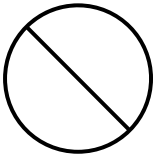


Safety-Based Separation and Searches for Juveniles

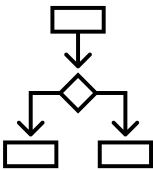
The Department of Corrections has adopted new rules on safety-based separation and trauma-informed searches in its licensed juvenile correctional facilities. Safety-based separation replaces the previous punitive isolation practice of disciplinary room time (DRT), while trauma-informed searches are now required for all searches. The rules were adopted October 22, 2024, and **are effective January 13, 2025.**



How is safety-based separation different from DRT?

DRT was a frequently used punitive response to facility rule violations with few guardrails and was widely varied in its use. Punitive isolation can result in long-term damage to juveniles' bodies and brains and can increase suicidal ideation and self-harm.

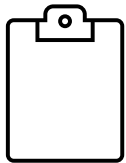
Unlike DRT, safety-based separation is used *only* when there is a safety threat to a juvenile, other juveniles, or facility staff. Staff must continually document the safety need.



How does safety-based separation work?

Safety-based separation occurs in either a locked or unlocked area, is initiated by staff, and must be related to a safety risk caused by a juvenile's behavior. It ends once a juvenile can safely engage with other residents and staff. Frequent well-being checks are required.

The goal is to transition a juvenile into regular facility programming as soon as the safety issue is resolved. Social isolation as discipline is also prohibited.



What other changes are there?

New time-out limits, enhanced notification requirements to families and others, and robust quarterly and annual facility reporting to DOC and the legislature.



What about searches?

The rule establishes trauma-informed techniques for searches, requires staff training, and requires DOC to provide training guidance to facilities.

Comments or questions on the rule should be sent to docrulemaking.DOC@state.mn.us

