

Permanent Regulations for the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint

Revised Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions

This document is intended to provide non-regulatory
guidance on the subject matter listed above.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	8
<u>A</u> Definitions	10
<u>A-1</u> What is “time out”?	10
<u>A-2</u> What is “isolated time out”?	10
<u>A-3</u> What is “physical restraint”?	10
<u>A-4</u> Does physical restraint include physical escort when removing a student from a classroom or other school setting?	11
<u>A-5</u> What is a momentary period of physical restriction?	11
<u>A-6</u> What is “prone physical restraint”?	11
<u>A-7</u> What is “supine physical restraint”?	12
<u>A-8</u> What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to self”?	12
<u>A-9</u> What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to staff”?	12
<u>A-10</u> What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to others”?	12
<u>A-11</u> What is a “mechanical restraint”?	12
<u>A-12</u> What is a “chemical restraint”?	13
<u>B</u> Framework of Supports for Students	14
<u>B-1</u> What behavioral supports should be available to contribute to a safe school environment for all students?	14
<u>B-2</u> How should IEP teams document positive behavior supports in the IEP and Behavioral Intervention Plan for a student receiving special education services?	14
<u>B-3</u> How should Section 504 teams document behavioral supports in the Section 504 Plan for an eligible student?	15
<u>C</u> Time Out and Isolated Time Out	15
<u>C-1</u> When can a time out or isolated time out be used?	15
<u>C-2</u> What are the requirements for a space that is used for the time out or isolated time out of a student?	16
<u>C-3</u> Is in-school suspension or detention considered a time out or isolated time out?	18
<u>C-4</u> When should isolated time out and time out NOT be used?	18
<u>C-5</u> When is the use of isolated time out and time out allowed?	18
<u>C-6</u> Is the use of a separate, quiet environment allowed for a student considered a time out or isolated time out?	19
<u>C-7</u> Is a student-requested opportunity to go to a different location in the school to self-regulate or seek staff support considered a time out or isolated time out?	19

<u>C-8</u>	Is evacuating other students from a classroom when one student presents a risk of harm to self or others considered a time out or isolated time out?	20
<u>C-9</u>	Who is responsible for ensuring that time out settings comply with the regulations relative to the physical space and the parameters pertaining to their use?	20
<u>C-10</u>	What are the requirements for the supervision of a student in time out and isolated time out?	20
<u>C-11</u>	When should a time out or isolated time out end?	21
<u>C-12</u>	What options are available if a student’s behavior meets the criteria for use of time out or isolated time out, but they refuse to go?	21
<u>C-13</u>	If a student’s behavior meets the criteria for use of time out or isolated time out, are there specific credentials or training requirements for staff who supervises the student?	22
<u>C-14</u>	If a student attempts to elope from a classroom, is it considered a time out if staff attempts to block the student’s egress?	22
<u>C-15</u>	When is blocking a student’s egress considered a time out or isolated time out?	22
<u>D</u>	Physical Restraints	23
<u>D-1</u>	When can a physical restraint be used?	23
<u>D-2</u>	What are the minimum safety requirements when implementing physical restraints?	24
<u>D-3</u>	When is the use of physical restraint prohibited?	24
<u>D-4</u>	What are the requirements for school personnel who participate in the use of physical restraint?	25
<u>D-5</u>	What communication factors must be considered when a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or who uses a high- or low-tech augmentative communication device is physically restrained?	26
<u>D-6</u>	What are the parameters for use of safety restraints (e.g., harnesses) on school buses? What measures are appropriate on the school bus if a student’s behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others in that setting?	26
<u>D-7</u>	Are weighted vests, wraps, blankets, or handheld beanbags/lightweight sandbags considered to be physical restraint or restrictive interventions?	27
<u>D-8</u>	Is the use of blocking pads allowed?	28
<u>D-9</u>	Is temporarily taking away a student’s mobility device (ex. wheelchair, rollator, walker, forearm crutch/cane), or preventing the student from moving the device when they are being careless or intentionally aggressive with the device, a physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out?	28
<u>D-10</u>	Is the use of prone physical restraint allowed in Illinois?	29

<u>D-11</u>	Is the use of supine physical restraint allowed in Illinois?	29
<u>D-12</u>	What is a Supine Restraint Review and who shall conduct the review?	30
<u>D-13</u>	How should a school district or serving entity determine if the use of supine physical restraint is medically or psychologically contraindicated?	31
<u>D-14</u>	How should a school district or serving entity address a situation in which physical restraint is contraindicated but the student engages in behavior that poses an imminent danger of causing serious physical harm to self or others?	31
<u>D-15</u>	What is the difference between a momentary period of physical restriction and a physical restraint?	32
<u>D-16</u>	Can school staff use brief, comforting physical touch without it being considered a physical restraint?	33
<u>D-17</u>	Are proprioceptive techniques like joint compression or brief squeezes considered physical restraint?	33
<u>D-18</u>	Does intervening in a student fight count as a physical restraint that mandates reporting and notification requirements?	33
<u>E</u>	Required Training	33
<u>E-1</u>	What are the training requirements for an adult who is supervising a student in isolated time out or time out or who is involved in a physical restraint?	34
<u>E-2</u>	What are the training requirements for school resource officers who may be involved with an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	34
<u>E-3</u>	Is there a grace period for annual training requirements on the use of physical restraint, time out, and isolated time out?	35
<u>E-4</u>	In what format(s) must the above training be provided?	35
<u>E-5</u>	What are the content requirements for training in the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraints?	35
<u>E-6</u>	Who can provide the required training?	37
<u>E-7</u>	What are the training requirements for an individual to serve as a trainer in the use of time out, isolated time out, and physical restraint?	37
<u>E-8</u>	Does a trainer still qualify to train staff if the trainer meets all the requirements of a particular physical management training vendor but does not meet the requirements found in Section (h)?	37
<u>E-9</u>	What happens if a trainer provides training to staff but does not meet the requirements of Section (h)?	38
<u>F</u>	Required Administrative Policy and Procedures on the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraints	39

<u>F-1</u>	Must each school district and other serving entities develop and maintain a policy that incorporates procedures on the use of time out and physical restraint?	39
<u>F-2</u>	Must parents be notified of a district's or other serving entity's policy for the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	39
<u>F-3</u>	How should an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint event be documented?	40
<u>F-4</u>	Who should be notified of the documentation and report of the isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint and in what manner?	41
<u>F-5</u>	Are there additional documentation requirements if there is an injury during a physical restraint or time out?	42
<u>F-6</u>	Does the documentation of an incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint need to include the position title and names of specific personnel who participated in implementing, monitoring, and supervising the incident?	42
<u>F-7</u>	When must staff reassess the need for a time out or isolated time out?	43
<u>F-8</u>	When must staff conduct an evaluation for safe continuation of isolated time out or time out? Who can conduct the evaluation?	43
<u>F-9</u>	When must an evaluation be conducted for a physical restraint? Who can conduct the evaluation for safe continuation?	43
<u>F-10</u>	What are the requirements when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?	44
<u>F-11</u>	What are some alternative options for restraint review meetings when incidents occur on any three days in a 30-day period and the student does NOT currently have an FBA/BIP or otherwise does not qualify for special education services?	45
<u>G</u>	Requirements for Parent/Guardian Notification and Meetings	45
<u>G-1</u>	When must a parent/guardian be notified of an event of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	45
<u>G-2</u>	What rights do parents have to discuss the incident of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out with school staff?	46
<u>G-3</u>	Pursuant to the School Code, who must be present at a meeting to discuss an incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	47
<u>G-4</u>	What should be provided to parents in the event of an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	47

<u>G-5</u>	What must occur when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?	48
<u>G-6</u>	What are the rights of parents/guardians when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?	48
<u>H</u>	Additional Questions of Importance	49
<u>H-1</u>	Do the regulations also apply to ISBE-approved nonpublic special education facilities and/or out-of-state facilities?	49
<u>H-2</u>	If a student is verbally abusive, disrespectful, disruptive, or intimidating to adults and/or peers, is isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint appropriate?	49
<u>H-3</u>	If the student is destructive to property, is isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint appropriate?	49
<u>H-4</u>	What are the roles of crisis intervention personnel, school security or safety officers, and first responders in situations involving the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	50
<u>H-5</u>	When is documentation needed when a student is restrained by a school resource officer?	51
<u>H-6</u>	If a student is likely to pose imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others while in settings outside the regular learning environment, how can school staff plan appropriately?	51
<u>H-7</u>	What are the requirements if a school district or other serving entity wants to implement a new physical restraint model?	52
<u>H-8</u>	If a parent, staff member, or other stakeholder has a concern about the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint in a school district or other serving entity, to whom should the complaint be directed?	52
<u>H-9</u>	Who may file a complaint about isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	52
<u>H-10</u>	What is the deadline for filing complaints alleging the misuse of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?	52
<u>H-11</u>	What is the process for state-sponsored mediation of complaints?	53
<u>H-12</u>	How will a complaint be processed?	54
<u>I</u>	Implementation Tools	55
<u>J</u>	References and Resources	56
<u>K</u>	Glossary	57

Introduction

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has the responsibility to inform school districts, special education cooperatives, and nonpublic special education facilities on the implementation of policies designed to ensure school wellness through advisory supports in education, health, and social-emotional well-being so our children have the opportunity to become whole, healthy, and educated adults. These supports, particularly in the area of social-emotional well-being, provide a process for children to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to:

- Recognize and manage their emotions
- Demonstrate caring and concern for others
- Establish positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Handle challenging situations constructively

Despite supports, problem behaviors can still occur. The response of a teacher, administrator, or other school staff to behavior that has the potential to threaten the well-being of a student or an adult is of paramount importance. **Physical restraints, isolated time outs, and time outs, as defined in the School Code and administrative rules, must be interventions of the last resort and applied judiciously in the rarest of situations.** Physically restraining or placing a student in time out can carry many risks to the student's physical well-being, emotional health, self-image, and reputation in the school community. Use of these interventions can also erode trust among stakeholders in the student's education and inhibit the student from being educated in a safe and healthy learning environment. There are, however, rare incidents in which it may be necessary to restrict a student's movements to ensure the safety of the student or others. State laws and federal guidance provide parameters for the use of time out and physical restraints when circumstances warrant.

The Illinois Administrative Code (revised May 29, 2024) [[23 IAC 1.285](#)] states the following:

“Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint, as defined in this Section, shall be used only when the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm, there is no known medical contraindication to its use on the student, and the school staff members or members applying the intervention have been trained in its safe application under this Section. (Section 10-20.33(b) or 34-18.20(b) of the School Code). Isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall not be used as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.”

