



GEO Academies
Regional Seclusion and Restraint Handbook
Revised June 29, 2025

GEO Prep Academies| GEO Prep Mid City Greater Baton Rouge
|GEO Next Generation High School| GEO Prep Baker

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides procedures/guidance for the use, reporting, documentation and oversight of the use of seclusion and restraint within the GEO Academies Regional network of schools in Louisiana in accordance with applicable law, regulations and formal guidance by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE).

These procedures specifically address the statutory requirements of La.R.S. 17:416.21 (Louisiana Act 328 of 2011) and revised Louisiana Bulletin 1706 regarding the use of seclusion and restraint as emergency safety measures to control the actions of students with exceptionalities in Louisiana's public schools. It is understood that this procedural/guidance document in no way constitutes the totality of interventions and strategies used by schools within the GEO Academies Regional network of Schools in Louisiana and its personnel in addressing the educational needs of students with exceptionalities.

For the purposes of this document, the GEO Academies Regional network of Schools in Louisiana may utilize policies adopted by the GEO Academies School Board; administrative procedures implemented by school administrators and school employees (as defined herein), and guided forms developed to assist school employees in carrying out their responsibilities under LA Rev Stat § 17:416.2111 and implementing regulations.

Additionally, the GEO Academies Regional network of Schools in Louisiana has adopted a proactive approach and will apply Seclusion/Restraint policies and procedures to all students, not only children with exceptionalities. **These policies and procedures shall be executed for all students to prevent injury and/or death. Therefore, it is critical that the policies and procedures be implemented specifically as described.**

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Notification Requirements for School Officials and Parents/Legal Guardians

The principal, or designee in absence of the principal, is responsible for ensuring that parents/legal guardians are notified if a child has been restrained or secluded as soon as possible. The student's parents or legal guardian shall also be notified, in writing, **within twenty-four (24) hours** of each incident of seclusion or physical restraint. Such notice shall include the reason for such seclusion or physical restraint, the procedures used, the length of time of the students seclusion or physical restraint and the names and titles of any school employee involved. **The Regional Director of Special Education, Pamela White, pwhite@geoacademies.org Phone (225) 314-2044 ext. 3709, shall be notified each time seclusion and/or restraint is used with a student.**

A school employee who has used seclusion or restraint with a student shall immediately report the incident to school administration and the Associate Director of Special Education. A school employee who has used seclusion or restraint shall also document and report each incident

using the district mandated reporting form. A written report shall be submitted to the school administrator within 24 hours of the incident and a copy shall be provided to the student's parent or legal guardian and the Associate Director of Special Education within 24 hours. The Associate Director of Special Education shall provide a copy of the written report for all occurrences at his/her school site(s) to the Regional Director of Special Education within 24 hours of receiving the information. The Regional Director of Special Education will keep the Chief Academic Office informed of all occurrences.

NOTIFICATION TO THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

All instances where seclusion or restraint is used to address behavior of a student with an exceptionality will be input into the Louisiana eSER system and reported to the Louisiana Department of Education by the Regional Director of Special Education, at minimum monthly.

EXPLANATION OF METHODS OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Employees with training are trained to focus on prevention and use proven strategies for safely diffusing anxious, hostile, or violent behavior at the earliest possible stage. When practical, these employees are the 'first responders' in situations that may escalate to the point of physical restraint. These employees are trained to practice the principles of nonharmful physical intervention, thereby reducing the risk of injury.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS RELATIVE TO THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS

Each school location will have select members of the administrative staff, special education staff, and other designated staff as selected by school and district level administration trained to implement seclusion and restraint techniques. Training will be conducted by a certified trainer with refreshers/updates provided annually. Documentation of training will be maintained by school level administration, the Regional Director of Special Education, and the Chief Academic Officer.

SECLUSION

Seclusion is a procedure that isolates and confines a student in a separate room or area until he/she is no longer an immediate danger to self or others. Seclusion does not include time-out, "which is a behavior management technique that is part of an approved program, involves the monitored separation of the student in a non-locked setting, and is implemented for the purpose of calming". The term does not include in-school suspension or student requested breaks.

