

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
600 School Climate and Discipline

610 Limitations on Use of Seclusion and Restraint

1.0 Purpose and Authority

- 1.1 The purpose of this regulation is to establish standards and procedures for the use of physical restraint, chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion to provide safety for all individuals. The regulations set forth permitted and prohibited uses of restraint and seclusion, required training for public school, private program, or alternative program personnel, required documentation and reporting of incidents of restraint and seclusion, required notification to parents, and waiver procedures for individual students.
- 1.2 These regulations are promulgated in accordance with 14 **Del.C.** §4112F.
26 DE Reg. 472 (12/01/22)

2.0 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Alternative program" means a program established pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** Ch. 16.

"Chemical restraint" means a drug or medication used on a student to control behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is either not medically prescribed for the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition or not administered as prescribed. (Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(1)).

"Individualized Education Program" or **"IEP"** means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Sections 7.0 through 11.0 of 14 **DE Admin. Code** 925.

"Mechanical restraint" means the application of any device or object that restricts a student's freedom of movement or normal access to a portion of the body that the student cannot easily remove. "Mechanical restraint" does not include devices or objects used by trained school personnel, or used by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which they were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including the following:

- Restraints for medical immobilization;
- Adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to allow greater freedom of movement stability than would be possible without use of such devices or mechanical supports;
- Vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle;
- Instruction and use of restraints as part of a criminal justice or other course; or
- Notwithstanding their design for other purposes, adaptive use of benign devices or objects, including mittens and caps, to deter self-injury.

(Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(2))

"Parent" means:

- A biological or adoptive parent of a child;
- A guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State);
- An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives and for whom a Relative Caregiver's School Authorization executed in compliance with 14 **Del.C.** §202(f)(1) is on file;
- An individual who is otherwise legally responsible for the child's welfare; or
- A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Section 19.0 of 14 **DE Admin. Code** 926.

The biological or adoptive parent, when attempting to act as the parent under these regulations, and when more than one party is qualified under this definition to act as a parent, must be presumed to be the parent for purposes of this definition unless the biological or adoptive parent does not have legal authority to make educational decisions for the child. If a judicial decree or order identifies a specific person or persons

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to act as the "parent" of a child, or to make educational decisions on behalf of a child, then such person or persons shall be determined to be the "parent" for purposes of this definition.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(23); 14 **Del.C.** §3110)

"Physical restraint" means a restriction imposed by a person that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to freely move arms, legs, body, or head. "Physical restraint" does not include physical contact that:

- Helps a student respond or complete a task;
- Is needed to administer an authorized health-related service or procedure; or
- Is needed to physically escort a student when the student does not resist or the student's resistance is minimal.

(Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(3))

"Principal" means the building principal, or the equivalent of the building principal, of any public school or charter school, or the building principal's designee.

"Private program" means a non-public school or program contracted by a school district or charter school.

"Public school personnel" means an employee or contractor of a public school district or charter school.

"Public school personnel" does not include the following:

- A law enforcement officer as defined in § 9200(b) of Title 11; unless the law enforcement officer meets the definition of a School Resource Officer/SRO; or
- An employee or contractor providing educational services within a Department of Correction or Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services facility. (Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(4))

"School Resource Officer" or **"SRO"** means a contractor, subcontractor or employee of a public school district or charter school who is a sworn law enforcement officer as defined in 11 **Del.C.** §9200.

"Seclusion" means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room, enclosure, or space that is either locked or, while unlocked, physically disallows egress. The use of a "timeout" procedure during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion." (Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(5))

"Student" means any individual enrolled in a Delaware public school or charter school, an alternative program pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** Ch. 16, or a private program pursuant to Title 14 **Del.C.** Chapter 31, Section 3124.

"Timeout" means a behavior management technique in which, to provide a student with the opportunity to reflect or regain self-control, a student is separated from others for a limited period in a setting that is not locked and the exit is not physically blocked by furniture, closed door held shut from outside, or other inanimate object. (Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(a)(6))

"Written report" means printed paper filings and electronic filings that can be printed.