[Public Act 102-0339](#) was signed into law Aug. 13, 2021. It amends the Illinois School Code and specifies that the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint will be limited to instances in which the student’s behavior poses an “imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.” Public Act 102-0339 further amended School Code Sections [105 ILCS 5/2-3.130](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#), requiring ISBE to collaborate with stakeholders to establish [goals and benchmarks](#) for reducing the use of these interventions. As part of these statutory requirements, school districts, special education cooperatives, and nonpublic special education facilities were required to submit reduction plans outlining strategies to decrease the use of these practices. Each of these entities has completed the required submissions in accordance with the law.

To support the consistent implementation of these requirements, this guidance document outlines the provisions of the School Code and regulations governing the use of time out, isolated time out, and physical restraint. These interventions are addressed within the broader goal of maintaining a safe learning environment and must be used only in conjunction with other positive behavior strategies. Under ISBE regulations, isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint are permitted only as part of a comprehensive approach that prioritizes prevention, de-escalation, and proactive behavioral interventions and support.

This guidance is published for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used as a substitute for legal advice. Please consult an attorney for legal advice or for a legal opinion on a specific matter.

A. Definitions

Question A-1: What is “time out”?

Answer: “Time out” means a behavior management technique for the purpose of calming or de-escalation that involves the involuntary monitored separation of a student from classmates with a trained adult for part of the school day, only for a brief time, in a non-locked setting. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(2\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Time out does not include a student-initiated or student-requested break; a student-initiated or teacher-initiated sensory break, including a sensory room containing sensory tools to assist a student to calm and de-escalate; an in-school suspension or detention; or any other appropriate disciplinary measure, including a student's brief removal to the hallway or similar environment. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(3\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question A-2: What is “isolated time out”?

Answer: “Isolated time out” means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a time out room or other enclosure outside the classroom without a supervising adult in the time out room or enclosure. Isolated time out is allowed only under limited circumstances. If all other requirements specified in Section 1.285 are met, isolated time out may be used only when the adult in the time out room or enclosure is in imminent danger of serious physical harm because the student is unable to cease actively engaging in extreme physical aggression. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(1\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Isolated time out does not include a student-initiated or student-requested break; a student-initiated or teacher-initiated sensory break, including a sensory room containing sensory tools to assist a student to calm and de-escalate; an in-school suspension or detention; or any other appropriate disciplinary measure, including a student's brief removal to the hallway or similar environment. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(3\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question A-3: What is “physical restraint”?

Answer: “Physical restraint” or “restraint” means holding a student or otherwise restricting the student’s movements and includes only the use of specific,

planned techniques. [[23 IAC 1.285\(b\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Physical restraint or restraint does not include momentary periods of physical restriction by direct person-to-person contact without the aid of material or mechanical devices that are accomplished with limited force and that are designed to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to himself, herself, or another person or damage to property. [[23 IAC 1.285\(b\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question A-4: Does physical restraint include physical escort when removing a student from a classroom or other school setting?

Answer: Yes, [Public Act 102-0339](#) removed language that permitted staff to remove a disruptive student who was unwilling to leave an area. Under the current rules, when you restrict a student’s movements to remove that student from an area, you must report it as a physical restraint.

However, a temporary touching of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location may not be considered a physical restraint if the student’s movements are not restricted. However, a forcible removal of a student from a classroom or other school setting is considered a physical restraint that must be reported to the State Board and to the parents or guardians of the student.

Question A-5: What is a momentary period of physical restriction?

Answer: A momentary period of physical restriction is direct person-to-person contact, without the aid of material or mechanical devices, that is accomplished with limited force and that is designed to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to the student or another or damage to property. [[23 IAC 1.285\(b\)](#)]

Question A-6: What is “prone physical restraint”?

Answer: “Prone physical restraint” means a physical restraint in which a student is held face down on the floor or other surface and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student in the prone position. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(4\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

A prone position also includes a “standing prone” in which a student is held against a wall or other surface and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student against that surface. **The use of prone physical restraint is prohibited.**

Question A-7: What is “supine physical restraint”?

Answer: “Supine physical restraint” means a physical restraint in which a student is held face up on the floor or other surface and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student in the supine position.

“Supine physical restraint” also includes a “standing supine position” in which a student is held against a wall or other surface and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student against that surface. The use of supine restraint is prohibited unless all the criteria in subparagraph (c)(5) (A-F) have been met. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(5\)](#)]

Question A-8: What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to self”?

Answer: “Imminent danger of serious physical harm to self” means a situation where a student presents a danger to the safety and well-being of himself or herself and is likely to cause serious physical pain or injury.

Question A-9: What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to staff”?

Answer: “Imminent danger of serious physical harm to staff” means a situation where a student presents a danger to the safety and well-being of school personnel and is likely to cause serious physical pain or injury.

Question A-10: What is “imminent danger of serious physical harm to others”?

Answer: “Imminent danger of serious physical harm to others” means a situation where a student presents a danger to the safety and well-being of others and is likely to cause serious physical pain or injury.

Question A-11: What is a “mechanical restraint”?

Answer: Mechanical restraints are **prohibited** by the School Code and regulations.

“Mechanical restraint” means the use of any device or equipment to limit a student's movement or hold a student immobile. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Mechanical restraint does not include any restraint used to:

- A) Treat a student's medical needs; [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)\(A\)](#)]
- B) Protect a student known to be at risk of injury resulting from lack of coordination or frequent loss of consciousness; [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)\(B\)](#)]
- C) Position a student with physical disabilities in a manner specified in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), federal Section 504 Plan, or other plan of care, where there is an evidenced medical need for the positioning and the restraint is not used for convenience; [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)\(C\)](#)]
- D) Provide a supplementary aid or service or an accommodation, including, but not limited to, assistive technology that provides proprioceptive input or aids in self-regulation; or [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)\(D\)](#)]
- E) Promote student safety in vehicles used to transport students. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(12\)\(E\)](#)]

Under this definition, the use of equipment, such as a blocking pad, in a protective manner to safeguard an individual is *not* construed as a mechanical restraint. However, the use of a blocking pad, mat, or other device or equipment to restrict a student’s movement during a restraint *is* considered mechanical restraint and is prohibited.

Any equipment used in restricting a student’s movements should be included in a student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or other plan of care. The use of any equipment to restrict a student’s movements that is not specified in one of these documents or used differently than described in these documents may be considered a mechanical restraint.

See [Question D-8](#) for more information about the use of blocking pads.

Question A-12: What is a “chemical restraint”?

Answer: Chemical restraints are **prohibited** by regulations.

“Chemical restraint” means the use of medication to control a student’s behavior or restrict a student’s freedom of movement. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(11\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Chemical restraint does not include medication that is legally prescribed and administered as part of a student’s regular medical regimen to manage behavioral symptoms and treat medical symptoms. The administration of medication at a time that is not specified in the prescribed orders or pursuant to the school or district’s policy on administering medication will be considered a chemical restraint. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(13\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

See [105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b](#) and [23 IAC 1.540](#) for more information on the administration of medication in schools.

B. Framework of Supports for Students

Question B-1: What behavioral supports should be available to contribute to a safe school environment for all students?

Answer: Behavioral interventions must prioritize strategies to avoid the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint with students whenever possible. Most student behaviors that do not contribute to a safe learning environment can be addressed via a school’s social-emotional learning, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment strategies; restorative justice frameworks; and/or other local district policy, procedures, and programs.

Question B-2: How should IEP teams document positive behavior supports in the IEP and Behavioral Intervention Plan for a student receiving special education services?

Answer: An IEP and/or a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), where appropriate, offer several opportunities to document positive behavior supports customized for a student with a disability who is receiving special education services. The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance section of the IEP, goals, supplementary aids and services, special education and related services, IEP notes, Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), and a BIP are all potential sections for IEP teams to describe the positive

interventions that have been attempted and their effectiveness. The Consideration of Special Factors section of the IEP allows the IEP team to explain whether behaviors will be addressed via a BIP, goals, accommodations, and/or services. The Accommodations and Goals sections of the IEP and the BIP provide opportunities to describe details, such as target behaviors, replacement behaviors, positive interventions, and motivators/rewards. Parent input should be considered when developing behavioral interventions to facilitate consistency between the home and school settings, when appropriate. This may be captured under the Parent Concerns subsection of the IEP, in the FBA and BIP, or within the IEP Notes section.

Students' IEPs and BIPs should articulate specific positive behavior strategies to be employed and should not rely on isolated time out, time out, and/or physical restraint as ongoing behavioral interventions. School teams should use less restrictive and intrusive measures prior to attempting time out, isolated time out, and/or physical restraint. Contraindications for the use of isolated time out, time out, and/or physical restraint may be included in a student's IEP and BIP as required for an individual student due to student-specific safety concerns.

Question B-3: How should Section 504 teams document behavioral supports in the Section 504 Plan for an eligible student?

Answer: The process should be similar for students who are eligible for services, supports, and accommodations under Section 504 and have disability-related behaviors that substantially limit a major life activity or would do so without such services, supports, and/or accommodations.

C. Time Out and Isolated Time Out

Question C-1: When can a time out or isolated time out be used?

Answer: The use of time out or isolated time out may only be used when:

1. A student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to himself, herself, or others;
2. Other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and have proven to be ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm;

3. There is no known medical contraindication to its use; and
4. The staff using these interventions have been trained in its safe application and under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#).

The use of time out will only be permitted if all four criteria above are met. The use of isolated time out will only be permitted if all four criteria *and* additional requirements for the use of isolated time out are met.

See [Question C-2](#) for the room requirements for a time out and an isolated time out. See [Questions C-5 and C-10](#) for additional requirements for the use of isolated time out.

Question C-2: What are the requirements for a space that is used for the time out or isolated time out of a student?

Answer: Room requirements for a time out have changed as of May 29, 2024. A classroom or other similar space may be an appropriate time out space if the requirements of [23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(5\)\(A-C\)](#) are met. The use of a physical space for time out shall be subject to the following requirements:

5. Any enclosure used for time out shall:
 - A) Meet all of the health/life safety requirements of [23 IAC 180](#);
 - B) Have the same ceiling height as the surrounding room or rooms and be large enough to accommodate not only the student but also, if applicable, another individual who is required to accompany that student under [23 IAC 1.285](#); and
 - C) If fitted with a door, be fitted with either a steel door or a wooden door of solid-core construction. If the door includes a viewing panel, the panel shall be unbreakable. The door shall not be locked or be physically blocked by furniture or any other inanimate object at any time during the time out.

