

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 1991 DATE ISSUED: August 16, 1991

SUBJECT: Development and Implementation of Client Crisis Management Policies and Procedures

I. PURPOSE

In residential and day program settings, crisis situations may arise which present a risk to the safety of clients and employees of the Department of Human Services. It is important, therefore, to have consistent standards for the prevention of, intervention in, and resolution of these crises.

It is the Department's position that a crisis management continuum, from least to most restrictive intervention strategies, be established and supported by policies and procedures throughout all components of the Department within the scope of this Administrative Order.

The purpose of this Administrative Order is to set forth the Department's policy on client crisis management, and to establish minimum standards for use by all divisions, institutions, and agencies in the development and implementation of client crisis management policies and procedures.

II. SCOPE

This Administrative Order applies to all components of the Department that are involved at any level in the direct provision of residential and/or day program services to Department clients. The scope of this order does not include third-party social service contract services and agencies.

III. DEFINITIONS

The following terms, when used in this order, have the meanings indicated:

Client Crisis Management means the informed activity of staff to prevent or contain acts of violence initiated by clients of the Department of Human Services.

Client means an individual receiving residential or day program services from the Department of Human Services within the scope of this Order.

Containment Techniques means the use of body holds to temporarily contain the action of a client who is posing an immediate danger to him/herself, other clients, or staff.

Crisis means a temporary loss of control or a condition of instability, often involving violent, aggressive client behavior.

Crisis Management Continuum means a spectrum of intervention techniques that can be utilized to prevent, intervene in, or resolve a crisis situation, including Crisis Recognition, Prevention and Intervention (CRPI), Defensive Techniques, Containment Techniques, Mechanical Restraint, Time Out, and Seclusion (all as defined herein).

Crisis Recognition, Prevention and Intervention (CRPI) means the approved program of crisis intervention, which provides staff with the knowledge, communication skills, and non-containment strategies needed to recognize, prevent and intervene in client crisis situations. This crisis management system provides the underlying philosophy of the continuum and serves as a prerequisite for training in more restrictive techniques proposed in this Administrative Order.

Day Program means a program which delivers client care and services on a non-residential basis within the scope of this Administrative Order.

Defensive Techniques means the use of defensive maneuvers to avoid or deflect injury from an assaultive client, or to escape any physical holds placed on staff or other clients by an assaultive client.

Mechanical Restraint means the application of an approved restraining device to restrict the freedom of movement of a client who is posing an immediate danger to him/herself, other clients, or staff.

Residential Services means care and services delivered in the Department of Human Services' psychiatric hospitals, developmental centers, residential treatment centers and community residences within the scope of this Administrative Order.

Seclusion means the confinement of an agitated client to a specially designed, locked room in order to remove the client from the stresses of the larger environment, and restrict his/her access to other clients and staff.

Time Out means the confinement of an agitated client to a specially designed room with a door that is held shut by staff, or a mechanism requiring constant pressure by staff to keep the mechanism engaged, in order to remove the client from the stresses of the larger environment, and restrict his/her access to other clients and staff.

IV. POLICY

A. The Department of Human Services is committed to the delivery of effective treatment and program strategies to clients within the least restrictive, most therapeutic environment possible. The Department recognizes that managing problem behaviors which place clients and staff at risk of injury is an integral part of the treatment milieu. It is, therefore, the Department's position that a crisis management continuum, from least to most restrictive intervention strategies, be established and supported by policies and procedures throughout all components of the Department within the scope of this Administrative Order.

The crisis management continuum shall begin with preventive measures designed to address any environmental, programmatic, and/or treatment factors which may contribute to, or precipitate crisis situations. Early intervention which focuses on negotiation and/or counseling is the preferred approach to managing clients in crisis. Recognizing that less restrictive approaches may occasionally fall short of de-escalating life-threatening situations, the crisis management continuum must include procedures for the containment of violent behavior, and where necessary, the use of mechanical restraints, time out, or seclusion.

The Department maintains its position that physical and mechanical intervention shall not be accorded any greater status or emphasis beyond that of extreme last resorts in high risk situations, i.e., when a client is posing an immediate danger to him/herself, other clients, or staff, and shall not be used: for staff convenience; solely for the prevention of destruction to property; in lieu of appropriate programming; or, in violation of Federal or State statutes. Accordingly, the Department authorizes the use of selected physical and mechanical interventions to enable staff to divert, contain, and/or restrain the actions of an aggressive client whose behavior is posing serious danger to him/herself or others.

B. All divisions, institutions, residential treatment centers, and agencies within the scope of this Administrative Order shall have written policies and procedures on the full continuum of client crisis management.