22 DE Reg. 55 (07/01/18)

26 DE Reg. 472 (12/01/22)

3.0 Use of Restraints

- 3.1 Public school personnel, private program personnel, and alternative program personnel are prohibited from imposing on any student:
 - 3.1.1 Chemical restraint; and
 - 3.1.2 Subject to waiver authorized by 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(c)(4) and Section 8.0, mechanical restraint and seclusion.
- 3.2 Such personnel may impose physical restraint only in conformity with all of the following standards:
 - 3.2.1 The student's behavior presents a significant and imminent risk of bodily harm to self or others;
 - 3.2.2 The physical restraint does not interfere with the student's ability to communicate in the student's primary language or mode of communication;
 - 3.2.3 The physical restraint does not interfere with the student's ability to breathe or place weight or pressure on the student's head, throat, or neck;
 - 3.2.4 The physical restraint does not recklessly exacerbate a medical or physical condition of the student;
 - 3.2.5 Less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in stopping the imminent risk of bodily harm to the student or others, except in case of a rare and clearly unavoidable emergency circumstance posing imminent risk of bodily harm, including, without limitation, intervening in a student initiated physical assault or altercation;

- 3.2.6 For a student with a disability as defined in 14 **Del.C.**, Chapter 31 or 34 C.F.R. Part 104, the physical restraint does not contravene provisions in an IEP, behavior intervention plan, accommodation plan, or any other planning document for the individual student;
- 3.2.7 Personnel use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from the threatened harm;
- 3.2.8 The physical restraint ends when a medical condition occurs putting the student at risk of harm or the student's behavior no longer presents an imminent risk of bodily harm to the student or others;
- 3.2.9 The physical restraint is within the scope of force authorized by 11 **Del.C.** §468.

(Authority: 14 **Del.C.** §4112F(b))

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4.0 Training of Personnel

- 4.1 Except as provided in 14 **Del.C.** §702(c), a student may be physically restrained only by public school personnel, private program personnel, or alternative program personnel who have completed training in physical restraint procedures.
 - 4.1.1 Such personnel shall receive annual training in the use of crisis prevention and intervention techniques consistent with nationally-recognized training programs, which shall meet the following minimum requirements:
 - 4.1.1.1 The training shall address prevention techniques, de-escalation techniques, and positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports;
 - 4.1.1.2 The training shall be designed to meet the needs of such personnel consistent with their duties and the potential need for emergency safety interventions; and
 - 4.1.2 Each public school, private program, and alternative program shall maintain written or electronic documentation of each training provided, which shall include a list of all personnel who participated in the training.
- 4.2 Any public school personnel responsible for reporting the physical restraint of a student to the Department of Education shall complete training on the reporting process approved by the Department of Education and any additional training that the Department of Education may prescribe.
 - 4.2.1 The approved training shall be provided using a web-based platform through the Department of Education's Professional Development Management System (PDMS) or similar system. The training will be provided on an annual basis and made available throughout each school year.
 - 4.2.2 Such personnel responsible for reporting the physical restraint of a student shall complete the approved training at least once every 3 years and during any year in which reporting procedures were changed from the previous year as indicated by the Department of Education.

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5.0 Parental Notification of Use of Physical Restraint

- 5.1 Except as provided in subsection 5.1.1, if a student is physically restrained, a reasonable attempt shall be made to notify the parent on the same day, but in no event later than twenty-four hours after, the physical restraint is used. Such notification shall be made in person, by phone or by voicemail, or by e-mail. The school shall maintain written documentation of successful and unsuccessful attempts to notify the parent.
 - 5.1.1 Where physical restraint is included in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan, the IEP Team or Section 504 Team, including the parent, shall determine a timeframe and manner of notification of each incident of physical restraint.
- 5.2 The parent shall be provided a copy of a final written report no later than the date on which such report is filed with the Department of Education. The written report shall contain, at a minimum, the information required under Section 6.0.

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6.0 Uniform Data Collection

- 6.1 When an incident of physical restraint of a student by public school personnel, private program personnel, and charter school personnel occurs:

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- 6.1.1 As soon as practicable thereafter, a reasonable attempt shall be made to interview the student regarding the incident; and
- 6.1.2 The school principal or charter school leader must provide a written report, in a uniform format as determined by the Department of Education, of the restraint to the Department of Education within 72 hours of the restraint, or within 72 hours of the time in which the student's district or charter school of residence receives notice of the restraint from the contracted private program or alternative program, whichever the case may be; and
- 6.1.3 The written report shall include, at a minimum:
 - 6.1.3.1 Details of the restraint incident, including, but not limited to, the student behavior and description of events leading to the use of physical restraint; de-escalation techniques utilized by school personnel prior to the restraint; a description of the student's behavior during the restraint; a summary of witness interviews, if applicable; any injury caused to the student, staff members, or other students; and any related treatment deemed necessary as a result of the restraint.
 - 6.1.3.2 Demographic information on affected students to include age, race, ethnicity, and disability category;
 - 6.1.3.3 A description of the interview conducted with the student, if applicable; and
 - 6.1.3.4 If applicable, a description of changes to any or all of the following that resulted from the restraint incident:
 - 6.1.3.4.1 For a student with a disability as defined in 14 **Del.C.**, Chapter 31 or 34 C.F.R. Part 104, the student's IEP, behavioral support, crisis intervention plan, accommodation plan, or any other planning document for the individual student;
 - 6.1.3.4.2 School or local educational agency policy or procedure; or
 - 6.1.3.4.3 Additional staff training.