Per [23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(4\)](#), the use of a physical space for an isolated time out shall be subject to the following requirements:

4. Any enclosure used for isolated time out shall:
 - A) Meet all of the health/life safety requirements of [23 IAC 180](#);
 - B) Have the same ceiling height as the surrounding room or rooms and be large enough to accommodate not only the

student but also, if applicable, another individual who is required to accompany that student under [23 IAC 1.285](#);

- C) Be constructed of materials that cannot be used by students to harm themselves or others; be free of electrical outlets, exposed wiring, and other objects that could be used by students to harm themselves or others; and be designed so that students cannot climb up the walls;
- D) Be designed to permit continuous visual monitoring of and communication with the student; and
- E) If fitted with a door, be fitted with either a steel door or a wooden door of solid-core construction. If the door includes a viewing panel, the panel shall be unbreakable. The door shall not be fitted with a locking mechanism or be physically blocked by furniture or any other inanimate object at any time during the isolated time out.

Per [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#), the use of any of the following rooms or enclosures for isolated time out or time out purposes is prohibited:

- (1) A locked room or a room in which the door is obstructed, prohibiting it from opening;
- (2) A confining space such as a closet or box;
- (3) A room where the student cannot be continually observed; or
- (4) Any other room or enclosure or time out procedure that is contrary to current rules adopted by the State Board of Education. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

The door of an isolated time out room that is contained within a classroom or other larger room or space must not be fitted with a locking mechanism of any sort. However, the classroom or other larger room can be capable of locking and may be locked in a manner consistent with the school building's safety and security protocols. An automatically locking door does not violate time out requirements so long as the door is not locked in a way that prevents the student or accompanying adult from exiting the space at any time. The door of the time out or isolated time out room cannot be physically blocked by furniture or any other inanimate object at any time during the isolated time out or time out.

Question C-3: Is in-school suspension or detention considered a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: No. In-school suspensions, detentions, and other appropriate disciplinary measures, including the student’s brief removal to the hallway, principal’s office, or similar environment, are a part of a schoolwide disciplinary policy to address infractions of the school or district code of conduct, usually involving supervised periods within a designated room in the school setting. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(3\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question C-4: When should isolated time out and time out NOT be used?

Answer: “Isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall not be used as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.” [[23 IAC 1.285](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question C-5: When is the use of isolated time out and time out allowed?

Answer: Isolated time out may be used only when the adult in the time out room or enclosure is in imminent danger of serious physical harm because the student is unable to cease actively engaging in extreme physical aggression toward the adult. An isolated time out can occur only after other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm and all other requirements described in the School Code and regulations have been met. An isolated time out is never appropriate when a student is engaging in self-injurious behavior. [[23 IAC 1.285](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Time out may be used only when the student’s behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm, and all other requirements described in the School Code and regulations have been met.

See the responses to [Questions F-3 to F-8](#) for documentation requirements. See the responses to [Questions C-10, C-11, and C-13](#) for supervision requirements.

See the responses in [Section E](#) for training requirements.

Question C-6: Is the use of a separate, quiet environment allowed for a student considered a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: Isolated time out and time out do not include a student-initiated or student-requested break, a student-initiated sensory break, or a teacher-initiated sensory break that may include a sensory room containing sensory tools to assist a student to calm and de-escalate; an in-school suspension or detention; or any other appropriate disciplinary measure, including a student’s brief removal to the hallway, principal’s office, or similar environment. [[23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(3\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)].

For purposes of initiation of breaks, “teacher” is defined as any or all school district or serving entity employees regularly required to be licensed under laws relating to the licensure of teachers. The use of a separate, quiet environment is allowed for any student if it is medically safe for the student and the space meets all of the health/life safety requirements of [23 IAC Part 180](#). It may be used for a student with a disability unless inconsistent with the IEP or Section 504 Plan. Such use will not be considered a time out under the regulations. [[105 ILCS 5/21B-75\(a\)](#)]

Other interventions that are not considered a time out or isolated time out can include, but are not limited to, the use of study carrels or other similar, stable, and non-enclosed partitions within the classroom; other classrooms or areas in the school that are designed for student work and study with fewer auditory and other distractions; and similar interventions (either at staff direction or upon student request). These are not considered a time out under the regulations, so no report of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint is required.

IEP teams should also consider that frequent separation of the student from his or her peers and classroom instruction may signal a need to reevaluate the student’s needs and consider the impact it has on the current programming and provision of free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for the student.

Question C-7: Is a student-requested opportunity to go to a different location in the school to self-regulate or seek staff support considered a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: No. Interventions that will not be considered a time out include, but are not limited to, sensory breaks, calming breaks, the use of study carrels or other non-enclosed partitions within the classroom, other classrooms or areas in the school that are designed for student work and study with fewer auditory and other distractions, and similar interventions (either at staff direction or upon student request). These are not considered a time out under the regulations, so no report to ISBE is required.

Question C-8: Is evacuating other students from a classroom when one student presents a risk of harm to self or others considered a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: Possibly. It is not considered a time out or isolated time out when a student engages in conduct that poses a risk of harm to self or others and school personnel evacuate the classroom while staff work with the student to help de-escalate the student's conduct and the student voluntarily remains in the classroom.

It would be considered a time out if classmates were removed from the classroom and the student did not want to voluntarily remain in that classroom. Once staff blocks a student's egress to ensure that the student remains in the classroom to de-escalate it would be considered a time out.

Question C-9: Who is responsible for ensuring that time out settings comply with the regulations relative to the physical space and the parameters pertaining to their use?

Answer: The school district or other serving entity is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance regarding the physical spaces used for time out and isolated time out and the use of those spaces. The Regional Office of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, ISBE, or other public agencies may also become involved as a follow-up to routine building inspections or in the event a specific complaint has been filed about time out spaces or their use.

General requirements for health and life-safety in schools can be found on [ISBE's Health and Life Safety webpage](#).

Question C-10: What are the requirements for the supervision of a student in time out and isolated time out?

Answer: The regulations provide that the use of time out and isolated time out shall be subject to the following requirements for supervision, per [23 IAC 1.285\(a\)\(6-7\)](#):

- 6) For an isolated time out, an adult who is responsible for supervising the student must remain within two feet of the enclosure. The supervising staff member must always be able to see, hear, and communicate with the student. The door shall not be locked or held to block egress. A student in isolated time out shall not be supervised using cameras, audio recording, or any other electronic monitoring device.
- 7) For time out, an adult trained under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#) who is responsible for supervising the student must remain in the same room as the student at all times during the time out.
- 8) A student placed in isolated time out or time out must have reasonable access to food, water, medications, and toileting facilities. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]. Except in circumstances in which there is a risk of self-injury or injury to staff or others, a student in isolated time out or time out shall not have his or her clothing removed, including, but not limited to, shoes, shoelaces, boots, or belts.

Question C-11: When should a time out or isolated time out end?

Answer: Time limitations on time outs are set forth in [23 IAC 1.285\(d\)](#) which specifies, “A student shall be released from isolated time out or time out immediately upon determination by the staff member that the student is no longer an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. No less than once every 15 minutes, an adult trained under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#) must assess whether the student has ceased presenting the specific behavior for which the isolated time out or time out was imposed.”

Question C-12: What options are available if a student’s behavior meets the criteria for use of time out or isolated time out, but they refuse to go?

Answer: Educators must decide whether it is safer to physically restrain a student to transport that student from the classroom to an alternate location or instead prevent the student from leaving the classroom to allow for the student to de-escalate in that space.

The use of a classroom for calming or de-escalation is appropriate, and if the student does not want to voluntarily remain in the classroom, the staff can remove the other students and block egress to ensure that the student

remains in the classroom to de-escalate. This would be considered a time out.

Educators must also consider that repeated instances of time outs and difficulty getting the student to go willingly to an alternative location generally signals a need to reconsider behavior strategies for that student, such as doing a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), creating a new behavior intervention plan (BIP), and/or meeting with the parents/guardian at an IEP meeting.

Question C-13: If a student’s behavior meets the criteria for use of time out or isolated time out, are there specific credentials or training requirements for staff who supervises the student?

Answer: Yes. There are specific directives for staff training pertaining to time outs and isolated time outs. This includes receiving at least eight hours of annual, developmentally appropriate training in areas such as crisis de-escalation, restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, identifying signs of distress during time out or restraint, and behavior management strategies.

Importantly, the training must also include a simulated experience of both administering and receiving time out and isolated time out, instruction on the effects of these interventions on students, and demonstration of proficiency in implementing these interventions safely and appropriately. Staff must also receive written evidence of completion, such as a certificate or training record, before being allowed to implement time out or isolated time out. For further details on these requirements, refer to [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#).

See the responses to the questions in [Section E](#) for further details on required training.

Question C-14: If a student attempts to elope from a classroom, is it considered a time out if staff attempts to block the student’s egress?

Answer: No. Blocking a student’s egress from a classroom to prevent elopement is not considered a time out when other students are present in the classroom. However, if all other students have been removed from the classroom and egress is blocked, it is considered a time out and must be reported.

Question C-15: When is blocking a student's egress considered a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: Blocking a student's egress by physically preventing a student from leaving a space may be considered a time out or isolated time out depending on the circumstances. If a student is alone in a room or enclosed area because staff directed or caused the student to be separated from peers and staff block the student's ability to leave, this is a time out or isolated time out (depending on whether a staff member remains in the room). It is important to note that egress may not be blocked using furniture or any other inanimate object as the use of these objects to block egress is prohibited.

If school staff do not cause the removal of the student from their peers but the student's egress is blocked, the action is not considered a time out or isolated time out. However, depending on the level of physical force used to block egress, the intervention may qualify as either a momentary period of physical restriction or a physical restraint. If the student's movement is restricted through sustained or forceful physical contact, it is considered a physical restraint and subject to all applicable requirements.

See the responses in [Section D](#) for further explanation on the difference between a momentary period of physical restriction and a physical restraint.

D. Physical Restraints

Question D-1: When can physical restraint be used?

Answer: Physical restraint may only be used when:

- 1) A student's behavior presents imminent danger of serious physical harm to himself, herself, or others;
- 2) Other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and have proven to be ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm;
- 3) There is no known medical contraindication to its use; and
- 4) The staff applying the restraint have been trained in its safe application and under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#).

