

**Independent Custody Visiting Association
Checklist for Independent Custody Visitors
Strip and Intimate Searching Children
October 2020**



Background

Schemes have asked ICVA (via the NEF) ICVA to produce a briefing regarding strip searching with specific note on what [PACE Code C Annex A](#) says on both strip and intimate searching for children and young people (any detainee aged 17 or under). This checklist is designed to accompany the briefing, and has a particular focus on custody records as ICVs will not be present at a search.

When you arrive in custody

- Prioritise visits to children.

During your visit

- Check on rights, entitlements and wellbeing as you would for any visit.
- If the detainee is a child, ask them if they have been subject to a search (being sensitive not to elicit details which may make the child embarrassed or uncomfortable).
- Ask the detainee if you are able to check the custody record.

Strip Search - When looking at the custody record (with permission)

- Check that the rationale for the search is fully recorded.
- Check the location of the search and that it was not able to be seen by others in the suite.
- Check that the names and gender of those present at the search is recorded.
- Check to see if the AA was present, and if they were not, that either:
 - This was at the request of the child, the child's decision was recorded with the signature of the AA in agreement.
 - If the search was considered urgent and therefore went ahead prior to the arrival of the AA, the reason for urgency was recorded.
 - A note has been made of attempts to get an AA in attendance as soon as possible.
- Check that the result of the search is recorded.

Intimate Search - When looking at the custody record (with permission)

- Check that the rationale for the search is fully recorded.
- Check the location of the search and that it was not able to be seen by others in the suite.

- Check that the details of those present at the search is recorded, including the gender of officers.
- If the search was undertaken by an officer, that the decision to do so has been authorised by an officer of inspector rank or above.
- Check to see if the AA was present, and, if they were not, that either:
 - this was at the request of the child, the child's decision was recorded and the AA had signed to agree.
 - The search was considered urgent and undertaken by an officer rather than a medical professional and without the AA in attendance.
 - Check the reason for urgency was recorded.
 - A note has been made of attempts to get an AA in attendance as soon as possible.
- Check that the result of the search is recorded.

When completing your report

- Report on rights, entitlements and wellbeing as normal.

If you have had access to the custody record:

- Note rationale for custody staff authorising a strip and/or intimate search.
- Comment generally as to whether the process for the appropriate type of search has been followed with the custody record reflecting the detail that PACE requires (such as who was present at search, sex of those present etc.)
- Note any result of the search.
- Remember:
 - If something feels like good practice – report it!
 - If something feels concerning – report it!