

DE-ESCALATION, PHYSICAL RESTRAINT, SECLUSION AND TIME-OUT POLICY

This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this circular is to ensure that every student participating in a Boston Public Schools program is free from the use of physical restraint inconsistent with state law and district policy and to ensure that physical restraint is used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. The purpose of the circular is also to state that the use of seclusion is prohibited by law and in the Boston Public Schools. This circular is consistent with regulations established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 603 CMR 46.00 and with school district policy.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education established regulations governing the use of physical restraints on students. These regulations supersede all previously established procedures. The Boston Public Schools must follow the provisions of 603 CMR 46.00, which regulates physical restraint on students in Massachusetts public school districts, charter schools, and collaborative and special education schools.

Physical restraint should be administered only when needed to protect a student or other students and staff from assault or imminent danger of serious physical harm. Physical restraint should be administered in the least intrusive manner possible and should be used to prevent or minimize harm to the student. Boston Public Schools does not use Seclusion. Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out, which shall mean a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed and no time-out can exceed 30 minutes without the express approval of the School Leader or their designee.

II. DEFINITIONS

Mechanical restraint shall mean the use of any physical device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. Mechanical restraint does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved

positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

BPS prohibits this type of restraint

Medication restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent/guardian for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint. ***BPS prohibits this type of restraint***

Physical escort shall mean a temporary touching or holding, **without the use of force**, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Prone restraint shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical

pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position. ***BPS prohibits this type of restraint***

Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02. ***Seclusion is prohibited in public schools and in BPS***

Time-out shall mean a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed and no time-out can exceed 20 minutes without the express approval of the School Leader or their designee.

III. PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES

A. METHODS FOR PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND ENGAGING PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The BPS Behavioral Health Services department has school psychologists assigned to all BPS schools and has social workers that provide district-wide services. The Behavioral

Health Services department provides a wide continuum of behavioral health services including prevention, at-risk and intensive services. In addition, the Behavioral Health Services team is the mental health crisis response team for the district and works with educational staff to identify and respond to unsafe situations.

In addition, BPS has developed a multi-tiered system of supports for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. The Comprehensive Behavioral Health Model (CBHM) is a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) designed to promote students' social, emotional, and behavioral wellbeing. MTSS is a three-tier model of service delivery for educational and behavioral services in a school setting. This model is also often called Response to Intervention (RtI). In BPS, the Academic Achievement Framework (AAF) is a version of RtI focused on students' social and behavioral learning. CBHM is focused on students' social and behavioral learning. The goal of the CBHM Lighthouse model is to create safe and supportive learning environments in which students may grow and thrive academically, personally, and socially. This includes providing the right amount of services and supports at the right time when a student absolutely needs them.

These models are based on the logic that the majority of students can and will be successful when provided with evidence-informed instruction and preventative

interventions. Appropriate interventions and the use of data to assess progress help ensure that students who benefit from progressively more intensive services will not need them over the long-term.

BPS engages with parents and caregivers at a school level, through the Guide for Families and Students and through the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (or SEPAC) to engage parents and caregivers in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure.

B. USE OF RESTRAINT

Physical restraint should be administered only when needed to protect a student or other students and staff from assault or imminent serious physical harm. Physical restraint can only be used as a last resort in an emergency when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to himself or herself or others, and the student does not respond to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary, for the least amount of time necessary, to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. A physical restraint may only be

administered by school personnel who have been properly trained in the use of physical restraint.

C. USE OF TIME-OUT

Seclusion does not include a time-out. A time-out is not a restraint. A time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. Time-outs are permitted as a behavioral strategy if the student is with a staff member or is continuously observed by a staff member who is immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. Time-out may not be used for discipline or punishment. The preference is for time-out to be implemented within a classroom to the greatest extent possible. Staff must document in Aspen the antecedent behavior prior to the time-out, any other behavioral support strategies attempted, and the time, date, duration and location of any time-out used as a behavioral support strategy. The school leader must give and document approval for any time-out to continue more than 30 minutes based on the individual student's continuing agitation.

D. OTHER LIMITATIONS ON USE OF RESTRAINT

Physical restraint shall be limited to using such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. 603 CMR 46.03(3).