Physical restraint is prohibited if any of the four criteria above are not met.

See Question A-3 for the definition of momentary physical restriction.

Question D-2: What are the minimum safety requirements when implementing physical restraints?

Answer: Physical restraint shall not impair a student's ability to breathe or communicate normally, obstruct a student's airway, or interfere with a student's ability to speak [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(3\)](#)]. A physical restraint consists of planned holds or techniques to restrict a student's movement (e.g., immobilization of the head, arms, legs, and/or torso), conducted by staff trained in its application, and which is only allowable in the event the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to themselves or others.

A student whose primary mode of communication is sign language or an augmentative mode must be able to have their hands free of the restraint for brief periods unless the supervising adult determines that this freedom appears likely to result in imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

See Question D-5 for more information on the requirements for students who use sign language or augmentative communication.

Question D-3: When is the use of physical restraint prohibited?

Answer: Physical restraint shall not be used as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. [[23 IAC 1.285](#)]

Students shall not be subjected to physical restraint for using profanity or other verbal displays of disrespect for themselves or others. A verbal threat shall not be considered as constituting an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, unless a student also demonstrates a means of or intent to immediately carry out the threat that would result in the imminent risk of serious physical harm [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(6\)](#)].

In addition, physical restraint shall **not be** used if any of the four criteria below are not met:

- 1) A student's behavior presents imminent danger of serious physical harm to himself, herself, or others;
- 2) Other less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and have proven to be ineffective in stopping the imminent danger of serious physical harm;
- 3) There is no medical contraindication to its use; and
- 4) The staff applying the restraint have been trained in its safe application and under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#).

Question D-4: What are the requirements for school personnel who participate in the use of physical restraint?

Answer: An individual who applies physical restraint shall use only the techniques he or she learned during the required annual training and for which there is written evidence of participation, according to [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(3\)](#).

Staff involved in physically restraining a student must periodically halt the restraint every five minutes or sooner based upon the type of physical management hold used and the methodology that the staff member learned in training to evaluate if the imminent danger of serious physical harm continues to exist. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(2\)](#)]. This should be done in accordance with the school/district-approved crisis-management program used to train staff.

If the imminent danger of serious physical harm continues to exist, staff may continue to use physical restraint, and the continued use must not be considered a separate instance of physical restraint. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(2\)](#)] Under such circumstances, only one report form must be provided to the parents and ISBE.

Staff members who have not been trained in the safe application of physical restraint may not physically restrain a student but may employ momentary physical restriction which is accomplished with limited force (e.g., momentarily stopping a student to prevent him or her from bolting into traffic, assisting a student away from a violent situation, preventing the student from serious self-injury). Only staff who have completed the required annual in-person training component as specified in [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(1\)](#) and in student-specific techniques (when specified in IEPs or planning around behavior, safety, or crisis) are permitted to use physical restraint on a student as a specific, planned technique.

See the responses in [Section E](#) for training requirements.

See the responses to [Questions F-3 to F-6](#) and [F-8 to F-10](#) for documentation requirements.

Question D-5: What communication factors must be considered when a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or who uses a high- or low-tech augmentative communication device is physically restrained?

Answer: If physical restraint is imposed upon a student whose primary mode of communication is sign language or an augmentative mode, the student shall be permitted to have his or her hands free of restraint for brief periods, unless the supervising adult determines that this freedom appears likely to result in imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(3\)](#)]

In such a case, as soon as it is safely possible, the student must be returned to positioning that allows him or her to engage in receptive and expressive communication with the adults involved in the restraint. Staff who restrain the student must also ensure that his or her appropriate, usual mode of communication (e.g., Picture Exchange Communication System, picture symbols, digitized devices, etc.) is readily available during the incident of physical restraint and must also understand their legal obligation to be able to communicate effectively with the student (e.g., be able to converse in the student's language or mode of communication).

Question D-6: What are the parameters for use of safety restraints (e.g., harnesses) on school buses? What measures are appropriate on the school bus if a student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others in that setting?

Answer: Restrictive equipment on the school bus, such as belts/straps, harnesses, and vests, must never be used as mechanical restraints for the purposes of discipline, punishment, or convenience.

Seat belts are required on small school buses in Illinois, and some districts require them for all buses. If these are required as standard safety features and employed as intended, they will not constitute mechanical restraint.

Use of equipment/devices, such as H-straps, harnesses, or vests, likewise does not constitute a use of mechanical restraint if the equipment is used for therapeutic or safety purposes as currently agreed upon and documented by a student's IEP team or within a student's plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Use of such equipment may

be necessary for some students who exhibit low muscle tone or poor posture control, dangerous behaviors such as bolting or climbing over seats or out of bus windows, or the inability to gauge and react appropriately to danger. Parameters for use of such equipment/devices, the need for a bus aide or small bus, and use of physical restraints if the student presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others must be documented in the IEP, as well as any associated behavior intervention, crisis, positioning, and safe mobility plans for the student. Schools may consider inserting goals in students' IEPs and appropriate BIPs to address bus issues, using the least invasive and restrictive safety measures first and only when there is a risk of imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others. Transportation personnel should be included in this planning, be informed of the student's needs, be aware of their responsibilities/roles, and be trained not only in general bus safety procedures, but also in student-specific techniques (e.g., communication; avoidance of behavioral, medical, or sensory triggers; de-escalation; repositioning if positioning shifts during transport; etc.).

The Illinois Administrative Code addresses the transportation of students with IEPs at [23 IAC 226.750](#). In addition, ISBE provides a variety of resources related to school transportation safety:

1. [Pupil Transportation Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. [Transportation for Students with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs](#)
3. [Administrator's Manual for Safe Transportation of Pupils](#)

The National Highway Safety Administration also provides a number of [resources](#) that address the safety of students while using school transportation.

Many school districts and other serving entities contract with bus companies for the provision of transportation services. If a student is subject to physical restraint during transportation as a specific, planned technique, the school, district, or cooperative staff who implemented the restraint is ultimately responsible for completing and submitting required documentation pursuant to [23 IAC 1.285\(g\)\(1\)](#) and [23 IAC 1.285\(f\)\(3\)](#) to ISBE and the parent.

Question D-7: Are weighted vests, wraps, blankets, or handheld beanbags/lightweight sandbags considered to be physical restraint or restrictive interventions?

Answer: No. If tactile and sensory aids are used under the prescription, direction, and student-specific training of a licensed professional (e.g., physical or

occupational therapist) they are not considered to be physical restraint or restrictive interventions. Weighted materials must never be used, however, as a mechanical restraint or for the purposes of discipline, punishment, or convenience. Additionally, the use of a weighted blanket or similar device must not be incorporated into a physical restraint to further restrict a student's movement — such as preventing a student from kicking — during the restraint. Doing so would constitute a mechanical restraint.

Question D-8: Is the use of blocking pads allowed?

Answer: The regulations do not restrict the ability to use blocking pads that are used in clinical and therapeutic environments as a means of preventing a student from harming themselves or others. When used appropriately — solely as a defensive measure to absorb blows and without restricting a student's egress or freedom of movement — blocking pads are not considered a physical restraint.

However, any use of a blocking pad to restrict a student's movements constitutes a mechanical restraint and is prohibited. This includes using a blocking pad to advance or corral a student. Any forward movement with a blocking pad toward a student in an attempt to control or contain their movement is considered a mechanical restraint and is prohibited.

If weighted items or blocking pads are used, staff must receive training on the appropriate use and potential dangers of weighted items or blocking pads.

Question D-9: Is temporarily taking away a student's mobility device (ex. wheelchair, rollator, walker, forearm crutch/cane), or preventing the student from moving the device when they are being careless or intentionally aggressive with the device, a physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out?

Answer: It depends on the specific circumstances of the incident. In some cases, restricting a student's movement by removing or disabling his or her means of mobility would be subject to the same regulations governing the application of other forms of physical restraints, time out, or isolated time out. In such cases, inhibiting the student's mobility would only be if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others and only used for as long as necessary to ensure that such danger no longer exists. In other cases, it may be considered a momentary period of physical restriction if done by direct person-to-person contact,

without the aid of material or mechanical devices, and with limited force to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to the student or another person.

Question D-10: Is the use of prone physical restraint allowed in Illinois?

Answer: No, the use of prone physical restraint is prohibited [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(4\)](#)].

Question D-11: Is the use of supine physical restraint allowed in Illinois?

Answer: Supine physical restraint is prohibited, unless all the following criteria from [23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(5\)](#) are met:

- A) Before using a supine physical restraint, the school district or other entity serving the student shall review and determine if there are any known medical or psychological limitations that contraindicate the use of a supine physical restraint.
- B) The school district or other entity serving the student deems the situation an emergency, defined as a situation in which immediate intervention is needed to protect a student or other individual from imminent danger of serious physical harm to himself, herself, or others and less restrictive and intrusive interventions have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger.
- C) Supine physical restraint is used in a manner that does not restrict or impair a student's ability to breathe or communicate normally, obstruct a student's airway, or interfere with a student's primary mode of communication.
- D) Supine physical restraint is used only by personnel who have completed required training under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#).
- E) Supine physical restraint is used only if those interventions are the least restrictive and intrusive interventions to address the emergency and stop the imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. During each incident, one school staff person trained in identifying the signs of distress must be assigned to observe and monitor the student during the entire incident. That staff person may not be involved in the physical holding of the student. The number of staff involved in physically restraining the student may not exceed the number

necessary to safely hold the student. Staff involved in the restraint must use the least amount of force and the fewest points of contact necessary and must afford the student maximum freedom of movement while maintaining safety.

- F) The supine physical restraint ends immediately when the threat of imminent danger of serious physical harm ends, but in no event shall supine physical restraint last longer than 30 minutes. If, after 30 minutes, the emergency has not resolved, or if an additional emergency arises the same school day that meets the standards of [23 IAC 1.285\(c\)](#), a school administrator, in consultation with a psychologist, social worker, nurse, or behavior specialist, may authorize the continuation of the restraint or an additional supine physical restraint. No restraint may be continued, nor may additional restraints be applied, unless continuation is authorized by a school administrator.
- G) If the student is restrained in a supine physical restraint in at least two separate instances within a 30-school day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a Supine Restraint Review.

Question D-12: What is a Supine Restraint Review and who shall conduct the review?

Answer: A Supine Restraint Review is a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used. If the personnel involved in the restraints do not include a psychologist, social worker, nurse, or behavior specialist, at least one of those staff members shall be included in the review. The State Superintendent may request that the school district or entity provide documentation from the Restraint Review.