The purpose of such policies and procedures is to ensure that crises are handled in a consistent fashion throughout the division. The policies and procedures shall at minimum include:

1. a statement of purpose reflecting the Department's position on client crisis management;
2. a statement of scope, indicating the range of the policy's applicability;
3. procedures for the authorization, use, documentation, monitoring, and treatment team review of the following approaches, as appropriate to the client's age, clinical needs, and level of functioning in a particular institution, residential center, agency, or program:
 - a. environmental, programmatic and/or treatment efforts designed to reduce the potential for crisis situations;
 - b. prevention, intervention in, and/or resolution of crises based on negotiation, guidance, and counseling as contained within the CRPI curriculum;
 - c. defensive techniques for deflecting attack;
 - d. containment techniques, i.e., use of body holds to temporarily contain the action of a client who is posing an immediate danger to him/herself, other clients, or staff;
 - e. mechanical restraint, i.e., the application of an approved restraining device to restrict the freedom of movement of a client who is posing an immediate danger to him/herself, other clients, or staff;
 - f. where allowable, time out, i.e., the confinement of an agitated client to a specially designed room with a door that is held shut by staff, or a mechanism requiring constant pressure by staff to keep the mechanism engaged, in order to remove the client from the stresses of the larger environment, and restrict his/her access to other clients and staff; and,
 - g. where allowable, seclusion, i.e., the confinement of an agitated client to a specifically designed, locked room in order to remove the client from the stresses of the larger environment, and restrict his/her access to other clients and staff.

4. a provision and rationale for the identification and prioritization of those staff who will receive the training in the application of the division/component policies and procedures on the full continuum of client crisis management; and,
5. a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of client crisis management procedures including, but not limited to, the incidence of client/staff injuries incurred as a direct result of crisis situations and containment responses.

C. Using the full expertise of division clinical and professional staff, each division director shall have the authority, responsibility, and accountability to develop divisional client crisis management policies and procedures and to approve client crisis management policies and procedures of components under his/her direction.

D. Using the full expertise of division and/or component clinical and professional staff, chief executive officers, superintendents, and directors of day program services shall have the authority, responsibility and accountability to develop institutional, residential center, or agency client crisis management policies and procedures.

E. Divisional and component policies and procedures, and any subsequent modifications, shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Institutions, prior to their implementation.

F. All staff who may be required to intervene with, restrain, transport or seclude clients in crisis situations shall be provided with education and training in the full client crisis management continuum, in order of least to most restrictive approaches, beginning with the prerequisite Crisis Recognition, Prevention and Intervention Program, and proceeding through those permissible responses contained in the respective division/component policies and procedures.

G. The Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources shall ensure the review and approval, prior to implementation, of all division/component training curricula attendant to this Administrative Order.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Institutions shall be responsible for the implementation of this Administrative Order. To this end, the Deputy Commissioner for Institutions shall review and

approve all divisional, institutional, residential center and agency client crisis management policies and procedures pursuant to this Administrative Order.

B. Each division director whose component(s) fall within the scope of this Administrative Order shall:

1. develop and promulgate division-level client crisis management policies and procedures and ensure the development of component level client crisis management policies and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this Administrative Order;
2. review and approve component policies and procedures on client crisis management;
3. establish an appropriate evaluative mechanism for monitoring the impact of institutional and agency client crisis management policies and procedures on client/staff injuries; and,
4. oversee the implementation, and monitor the continuance of the evaluative process throughout the divisional and institutional quality assurance functions.

C. Chief executive officers, superintendents, and agency directors whose facility/service falls within the scope of this Administrative Order shall:

1. develop and promulgate client crisis management policies and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this Administrative Order and their respective divisional policies.
2. develop a local (or regional, if more feasible because of the size of the institution/agency) crisis management safety committee, making use of human rights/client advocacy committees where appropriate and available, to:
 - a. monitor local compliance with and effectiveness of client crisis management policies and procedures as set forth;
 - b. assist the local quality assurance function in the collection and analysis of appropriate evaluative data on client/staff injuries related to client crisis management procedures;
 - c. oversee appropriate corrective action where necessary.

If possible, the committee representation will include clinical, social work, administrative, and residential care personnel, risk managers/safety officers, quality assurance representatives, and client advocates.

D. The Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources shall:

1. ensure the development, review and approval of all curricula necessary to implement this Order, including the incorporation of recommended additions, deletions, and/or modifications to previously approved curricula;
2. secure an external review of curricula pertaining to physical and mechanical interventions (this review shall be conducted by an agency, not of the Department of Human Services, with demonstrated expertise in client care and adult education);
3. monitor and evaluate the timeliness and effectiveness of the training delivered throughout the Department;
4. ensure the review and approval of any additional training of Department staff in the various areas defined in this Administrative Order, prior to their implementation; and,
5. ensure the appropriate management and resolution of employee relations issues attendant to this Administrative Order.



Alan J. Gibbs
Commissioner