



POLICY ADVISORY

Policy Title:	Residential Licensing Policy Updates
Policy Number:	RP-26-01, RP-26-02, RP-26-03, RP-26-04, RP-26-05, RP-26-06, RP-26-07
Release Date:	May 14, 2026
Effective Date:	November 17, 2026
Policy Link:	https://www.mass.gov/info-details/residential-licensing-changes

OVERVIEW

EEC released updated Standards for the Licensure of Residential Programs Serving Residents and Young Parents, effective August 17, 2026. To accompany the new regulations, EEC is updating existing policies and creating new policies to further support the aims of the new regulations: modernizing and streamlining language, enhancing clarity, and incorporating an evidence-based approach to residential program licensing. This policy advisory provides an overview of the policy updates that will take effect alongside the new licensing regulations on August 17, 2026.

APPLICABILITY

These policies apply to all EEC-licensed residential programs.

KEY UPDATES TO EXISTING POLICIES

- **Internal Investigations:** Update to the 2022 Internal Investigations policy, providing additional detail regarding EEC's requirements for programs' internal

investigation policies and procedures. Additionally, “Personnel Guidance” section has been removed and developed into a separate standalone policy (see below).

- **Removal and Return of Staff Suspected of Abuse or Neglect:** Update to the “Personnel Guidance” section of the Internal Investigations policy to reflect the current BRC process and provide additional details about the required procedures for reports filed with DCF and DPPC.
- **Serious Injury in Residential Care:** Update to the 2008 Serious Injury in Residential Care or Placement policy to reorganize and reformat for improved readability and provide programs with a definition of serious injury.
- **Prone Restraint:** Update to the 2016 Prone Restraint Authorization Policy to modernize language and improve clarity.
- **Bedroom Doors in Residential Programs:** Update to the 2003 Closed/Locked Doors policy, defining the circumstances under which bedroom doors must remain open and unlocked, as well as conditions under which bedroom doors may be closed or locked.

NEW POLICIES

- **Use of Surveillance Cameras in Residential Programs:** New policy outlining new EEC regulatory requirements for programs’ policies and procedures around the use of surveillance cameras.
- **Electronic Records:** New policy articulating standards for the use of electronic records in residential programs to ensure regulatory compliance, continuity of access, and protection of confidential information.

PENDING UPDATES FOR PLACEMENT POLICIES

In cases where the above residential policies replace an existing policy applicable to both residential programs and placement agencies, the previous policy will remain in effect for placement agencies only. EEC is in the process of re-releasing the following policies to clarify their updated applicability to placement agencies only:

- Internal Investigations and Personnel Guidance policy issued on March 22, 2022
- Serious Injury in Residential Care or Placement issued on September 25, 2008

OBSOLETE

The above policies replace the following EEC policies for residential programs:

- Internal Investigations and Personnel Guidance policy issued on March 22, 2022
- Serious Injury in Residential Care or Placement issued on September 25, 2008
- Prone Restraint Authorization Policy issued September 8, 2016
- Closed/Locked Doors issued March 26, 2003