

Australian Capital Territory

Corrections Management (Use of Chemical Agents – First Aid and Cleaning) Operating Procedure 2026

Notifiable instrument NI2026–164

made under the

Corrections Management Act 2007, s14 (Corrections policies and operating procedures)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Corrections Management (Use of Chemical Agents – First Aid and Cleaning) Operating Procedure 2026*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Operating Procedure

I make this operating procedure to facilitate the effective and efficient management of correctional services.

4 Revocation

This instrument revokes the *Corrections Management (Use of Chemical Agents – First Aid and Cleaning) Operating Procedure 2024* [NI2024-565].

Leanne Close ^{APM}
Commissioner
ACT Corrective Services

26 March 2026



OPERATING PROCEDURE	Use of Chemical Agents – First Aid and Cleaning
OPERATING PROCEDURE NO.	11.4
SCOPE	ACT Correctional Centres

PURPOSE

To provide instructions to staff on the first aid and cleaning process after the use of chemical agents.

PROCEDURE

1 General

- 1.1 The first aid and cleaning process must be started as soon as practicable after the person has been exposed to chemical agents.
- 1.2 Officers should, where possible, treat those exposed persons who appear most affected before treating those who appear less affected.
- 1.3 Prior to moving a person for first aid and cleaning, the officer must:
 - a. assess the situation and determine that it is safe to do so
 - b. wear disposable gloves and a mask or glasses if needed.
- 1.4 Staff must be alert to the signs and symptoms of distress or potential medical emergency in accordance with the *Use of Force and Restraint Policy* when using chemical agents.
- 1.5 Officers must provide first aid and cleaning for a person in accordance with the *Use of Force and Restraint Policy* and training.

2 First aid and cleaning process

- 2.1 An affected person should be placed facing into the wind where possible.
- 2.2 In a planned use of chemical agents, the OIC must determine and identify which of the existing designated first aid and cleaning sites is the most appropriate to use. In an unplanned use of force officers must use the nearest suitable source of continuous cool water. At the Court Transport Unit, showers are suitable for first aid and cleaning.
- 2.3 Tubs, buckets or bowls of water must not be used to clean a person.
- 2.4 The officer must apply a continuous 'soft' flow of fresh, cool water to the affected person's forehead and allow the water to run down over the face.
- 2.5 The officer must instruct the affected person to bend forward to avoid the water running over the rest of the body. Allow the water to flow in a manner that will still allow the affected person to breathe.
- 2.6 The officer must instruct the affected person to:

- a. remain calm
 - b. breathe in via the mouth and out of the nose
 - c. blink their eyes rapidly under the water flow
 - d. blow their nose, cough and spit to remove the chemical agent
 - e. not rub the affected area and eyes
- 2.7 Where practical, allow the affected person to control the water, moving in and out of the water as they need.
- 2.8 A minimum of 15 minutes of water first aid and cleaning must be provided. However, only the affected person can say when they are clean. If the facilities and incident permits, access to more water must be permitted.
- 2.9 Once all people have been cleaned, officers must ensure any PPE including respirators or breathing apparatus is aired and, where appropriate, cleaned in accordance with training.

3 First aid and cleaning of a detainee

- 3.1 Officers must inform the affected detainee they can assist them in the first aid and cleaning process, but the detainee must follow all officer directions.
- 3.2 Where a detainee is non-compliant with officers' direction, officers must ensure the detainee is appropriately contained for the safety of themselves and others.
- 3.3 First aid and cleaning with water must only be commenced when the detainee is compliant with the officer's instructions and where it is safe to do so.
- 3.4 Where officers are assisting a detainee and the detainee becomes non-compliant with officers' directions, officers may restrain the detainee in accordance with the *Use of Force and Restraint Policy*.
- 3.5 The officer must remove any items covering the affected detainee's face, including glasses. However, contact lenses must only be removed by a healthcare professional or the detainee themselves.
- 3.6 Where the detainee's clothing is not being seized as evidence the items must be stored and washed separately to prevent cross contamination.
- 3.7 The detainee must be immediately issued with fresh ACTCS issued clothing and be placed on observations for two hours or as otherwise advised by a Justice Health staff member.

First aid and cleaning at the Court Transport Unit

- 3.8 Detainees must be assisted to self-clean in the shower where possible.
- 3.9 Officers must provide first aid and cleaning aftercare in the first instance with an ambulance to be contacted in cases of continuing significant symptoms or medical emergencies.
- 3.10 Where chemical agents are used, the detainee is to be placed on 15x24 hour observations until such time as the detainee is released from custody or transported to Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).
- 3.11 Where a detainee is released from custody after being exposed to chemical agents and continues to display symptoms, they should be offered assistance with seeking further medical advice, such as phoning their medical service.

