



NH Department of Health & Human Services  
Division for Children, Youth & Families

## DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

### 1377.1 MECHANICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES

Policy Directive: **24-05**

Effective Date: **July 2024**

Implements Policy: [1377](#)

Approved:

Marie Noonan, DCYF Interim Director

This SOP defines the procedures for the use and care of mechanical restraints.

#### Procedure

*The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.*

- I. JPPOs/JJ Supervisors are responsible for the care and safety of the child while mechanical restraints are applied.
- II. When applying mechanical restraints, the following process must occur:
  - A. Verbally command the child to stand or kneel as necessary for the circumstance and type of restraint;
  - B. Apply mechanical restraints in the following order:
    1. Waist belt (if applicable), with child facing away;
    2. Handcuffs, with child facing the JPPO; and
    3. Leg restraints (if applicable), with child facing away; and
  - C. Verify proper fit, capillary refill, spacing, and then double lock each handcuff.
  - D. When both handcuffs and leg restraints are applied, they shall not be connected together.
- III. If there is reported or observed undue discomfort or decreased circulation, the restraints are checked and adjusted as soon as it is safe to do so.
- IV. If the child is placed in a prone position for safety reasons, it is critical that the child be transitioned to a safer position including but not limited to, rolling the child on their side, or assisting them to a seated or standing position.
- V. After mechanical restraints are applied and when it is safe to do so, JPPOs/JJ Supervisors conduct a search of the child that is as thorough and unobtrusive as possible, according to [Policy 1346 Search and Seizure](#), for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the child and others.

- A. Contraband, weapons, or evidence of a crime discovered on the child or in the child's possession during a search will be seized, documented on [Form 1346 Seized Property Report](#), and handled according to Policy 1346.
- VI. Mechanical restraints are removed only when it is safe to do so. Removal must follow training and instructions and be done by the JPPO/JJ Supervisor in the following order and manner:
- A. Leg restraints, if applied:
    - 1. Instruct the child to kneel on a solid surface to gain access to the leg restraints;
      - (a) Tell the child which leg restraint will be removed;
      - (b) Repeat for the second leg; and
      - (c) Instruct the child to stand and guide them to their feet.
  - B. Handcuffs:
    - 1. Instruct the child to stand facing away with their feet shoulder-width apart, direct them to bend slightly at the waist and then to remain still;
    - 2. Tell the child which handcuff will be removed first and then direct the child to place that hand on their head when the handcuff is removed; and
    - 3. Repeat for the second hand and direct the child to place the remaining hand on their head and then to remain still.
  - C. Waist belt, if applied:
    - 1. Instruct the child to stand facing forward and remain still;
    - 2. Stand in front of the child and remove the handcuffs one at a time; and
    - 3. Step behind the child to remove the waist belt.
- VII. Mechanical restraints are cleaned and sanitized according to training and instructions as soon as practicable after use.
- VIII. JPPOs/JJ Supervisors should inspect their Division-issued handcuffs at least once a month to verify they are in good working condition and to review safety factors according to training and instructions as follows:
- A. Verify both single bars can move freely through the double bars with one finger;
  - B. Inspect double bars for being too loose or too tight;
  - C. Inspect the keyway for debris. Clear lint or other material out of the keyway;
  - D. Examine the handcuff key to ensure there are no cracks in the metal and the flag still fits well into the keyway;
  - E. Inspect the handcuffs for any signs of rust or corrosion, especially near the boss rivet and where the ratchet seats inside the handcuff;

- F. Confirm hinges are free of rust and move freely; and
- G. Lubricate with graphite lubricant as needed. Only use lubricant as directed by the JJS Training Officer.

### Applicable Forms

Form	Title
<a href="#">1346</a>	Seized Property Report
<a href="#">1360</a>	Equipment Inventory and Incident Report
<a href="#">1379</a>	Use of Force Report

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Q1. Are restraints required for all JJS transports?

- A No, JPPOs/JJ Supervisors use their training, experience, and professional judgement to determine whether secure transport is necessary by taking into account things like safety concerns and flight risks.
- A Secure transport means the child has mechanical restraints applied while traveling. Leg restraints and waist belts are not mandatory for all secure transports.

#### Q2. Where can I get leg restraints and waist belts?

- A These items may be obtained from Central Control at the secure treatment facility for juveniles. Some District Offices have leg restraints and waist belts available; check with a Supervisor.

### Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

[A - B](#)   [C - D](#)   [E - F](#)   [G - I](#)   [J - L](#)   [M - N](#)   [O - Q](#)   [R - S](#)   [T - V](#)   [W - Z](#)