Seclusion is **permitted** only:

- For behaviors that involve an imminent risk of harm.
- As a LAST resort when de-escalation attempts have failed and the student continues to pose an imminent threat to self or others.

- As long as necessary to minimize the imminent risk of harm while summoning the assistance of crisis intervention personnel, emergency medical services personnel, and/or law enforcement officers when a crime has been committed.

Seclusion is **prohibited**:

- For addressing behaviors such as general noncompliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusal. (Such behaviors shall be responded to with less stringent and less restrictive techniques).
- As a form of discipline or punishment.
- As a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance.
- For the convenience of school personnel.
- When unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted.
- If the student is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action (as certified by a licensed health care provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled).

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Physical Restraint is **permitted** only under the following conditions:

- If the student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others.
- As a last resort to protect the safety of self and others.
- To the degree necessary to stop dangerous behavior.
- In a manner that causes no physical injury to the student.
- Results in the least possible discomfort to the student.
- Does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing or ability to communicate with others.
- Does not involve the use of any form of mechanical restraint.
- The student is not physically restrained in a manner that places excessive pressure on the student's chest or back or that causes asphyxia.
- Applied only in a manner that is directly proportionate to the circumstances and to the student's size, age, and severity of behavior.

Physical Restraint is **prohibited**:

- As a form of discipline or punishment.
- As a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance.
- For the convenience of school personnel.
- When unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted.
- If the student is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action (as certified by a licensed health care provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled).

Restraints should only be used by personnel trained by a certified trainer!

MECHANICAL RESTRAINT

No student shall be subjected to any form of mechanical restraint by school employees.

SECLUSION ROOM

The use of a seclusion room is permission under certain conditions. School personnel may confine a student with a disability to a seclusion room (a room or other confined area from which the student is involuntarily prevented from leaving) on an individual basis and for a limited time to allow the student the opportunity to regain control in a private setting. When the use of a seclusion room is necessary, the student with a disability should be escorted to the seclusion area without the use of physical force. Physical prompts are permissible for the purpose of safely guiding the student from one area to another, but care should be taken to limit the use of physical contact with the student and to avoid the use of physical force. Verbal redirection and other means of positive support should be used before resorting to physical means.

Environment and Other Conditions:

When is it deemed necessary to use a seclusion room as a last resort (after all other less restrictive measures have been used and failed), the following environmental and other conditions are required:

- The student must be supervised by a school employee at all times.
- The supervising employee must be able to see and hear the student the entire time the student is confined to the seclusion room
- The seclusion room must be free of any object that poses a potential threat or danger to the student while in the room.
- The seclusion room must have an observation window of a size appropriate to the student's size, behavior, and chronological and developmental age.

- The seclusion room must have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems comparable to operating classrooms in the school.
- The seclusion room must not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, to threaten or bully the student, or to obtain behavioral compliance.
- The seclusion room must not be used for the convenience of school personnel or when it is unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted.
- The seclusion room is not permitted for use by a student who has a known medical or psychological condition that precludes its use (as certified by a licensed health care provider in a written statement provided to the school).

Seclusion Room Documentation

- All incidents of seclusion and the use of a seclusion room must be documented on the district mandated reporting form.
- Incidents will be entered into the Louisiana Special Education Reporting System (eSER) by the Regional Director of Special Education once received.
- A copy of the procedures governing the use of seclusion/seclusion rooms is to be posted on the GEO Academies website. A copy should be provided to the parent(s) and/or student of majority age upon request.

