

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES**

<b>Subject:</b> <b>ADOLESCENT TEAM (A – TEAM)</b>	<b>Policy Number:</b> <b>36</b>
<b>Number of Pages:</b> 3	<b>Section:</b>
<b>Attachments:</b> <b>Referral Packet</b>	<b>Related Standards &amp; References:</b> <b>Mississippi Code annotated 1972 Section 43-14-1</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> <b>June 1, 2012</b>	<b>Approved:</b>  <b>James Maccarone, Director</b>

**I. POLICY**

It is the policy that an Adolescent Team (A-Team) will be established in each Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services Region.

The A-Team shall provide System of Care Services for non-violent youthful offenders who have serious behavioral or emotional disorders.

The establishment and functioning of the A-Team is set in statute and will follow guidelines set by Mississippi Code Annotated 1972, Section 43-14-1.

A completed referral packet, on each juvenile, is to be completed and presented to the Regional A-Team.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

None

**III. PROCEDURE**

A Community Services, Youth Services Counselor is responsible for completing a referral packet on any youth paroled from Oakley Youth Development Center on psychotropic drugs and any youth in the community hard to place. All youth must be staffed by the A-Team prior to being referred to the State Review Team.

## **A-Teams**

### Target Population

#### Section 43-14-1(4) (b)

Juvenile offenders (up to age 20) who are identified by the respective Youth Court in each youth's home county as non-violent youthful offenders who have serious behavioral or emotional disorders; these "non-violent offenses" include those termed "status offenses".\*

The "non-violent offender" has been defined as including non-status and status offenses as long as they are non-violent. Specifically these are as follows: alcohol offenses, arson, making threat of injury to a building, school, or program; burglary; CHINS/Runaway; contempt of court; disorderly conduct; drug offenses; grand larceny; harassment; malicious mischief; petit larceny; and shoplifting.

#### Section 43-21-605(1) (k) (iii) & (1)

"The disposition order provides that the court has considered the medical, educational, vocational, social & psychological guidance, training, social education, counseling, substance abuse treatment, and other rehabilitative services required by that child as determined by the court; or

Referral to A-Team provided system of care services".

### Team Coordinators

- Division of Youth Services Regional Director
- Others as approved by MDHS/DYS

### Team Composition

- Youth Court Counselor
- Community Mental Health Professional
- School Counselor or School Attendance Officer
- Social Services/Child Welfare Professional
- Parent of a child with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) who has been in the juvenile justice system

\*Status offenses include: Child in Need of Supervision, Runaway, Disobedient Child, Child in Need of Special Care, and Truancy.

### **Special Notes for the A-Team Referral Process**

1. A-Teams are not placement teams for 24-hour treatment centers or hospitals nor are they authorized to recommend placement in a training school. A-Teams are responsible for recommending an appropriate system of care in the community for youthful offenders for whom such a system of care can be identified.
2. The Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) representative on each A-Team shall be an individual with a Master's degree, at a minimum, from children's youth mental health services of a CMHC who is qualified as per current DMH Minimum Standards for Community Mental Health/Mental Retardation Services to conduct an Intake/Assessment.

The completed A-Team Referral packet should provide adequate amounts and types of information for the CMHC team representative to make a preliminary determination that a youth meets or does not meet a diagnosis from the DSM-IVR that is among those recognized by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health's clinical determination of being a serious emotional disturbance (SED). Also, an additionally important role for the CMHC representative is to determine the initial intensity and types of community-based mental health services for respective youth who can be appropriately served through a system of care in the community.

The presence and participation of appropriate CMHC members on the A-Team provide the prescribed State Statute 43-14-1 Sec (4) b linkage between MAP Teams and A-Teams.

3. A case identified as a "Child in Need of Supervision" (CHINs) who has a serious behavioral or emotional disorder may be served by the A-Team or the MAP Team.
4. The DYS Counselor is responsible for making certain that the A-Team referral packet is completely filled out and that any requested available documents are attached to the referral packet.