Instances when restraint is not to be used:

- 1.** Physical restraint is not to be used as a means of discipline or punishment. 603 CMR 46.03(2)(a).
- 2.** Physical restraint is not to be used when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including but not limited to asthma, seizures, cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting. 603 CMR 46.03(2)(b).
- 3.** Physical restraint is not to be used as a response to the destruction of property, school disruption, refusal of the student to comply with public education program rules or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm. 603 CMR 46.03(2)(c).
- 4.** Physical restraint should not be used as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include the use of physical restraint

as a standard response to any behavior. 603 CMR 46.03(2)(d).

- 5.** Boston Public Schools prohibits the following forms of restraint: mechanical, medication, seclusion, prone, and prone restraints.

Nothing in this document, or in 603 CMR 46.00, prohibits:

- 1.** the right of an individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or another individual.
- 2.** law enforcement, judicial authorities, or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other persons alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk.
- 3.** the exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter of child abuse/neglect according to MGL c. 119, s 51A to the appropriate state agency.
- 4.** the protection afforded publicly funded students under other state or federal laws, including those laws that provide for the rights of students who have been found eligible to receive special education or related services.

E. PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

- Restraint must be implemented only by trained and actively certified personnel. Whenever possible, the restraint shall be witnessed by at least one person who did not engage in the restraint. As an exception, in the event of an emergency situation where no trained staff are available to protect students and staff from imminent harm, the restraint may be implemented until properly trained staff have arrived.
- Restraints must be implemented in a way that does not prevent a student from breathing or speaking.
- The use of unnecessary force in administering physical restraint is expressly prohibited. Intervening staff can use only the amount of force necessary to protect the students or others from physical injury. Staff shall select the safest and least intrusive method that is likely to be effective for the student.
- If a student indicates or is observed to be in significant physical distress (difficulty breathing, signs or indicators of pain or discomfort, change in color or alertness, etc.), the student shall be released immediately, and medical assistance should be sought.
- Students shall be released from physical restraint as soon as it is safe to do so, meaning that the student is no longer a danger to themselves or others and/or a plan has been made to manage the student safely without having to use physical management.

- In the rare event that a student is in crisis for more than 20 minutes, restraints **over 20 minutes must have approval from the school leader. The school leader must document that approval was granted for any restraint over 20 minutes.**
- Follow up procedures following restraint must be implemented. These include a debrief with the student (if appropriate), a review of the incident with staff, and any needed follow up with student witnesses.
- The school nurse should assess the student's physical condition after any restraint.

F. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to 603 CMR 46.05(5), the following is required:

1. A restraint shall not be administered in a manner that prevents the student from speaking or breathing.
2. A restraint shall be administered in such a way to prevent or minimize physical harm.
3. During a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
4. If at any time during the restraint the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the restraint will immediately terminate, and medical assistance will be sought.

- 5.** Program staff will review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- 6.** During a restraint, staff will continuously talk to and engage the student in an attempt to de-escalate behavior and to end the restraint as soon as possible.
- 7.** Staff administering physical restraint will use the safest method available that is appropriate to the situation.
- 8.** If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain approval from the school leader. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
- 9.** After the release of a student from restraint, the incident, when applicable, will be reviewed with the student and the behavior that led up to the restraint will be addressed.
- 10.** The staff person(s) who administered the restraint will also have a review to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed and consider whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. FOLLOWING EACH RESTRAINT

Following the use of any physical intervention of any duration that meets the definition of physical restraint under DESE regulations, several steps must be taken to notify appropriate parties and report the restraint in both BPS and DESE systems:

- **Notify School Administration:** Notify school administration verbally as soon as possible, and provide written report by the next school working day. In the event that the school leader was involved in the restraint, the restraint must be reported to the School Superintendent or Operational Leader within the same timeline.
- **Notify Parents/Guardians:** The school leader or director of the program notifies the parent/guardian verbally as soon as possible (by the end of the day of incident), and by written report in the language of the home to an email provided by the parent/guardian or by regular mail postmarked within 3 working days of the incident. The written report shall include:
 - Student information, the names of those involved in the restraint, and observer names (if any). The report will also include the name of the administrator notified if the event went beyond 20 minutes.