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7.0 Annual Reporting Requirement

The Department of Education shall issue an annual report on the use of physical restraint, which shall include rates of usage by school and by subcategories identified pursuant to Section 6.0, identify trends, and analyze significant results. The report shall be posted on the Department of Education's website.

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8.0 Waiver

- 8.1 Any public school, private program, or alternative program applicant for a waiver of the prohibition on the use of mechanical restraints or seclusion for an individual student must deliver the request in writing, in a uniform format developed by the Department of Education, to the Secretary or Secretary's designee setting forth the grounds for the request.
 - 8.1.1 The request shall be based on compelling justification supported by documentation, including, but not limited to, educational records, reporting of incidents, and the student's functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan, including implementation data, and medical documentation, if applicable.
 - 8.1.2 The request shall contain a description of the conditions and safeguards that the applicant will utilize in connection with the waiver, including, but not limited to:
 - 8.1.2.1 A detailed description of the proposed continual visual staff monitoring of student;
 - 8.1.2.2 A requirement that the parent be notified of each use of mechanical restraint or seclusion which conforms to the procedure set forth in Section 5.0 for reporting physical restraint except that the provisions of subsection 5.1.1 shall not apply herein; and
 - 8.1.2.3 A detailed description of the physical space within which the seclusion will occur, or of the type of mechanical restraints to be utilized, whichever is applicable.
 - 8.1.3 The request shall include a written authorization signed by the parent agreeing to the issuance of a waiver on the prohibition of the use of mechanical restraints or seclusion for that student and a signed written consent for release of information to the Department of Education and the waiver review committee.
 - 8.1.4 All privileged documentation shall be maintained confidentially by the Department of Education and the waiver review committee to the extent permitted by law.

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- 8.2 All requests shall be considered by a waiver review committee appointed by the Secretary. A decision by the waiver review committee shall be rendered no later than 60 calendar days of receipt of the waiver request.
- 8.3 The committee shall make a written recommendation to the Secretary, which shall include:
 - 8.3.1 A summary of the compelling justification based on the documentation submitted in support of the waiver requested;
 - 8.3.2 Recommendations to include any specific conditions and safeguards, and a brief statement of the reasons therefore;
 - 8.3.3 A requirement that, where a waiver is issued, there be continual visual monitoring, parental notice of each use of mechanical restraint or seclusion, and collection of data to include the number of times the student was subject to mechanical restraint or seclusion, the duration of each mechanical restraint or seclusion, and any other data as required by the Department of Education;
 - 8.3.4 A statement as to the duration of the waiver, not to exceed a period of one calendar year.
- 8.4 The Secretary shall consider the entire record of the case and the committee's recommendations in reaching a final decision. The Secretary's decision shall be issued in writing and mailed to the applicant and the parent by certified mail no later than 10 calendar days from receipt of the recommendation of the waiver review committee.
- 8.5 The Secretary's decision shall be final.

18 DE Reg. 130 (08/01/14)

26 DE Reg. 472 (12/01/22)

9.0 School Resource Officer (SRO) Training

- 9.1 SROs shall annually receive the following awareness level training from the school district or charter school in which they are assigned:
 - 9.1.1 Training which is consistent with that which is required of other public school personnel within their school district or charter school for disability awareness and behaviors that may manifest as a result of disabilities;
 - 9.1.2 Best practices for de-escalation techniques utilized in the school setting;
 - 9.1.3 Current information on the intervention decisions and techniques used by school personnel within the school setting;
 - 9.1.4 Such other training as is necessary to protect the health and well-being of students with disabilities, including students with an IEP who enroll after the beginning of the school year, which shall include basic awareness training specific to IEPs, functional behavior assessments and behavioral intervention plans;
 - 9.1.5 SROs shall participate in the annual SRO training provided by the Delaware State Police or equivalent training provided by the police agency employing the SRO.
- 9.2 The training outline in this regulation shall include reference to how it relates to the duties and responsibilities of the SRO as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the school district or charter school and the police agency employing the SRO as required under 14 **DE Admin. Code** 601.
- 9.3 Prior to the start of each school year, or as soon as practical, but no later than 30 calendar days after the first student day of school, a representative of each school building shall meet with the SRO assigned to that school in order to be familiarized with behaviors related to disabilities that may occur in the school and typical responsive actions that may be taken by school personnel in that school.
- 9.4 Nothing within this regulation or contained within 14 **Del.C.** §4112F shall be interpreted as creating any additional restrictions on the sworn authority of law enforcement officers or their ability to carry out their required sworn duty.

18 DE Reg. 130 (08/01/14)

22 DE Reg. 55 (07/01/18)

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