The Supine Restraint Review must include, but not be limited to:

- i) Conducting or reviewing a functional behavioral analysis, reviewing data, considering the development of additional or revised positive behavioral interventions and supports, considering actions to reduce the use of restrictive procedures, or, if applicable, modifying the student's Individualized Education Program, federal Section 504 Plan, Behavioral Intervention Plan, or other plan of care, as appropriate; and

- ii) Reviewing any known medical or psychological limitations that contraindicate the use of a restrictive procedure, considering whether to prohibit that restrictive procedure, and, if applicable, documenting any prohibitions in the student’s Individualized Education Program, federal Section 504 Plan, Behavioral Intervention Plan, or other plan of care. [[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(5\)\(G\)](#)]

Question D-13: How should a school district or serving entity determine if the use of supine physical restraint is medically or psychologically contraindicated?

Answer: The decision as it pertains to each student should be made by appropriate school personnel, including at a minimum, a school psychologist or school social worker, a school nurse or other nurse employed by the school district or serving entity, and the parent. In addition, school personnel should review any known medical information, including information provided by non-school medical or psychological professionals. If an IEP team determines that use of supine restraint is appropriate in specific circumstances, then it is highly recommended to document this discussion in the student’s IEP.

If a student has an IEP, a school district or serving entity may determine whether using supine restraint is contraindicated due to medical or psychological reasons via the IEP team decision-making process. In such circumstances, the school district or serving entity personnel must rely on the IEP team’s determination regarding the propriety of the use of supine restraint and in what circumstances, if allowed. The IEP team should clearly document the specific nature of any known contraindication and identify which forms of physical restraint, if any, are permissible under the student’s plan.

Importantly, a contraindication for supine restraint does not necessarily mean that all forms of physical restraint are prohibited. For example, a student may have a psychological contraindication to being restrained in a supine position — such as a trauma history or anxiety triggered by being placed on the floor — but may still safely be supported using a standing or seated physical restraint. Similarly, a medical contraindication may apply specifically to floor-based holds while still allowing for the safe use of upright physical restraints.

The review required by [23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(5\)\(G\)](#) does not require a full IEP team meeting; however, the requirements could be met by conducting an IEP meeting, as appropriate.

Question D-14: How should a school district or serving entity address a situation in which physical restraint is contraindicated but the student engages in behavior that poses an imminent danger of causing serious physical harm to self or others?

Answer: In addition to other appropriate and available interventions, if any, the school district or serving entity may contact emergency personnel, including, but not limited to, crisis intervention personnel, law enforcement, or other first responders, along with the student's parent, to intervene in the situation. The school may also consider a change in placement to a more restrictive setting or an alternative placement if the current placement cannot ensure the safety of the student or others.

If the student has a psychological contraindication, this only applies to supine restraint. Other forms of physical restraint may still be used if those techniques are not medically contraindicated and all other criteria for the use of physical restraint have been met.

Question D-15: What is the difference between a momentary period of physical restriction and a physical restraint?

Answer: A momentary period of physical restriction is defined as direct person-to-person contact that is momentary, involves limited force, and is solely intended to prevent a student from completing an act that could result in potential physical harm to themselves or others or cause property damage. Examples may include momentarily placing a hand on a student's shoulder to gain attention or lightly guiding a student away from a peer during an escalating situation.

In contrast, a physical restraint means holding a student or otherwise restricting the student's movements and includes only the use of specific, planned techniques. The key distinction is that a momentary restriction is limited in duration, does not restrict freedom of movement, and is used as a temporary, non-restrictive intervention. Once a student's movement is restricted in a sustained or forceful way, it becomes a physical restraint and is subject to the full statutory requirements, including reporting and training.

[[23 IAC 1.285\(b\)](#), [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#), and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

See the comparison chart in [Section I](#) for further information on the differences between a momentary period of physical restriction and a physical restraint.

Question D-16: Can school staff use brief, comforting physical touch without it being considered a physical restraint?

Answer: Momentary physical touch intended to comfort a student in distress, such as a brief hug (when age appropriate) or a pat on the back, is not considered a physical restraint but should only be used if the student welcomes the interaction and in a manner that respects the student's comfort and personal boundaries.

Question D-17: Are proprioceptive techniques like joint compression or brief squeezes considered physical restraint?

Answer: The use of brief squeezes, joint compression, or proprioceptive exercises—as recommended by an occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, or social worker to assist a student in regulating their body is not considered a physical restraint. However, as a best practice, this information should be included in a student's Individualized Education Program or 504 Plan to ensure consistency and appropriate implementation.

Question D-18: Does intervening in a student fight count as a physical restraint that mandates reporting and notification requirements?

Answer: A momentary effort by school staff to prevent or break up a physical altercation — such as stepping between students or briefly guiding them apart — is not considered physical restraint if it does not restrict a student's movement and otherwise meets the regulatory criteria. In such cases, no reporting is required.

However, if staff use physical holds to separate or control students during a fight — for example, by grabbing and pulling a student away — this is considered physical restraint. Even when used appropriately and in response to imminent danger, such restraint must be reported, and all documentation, parental notification, and staff training requirements apply. Staff should be aware that the determining factor is not the intent to break up a fight, but whether a student's movement was restricted. If so, the intervention must be documented and reported as a physical restraint, regardless of the circumstances.

E. Required Training

Question E-1: What are the training requirements for an adult who is supervising a student in isolated time out or time out or who is involved in a physical restraint?

Answer: At least eight hours of developmentally appropriate training annually is required per [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(1\)](#). Developmentally appropriate training is training that takes into consideration children’s age, grade level, and disabilities.

Training is required in the following areas:

- A) Crisis de-escalation,
- B) Restorative practices,
- C) Identifying signs of distress during physical restraint and time out,
- D) Trauma-informed practices, and
- E) Behavior management practices.

Isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall be applied only by individuals who have received annual systematic training on less restrictive and intrusive strategies and techniques to reduce the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint. These efforts should be based on best practices and how to safely use time out and physical restraint when alternative strategies and techniques have been tried and proven ineffective. This training must include all the elements described in [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#) and must result in the receipt of a certificate of completion or other written evidence of participation. An individual who applies isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall only use techniques in which he or she has received prior annual training, as indicated by written evidence of participation. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(3\)\]](#) All adults who are trained must be provided a copy of the district’s policies on isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(2\)\]](#) Training for appropriate use of physical restraint must be completed in-person.

See [Goals and Benchmarks](#) created by ISBE for additional training resources.

See [Question E-4](#) for additional information about training formats.

Question E-2: What are the training requirements for school resource officers who may be involved with an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: According to [105 ILCS 5/10-20.68\(b\)](#), “Beginning January 1, 2021, any law enforcement agency that provides a school resource officer under this Section shall provide to the school district a certificate of completion, or approved waiver, issued by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board under Section 10.22 of the Illinois Police Training Act indicating that the subject officer has completed the requisite course of instruction in the applicable subject areas within one year of assignment, or has prior experience and training which satisfies this requirement.” This applies to all school resource officers (SROs), not just those involved in instances of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.

Additionally, if any SRO is involved with an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint that meets the definitions under [23 IAC 1.285](#), the SRO will need to be trained in accordance with the requirement under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#).

See [Questions H-4 and H-5](#) for further information regarding SROs.

Question E-3: Is there a grace period for annual training requirements on the use of physical restraint, time out, and isolated time out?

Answer: No. Training requirements set forth by [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#) specify annual training. An individual who is not recertified in all components of the required training by their annual training date would be considered out of compliance and would need to complete a full training.

Question E-4: In what format(s) must the above training be provided?

Answer: The method of training and the number of staff to be trained are local matters to be determined by the school district or serving entity.

Online training may be utilized for all the required training areas pertaining to time out and isolated time out.

Online training relative to physical restraint **is prohibited**. Physical restraint training must include in-person, hands-on practice of techniques, ranging from minimal to intensive physical involvement and interventions.

Question E-5: What are the content requirements for training in the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraints?

Answer: Training shall include, but need not be limited to:

- i) The dangers associated with the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint and the need to use interventions that are less restrictive and intrusive to reduce the risk of harm to students;
- ii) Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship-building, and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- iii) Recognizing and responding appropriately to the antecedent of a student's behavior;
- iv) Recognizing contraindications and other conditions and events that increase risk of death;
- v) A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- vi) The simulated experience of administering and receiving a variety of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint techniques, ranging from minimal physical involvement to very controlling interventions;
- vii) Instruction regarding the effects of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint on the person in restraint, isolated time out, or time out, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- viii) Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and
- ix) Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint. [[23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(4\)\(B\)](#)]

Note: Online training relative to physical restraint is prohibited. Physical restraint training must include in-person, hands-on practice of techniques, ranging from minimal physical involvement to very controlling interventions.

Question E-6: Who can provide the required training?

Answer: The employer or an external entity may provide the required training with respect to isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint. All persons or entities who provide training must be trained and certified in the:

- i) Effective use of less restrictive and intrusive alternatives to prevent imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others; and
- ii) Safe application of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint when less restrictive and intrusive alternatives have been tried and proven ineffective. [[23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(4\)\(A\)](#)]

Question E-7: What are the training requirements for an individual to serve as a trainer in the use of time out, isolated time out, and physical restraint?

Answer: To qualify, the trainer must have completed annual training that includes at least eight hours of developmentally appropriate instruction in the following areas: crisis de-escalation, restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, behavior management, and identifying signs of distress during physical restraint and time out. This training must also include systematic instruction in the safe and appropriate use of time out and physical restraint, less restrictive alternatives, contraindications, monitoring for distress, and proper documentation and reporting. Trainers must demonstrate proficiency in the techniques they teach and receive a certificate of completion or other written evidence of participation.

Furthermore, all persons or entities providing training must themselves be trained and certified in both the effective use of less restrictive alternatives to prevent imminent danger and the safe application of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint when such alternatives have been attempted and proven ineffective.

In short, trainers must be actively trained in the exact methods they are teaching, must be up to date within the past year, and must meet all

content and competency requirements detailed in Section (h). [[23 IAC 1.285\(h\)\(5\)](#)]

Question E-8: Does a trainer still qualify to train staff if the trainer meets all the requirements of a particular physical management training vendor but does not meet the requirements found in Section (h)?

Answer: No. A trainer does not qualify to train staff in the use of time out or physical restraint solely by meeting the requirements of a private or commercial physical management training vendor if those requirements do not also satisfy all elements found in Section (h).