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION

Seclusion and Restraint requires monitoring, documentation, and analysis of data collected onto the regional form:

- Continuous monitoring is required.
- Documentation every 15 minutes (with adjustments made accordingly).
- Students are released/removed as soon as the reasons for the action have subsided.
- Parents or guardians must be notified as soon as possible by face to face conversations, phone calls, electronic communications and/or home visits.
- Parents or guardians, school administration, Associate Director of Special Education and Regional Director of Special Education are notified in writing within 24 hours of **each** incident of seclusion/restraint.
 - Reason for seclusion/restraint

- Description of procedures used
- Length of time of seclusion/restraint
- Names and titles of school employees involved.

Review data/documentation at least once every 3 weeks for students secluded and restrained and whose challenging behavior continues or escalates. When a student is involved in 5 incidents of restraint/seclusion in a single school year, the IEP Team must be reconvened to review and revise the student's behavior intervention plan to include any appropriate and necessary behavioral supports. The IEP team may reconvene prior to the 5th incident in order to add or adjust the behavior plan and/or add a crisis plan.

***Five (5) incidents in a school year includes the cumulative number of incidents of restraint AND seclusion. (e.g., 2 restraints + 3 seclusions = 5 incidents)**

DEFINITIONS

The follow is a definitions of terms as provided by the Louisiana Legislature in Act 328 which governs seclusion and restraint of students with exceptionalities:

Emergency – A sudden, generally unexpected set of circumstances that require immediate action.

Imminent risk of harm – An immediate and impending threat of a person causing substantial physical injury to self or others. The risk is “imminent” if it is likely to occur within a matter of moments.

Mechanical Restraint – The application of any device or object used to limit a person’s movement. This term 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 purposes for which such devices were designed, such as:

- A protective or stabilizing device used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for proper use and which is used in compliance with orders issued by an appropriately licensed health care provider.
- Any device used by a duly licensed law enforcement officer in the execution of his official duties.

Physical Escort – Touching or holding a student with or without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student to a new location. Physical escort does not include the unforced holding of a student’s hand or other physical prompts for the purpose of safely guiding the student from one task to another or directing the student in an educational activity.

Physical Restraint – Bodily force used to limit a person’s movement. This term does not include:

- Consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact.
- Holding of a student, by a school employee, for less than five minutes in any given hour or class period for the protection of the student or others.
- Holding of a student, by a school employee, for the purpose of calming or comforting the student - provided the student's freedom of movement or normal access to his or her body is not restricted.
- Minimal physical contact for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another.

- Minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) – A systematic approach to embed evidence-based practices and data-driven decision making when addressing student behavior in order to improve school climate and culture.

Seclusion – A procedure that isolates and confines a student in a separate room or area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to self or others.

Seclusion Room - A room or other confined area, used on an individual basis, in which a student is removed from the regular classroom setting for a limited time to allow the student the opportunity to regain control in a private setting and from which the student is involuntarily prevented from leaving.

School Employee - A teacher, paraprofessional, administrator, support staff member, or a provider of related services.

Substantial Risk of Injury – Behavior which has both the intent and available means to cause serious physical harm to self or others. “Time Out” – A behavior reduction procedure that involves the absence of positive reinforcement for a limited period of time. Time out may include: (1) Inclusionary time-out where the student remains in sight and sound of others in the classroom; (2) Exclusionary time-out where the student leaves the learning environment and goes to another location but is not isolated and prevented from leaving. These forms of time-out are NOT considered by GEO Academies Schools to constitute seclusion but must be monitored and documented at the school level to ensure that repetitive incidents of time-out do not occur and, if occurring, do not result in substantial isolation of the student from instructional activities.

Timeout—A behavior reduction procedure that involves the absence of positive reinforcement for a limited period of time. Time out may include (1) Inclusionary time-out where the student remains in sight and sounds of others in the classroom; (2) Exclusionary time-out where the student leaves the learning environment and goes to another location but is not isolated and prevented from leaving. These forms of time-out are NOT considered by the School Board to constitute seclusion but must be monitored and documented at the school level to ensure that repetitive incidents of time-out do not occur and, if occurring, do not result in substantial isolation of the student from instructional activities.

Written Guidelines and Procedures— The written guidelines and procedures adopted by a school’s governing authority regarding appropriate responses to school behavior that may require immediate intervention.

