



## Office of Children and Family Services


ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE  
Commissioner

### Memorandum

Date: June 30, 2021

To: Executive Directors and Administering Agencies of Secure, Specialized Secure and Non-Secure Detention Facilities

From: Dr. Nina Aledort, Deputy Commissioner 

Re: Ending the Use of Prone Restraints

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This memo is a reminder to all detention facilities that prone restraints will no longer be an approved restraint technique as of July 1, 2021. Official policy will be forthcoming. We have been working collectively to end the use of prone restraints since August 2020. In order to implement this change, all facilities have submitted plans for retraining where required, and updated behavior management and restraint policies to eliminate the use of prone restraints. Any additional policy or protocol updates should be submitted immediately to the detention mailbox at [ocfs.sm.detention@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:ocfs.sm.detention@ocfs.ny.gov)

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) banned the use of prone restraints in state-run juvenile placement facilities over a decade ago, recognizing the potential harmful effects on youth. High profile incidents across the nation in 2020 instilled a sense of urgency for OCFS to eliminate the use of prone restraints in all licensed facilities, including detention. Despite years of progress in reducing the number of youth being held in any detention facilities, New York still struggles to reduce the racial disparities in detention. This policy change not only enhances the safety of the youth but seeks to rectify a policy that negatively impacts the youth who are in our detention facilities, who are disproportionately youth of color.

In addition to the elimination of this specific restraint technique, OCFS is committed to working with all detention facilities to identify effective strategies to reduce overall reliance on physical restraints, and to increase safety for youth and staff. Detention facilities must be environments that not only safely maintain youth throughout their court proceedings, but also provide opportunities for growth.

OCFS will continue to support the implementation of de-escalation techniques, training, programmatic enhancements and physical plant changes to achieve these important goals.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Dan Hulihan, Director of Detention Services at [Daniel.Hulihan@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Daniel.Hulihan@ocfs.ny.gov)