



603 CMR 46.04(1)

Procedures for the Use of Time Out Space

Definition: 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.

A time-out strategy should be used in conjunction with an individual behavior support plan that is provided to the parent prior to its implementation. The behavior support plan should outline under what circumstances the procedure will be implemented.

*A time-out procedure may be used in the absence of an individual behavior support plan, but the parent must be notified, the same day, if the procedure is used.

If a staff member needs to physically assist the student to get to the time-out space, it is considered an “Escort” if staff temporarily touches or holds, without the use of force, the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location. Use of this procedure should be documented on the Time-Out data sheet, by checking the “Escort” box.

If the student resists movement to the time-out space and staff significantly restricts the student’s freedom of movement, this constitutes a physical restraint and should be recorded as such on an incident report. This includes the use of a transport procedure, as trained in CPI, where the student is not actively engaged in walking.

The duration, including beginning and end times, of all instances of separation from the group, whether chosen by the student or directed by staff, should be recorded on the Time-out data form.

During time-out, a staff member must continuously observe a student. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times.

*If the time-out procedure lasts 30 minutes, the program staff will contact the program coordinator or program director for approval to continue the procedure. In the absence of the program coordinator or director, program staff should contact the executive director.

The coordinator, director, or executive director’s decision to grant approval to continue the time-out procedure will be based on the student’s continued agitation.

All portions of the Time-Out data form should be completed at the time the procedure is implemented.

The use of seclusion is prohibited. Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

If at any point during the Time-out procedure, a physical restraint is utilized, including that used to physically assist the student to the time-out area, an incident report form will be completed in full either when the incident is occurring, or immediately after.

Once per month, the Time-Out data sheets should be collected by the program coordinator and brought to the program office.

*Each month, the program secretary will enter the data into the electronic data system so that use of the procedure can be tracked across both individual students and at the program level.

At least once per quarter the BCBA associated with the program will create charts of the use of the Time-out procedure for the program.

Program administrator will include the review of this data in his/her monthly meetings with the designated program team that reviews restraint data.

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.

Physical restraint is 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.