



Act 479 of 2025

**Who
Are
We?**



How did we get here?

The audit cites multiple recommendations for LDOE, including:

- Development of a process to monitor school systems' policies and use of seclusion and restraint;
 - 92% of policies reviewed by the auditor were not compliant with current law.
- Working with the legislature to obtain resources needed to effectively monitor seclusion and restraint (i.e. funding and additional staff);
- Improving processes to verify accuracy of the number of seclusion and restraint incidents;
 - 72% of schools reported no incidences of seclusion or restraint which is inconsistent with reports from parents of students with disabilities.
- Ensuring all school systems are aware of mandated reporter laws and abuse/neglect by noncaregivers should be reported to law enforcement;
 - Large number of school staff said they would report to a school administrator and not necessarily law enforcement.
- Reviewing school's systems' camera policies to ensure state law is being followed. o 60% of schools that received funding for cameras in special education classrooms had not installed any cameras.

Overview of Act 479

- HUGE overhaul of both the Restraint/Seclusion Law and Sped Cameras
- New definition of physical restraint
- Requires only trained personal in CIT to use physical restraint
- Added nurse check-in
- New parent notification requirements
- Required continuous monitoring instead of every 15 minutes
- Requires teacher preparation programs to include completion of a crisis intervention training
- Mandates camera installation by Feb 1, 2026, in ALL sped classrooms
- Requires IEP teams to educate parents about Medical Opt-Out of R&S

Why It Matters



- Protects students with exceptionalities
- Protects teachers and other school personnel
- Prepares teachers before they enter the classroom
- Promotes transparency in behavioral interventions
- Ensures informed parental involvement
- Ensures well being of students after an incident

Advocacy Works!



Key Provisions

Seclusion and Seclusion Rooms

- Establishes clear guidelines for when and how seclusion may be used.
- Requires that seclusion rooms meet specific safety standards.
- Requires the student to be monitored while seclusion or physical restraint is used and removes the time component.
- Clarifies language that “Sensory Rooms” shall NOT be used as or considered to be seclusion rooms
- Seclusion shall not be used as a routine school safety, discipline, or intervention measure or to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self stimulation, and academic refusal, and other behaviors that, while disruptive to a classroom setting or other daily school activities, do not present an imminent risk of harm to self or others.

Physical Restraint

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- A word cloud of terms related to mental health care, including restraint, seclusion, de-escalation, and confinement. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with 'restraint' and 'seclusion' being the largest and most prominent. Other words include 'trauma', 'crisis', 'de-escalation', 'confinement', 'dangers', 'supine', 'deadly', 'manage', 'professionals', 'agitation', 'involuntary', 'death', 'supervision', 'suffocate', 'unsafe', 'school', 'ebd', 'challenging', 'overuse', 'disabilities', 'asphyxia', 'inhibit', 'exacerbate', 'breathe', 'staff', 'danger', 'law', 'ineffective', 'serious', 'imminent', 'physical', 'psychological', 'policy', 'antecedents', 'prevent', 'prone', 'control', 'use', and 'ty'. The words are in various colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, red) and orientations (horizontal, vertical, diagonal).

Key Changes

Seclusion – Seclusion Rooms

- a procedure that isolates and confines a student in a designated separate room
- a room or other confined area, used on an individual basis, in which a student is removed from the regular classroom setting for a limited time to allow the student the opportunity to regain control in a private safe, secure, and supervised setting and from which the student is involuntarily prevented from leaving
- Seclusion shall not be used as a routine school safety, discipline, or intervention measure or to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self stimulation, and academic refusal, and other behaviors that, while disruptive to a classroom setting or other daily school activities, do not present an imminent risk of harm to self or others.
- A school employee shall continuously monitor a student who has been placed in seclusion or has been is secluded for the duration of such seclusion

New Seclusion Room Guidelines



- Be free of any object that poses a danger to the student placed in the room.
- Have an observation window and be of a size that is appropriate for the student's size, behavior, and chronological and developmental age
- Have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems comparable to operating classrooms in the school.

Sensory Rooms

- a room or space that is used for the monitored separation of a student in an unlocked setting
- may also be referred to as a "calming room", "calming space", "comfort room", "comfort space", "sensory space", "timeout room", or "timeout space"
- The appropriate use of sensory rooms shall not be considered seclusion



New CIT Training

- Authorizes LDOE to develop a crisis intervention training program.
 - certain public-school employees as designated by each principal or his designee are required to complete the program.
- Requires teacher preparation programs to include completion of a crisis intervention training program and authorizes such instruction to be incorporated into an existing course of study.
 - requires that an applicant complete a crisis intervention training program created or approved by DOE.
- Will be available to all LEAs free of charge by LDOE in late fall



Requirements of CIT Training

- Teach evidence-based techniques that are shown to be effective in the prevention and safe use of seclusion and physical restraint.
- Guidelines on understanding when there is an imminent danger of serious physical harm to a student or others and when to intervene in such a scenario
- An emphasis on safety and respect for the right and dignity of each person involved in an incident that involves the use of seclusion or physical restraint on a student.
- An emphasis on using the least restrictive form of intervention and taking incremental steps in an intervention
- An overview of seclusion rooms, sensory rooms, the differences between them, and authorizations and prohibitions relative to the use of such rooms as provided in this Section and in each public-school governing authority's relevant guidelines and procedures.

