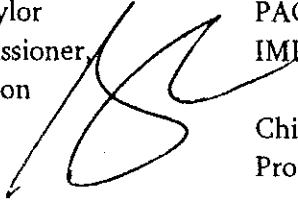


**City of New York  
Administration for Children's Services**

**SUBJECT:** Securing Children's Personal Property at the Children's Center

**Approved By:** Gilbert Taylor  
Executive Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Child Protection



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**IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY:**

Children's Services Staff: Division of Child  
Protection (DCP)

**Date:** October 18, 2012

### **Purpose**

This policy is intended to guide the Division of Child Protection (DCP) staff on the process for securing children's property including, but not limited to, clothing, jewelry, electronic equipment, monies, and other valuables during the removal and placement of children. The policy provides specific guidance for securing children's property while the children are at the Children's Center.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Division of Child Protection staff involved in the removal and placement of children. The policy is effective immediately.

### **Policy**

When children are being removed from a parent, guardian, or person legally responsible (PLR), DCP Staff is required to inform the parent/guardian/PLR (PLR) about the process for securing the children's property. DCP staff should secure the children's property while the children are at the Children's Center and return all property to the children upon discharge from the Children's Center. When children leave property at the Children's Center, Children's Center staff is required to secure the property and make reasonable efforts to locate and return the property to the parent/guardian/PLR/child before disposing of such property.

### **Procedure**

#### **Borough Office Staff**

1. When children are being removed, staff conducting the removal shall ask the parent/guardian/PLR and children to identify any property the children have in their possession. Staff shall inform the parent/guardian/PLR and children about the process in place for securing the property while the children are at the Children's Center.

2. The parent/guardian/PLR and children shall also be informed that when property is left at the Children's Center, Children's Center staff will attempt to contact and return the property/valuables to the parent/guardian/PLR/children. Furthermore, the parent/guardian/PLR and children shall be notified that if the attempt to return the property/valuable is unsuccessful and remains unclaimed, the property will be disposed of after one year.
3. Upon arrival at the Children's Center, staff accompanying the children should inspect the agency vehicle to determine that the children have not left any personal property in the vehicle. Staff shall also alert the Children's Center staff if the children have valuables in their possession.

#### **Children's Center Staff**

1. When children arrive at the Children's Center, Children's Center staff are required to inquire if the children have property in their possession. Children often bring personal property to the Children's Center including clothing, cell phones, iPods, laptops, computer games, jewelry, and other valuables.
2. Staff are required to explain to the children the procedures for securing children's property while at the Children's Center, the process for returning their property and the procedure that will be followed should the children leave property at the Children's Center.
3. Children's Services Staff shall label all personal property with the child's name, date of birth, and case ID #and store the property in a secure room.
4. The items shall be inventoried and the inventory list shall be signed by the Children's Services staff who completes the inventory. Children who are of appropriate age and cognitive ability should be asked to sign the inventoried list indicating that all of their personal property was included in the inventory list. Children younger than ten years of age should not be asked to sign the inventory list. A copy of the inventory list should be given to the child. A copy of the signed document should also be scanned and stored in an accessible electronic file.
5. Children's Center staff will return property to the children upon their discharge from the Children's Center.
6. Children brought to the Children Center with inadequate clothing will be provided clothing which they are allowed to take with them upon discharge.

#### **Returning Property**

1. When children are being discharged from the Children's Center, Children's Center Staff are required to return the children's property along with a copy of the inventory list. Children who are of appropriate age and cognitive ability should be asked to sign the inventory list indicating that all property was

returned. Children younger than ten years of age need not be asked to sign the inventoried list.

2. A copy of the signed document should be scanned and stored in an accessible electronic file. Copies of the physical document will remain on file at the Children's Center for 90 days.
3. Children's Center Staff shall verify that all personal property is returned to the children upon their discharge from the Children's Center.

### **Unclaimed Property**

- I. If children leave the Children's Center to go to a planned placement and their inventoried property is not returned to them before leaving the Children's Center, Children's Center Staff shall make reasonable efforts to return the property to the children. Reasonable efforts shall include, at a minimum, contacting the Foster Care agency caseworker and arranging for the inventoried property to be picked up by the agency and then delivered to the child at his or her placement.
- II. If children leave the Children's Center to return home and their inventoried property is not returned to them before leaving, Children's Center Staff shall make reasonable efforts to return the property to the children. Such reasonable efforts shall include, at a minimum, contacting the children's parent/guardian/PLR regarding the property to make arrangements for the retrieval or delivery of the property.
- III. When youth leave the Children's Center without permission and leave their inventoried property at the Children's Center:
  1. Within 72 hours of a child leaving without permission, Children's Center Staff will mail out a notification letter to the parent/guardian/PLR informing them about the unclaimed property and that they have 90 days to pick up the child's property.
  2. If the property is not picked up by the 90<sup>th</sup> day, Children's Center Staff will mail the property to the last known address for the child.
  3. If the property is returned to the Children's Center after being mailed, staff will notify Day Program and request that the items are collected and put in off-site storage.
  4. Children's Services will keep children's property for a period of one year and then the property will be disposed of.

### **Record Keeping**

1. Children's Services Staff will maintain a log of the date the notification letter was mailed to the parent/guardian/PLR; if a parent/guardian/PLR and/or child retrieves the property, what they retrieved and the date they retrieved the property; the date the property was mailed to the last known address; if the property is returned by mail to the Children's Center, the date the property

was delivered to the CC; the date the request was made to the Day Program for collection of the items and the date the items were collected by the Day Program.

2. A copy of the notification letter mailed to the parent/guardian/PLR and the inventory of items will be scanned, and stored in an accessible electronic file. Copies of the mailed letters will remain on file at the Children's Center for a period of 90 days.

If you have any questions about what is contained in this policy, please speak with your on-site management.