- Date and time of the restraint, including beginning and ending timesA brief summary of the event in progress at the time of restraint, the immediate antecedent to the challenging behavior, efforts/attempts at de-escalation, any alternatives to restraint tried, and documentation of any injuries to staff or students. The summary should also include description of the holds used and why they were necessary, any reaction of the student to the restraint, how the restraint ended.
- Any further actions taken by the school, opportunities for the parent/guardian to discuss the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, or any other related matter.

Important note: The school leader will print a copy of the same report submitted to DESE (see “Report to DESE” below) as written documentation of the restraint and email or mail it to the parent/guardian. The report to DESE should contain the required information listed above.

- **Record in Aspen:** a conduct incident must be recorded in Aspen within 24 hours, detailing attempts to de-escalate, provide limits, type of restraint used and duration. The use of restraint should be added as a conduct action of “Restraint-Physical.”
- **Report to DESE:** all restraints must also be reported to DESE via the DESE Security Portal

[\(<https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/edu/myportal/meoe>\)](https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/edu/myportal/meoe)

within three business days. The school leader is responsible for ensuring that all reporting timelines are adhered to and that the restraint is uploaded to the portal in a timely manner.

- In the event of an injury during restraint, a copy of the written report must be sent to DESE within three school working days. In addition, the school must also send the copy of the [record of restraints](#) maintained by the school leader for the 30-day period before the date of the reported incident. The program will be notified of any additional steps needed within 30 calendar days of receipt of the reports.

B. DATA REVIEW

1. Individual Student Review

The school leader shall conduct a weekly review of the data to identify any students who have been restrained multiple times that week. If students are identified as having been involved in multiple restraints in a week, the school leader will convene a support team to:

- (a) review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent/guardian about such reports and the use of the restraints;

(b) an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;

(c) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;

(d) agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

****If the school leader directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The school leader shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent/guardian, upon request.***

2. Monthly School-Wide Review

The school leader will complete a monthly review of all school-wide restraint data. The review should look for patterns like time of day or day of week, individuals involved, types of restraints or durations for specific students, duration of restraints, and the number and types of injuries. Based on this review, the school leader may decide that updates or retraining are needed or any other actions needed with the goal of reducing or

eliminating restraints

V. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

A. FOR ALL STAFF

The laws of MA require that all school district staff that interact with students receive an **annual Prevention of Restraint and Seclusion and De-Escalation Training**. To respond to this requirement BPS has created an asynchronous online learning module consistent with 603 CMR 46.04(2). The training must be completed within the month of September of every school year. For employees hired after the beginning of the school year, the training must be completed within the first month of their hire.

Each school leader shall determine a time and method to provide all program staff with training regarding the program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used.

Training shall include information on the following:

- (a) The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;
- (b) The program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
- (c) Interventions that may preclude the need for

restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;

(d) When behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;

(e) Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and

(f) Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(3) in the use of physical restraint

Below is the link to the training.

[De-escalation training link](#)

B. FOR ALL STAFF AUTHORIZED TO SERVE AS A SCHOOL-WIDE RESOURCE ON THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

At the beginning of each school year, school leaders are required to identify program staff who are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These individuals will

participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. Such training will include the content described in 603 CMR 46.04(4) and be competency-based and be at least sixteen (16) hours in length with at least one refresher training occurring annually thereafter. This training will be in the Safety Care Program and provided by the Office of Social Work Department or Special Education. Staff can register for Safety Care training on Vector.

Only public education program personnel who have received Safety Care training shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. **However, the training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee, or agent of the public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. 603 CMR 46.05(1)**

C. PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF RESTRAINT

Please review the Proper Administration of Restraint in Section III above. This section gives additional details directly from the state regulations.

- 1. Trained Personnel.** Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(2) or (3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of

a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

- 2. Use of Force.** A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from serious physical injury or harm.
- 3. Safest Method.** A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited in Boston Public Schools.
- 4. Duration of Restraint.** All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

5. Safety Requirements. Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

- (a)** No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
- (b)** Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- (c)** If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
- (d)** Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.

- (e) After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Please review the Reporting Requirements in Section IV above. This section gives additional details directly from the state regulations.

