



**SAN MATEO COUNTY  
PROBATION DEPARTMENT  
INSTITUTIONS SERVICES MANUAL**

**ARTICLE 5  
Classification and Separation  
§1354/1354.5**

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**Topic                      Separation**

**Policy**                      This policy provides guidelines for the separation or room confinement of youth. Probation staff may separate youth to maintain the order, safety, and security of the facility and shall provide for the continuance of all youth rights during such separation.

Separation of youth for reasons that include, but are not be limited to, medical and mental health conditions, assaultive behavior, disciplinary consequences, and protective custody.

Decisions to separate youth should include consideration of positive youth development and trauma-informed care. When the objective of the separation is discipline, see the Youth Discipline and Room Confinement policies (15 CCR 1354). [Create link here](#)

Youth shall not be denied normal privileges during separation except when necessary to accomplish the objective of separation (15 CCR 1354).

This section does not prohibit members from placing a youth in a single-occupancy room at the youth's specific request or in accordance with Title 15 regulations regarding separation (15 CCR 1352).

There shall be a daily review of separated youth to determine if separation remains necessary, unless more frequent review is required (15 CCR 1354):

- a. No youth should be separated from the general population unless an assessment of available alternatives has been made and the ISM-OD or the authorized designee has determined that there is no available alternative means to keep the youth and other youth safe. The basis for safety concerns and the reasons why no alternative means of separation are available shall be documented.
- b. Youth may only be separated from the general population until an alternative means to keep all youth safe can be made.
- c. During any period of separation, youth may not be denied daily large-muscle exercise and legally required educational programming or special education services. Separated youth should not be denied access to other programs and work opportunities as reasonably possible (28 CFR 115.342).
- d. Separated youth shall also receive daily visits from a medical or mental health care

provider (28 CFR 115.342; 15 CCR 1354). Youth separated for medical or mental health reasons must be cleared by the appropriate mental health or medical professional prior to being returned to general population.

1. Staff may separate a youth from the general population for reasons that include, but are not limited to, disciplinary consequences, medical and mental health conditions, placement on Observation and Assessment, assaultive behavior, and protective custody.
2. Prior to separation, staff shall discuss the purposes of the separation with the youth. Staff shall allow the youth to make a statement. Staff shall develop an individualized plan that includes the goals and objectives to be met in order to reintegrate the youth to general population. If there is a safety or security issue, the youth can be moved prior to discussing the purpose of the separation.
3. Youth who are separated shall not be denied normal privileges during separation; including large muscle activity, medical or mental health care, opportunity for hygiene, education, or meals (see §1390 Discipline).
4. Youth shall be separated only as long as there is a threat to safety or security of other youth, staff members, or visitors, and necessary to accomplish the objectives of the separation.
5. Staff shall follow all procedures related to safety checks of youth, including the direct visual observation of youth in separation (§1328 Safety Checks).
6. Staff shall review the separation of youth to determine whether it is appropriate for the youth to remain in separation. In the case of youth separated for protective custody, an Institutions Services Manager shall review the need for separation at least once per day. If a youth is separated for the purposes of a “time out” or “cool down,” staff shall evaluate the need for continued separation at least every 15 minutes. Separation of a youth for 30 minutes or longer for any purpose shall be approved by lead staff. In the event of the separation of the youth for medical reasons, only Medical staff shall approve removing the youth from separation status.

#### **1354.1 ADULT AND YOUTH SEPARATION**

Staff ensures separation between youth and adult offender in the event that an adult offender is on the YSC premises awaiting a court hearing.

#### **1354.2 SEPARATION EXCEPTIONS**

Youth not required to be in an infirmary for illness may be separated for health and safety issues, with the written approval of a licensed physician or nurse practitioner in accordance with 15 CCR 1354.5:

- 1) To treat and protect against the spread of communicable disease for the shortest amount of time required to reduce the risk of infection.

- 2) For required extended care after medical treatment.

### **1354.3 ROOM CONFINEMENT**

1. Discipline shall be imposed at the least restrictive level which promotes the desired behavior.
2. Discipline shall not include corporal punishment, group punishment, physical or psychological degradation, or use of restraint.
3. Per California Welfare and Institutions Code, Article 1, Section 208.3, room confinement shall not be used for the purposes of punishment, coercion, convenience, or retaliation by staff.
4. Per California Welfare and Institutions Code, Article 1, Section 208.3, a youth, or ward may be held up to four hours in room confinement. After the youth or ward has been held in room confinement for a period of four hours, staff shall do one or more of the following:
  - a. Return the youth or ward to the general population.
  - b. consult with mental health or medical staff.
  - c. develop an individualized plan that includes the goals and objectives to be met in order to reintegrate the youth or ward to general population.
5. Per California Welfare and Institutions Code, Article 1, Section 208.3, if room confinement must be extended beyond four hours, staff shall do the following:
  - a. Document the reason for room confinement and the basis for the extension, the date and time the youth or ward was first placed in room confinement, and when he or she is eventually released from room confinement.
  - b. Develop an individualized plan that includes the goals and objectives to be met to reintegrate the youth or ward to general population.
  - c. Obtain documented authorization by the facility superintendent or his or her designee every four hours thereafter.
6. Restrictions on the use of room confinement are not intended to limit the use of single-person rooms for the housing of youth and do not apply to normal sleeping hours. In addition, restrictions on the use of room confinement do not apply during an emergency circumstance that requires a significant departure from normal operations, including a natural disaster or facility-wide threat that poses a substantial risk of harm to staff and youth.
7. At no time is room confinement used for the purposes of punishment, coercion, convenience, or retaliation by staff.
8. Room confinement shall not be used to the extent that it compromises the mental and physical health of the youth.

9. Room confinement does not apply when a youth is placed in a locked youth room to treat and protect against the spread of a communicable disease for the shortest amount of time required to reduce the risk of infection, with the written approval of a licensed physician or nurse practitioner, when the youth is not required to be in an infirmary for an illness.
10. Room confinement does not apply when a youth is placed in a locked youth room for required extended care after medical treatment with the written approval of a licensed physician or nurse practitioner, when the youth is not required to be in an infirmary for an illness.
11. This section does not apply to youth or wards in court holding facilities or adult facilities.

See Procedures Manual on Separation for further information.