This section explicitly states that an individual may only provide training in a particular method of time out or physical restraint if they have completed training within the past year that meets all the requirements of subsection (h) and have written evidence of such completion. This includes comprehensive instruction in de-escalation, restorative practices, trauma-informed care, behavior management, recognizing signs of distress, and safe application of restraint — all of which must align with Illinois regulations, not just vendor protocols.

Therefore, even if a vendor certifies a trainer, that certification is insufficient unless the training also covers the specific content, standards, and documentation requirements outlined in Section (h). School districts and serving entities must ensure that all trainers meet the state's legal standards, not just those of the vendor.

Question E-9: What happens if a trainer provides training to staff but does not meet the requirements of Section (h)?

Answer: If a trainer does not meet the requirements outlined in Section (h)(5) — specifically, if they have not received written evidence within the preceding one-year period of completing training that meets all elements of subsection (h) — then all staff trained by that individual are considered out of compliance with the required training standards.

This means that any staff member trained by a non-compliant trainer may not lawfully implement physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out, as they have not received valid training under the rule. School districts and serving entities are responsible for ensuring that both trainers and trainees meet all applicable requirements, including the specific content areas, demonstration of proficiency, and documentation standards specified in Section (h).

F. Required Administrative Policy and Procedures on the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraints

Question F-1: Must each school district and other serving entities develop and maintain a policy that incorporates procedures on the use of time out and physical restraint?

Answer: Yes. All districts and other serving entities that use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint must have a policy for the use of such practices. Per [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#), the policy must be implemented in accordance with written procedures that include:

- 1) The circumstances under which isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint will be applied;
- 2) A written procedure to be followed by staff;
- 3) Designation of a school official to be informed of such events and maintain documentation required under [23 IAC 1.285](#);
- 4) The process a district or other entity serving public school students will use to evaluate any incident that results in an injury to the affected student;
- 5) A description of the district's or other entity's annual review of the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, which at a minimum shall include:
 - A. The number of incidents involving the use of these interventions;
 - B. The location and duration of each incident;
 - C. Identification of the staff members who were involved;
 - D. Any injuries or property damage that occurred; and
 - E. The timeliness of parental or guardian notification, timelines of agency notification, and administrative review. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(i\)\]](#)

Question F-2: Must parents be notified of a district's or other serving entity's policy for the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: Yes, [23 IAC 1.285\(f\)\(1\)](#) requires a district whose policy allows for the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint to notify parents or guardians of the policy as part of the information distributed annually or

upon enrollment pursuant to Sections [10-20.14\(a\)](#) and [14-8.05\(c\)](#) of the School Code.

Question F-3: How should an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint event be documented?

Answer: Per [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(1\)](#), in the form and manner prescribed by the State Superintendent, a written record of each episode of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall be maintained in the student's temporary record in accordance with [105 ILCS 10/the Illinois School Student Records Act](#).

Each record shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- A. The student's name;
- B. The date of the incident;
- C. The beginning and ending times of the incident;
- D. A description of any relevant events leading up to the incident;
- E. A description of any interventions used prior to the implementation of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint;
- F. A description of the incident and/or student behavior that resulted in isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, including the specific imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
- G. For isolated time out, a description of the rationale of why the needs of the student cannot be met by a lesser restrictive intervention and why an adult could not be present in the time out room;
- H. A log of the student's behavior in isolated time out, time out, or during physical restraint, including a description of the restraint techniques used and any other interaction between the student and staff;
- I. A description of any injuries (whether to students, staff, or others) or property damage;
- J. A description of any planned approach to dealing with the student's behavior in the future, including any de-escalation methods or procedures that may be used to avoid the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint;
- K. A list of the school personnel who participated in the implementation, monitoring, and supervision of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint;
- L. The date on which parental or guardian notification took place as required by [23 IAC 1.285\(f\)](#).

[ISBE Form 11-01](#) **must** be used to document instances of isolated time out, time out, and/or physical restraint. The form can be found on the [ISBE Student Care webpage](#).

Question F-4: Who should be notified of the documentation and report of the isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint and in what manner?

Answer: If a student is subjected to isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the school must make a reasonable attempt to notify the student’s parent or guardian on the same day the event occurred.

The school district or other serving entity must designate an official to receive and maintain these records. [[23 IAC 1.285\(i\)\(3\)](#)] The designated school official must be notified of the incident as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day on which an event occurred. [[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(2\)](#)]

The school district or other serving entity must send ISBE Form 11-01 to the student’s parents or guardians within one business day after any use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint. Notification of parents or guardians may be accomplished by personal service, electronic delivery, or by mailing the documentation within one business day. **Documentation should be completed by the serving entity.** The documentation must include, at a minimum, a copy of [ISBE Form 11-01](#) and the following:

- A) A copy of the standards for when isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint can be used;
- B) Information about the rights of parents, guardians, and students; and
- C) Information about the parent’s or guardian’s right to file a physical restraint and time out complaint with the State Superintendent of Education, the complaint process, and other information to assist the parent or guardian in navigating the complaint process. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33\(h\)](#)] and [[105 ILCS 5/34-18.20\(h\)](#)]
- D) A description of the state complaint, mediation, and due process procedures for students who are eligible to receive special education services; and

- E) Information on the procedures for requesting an evaluation and pursuing accommodations and modifications under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or special education eligibility and services for students who are not yet eligible to receive these accommodations or services. [[23 IAC 1.285\(f\)\(3\)](#)]

As referenced in ISBE Form 11-01, a behavior log of the student's behavior during the isolated time out, time out, and/or physical restraint, as well as any interaction between the student and staff, should also be attached.

The serving entity **must** submit the documentation into the ISBE Student Information System (SIS) no later than two school days after any use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.

A copy of ISBE Form 11-01 must be maintained in the student's temporary record for each incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint. [[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(1\)\(H\)](#)]

Question F-5: Are there additional documentation requirements if there is an injury during a physical restraint or time out?

Answer: The regulations require that the documentation of time out, isolated time out, or physical restraint must include a description of any injuries to staff, students, or others. [[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(1\)\(I\)](#)] The current ISBE reporting form includes documentation of a nurse evaluation. A nurse evaluation is not required in every circumstance where time out, isolated time out, or physical restraint is used. It is only required when the student, parent/guardian, or a staff member reports an injury to the student or when an injury occurs to a staff member. If a nurse is not available to conduct the evaluation, it may be conducted by an administrator, such as a special education administrator, building principal, or assistant principal.

Question F-6: Does the documentation of an incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint need to include the position title and names of specific personnel who participated in implementing, monitoring, and supervising the incident?

Answer: Yes, both the position title and name of each staff member must be listed on [ISBE Form 11-01](#). It is important to document both the position title and names of staff in case there is a need to obtain additional information from those individuals to ensure accurate reporting or to gather data by which to assess the appropriateness of interventions for the specific student,

clarify staff training needs, or identify positive staff-student relationships on which to build. Given that multiple staff may have the same job title or there may be a high turnover rate of individuals in specific positions, it is especially important to list the specific staff involved.

When entering an incident into SIS, only position titles will need to be entered.

Question F-7: When must staff reassess the need for a time out or isolated time out?

Answer: No less than once every 15 minutes, an adult trained under subsection (h) must assess whether the student has ceased presenting the specific behavior for which the time out was imposed. [[23 IAC 1.285\(d\)\(1\)](#)]

Question F-8: When must staff conduct an evaluation for safe continuation of isolated time out or time out? Who can conduct the evaluation?

Answer: The requirements of [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(3\)](#) shall apply whenever an episode of isolated time out or time out exceeds 30 minutes or repeated episodes have occurred during any three-hour period.

- A. A licensed educator or licensed clinical practitioner who has completed the training requirements under subsection (h) of the administrative code shall evaluate the situation.
- B. The evaluation must consider the appropriateness of continuing the procedure in use, including the student's potential need for medication, nourishment, or use of a restroom, and the need for alternate strategies (e.g., assessment by a mental health crisis team, assistance from police, or transportation by ambulance).
- C. The results of the evaluation must be committed to writing and copies of this documentation must be placed into the student's temporary student record and provided to the official designated under subsection (i)(3). [[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(3\)](#)]

Question F-9: When must an evaluation be conducted for a physical restraint? Who can conduct the evaluation for safe continuation?

Answer: The requirements of [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(3\)](#) shall apply whenever an episode of physical restraint exceeds 15 minutes, or repeated episodes have occurred during any three-hour period.

- A. A licensed educator or licensed clinical practitioner who has completed the training requirements under subsection (h) of the administrative code shall evaluate the situation.
- B. The evaluation must consider the appropriateness of continuing the procedure in use, including the student's potential need for medication, nourishment, or use of a restroom, and the need for alternate strategies (e.g., assessment by a mental health crisis team, assistance from police, or transportation by ambulance).
- C. The results of the evaluation must be committed to writing and copies of this documentation must be placed into the student's temporary student record and provided to the official designated under subsection (i)(3). [[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(3\)](#)]

See [Question D-11](#) for requirements specific to the use of supine physical restraint.

Question F-10: What are the requirements when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?

Answer: According to [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(4\)](#), when a student experiences instances of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used, review the student's functional behavioral assessment, including a determination as to whether a new functional behavior assessment is necessary, and prepare an individual behavior plan for the student that includes, if applicable, a plan for conducting a new functional behavior assessment that provides either for continued use of these interventions or for the use of other specified interventions. The plan created shall be placed into the student's temporary student record.

The review meeting must be held no later than 20 days after the third day the instance of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint occurred in the 30-day period. The timeline may be extended if a request for extension is received from the student's parent or guardian.

The school district or other serving entity must invite the student's parents to this review and provide 10 days' notice of its date, time, and location. If a student has an IEP, an IEP meeting may satisfy the meeting requirement. The notification must also "inform the parents or guardians that the student's potential need for special education, an alternative program, or, for students already eligible for special education, the student's potential

need for a change in program, will be considered and that the results of the review will be entered into the temporary student record,” per [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(4\)\(C\)](#). The meeting notice must include the name of school personnel that participated in any of the incidents of physical restraint, time out or isolated time out that occurred. It is not a valid meeting if any school personnel that participated in these incidents are excluded from the meeting.

Question F-11: What are some alternative options for restraint review meetings when incidents occur on any three days in a 30-day period and the student does NOT currently have an FBA/BIP or otherwise does not qualify for special education services?