1. Circumstances under which a physical restraint must be reported. Program staff shall report the use of any physical restraint as specified in 603 CMR 46.06(2).
2. Informing the Principal. The program staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the School Leader of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the School Leader for review of the use of the restraint. If the School Leader has administered the restraint, the School Leader shall prepare the report and submit it to

an individual or team designated by the superintendent or board of trustees for review. The School Leader shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the Department or the student's parent/guardian, upon request.

- 3. Informing Parents/Guardians.** The School Leader shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent/guardian of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and shall notify the parent/guardian by written report sent either within three school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent/guardian for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. If the program customarily provides a parent/guardian of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the parent/guardian in that language. The School Leader shall provide the student and the parent/guardian an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.
- 4. Contents of Report.** The written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(2) and (3) shall include: **(a)** The name of the student; the names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and

ended; the name of the School Leader or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, as applicable, the name of the School Leader or designee who approved continuation of a restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant to 603 CMR 46.05(5)(c). **(b)** A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint. **(c)** A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided. **(d)** Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student. **(e)** Information regarding opportunities for the student's parent/guardian to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, and any other related matter.

5. Individual Student Review. The School Leader shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify

students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the School Leader shall convene one or more review teams as the School Leader deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following: **(a)** review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent/guardian about such reports and the use of the restraints; **(b)** an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved; **(c)** consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future; **(d)** an agreement on a written plan of action by the program. If the School Leader directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The School Leader shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent/guardian, upon request.

6. Administrative Review. The School Leader shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data.

This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The School Leader shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction or prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

- 7. Report All Restraint-related Injuries to the Department.** When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(4) to the Department postmarked no later than three school working days of the administration of the restraint. The program shall also send the Department a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the School Leader pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint.
- 8. Report All Physical Restraints to the Department.** Every program shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding the use of physical restraints.

Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

VI. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

Parents/guardians or students will notify the school leader or designee of any concerns regarding restraint practices and procedures. If a designee receives the complaint or a concern, that designee shall notify the school leader within the school day. The school leader shall attempt, within their authority, to work with the parent/guardian to resolve the complaint fairly and expeditiously. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution or does not choose an informal resolution, then the parent/guardian may proceed with the formal complaint process.

B. FORMAL COMPLAINTS

A complaint may be submitted to the Regional School Superintendent regarding any restraint.

A complaint may be submitted to the Problem Resolution System at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/intake/default.html>.

For more information or questions on:

Topic	Department & Contact	Email
General Restraint Policy, DESE Requirements and Documentation	<p>Office of Specialized Services</p> <p>Kay Seale, <i>Chief of Specialized Services</i></p> <p>Christine Trevisone, <i>Senior Advisor of Specialized Services</i></p>	<p>kseale@bostonpublicschools.org</p> <p>ctrevisone@bostonpublicschools.org</p>
Safety-Care (De-Escalation and Physical Restraint Training) – ABA Strand	<p>Office of Specialized Services</p> <p>Zachary Houston, <i>Assistant Director ABA</i></p>	<p>zhouston@bostonpublicschools.org</p>
Safety-Care (De-Escalation and Physical Restraint Training) – non-ABA schools	<p>Office of Student Support</p> <p>Jenna Parafinczuk, <i>Director of Social Work</i></p>	<p>jparafinczuk@bostonpublicschools.org</p>

De-Escalation Training	<p>Office of Behavioral Health</p> <p>Andria Amador, <i>Senior Director of Behavioral Health Services</i></p>	<p>aamador@bostonpublicschools.org</p>
Reporting	<p>Schools Department</p> <p>Drew Echelson, <i>Chief of Schools and Accountability</i>, or</p> <p>Operational Leader for Region</p>	<p>dechelson@bostonpublicschools.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Region 1: Jeichael Henderson: jhenderson@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 2: Courtney Kinney: cmaginnis@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 3: Michelle Jordan: mjordan2@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 4: Naima Abdal-Khallaq:

		<p>nabdalkhallaq@bostonpublicschools.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Region 5: Kristen Weeks: kweeks@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 6: Monique Carter: mcarter3@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 7: Nelson Miranda: nmiranda@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 8: Zach Solis: zsolis@bostonpublicschools.org• Region 9: Rui Gomes: rgomes2@bostonpublicschools.org
--	--	---

