



Policy Advisory

Policy Title: Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement

Policy Number: RP-26-13

Release Date: August 21, 2026

Effective Date: September 1, 2026

Policy Link: [Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement](#)

OVERVIEW

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is committed to supporting residential programs to protect the safety, privacy, and care of residents and staff in responding to the presence of, or requests from, law enforcement officers engaged in civil law enforcement, including federal civil immigration officers. As required by the PROTECT Act, Stat. 2026 c. 163, § 3, this policy governs all civil law enforcement interactions related to a program premises; residents served; employees and staff working in a program; and records and/or information maintained by the program. This requirement is discussed in more detail in the [Guidance for Child Care and Residential Providers Related to Interacting with Civil Law Enforcement](#), issued by the Governor's Office, the Executive Office of Education, and EEC.

Except as required by state or federal law or as required for the Commonwealth or any of its subdivisions to administer a state or federally supported or funded program, civil arrests by law enforcement officers engaged in civil law enforcement shall not be permitted on the premises of a licensed residential program without a judicial warrant or judicial order. G.L. c. 15D, § 23(b) (codifying Stat. 2026, c. 163, § 3). This provision goes into effect **September 1, 2026**, regardless of whether a residential program has adopted a policy reflecting this provision.

If a program's existing policies cover the new requirements, programs must submit an Attestation to EEC indicating such. See Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement: Appendix D. To the extent that a program's policies do not otherwise cover the new requirements, programs must submit their [Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Officers Policy](#) to EEC. The Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy includes a Model Policy for programs to use. See Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy Appendix A.

Starting **September 4, 2026**, programs will be able to download their Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy or Attestation into their LEAD document library under the following category labeled Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy: **R&P: Residential Policy Verification**

Programs should be prepared to discuss their interactions with civil law enforcement policy with EEC staff during program visits.

Nothing in this policy update prohibits appropriate cooperation with authorities, including police, fire departments, emergency medical services, child protective authorities, or other public safety officials responding to an emergency, investigating criminal conduct, protecting a child from abuse or neglect, or otherwise exercising lawful authority unrelated to civil immigration enforcement.

Nothing in this policy alters the program's obligations to comply with state and federal laws or EEC policies or procedures.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all licensed residential programs.

KEY TOPICS

Residential programs must create and maintain an Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy with information that addresses the detailed requirements. The Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement Policy also includes additional information in the following sections that support the implementation of this policy requirement:

- Background
- Authority
- Definitions

- Policy Statement
- Suggested Guidance
- Compliance
- Additional Information
- Obsolete
- Appendix A: Model Policy on Interactions with Civil Law Enforcement

OBSOLETE

- Executive Office of Education: [Guidance \(May 2026\): Recommendations for Entities Providing Education and Child Care Services Related to Interacting with Federal Immigration Officers](#)