Answer: ISBE recognizes that not all students who experience RTO have a current FBA/BIP or qualify for special education services. Further, ISBE recognizes that conducting an FBA, or developing a BIP, may require written consent from the student’s parents or legal guardian. It is important to note that a student who frequently experiences RTO may require such services. If a general education student experiences incidents of RTO on any three days in a 30-day period, the school should consider whether a request to evaluate the student for special education services needs to be made. The school’s consideration of whether a request for evaluation is appropriate, including any attempts to contact parents/guardians, should be documented and included in the student’s temporary record.

If the parents/guardians do not give consent, or the school is otherwise unable to get consent prior to the restraint review meeting, the school may consider alternatives, such as developing a temporary internal support plan or safety plan.

G. Requirements for Parent/Guardian Notification and Meetings

Question G-1: When must a parent/guardian be notified of an event of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: The school must make a reasonable attempt to notify the student’s parent/guardian on the same day the event occurred. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(f\)\(2\)\]](#)

Within one business day after an incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the school district or other entity serving the student shall send the required [ISBE Form 11-01](#) to the student's parent/guardian as well as other information listed in [23 IAC 1.285\(f\)\(3\)](#).

Question G-2: What rights do parents have to discuss the incident of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out with school staff?

Answer: Per [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#), a student's parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible but no later than two school days after the event of the right to request a meeting to discuss the incident. If a parent/guardian requests a meeting, it must be held within two school days of the request. This meeting timeline may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian may request that the meeting be convened via telephone or video conference. **The meeting must be separate and apart from a student's IEP meeting or a Section 504 meeting.**

The meeting must provide an opportunity to discuss the following:

- (i) The events that occurred prior to the incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint and any actions that were taken leading up to the incident;
- (ii) The incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint;
- (iii) The events that occurred or the actions that were taken following the incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, including whether the student returned to regular school activities, and if not, how the student spent the remainder of the school day. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

All parties present at the meeting shall have the opportunity to discuss what school personnel could have done differently to avoid the incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, and what alternative courses of action, if any, the school can take to support the student and to avoid the future use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint. At no point may a student be excluded from school solely because a meeting has not occurred. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

A summary of the meeting and any agreements or conclusions reached during the meeting shall be documented in writing and shall become part of the student's school record. A copy of the documents shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

If a parent/guardian does not request a meeting within 10 school days after the school has provided the documents to the parent/guardian, or if a parent/guardian fails to attend a requested meeting, that fact shall be documented as part of the student's school record. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

See [Question D-12](#) for more information regarding Supine Restraint Review.

Question G-3: Pursuant to the School Code, who must be present at a meeting to discuss an incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: Meeting participants must include at least one school staff member who was involved in the event, at least one staff member who was not involved in the event, the student's parent/guardian, and the student, if appropriate. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

Question G-4: What should be provided to parents in the event of an isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: Per [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#), schools shall provide parents/guardians with the following information after each incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint:

- 1) A copy of the standards for when isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint can be used;
- 2) Information about the rights of parents/guardians and students;
- 3) Information about the parent's/guardian's rights to file a complaint with the State Superintendent of Education, the complaint process, and other information to assist the parent/guardian in navigating the complaint process;
- 4) A description of the state complaint, mediation, and due process procedures for students who are eligible to receive special education services; and
- 5) Information on the procedures for requesting an evaluation and pursuing accommodations and modifications under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or special education eligibility and services for students who are not yet eligible to receive these accommodations or services.

The information may be provided in printed form or, upon written request of the parent/guardian, by email. [[105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#)]

A Parent/Guardian Bill of Rights is available on the [ISBE Student Care webpage](#).

See [Questions H-8 to H-10](#) for more information about the complaint process.

See [Questions F-4](#) for more information about the requirements for parent/guardian notification.

Question G-5: What must occur when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?

Answer: According to [23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(4\)](#), when a student experiences instances of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on any three days within a 30-day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used, review the student’s functional behavioral assessment, including a determination as to whether a new functional behavior assessment is necessary, and prepare an individual behavior plan for the student that includes, if applicable, a plan for conducting a new functional behavior assessment that provides either for continued use of these interventions or for the use of other specified interventions. This review meeting must be held no later than 20 days after the third day the instance of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint occurred, but may be extended if a request for extension is received from the student’s parent or guardian.

Question G-6: What are the rights of parents/guardians when a student experiences isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on three days within a 30-day period?

Answer: The school district or other serving entity must invite the student’s parent/guardian to participate in this review. The parent/guardian must be given 10 days’ notice of the review date, time, and location. If a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), an IEP meeting may satisfy the meeting requirement. The notification must also inform the parents or guardians that the student’s potential need for special education, an alternative program, or, for students already eligible for special education, the student’s potential need for a change in program, will be considered and that the results of the review will be entered into the temporary student record. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(e\)\(4\)\]](#)

H. Additional Questions of Importance

Question H-1: Do the regulations also apply to ISBE-approved nonpublic special education facilities and/or out-of-state facilities?

Answer: Yes. The rules also apply to nonpublic schools that are approved by ISBE to serve students with disabilities pursuant to [23 IAC Part 401](#).

Question H-2: If a student is verbally abusive, disrespectful, disruptive, or intimidating to adults and/or peers, is isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint appropriate?

Answer: No. These interventions are only permitted if a student’s behavior poses an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. If the student’s verbal behavior appears threatening, he or she would need to demonstrate intent or have a means to immediately carry out a threat of harm for it to qualify as an imminent danger of serious physical harm. [\[23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(6\)\]](#)

Question H-3: If the student is destructive to property, is isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint appropriate?

Answer: It depends on the risk of serious physical harm to the student and/or others. For example, if a student throws furniture or other large objects at or near others, shatters glass in such a way as to present danger to the student or others, or uses chemicals (e.g., spray cannisters) in such a way that is not only damaging to property but acts as a harmful inhalant, restraining the student or moving the student to a separate location might be necessary.

If the student damages property by carving inappropriate words in the desktop with a pen, defaces a classroom poster, or shreds a textbook, isolated time out, time out, or restraint would not be permitted unless there is an **imminent risk of serious physical harm**.

In situations where a student is damaging property in a way that does not pose an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others but where brief, non-restrictive intervention may prevent escalation or further damage, a momentary period of physical restriction — such as guiding a student’s hand away or stepping between the student and the

object — may be used. This type of brief physical intervention is not considered a physical restraint, as long as it does not restrict the student’s movement or access to their body and is not forceful or prolonged.

Question H-4: What are the roles of crisis intervention personnel, school security or safety officers, and first responders in situations involving the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: The Illinois School Code provides information on the roles of school resource or safety officers under [105 ILCS 5/10-20.68](#). In the event that a student’s behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, or when an incident has already occurred, first responder agencies (including, but not limited to, crisis intervention personnel, law enforcement, or other first responders) might become involved. Some school security officers and first responders receive training in-house or via disability-focused organizations in strategies for working with individuals with specific needs during crisis situations (e.g., communicating with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, calming students with sensory processing disorders, etc.).

Since involving personnel unfamiliar with an individual student’s needs might escalate the crisis or cause other unintended consequences, school districts and other serving entities might also consider collaborating with local first responders and security personnel (including, but not limited to, crisis intervention personnel, law enforcement, or other first responders) on safety, evacuation, and behavioral crisis planning for individual students, subject to applicable federal and state laws regarding records and student confidentiality.

According to [105 ILCS 5/10-20.68\(b\)](#), “Beginning January 1, 2021, any law enforcement agency that provides a school resource officer under this Section shall provide to the school district a certificate of completion, or approved waiver, issued by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board under Section 10.22 of the Illinois Police Training Act indicating that the subject officer has completed the requisite course of instruction in the applicable subject areas within one year of assignment, or has prior experience and training which satisfies this requirement.” This applies to all SROs, not just those involved in instances of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.

SROs must also be trained under [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#) if they will be involved with isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.

See responses to [Section E](#) for training requirements.

Question H-5: When is documentation needed when a student is restrained by a school resource officer?

Answer: If the restraint meets the definition under [23 IAC 1.285\(b\)](#) for physical restraint, [ISBE Form 11-01](#) will need to be completed and placed in the student's temporary record. The student's parent/guardian must be notified pursuant to 23 IAC 1.285(f). The incident must also be reported in SIS within the time parameters detailed in [23 IAC 1.285\(g\)](#).

Question H-6: If a student is likely to pose imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others while in settings outside the regular learning environment, how can school staff plan appropriately?

Answer: The rules for isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint apply to all school activities. If a student's behavior poses an imminent risk of serious physical harm to self or others outside the regular school setting, school districts and other serving entities should consider the regulations and determine whether someone trained in accordance with the regulations should be present.

Students with disabilities have the right, per [34 CFR 300.117](#), to participate and be fully integrated in the same activities as their nondisabled peers unless otherwise individually determined by a student's IEP or Section 504 team. Unless a student's IEP or Section 504 team has properly determined that a student cannot safely participate in an activity (even with the provision of appropriate supports), the IEP or Section 504 team should develop plans for those involved in providing transportation or planning and supervising field trips, school events, and extracurricular activities and consider the least restrictive options.

Detailed procedures to address a student's behaviors, specific to that location and scenario, should be developed and agreed upon by the IEP or Section 504 team in advance if it is determined that the student can participate safely with appropriate supports. Procedures might include who will be informed of the student's needs per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable confidentiality protections, what alternative strategies will be attempted before or in lieu of time out or physical restraint, and who among those present in various settings will be trained to implement alternate strategies or time out or physical restraint, if required under the circumstances.

Question H-7: What are the requirements if a school district or other serving entity wants to implement a new physical restraint model?

Answer: Any physical restraint model used by a school district or other serving entity must adhere to [23 IAC 1.285](#) and [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33](#) or [105 ILCS 5/34-18.20](#). Appropriate restraint models should not allow prone restraint under any circumstances, or supine restraint unless criteria under [23 IAC 1.285\(c\)\(5\)\(A\)-\(G\)](#) are met. The model must follow training requirements per [23 IAC 1.285\(h\)](#).

Question H-8: If a parent, staff member, or other stakeholder has a concern about the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint in a school district or other serving entity, to whom should the complaint be directed?

Answer: The complaint should be directed to the State Superintendent using ISBE [Form 11-01B](#). The form may be submitted to RestraintTimeOut@isbe.net.