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

**ATTACHMENT A: QUICK REFERENCE DO'S AND DON'TS
FOR CRISIS INTERVENTION IN BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

In Massachusetts, the use of physical restraint in public schools is highly regulated, and it should only be employed as a **last resort** to ensure the safety of students and staff. It is essential for teachers and school staff to follow specific guidelines and best practices when using physical restraint. Here's a list of Do's and Don'ts for staff using physical restraint in public schools in Boston:

Do's:

- **Use the Least Restrictive Method:** Use the least restrictive means of intervention. Alternatives to restraint, including but not limited to verbal or other de-escalation techniques, should be attempted before resorting to physical restraint.
- **Safety First:** Physical restraint should only be used when there is a threat of assault or imminent serious physical harm. It should never be used as a form of punishment or discipline.
- **Training:** Teachers and staff should receive proper training in safe and effective restraint techniques, including annual refresher training.
- **Documentation:** Document the incident thoroughly, including the reason for restraint, the duration, and any injuries sustained. This documentation should be completed as soon as possible after the incident. The documentation should contain the facts of the incident and restraint rather than conclusions.

- **Documentation of Time-Outs:** Staff should document in Aspen the antecedent behavior and the time, date, duration and location of any time-out used as a behavioral support strategy. The school leader must give approval for any time-out to continue more than 30 minutes based on the individual student's continuing agitation.
- **Communication:** Maintain open and effective communication with other staff members during a restraint to ensure a coordinated and safe response. **In the rare event that a student is in crisis for more than 20 minutes, restraints over 20 minutes must have approval from the school leader. The school leader must document that approval was granted for any restraint over 20 minutes.**
- **Notify Parents/Guardians:** The principal or director of the program notifies the parent/guardian, verbally as soon as possible (within 24 hours), and by written report within 3 school working days **by providing a copy of the physical restraint report submitted to DESE.**
- **Monitoring:** Continuously monitor the student's physical and emotional well-being during the restraint. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to themselves or others, or the student indicates that they cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

- **Legal Compliance:** Be aware of and follow all relevant laws, regulations, and school policies regarding the use of physical restraint in schools.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** If there are any injuries or signs of distress during the restraint, seek immediate medical attention for the student or impacted individual.
- **School Nurse Assessment:** Whenever possible, the school nurse should assess the student's physical condition following a restraint.

Do not:

- **DON'T Implement Unnecessary Restraint:** Do not use physical restraint unless there is a threat of assault or an imminent serious physical harm. It should not be used for minor infractions or as a convenience for staff.
- **DON'T Seclude:** Always maintain visibility and ensure continued communication with the student. Also ensure the presence of another staff member if possible. Under no circumstances may a student be left alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Doors cannot be locked during any time-out.
- **DON'T Use Protracted Restraint:** Do not continue the restraint once the student is no longer an immediate danger to themselves or others, or if the student indicates they cannot breathe or is observed to be in severe distress.

- **DON'T Restrain the Head or Neck:** Do not use any form of restraint that puts pressure on a student's head, neck, or throat, as it can be dangerous and potentially lethal.
- **DON'T Use Untrained Staff:** Do not allow untrained or unauthorized staff to engage in physical restraint. Only trained personnel should be involved in the process.
- **DON'T Use Mechanical Restraints:** Do not use mechanical restraints, such as handcuffs, on students in public schools.
- **DON'T Use Restraints for Revenge or Punishment:** Do not use physical restraint as a means of revenge, discipline, or punishment. Restraint should always be a last resort to protect the safety of all involved.
- **DON'T Fail to Report:** Do not neglect to report the use of physical restraint to school administration, parents/guardians, and relevant authorities as required by law and school policy. Reports should be carefully written to record the facts of the incident and restraint.

Remember that the use of physical restraint in public schools is a sensitive and potentially risky action that should only be used when all other means of ensuring safety have been exhausted.

Compliance with Massachusetts laws and regulations is essential to protect the well-being and rights of all students involved.

ATTACHMENT B: NOTIFICATION PROCESS

