



# Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

---

Ted Strickland, Governor

John Martin, Director



## Information Notice 08-11-03

**To:** CBMR/DD Superintendents  
COG Directors  
SSA Directors  
Providers

**From:** Michael J Rench, Deputy Director  
Division of Community Services

**Date:** November 5, 2008

**Re:** **Prone Restraint**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Information Notice is to inform the field of the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD) decision to ban prone restraint. We have come to this conclusion after much research. Overwhelming findings support the belief that its use poses an unacceptable risk to health and safety.

**SCOPE:**

This statewide Information Notice applies to all providers of services to individuals with disabilities who receive funds directly or indirectly from the ODMRDD to provide a service or support to an individual eligible for County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (CBMRDD) services.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Positive Intervention Culture initiated by ODMRDD centers on the principles of respect, trust and building relationships that are safe and healthy. In keeping with the spirit of this culture, ODMRDD has encouraged the research of alternatives to the use of aversive techniques as a means of behavioral intervention. Such interventions can result in emotional or physical trauma and often disrupt relationships with those closest to the individual. The use of prone restraint, in particular, has become an urgent area of concern in Ohio and nationally due to the high risk of serious injury and death.

The Statewide Behavior Support Advisory Committee (SBSAC) has completed an analysis of information on the dangers of restraints; particularly prone restraint. This research supports the belief that prone restraints are potentially fatal due to the impact this maneuver has on reducing a person's ability to breathe and increasing the need for recovery time after exertion. The

SBSAC's analysis of this data, combined with the research outlining the inherent dangers of prone restraint, led to their determination that a ban is necessary for the use of prone restraints within the MR/DD system.

ODMRDD's oversight responsibilities for behavior supports per O.A.C. 5123:2-1-02(J)(4)(a) states in this regard that "[t]he department shall provide oversight of behavior support plans, policies, and procedures as deemed necessary to ensure individual rights and the health and safety of the individual." Moreover, O.A.C. 5123:2-1-02(J)(4)(c) states in part that "[t]he department shall take immediate action, as necessary, to protect the health and safety of individuals served."

To that end, the Committee submitted a letter of recommendation which ODMRDD promptly acted upon resulting in this notice banning the use of prone restraints.

**STEPS TOWARD THE GOAL:**

Definition: Prone restraint is defined as a method of aversive behavior intervention where an individual's face and or frontal part of his or her body is placed in a downward position touching any surface.

Restraint Usage: Prone restraints are not to be written into Behavior Support Plans that may or may not be components of any person's Individual Services Plan. Prone restraints are not to be utilized at any point in time, including as a behavioral intervention in any crisis situation.

Technical Assistance: ODMRDD Positive Intervention Culture team members are available to assist local teams with reviewing their current usage of prone restraints in specific Behavior Support Plans and/or as part of Crisis Intervention Programs to determine safer, permissible, alternative procedures that may act as replacement strategies.

Grace Period: Any provider within the scope of this Information Notice will have 120 days to discontinue the usage of the prone restraint as a type of behavior intervention that they utilize either in an approved Behavior Support Plan or as a crisis intervention technique. The purpose of this grace period is to allow time for the appropriate teams to meet and develop an alternative approach and adequately train staff in the new intervention plan.

Consequences: Any and all usage of prone restraint following the 120 day grace period will require that a Major Unusual Incident be reported. A related investigation concerning the use of a prohibited action will be completed.

Please contact Ginger Curtiss or Heidi Taylor, ODMRDD Consultants, via email at [behavior.support@odmrdd.state.oh.us](mailto:behavior.support@odmrdd.state.oh.us) for information on receiving technical assistance as you move forward in an effort to support the Positive Intervention Culture.

- c: Ted Strickland, Governor
- Sandra Stephenson, Director, Department of Mental Health
- Helen Jones-Kelley, Director, Department of Job and Family Services
- John Corlett, Deputy Director of Medicaid, Department of Job and Family Services
- Angela Cornelius-Dawson, Director, Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services
- Alvin Jackson, Director, Department of Health
- Barbara Riley, Director, Department of Aging
- Thomas Stickrath, Director, Department of Youth Services
- Marilyn Troyer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
- John Martin, Director, Department of MR/DD
- Dan Ohler, Executive Director, OACBMR/DD
- Mary Ann Chamberlain, President, OSCBMR/DD
- Michael Kirkman, Executive Director, OLRS
- Carolyn Knight, Interim Executive Director, ODDC
- Mark Davis, Executive Director, OPRA
- Susan Dlouhy, Administrator, OAAS
- Gary Tonks, Executive Director, The Arc of Ohio
- Ron Kozlowski, Executive Director, APSI
- Mary Vaughan, Executive Director, ADA-Ohio
- Shawn Henry, Executive Director, OCALI
- Tanya Marie Fernandez-Mote, Chairperson, Governor's Council
- Sadie Hunter, Executive Director, People First
- ODMR/DD DC Superintendents
- ODMR/DD Deputy Directors
- ODMR/DD Central Office

Resources:

Ohio Administrative Code 5123:2-1-02 (County Board Administration)