Question H-9: Who may file a complaint about isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: According to [23 IAC 1.285\(j\)\(1\)](#):

- 1) Any parent or guardian, individual, organization, or advocate may file a signed, written complaint with the State Superintendent alleging that a local school district or other entity serving the student has violated this Section. The complaint shall include all of the following:
 - A) The facts on which the complaint is based;
 - B) The signature and contact information for the complainant;
 - C) If known, the names and addresses of the students involved and the name of the school of attendance;
 - D) A description of the nature of the problem, including any facts relating to the problem; and
 - E) A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known.

Question H-10: What is the deadline for filing complaints alleging the misuse of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint?

Answer: Per [23 IAC 1.285\(j\)\(2\)](#):

- 2) The State Superintendent shall only consider a complaint if it alleges a violation occurring not more than one year prior

to the date in which the parent, guardian, individual, organization, or advocate received notification of the violation, if the notification contained all of the requirements in subsection (f).

ISBE will determine the timeline based on the date that the person who is eligible to file the complaint — such as a parent, guardian, administrative agency, or advocate — *should have* received proper notification from the school. ISBE will not calculate the timeline based on secondhand notice. For example, if a parent receives the notice and tells an advocate three months later, the one-year timeline begins on the date the parent received the notice, not the date the advocate was informed.

If a parent or guardian did not receive proper notification — either because no notification was provided or because the notice did not include all required components — then the one-year lookback period does not begin. In that case, the timeline to file a complaint remains open until the date when proper notification is finally given in accordance with the law.

Question H-11: What is the process for state-sponsored mediation of complaints?

Answer: Per [23 IAC 1.285\(j\)\(3\)](#):

- 3) If mutually agreed upon in writing, the parties to the complaint may request State-sponsored mediation. If one of the parties in the complaint is a nonpublic special education facility, the student's home district must also agree to participate in the mediation. If the parties agree to a resolution in mediation, the parent, guardian, individual, organization, or advocate that filed the complaint must formally withdraw the complaint. The State Board of Education will publish the metrics for the use of mediation, including the number of complaints resulting in mediations and the number of complaints successfully resolved through mediation. All data released by the State Board shall be consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, including, but not limited to, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and the Illinois School Student Records Act.

Any party to a complaint may request state-sponsored mediation by completing [ISBE Form 22-33](#) (Mediation Request Form) and submitting it to RestraintTimeOut@isbe.net or the principal consultant assigned to the complaint.

Question H-12: How will a complaint be processed?

Answer: Per [23 IAC 1.285\(j\)\(4\)-\(7\)](#):

- 4) After receiving a complaint that meets the requirements of this subsection (j), the State Superintendent shall:
 - A) Carry out an independent investigation, including, but not limited to, an on-site investigation, if deemed necessary by the State Superintendent;
 - B) Give the complainant the opportunity to submit additional information, either orally or in writing, about the allegations in the complaint; and
 - C) Require that the public entity that is the subject of the complaint submit a written response to the complaint. The public entity shall submit its response and all other documentation to the State Superintendent and the parent, guardian, individual, organization, or advocate filing the complaint no later than the date indicated in the written correspondence received under this subsection (j), except as prohibited under the Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140].
- 5) The State Superintendent must issue a written decision to the complainant that addresses each allegation in the complaint and that contains all of the following:
 - A) Findings of fact and conclusion;
 - B) The reasons for the State Board of Education's final decision; and
 - C) Orders for any action, including technical assistance.
- 6) If the State Board receives information, from school data reporting or any other source, alleging or indicating that a school district or other entity serving a student has violated this Section, the State Board shall have the authority to commence an investigation under subsection (j)(4) and issue a written decision as to the allegations or indications under subsection (j)(5). An individual, organization, or other

entity providing such information to the State Board shall be able to do so confidentially.

- 7) The complaint procedure under this subsection (j) does not limit, diminish, or otherwise deny the federal and State rights and procedural safeguards afforded to students.

Depending on the nature and severity of the concern, the following may also be appropriate sources of assistance:

- Possible Health/Life Safety Violations
 - o [County Health Departments](#) – For concerns about health or sanitary conditions
 - o [Regional Offices of Education](#) – For concerns related to the school building or room for time out, training for bus personnel, etc.
- Possible Civil Rights Violations -
 - o [U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#) (OCR)
 - [OCR Complaints information](#)
Contact: 800-421-3481 (TDD 1-800-877-8339)
- Possible Violations of Special Education Rules and Regulations
 - o Illinois State Board of Education Special Education Department, [Dispute Resolution](#)
- Possible Abuse or Neglect of a Student
 - o [Illinois Department of Children and Family Services](#) – For concerns about abuse or neglect Hotline: 800-25-ABUSE (22873)
 - o Illinois State Board of Education, [Educator Misconduct Reporting](#)
 - o Local Police Departments

I. Implementation Tools

I-1: Comparison of momentary period of physical restriction vs. physical restraint

<i>Key Distinctions</i>	Momentary Period of Physical Restriction	Physical Restraint
<i>Duration</i>	Brief in nature, but not defined by time	Any instance in which movement is restricted, regardless of duration

<i>Purpose</i>	To prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to the student or another or damage to property	To prevent imminent danger of serious physical harm
<i>Use of Force</i>	Limited force is used	Uses physical force.
<i>Restriction of Movement</i>	Does not restrict movement	Restricts movement or access to body
<i>Needs Training to Use</i>	Staff using this are not required to be trained in physical management techniques	May only be used by staff who have been previously trained in physical management techniques
<i>Requires Notification to ISBE</i>	No	Yes
<i>Requires Parental Notification</i>	No	Yes
<i>Example</i>	Lightly guiding a student away, tapping a shoulder to redirect	Holding a student in a seated or standing restraint to prevent harm

J. References and Resources

Federal References

- U.S. Department of Education. (2012). [Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document](#)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2024). [Illinois Compilation of School Discipline Law and Regulations](#)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2019). [Parent and Educator Guide to School Climate Resources](#)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016). [Fact Sheet: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities](#)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016). [Dear Colleague Letter: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities](#)
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2019). [K-12 Education: Education Should Take Immediate Action to Address Inaccuracies in Federal Restraint and Seclusion Data](#)

Federal Resources

- U.S. Department of Education. (2020). [Students with Disabilities and the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in K-12 Public Schools](#)

U.S. Senate. Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. (2014). [Dangerous Use of Seclusion and Restraints in Schools Remains Widespread and Difficult to Remedy: A Review of Ten Cases](#) (video)

[National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#)

U.S. House of Representatives. (2010). [Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act](#)

National Resource

[Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports](#)

Illinois References

[23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.280](#)

[23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.285](#)

[23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 180](#)

[23 Illinois Administrative Code 226.750](#)

[23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 401](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/2-3.130](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/10-20.14](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/10-20.33](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/10-20.68](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/14-8.05](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/21B-75](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/24-24](#)

[105 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/34-18.20](#)

Illinois Resources

[Illinois State Board of Education Wellness & Student Care Department](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education Health and Life Safety](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education – Social and Emotional Learning](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education – Regional Offices of Education](#)

[Illinois Department of Public Health](#)

[Illinois Department of Children and Family Services](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education – Pupil Transportation FAQ](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education – Transportation for Students with Disabilities and Special Health Needs](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education - Administrator Manual for the Safe Transportation of Pupils Grade 12 and Below](#)

K. Glossary

Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) A Behavioral Intervention Plan is a written plan developed as part of an IEP or Section 504 Plan to address behavior exhibited by a student that impedes learning either for the student or others.

A BIP includes the findings of a Functional Behavioral Assessment of the student's behavior, a summary of prior interventions attempted and whether or not they were successful (examples include environmental changes, curriculum changes, peer-based support, and teaching strategies), a description of any behavioral interventions to be used (including those aimed at developing or strengthening alternative or more appropriate behaviors), an identification of the measurable behavioral changes expected and the methods of evaluation, a schedule for review of the interventions' effectiveness, and provisions for communicating with the parents about their child's behavior and coordinating school-based and home-based interventions.

A BIP should include specific strategies to teach the student to replace the targeted behavior with appropriate behavior and interventions designed to address the targeted behavior.

Behavior Management Practices Behavior Management Practices are used to develop or strengthen alternative or more appropriate behaviors (including assisting students in learning to regulate their own behavior) and to prevent behaviors from occurring that impede learning for the student and/or others.

Behavior management practices could include behavioral interventions that are based on the methods and empirical findings of behavioral science and designed to influence a child's actions or behaviors positively.

De-escalation De-escalation is the reduction of problematic behavior or mitigation of a precarious situation with verbal and/or nonverbal behavioral intervention strategies to prevent the need for isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) A Functional Behavioral Assessment is part of a process used for gathering information regarding the target behavior, its antecedents, and consequences, controlling variables, the student's strengths, and the communicative and functional intent of the behavior for use in developing behavioral interventions. The assessment also includes observation across settings, interviews,

and comprehensive data collection to identify patterns regarding when, where, and why the behavior is occurring.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) The IEP is a written educational plan for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the requirements of federal and state law and regulations. The IEP sets forth a district's offer of a free and appropriate public education for a student with a disability based on the student's individual needs.

The IEP must include a description of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, as well as a description of how the student's disability impacts the student's participation and progress in the general education setting.

The IEP must identify special education and related services with measurable goals and objectives to be attained during a calendar year, along with a description of how the student's progress in meeting those goals will be measured during a calendar year.

Restorative Practices Restorative practices focus on repairing harm done to relationships instead of assigning blame and dispensing punishment. Restorative practices refer to a range of methods and strategies that can be used to prevent relationship-damaging incidents from occurring and to resolve them if they do occur.

Section 504 Plan A Section 504 Plan describes the supports a district will provide to a student with a disability to ensure the student's right to full access and participation in all school-related activities. A 504 Plan ensures that a student's disability will not pose a barrier to the student's access to school programs, curricula, and related activities.

Sensory Break A sensory break is a designated portion of time that may allow a child to de-escalate from the sensory stimulation of a classroom or other school setting to support the child's focus, attention, and learning.

Serious Physical Harm Serious physical harm indicates pain or injury and is not synonymous with "serious bodily injury" for the purposes of placing students with disabilities in an interim alternative educational setting. "Serious bodily injury" is defined as a bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, prolonged and obvious disfigurement, or prolonged loss or

impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

Trauma-informed Practices Trauma-informed practices involve understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of trauma. Such practices are directed by a detailed understanding of how trauma can shape an individual's perceptions and behavior. Trauma-informed practices consider the nature and manifestations of trauma and emphasize the physical, psychological, and emotional safety of both students/patients and school personnel/providers.