Requirements of CIT Training

- Alternatives to the use of seclusion and physical restraint
- Strategies for the safe implementation of restrictive interventions
- The use of emergency safety interventions that include continuous assessment and monitoring of the physical well-being of a student and the safe use of seclusion and physical restraint throughout the duration of a restrictive intervention.
- Prohibited actions relative to seclusion and physical restraint.
- Debriefing strategies and the importance and purpose of debriefing.
- Best practices for documentation of instances of the use of seclusion of and physical restraint on a student.
- Measurable learning objectives for participants

New Crisis Response Teams in Schools

- Certain public-school employees as designated by each principal or his designee are required to complete the additional CIT program.
- Information about a school's use of crisis intervention, including the proper use of seclusion and physical restraint, shall be included in a school's student handbook and made available to the parent and legal guardian of each student with an Individualized Education Program or Behavioral Intervention Plan.
- These trained personnel, should be the only ones responding to restraint/seclusion situations, except in emergency situations in which there is not sufficient time to have trained personnel respond.

Medical Opt-Out

- No school employee shall seclude or physically restrain a student who is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed health care pediatrician, neurologist, or mental health provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled.
 - Each principal or his designee shall notify each parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled at the school with an Individualized Education Program of the prohibition of the use of seclusion and physical restraint if the student has a known condition. Such notification shall be made annually and be incorporated into the student's Individualized Education Program meeting.



Reporting Requirements

- The school employee who secluded or physically restrained the student shall notify the school principal and the principal or his designee shall notify electronically the director or supervisor of special education
- The school employee who secluded or physically restrained the student or a school administrator shall notify the parent or legal guardian via a phone call as soon as is practicable but no later than the end of the same school day.
- A school nurse or school health designee shall visit the student as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the same school day, to look for and document any signs of injury or distress.

Documentation Requirements

- A school employee who secluded or physically restrained a student shall document and report the incident in accordance with the policies adopted by the public-school governing authority.
- The employee shall submit such report to the school principal by the end of the next school day following the incident.
- The principal or his designee shall submit the report to the parent by the end of the next school day following receipt of the report

The Incident Report Requirements

- The name, age, grade, gender, race, and disability of the student secluded or restrained.
- The date, time, location, and duration of the seclusion or physical restraint.
- The name and title of each school employee involved and who was a witness.
- A description of the events requiring the use of seclusion or physical restraint, including a description of the procedures and types of restraint used, any actions taken in an attempt to de-escalate the situation, and the student's behavior that suggest the student posed an imminent risk of harm to self or others.
- A description of any student injuries, visible marks, or medical emergencies that occurred during or after the seclusion or physical restraint.

The Incident Report Requirements

- A description of the actions taken immediately following the student's release from seclusion or physical restraint, including actions to notify the student's parent or legal guardian.
- A description of the student's actions immediately following the student's release from seclusion or restraint.



Multiple incidents being reported?

- If a student is involved in three incidents in a school year involving the use of seclusion or physical restraint, the special education teacher shall send prior written notice of the intention to call an Individualized Education Program team meeting to the student's parent or legal guardian
- At that IEP meeting the team must:
 - review and revise the student's Behavioral Intervention Plan
 - include or add any crisis intervention plans, to include any appropriate and necessary behavioral supports.
- If the student's challenging behavior continues or escalates, requiring repeated use of seclusion or physical restraint, the director or supervisor of special education or his designee shall review the student's plans at least once every three weeks.

Cameras



- By Feb 1st, 2026, each public-school governing authority shall install a camera in each special education classroom
- verify periodically that the camera remains in operation.
- the school must provide notice to parents of students in the affected classroom via normal school communication channels when a camera is not in operations for more than 2 consecutive school days
- A school principal or his designee and the director or supervisor of special education shall review video and audio footage, if available, to ensure policies and proper techniques were followed during an incident.

Local School Board Requirements

- Must adopt written guidelines and procedures regarding:
 - Proper use of crisis intervention plans, including the use of positive behavioral interventions and support, sensory rooms, seclusion, and physical restraint, and how these strategies differ.
 - All seclusion and physical restraint safety, reporting, and notification requirements, including any follow-up procedures.
 - An explanation of the methods of physical restraint and the school employee training requirements relative to the use of restraint.
 - An explanation of how school employees may utilize and be trained in a crisis intervention training program.
- At the beginning of each school year, each public-school governing authority shall post on its website the guidelines and procedures adopted

Local School Board Requirements



- Each public-school governing authority shall annually submit prior to the beginning of each school year its guidelines and procedures adopted to its special education advisory council
- Local policies will need to be updated by December 1
- Submit policy updates to LDOE
- Report the number of designated seclusion rooms to its special education advisory council
Deadline May 31, 2026.

BESE Update

- LDOE presented Act 479 and bulletin changes at the June Superintendents Advisory Council.
 - [3.1.pdf](#)
- LDOE presented Act 479 at the June SEAP Meeting and proposed changes to bulletins
 - [06.2025 SEAP B1706 B741 Seclusion and Restraint HB684 Amended \(1\).pdf](#)

BESE Update

At their August Meeting, BESE approved:

- Revisions to Bulletins in response to Act 479 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session
 - Bulletin 741—Louisiana Administrators Handbook for School
 - Bulletin 1706—Regulations for Implementation of the Children with Exceptionalities Act

How to get and stay involved:

- Attend all school board meetings where these policy updates are being discussed and considered
- Attend the local Special Education Advisory Committee meeting when the policies are being presented and discussed
- Not sure when the meetings are happening call your Sped Director or School Board President and start asking questions



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Ashley McReynolds

Amcreynolds@thearcla.org

225-383-1033