Appendix A
GEO Academies
Regional Seclusion & Restraint Reporting Form



GEO Academies

Regional Seclusion & Restraint Reporting Form

Date Form Completed: _____ School Site: _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

Race: _____ Grade: _____ Male _____ Female _____

Regular Education: _____ (504 Plan _____ Behavior Plan _____) Special Education: _____

What type of incident occurred? Seclusion _____ Physical Restraint _____

Date of Incident: _____ Location of Incident: _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Describe the antecedent (the events or actions that occurred before the behavior): _____

Describe the student's behavior: _____

Describe the efforts and interventions used by staff prior to the seclusion or restraint: _____

Describe all interactions between the staff and the student: _____



Describe how the incident ended:

Determination by staff member that student was no long a risk to himself or others

Intervention by administrator (s) to facilitate de-escalation

Law enforcement personnel contact and arrived

Staff sought medical assistance

Other (describe): _____

Describe any injuries to student or school employee, if applicable: _____

Describe future alternatives to seclusion/restraint that can and/or will be used: _____

List all school all personnel involved and their role in the incident: _____

Signatures of School Personnel Involved

Signature _____ Position _____

Signature _____ Position _____

Signature _____ Position _____

Signature _____ Position _____



Parent Notification (Parents/guardians must be notified as soon as possible. Parents shall be notified in writing within twenty-four hours of the incident).

Date: _____ Time: _____ Who contacted the parent: _____

A copy of the written report was sent to the parent on: _____

School Administrator's Signature

A copy of the written report was sent to the Assoc Dir of Sped on: _____

School Administrator's/IEP Teacher of Authority Signature

A copy of the written report was sent to the Regional Dir of Sped on: _____

Associate Director of Special Education Signature

The incident was reported to the LDOE through Louisiana eSER on: _____

Regional Director of Special Education Signature

Appendix B

Louisiana's Seclusion/Restraint Law

Louisiana Revised Statute §17:416.21 - Behavior of students with exceptionalities; use of seclusion and physical restraint

§416.21. Behavior of students with exceptionalities; use of seclusion and physical restraint

A. As used in this Section:

(1) "Imminent risk of harm" means an immediate and impending threat of a person causing substantial physical injury to self or others.

(2)(a) "Mechanical restraint" means the application of any device or object used to limit a person's movement.

(b) Mechanical restraint does not include:

(i) A protective or stabilizing device used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for proper use and which is used in compliance with orders issued by an appropriately licensed health care provider.

(ii) Any device used by a duly licensed law enforcement officer in the execution of his official duties.

(3)(a) "Physical restraint" means bodily force used to limit a person's movement.

(b) Physical restraint does not include:

(i) Consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact.

(ii) Holding of a student, by a school employee, for less than five minutes in any given hour or class period for the protection of the student or others.

(iii) Holding of a student, by one school employee, for the purpose of calming or comforting the student, provided the student's freedom of movement or normal access to his or her body is not restricted.

(iv) Minimal physical contact for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another.

(v) Minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response.

(4) "Positive behavior interventions and support" means a systematic approach to embed evidence-based practices and data-driven decision making when addressing student behavior in order to improve school climate and culture.

(5) "School employee" means a teacher, paraprofessional, administrator, support staff member, or a provider of related services. 11

(6) "Seclusion" means a procedure that isolates and confines a student in a separate room or area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to self or others.

(7) "Seclusion room" means a room or other confined area, used on an individual basis, in which a student is removed from the regular classroom setting for a limited time to allow the student the opportunity to regain control in a private setting and from which the student is involuntarily prevented from leaving.

(8) "Written guidelines and procedures" means the written guidelines and procedures adopted by a school's governing authority regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention.

B.(1) Seclusion shall be used only:

(a) For behaviors that involve an imminent risk of harm.

(b) As a last resort when de-escalation attempts have failed and the student continues to pose an imminent threat to self or others.

