaise with the provider of security services within the correctional or Juvenile Justice facility where they are working. This approach will assist to minimise the likelihood of harm to staff resulting from aggression occurring in the workplace.

The [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) is the main legislation setting out a worker's right to a safe and healthy work environment.

## 2. Policy Content

### 2.1 Mandatory Requirements

To assist in providing the Network workers with a safe working environment and to provide Network workers with guidelines and instructions for the use of personal duress alarms and two-way radios.

### 2.2 Implementation – Roles & Responsibilities

**Managers** (Includes Departmental Managers, Nursing Unit Managers (NUM) and Nurse Managers) **are responsible for:**

- Implementing Policy [5.035 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios](#);
- Complying with each facility's local policies and procedures;
- Ensuring workers, when in a facility where personal duress alarms or two-way radios are available, wear a duress alarm and two-way radio at all times;
- Liaising with the provider of security services within correctional or Juvenile Justice facility to conduct regular testing of the equipment and systems;
- Acting on any reports of faulty equipment; and
- Ensuring that workers receive appropriate instruction and training, including location-specific orientation.

**All staff are responsible for:**

- Complying with policy [5.035 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios](#);
- Cooperating with managers and supervisors in relation to wearing a duress alarm or two-way radio;

- Reporting any faulty equipment to their manager;
- Complying with each facility's local policies and procedures in regards to duress alarms or two-way radios;
- In facilities where it is required, wearing a duress alarm or two-way radio at all times when entering a facility and not removing them until they are exiting the facility and
- Cooperating with the provider of security services within the correctional or Juvenile Justice facility, and their notification procedures in the event of a false alarm.

### 3. Procedure Content

#### 3.1 General

The *WHS Act 2011* requires employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees. The Network must provide all staff with appropriate guidelines and instructions for the use of Duress Alarms and Two-way Radios within Correctional facilities.

#### 3.2 Duress Alarms and Two-Way Radios

Personal duress alarms and two-way radios are the property of each individual facility. Each facility, controlled by the provider of security services within the correctional or Juvenile Justice facility, will determine which staff and/or visitors require a personal duress alarm or two-way radio. The Network must comply with the facility's policy and procedures. A staff member must accompany the Network visitors at all times. Staff visiting facilities that they do not usually work in must request a duress alarm or be accompanied by a permanent staff member of the facility.

When required, personal duress alarms are to be worn at all times, attached to the person's clothing or belt. They are not to be worn around the neck. Personal duress alarms are either activated by pushing a button or the man down feature (staff member falling or being knocked to the ground)

Network staff working in Juvenile Justice Centres will be issued with a two-way radio as a form of personal alarm. The radios must be turned on at all times and worn attached to a belt provided by JJNSW. In centres where earpieces are provided, the earpiece must be worn at all times ensuring communication lines are open.

#### 3.3 Maintenance/Records

It is the responsibility of the provider of security services within the correctional or Juvenile Justice facility to supply the duress alarm or two-way radio, and to maintain and service the equipment. The Network workers must report any faults with alarms to their manager or to a delegated person in charge of duress alarms or two-way radios at the individual facility. Workers must not deliberately tamper with or damage any equipment supplied to them.

Organisations who supply a personal duress alarm or two-way radio are also responsible for recording which alarm or radio is issued to each individual.

#### 3.4 Training

Organisations supplying the Network workers with personal duress alarms and radios must:

## Duress Alarms and Two-way Radios

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- ensure they have a system in place that provides for training of persons responsible for monitoring personal duress alarms and two-way radios,
- ensure persons are appropriately trained in the use of equipment,
- respond effectively to a radio call, and
- be familiar with the response plan.

It is the responsibility of the organisation supplying a personal duress alarm or radio to the Network workers to ensure staff are aware how to activate the alarm or operate the radio, how it is to be worn, how it is monitored, the response process and any further relevant information.

the Network managers are to ensure their local workplace induction program includes locations of fixed duress alarms, how to activate the alarm, local security policy and procedures and what the response plan is when an alarm is activated.

For facilities where personal duress alarms are issued, workplace induction is to include:

- how to activate the alarm;
- what to do if an alarm is accidentally set off;
- where to record the number of the duress alarm issued to a staff member; and
- the facility's policy and procedure on personal duress alarms if applicable.

Where two-way radios are supplied in Juvenile Justice Centres, workplace induction is to include how to operate the radio and earpiece, how to call for assistance and the facility's policy and procedure on radios if applicable.

Each location site or facility where two-way radios and duress alarms are provided must develop a Safe Work Practice in consultation with the department they are working with e.g. CSNSW or JJNSW and include it as part of workplace induction training.

Staff must note that there may be areas within centres with 'blind spots' where equipment cannot be monitored. Duress alarms and two-way radios should therefore not be a replacement for good situational awareness. Good judgement should treat radios and portable duress alarms as a secondary line of defence whenever possible. Additionally, staff must exercise caution by ensuring that another colleague is aware of their location at all times.

### 3.5 When to Activate a Duress Alarm or Radio

Duress alarms and radios should be activated when staff are unable to diffuse a potentially violent situation, are unable to retreat, unable to seek support from other staff, or when staff feel threatened or unsafe. All staff should feel assured that in the event of their triggering a duress alarm or radio or seeking urgent assistance in a threatening situation, an appropriate response is available. When activating a personal duress alarm or radio staff are to act in accordance with the agreed immediate response as determined by each facility.

After the event staff must:

- Be provided with medical attention if required;
- Report the incident to their manager; and
- Submit a notification on the Incident Information Management System (IIMS).

After the event, managers should:

- Ensure staff are aware of the Worker Assistance Program (EAP) services;
- Organise for staff to be debriefed if necessary;
- Notify NSW Police if required and;
- Investigate, notify and follow up as per Policy [2.030 Incident Management](#).

All systems need to be monitored and reviewed; if system failures occur, all stakeholders should be consulted and improvements or issues addressed.

## 4. Definitions

### Must

Indicates a mandatory action to be complied with.

### Should

Indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

## 5. Legislation and Related Documents

Legislation	<a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011</a> <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017</a>
NSW Health Policy Documents	<a href="#">IB2013_024 Protecting People and Property: NSW Health Policy and Standards for Security Risk Management</a> <a href="#">PD2015_001 Preventing &amp; Managing Violence in the NSW Health Workplace – A zero Tolerance Approach.</a>
Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network Policies	<a href="#">5.005 Alarm, Pager &amp; Two-Way Radio Use &amp; Management – FH</a> <a href="#">2.030 Incident Management</a>
Juvenile Justice NSW	<i>Alarm Procedure</i> <i>CCTV &amp; Radio Surveillance Policy</i> <i>CCTV &amp; Radio Surveillance Procedure</i> <i>Individual Centre's Emergency Manuals.</i>
CSNSW	<i>Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures:</i> <i>15.1 Safe work practises</i> <i>16.8 Health centre security</i>