4 First aid and cleaning of a person other than a detainee

- 4.1 Persons other than a detainee, e.g., officers, other staff members, visitors or contractors, must be assisted to clean in accordance with section 2.
- 4.2 Where possible, clothing contaminated by chemical agents should be placed in bags and labelled as contaminated with the chemical agent to avoid cross-contamination. Clothing can safely be taken home to launder.
- 4.3 A person whose clothing has been contaminated by chemical agents must be offered the opportunity to access fresh clothing.
- 4.4 Once a person can continue with self-cleaning, assisting officers should move to the next person.
- 4.5 All people exposed to chemical agents, who remain on ACTCS premises, must be placed on regular observations for continuing significant symptoms or medical emergency for two hours or in accordance with medical advice.
- 4.6 Where a person other than a detainee leaves ACTCS premises within the two-hour period in 4.5 or continues to display symptoms after 45 minutes, the person should be offered assistance with seeking further medical advice, such as phoning their medical service.

First aid and cleaning of officers

- 4.7 Officers who have participated in a use of force involving chemical agents must wash their hands as soon as practical.
- 4.8 Officers whose clothing has been exposed to chemical agents must notify the CO3, who will ensure they are issued with fresh clothing from stores. To prevent secondary contamination an unaffected officer must retrieve any replacement clothing required.
- 4.9 Where a staff member who has been exposed to a chemical agent continues to experience symptoms after first aid and cleaning, their supervisor should consider temporarily changing their duties.

5 Crime scene management

- 5.1 If the area in which a chemical agent was used is to be considered a crime scene and further investigation is required, the scene should be secured with only limited ventilation, as per the Crime Scene Management Operating Procedure and Evidence Management Operating Procedure. First aid and cleaning will not commence until the crime scene has been released by ACT Police.
- 5.2 Officers securing the crime scene must manage any chemical agent units/canisters used in the incident as potential evidence. Where police wish to remove canisters, officers must record the serial numbers of units and provide them to the Armoury Officer, so the units can be accounted for in records.
- 5.3 Investigators must be informed that a chemical agent was used, and that the area has not been ventilated.
- 5.4 Where a detainee or officer is exposed to chemical agents and their clothing is considered evidence as part of a crime, the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) must ensure officers seize all clothing as per the Evidence Management Operating Procedure. The person must be issued with

fresh ACTCS issued clothing. The evidence bags must be labelled that chemical agents were used and that the items have not been cleaned.

- 5.5 Where a person other than a detainee or officer is exposed to chemical agents and their clothing is considered evidence as part of a crime, the officers establishing the crime scene must request that the person remain until ACT Policing take charge of the crime scene.

6 Building cleaning

- 6.1 If the area is not considered a crime scene an officer must ensure normal ventilation of the area. Use of an extractor fan may be appropriate.
- 6.2 The OIC will determine whether ACTCS staff will clean the exposed area or a specialised external cleaning service is required. The area must be ventilated for a suitable period before cleaning and the cleaner must wear appropriate PPE.
- 6.3 The Officer-in-Charge must also consult the Facilities Management Unit to determine if additional equipment servicing or cleaning is required before the space is reoccupied.
- 6.4 All exposed food must be disposed of. Contaminated areas may be washed with soap and water.
- 6.5 Detainee clothing or property contaminated by chemical agents must be placed in bags and labelled as contaminated with the chemical agent, the date of the incident and the detainee's name and PID. Clothing must be provided to the Laundry Officer for laundering. Bags with property other than clothing must be provided to the detainee once they have returned to their cell, with advice on how to clean items.

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

- Crime Scene Management Operating Procedure
- Evidence Management Operating Procedure
- Use of Force and Restraint Policy



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ACT Corrective Services
25 March 2026

Document details

Criteria	Details
Document title:	<i>Corrections Management (Use of Chemical Agents – First Aid and Cleaning) Operating Procedure 2026</i>
Document owner/approver:	Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations, ACT Corrective Services
Date effective:	The day after the notification date
Review date:	5 years after the notification date
Responsible Officer:	Senior Director Operations and Senior Director Court Transport Unit
Compliance:	This operating procedure reflects the requirements of the <i>Corrections Management (Policy Framework) Policy 2024</i>

Version Control			
Version no.	Date	Description	Author
V1	October 2021	First Issued	S Leedham
V2	August 2024	Revised to align with amendments to Use of Force and Restraint Policy	H Cheney
V3	February 2026	Revised to clarify established first aid/cleaning locations following planned UoF	S Gray