(2) Seclusion shall not be used to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusal. Such behaviors shall be responded to with less stringent and less restrictive techniques.

(3)(a) A seclusion room shall be used only as a last resort if and when less restrictive measures, such as positive behavioral supports, constructive and non-physical de-escalation, and restructuring of a student's environment, have failed to stop a student's actions that pose an imminent risk of harm.

(b) A student shall be placed in a seclusion room only by a school employee who uses accepted methods of escorting a student to a seclusion room, placing a student in a seclusion room, and supervising a student while he or she is in the seclusion room.

(c) Only one student may be placed in a seclusion room at any given time, and the school employee supervising the student must be able to see and hear the student the entire time the student is placed in the seclusion room.

(4) A seclusion room shall:

(a) Be free of any object that poses a danger to the student placed in the room.

(b) Have an observation window and be of a size that is appropriate for the student's size, behavior, and chronological and developmental age. 12

(c) Have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems comparable to operating classrooms in the school.

C.(1) Physical restraint shall be used only:

(a) When a student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others and only as a last resort to protect the safety of self and others.

(b) To the degree necessary to stop dangerous behavior.

(c) In a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing or ability to communicate with others.

(2) No student shall be subjected to any form of mechanical restraint.

(3) No student shall be physically restrained in a manner that places excessive pressure on the student's chest or back or that causes asphyxia.

(4) A student shall be physically restrained only in a manner that is directly proportionate to the circumstances and to the student's size, age, and severity of behavior.

D. Seclusion and physical restraint shall not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, as a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance, or for the convenience of school personnel.

E. No student shall be subjected to unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted use of seclusion or physical restraint.

F. A student shall not be placed in seclusion or physically restrained if he or she is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed health care provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled.

G. A student who has been placed in seclusion or has been physically restrained shall be monitored continuously. Such monitoring shall be documented at least every fifteen minutes and adjustments made accordingly, based upon observations of the student's behavior.

H. A student shall be removed from seclusion or released from physical restraint as soon as the reasons for justifying such action have subsided.

I.(1) The parent or other legal guardian of a student who has been placed in seclusion or physically restrained shall be notified as soon as possible. The student's parent or other legal guardian shall also be notified in writing, within twenty-four hours, of each incident of seclusion or physical restraint. Such notice shall include the reason for such seclusion or physical restraint, the procedures used, the length of time of the student's seclusion or physical restraint, and the names and titles of any school employee involved. (2) The director or supervisor of special education shall be notified any time a student is placed in seclusion or is physically

restrained. J. A school employee who has placed a student in seclusion or who has physically restrained a student shall document and report each incident in accordance with the policies adopted by the school's governing authority. Such report shall be submitted to the school principal not later than the school day immediately following the day on which the student was placed in seclusion or physically restrained and a copy shall be provided to the student's parent or legal guardian.

K. If a student is involved in five incidents in a single school year involving the use of physical restraint or seclusion, the student's Individualized Education Plan team shall review and revise the student's behavior intervention plan to include any appropriate and necessary behavioral supports.

L. The documentation compiled for a student who has been placed in seclusion or has been physically restrained and whose challenging behavior continues or escalates shall be reviewed at least once every three weeks.

M.(1) The governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school shall adopt written guidelines and procedures regarding: (a) Reporting requirements and follow-up procedures. 14 (b) Notification requirements for school officials and a student's parent or other legal guardian. (c) An explanation of the methods of physical restraint and the school employee training requirements relative to the use of restraint. (2) These guidelines and procedures shall be provided to all school employees and every parent of a child with an exceptionality.

N.(1) The governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school shall report all instances where seclusion or physical restraint is used to address student behavior to the Department of Education. (2) The Department of Education shall maintain a database of all reported incidents of seclusion and physical restraint of students with exceptionalities and shall disaggregate the data for analysis by school; student age, race, ethnicity, and gender; student disability, where applicable; and any involved school employees. Acts 2011, No. 328, §1, eff. June 29, 2011.