**Procedure No.:** I.E.PR.002 **Issue Date:** August 1, 2023

**Subject: Bed & Side Rail Safety, Assessments and Audits Effective Date:** Upon release

**Section:** Health and Safety **Approved:**/s/Jordan Scheff/LT

**Policy Statement**

The use of bed and side rails, specialty beds or mattresses, and related equipment provide individuals receiving funding and services from DDS with comfort and security, aid in turning and repositioning in the bed, provide a hand-hold for getting into and out of bed, and may minimize the risk of fall-related injuries. The use of bed and side rails and specialty beds or mattresses, however, may present risks of injury including, but not limited to, suffocation, skin bruising, and agitation. This procedure is consistent with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidance to reduce injuries related to the use of bed and side rails found in the [FDA Guide to Bed Safety Bed Rails in Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Home Health Care: The Facts](https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/hospital-beds/guide-bed-safety-bed-rails-hospitals-nursing-homes-and-home-health-care-facts).

1. **Purpose**

The Department of Developmental Services’ procedure establishes a consistent means of reviewing and auditing the safety and operating conditions of beds with bed and side rails and specialty beds and mattresses for individuals residing in DDS-funded residences or facilities, or those individuals attending respite centers. Specifically, these types of beds are equipped with bed and side rails or are specialty beds or mattresses, such as hospital beds, waterbeds, or air mattresses, and the bed’s related equipment.

1. **Applicability**

This procedure applies to all individuals for whom the department bears direct or oversight responsibility for their health and safety and who have been determined to need bed rails or a specialty bed or who have experienced a change in condition which alerts DDS staff, qualified provider staff, or the individual’s planning and support team to the need for a specialty bed or bed rails. This standard is to be applied to the planning and coordination of care for individuals. It provides guidance to residential site managers and both DDS public program and DDS qualified provider direct support staff for individuals who receive residential funding or services and individuals who attend respite centers.

1. **Definitions**

None

1. **Implementation**
2. **Identification of the Need for Bed & Side Rails**

When an individual who has been determined to need bed rails or a specialty bed or who has experienced a change in condition that would require the use of a specialty bed or bed rails, the individual’s planning and support team (PST) shall complete the initial Individual Bed & Side Rail Needs Assessment Tool, which is reviewed annually and whenever there are changes in the individual’s condition that would require the use of bed rails. (I.E.PR.002 Attachment A). At the time the Individual Bed & Side Rail Needs Assessment is reviewed with the PST, there may be a determination made that bed rails are indicated for one or more of the following uses such as:

1. Protective devices: The PST may determine that bed rails are necessary to protect an individual from potential injury caused by falling out of bed due to involuntary body movements caused by seizures, cerebral palsy (CP), or other medical conditions. This use of bed rails is generally not intended to prevent the individual from getting out of bed independently, but rather to minimize the risk of injuries.
2. Positioning devices: While the use of bed rails as a positioning device is not optimal, a clinician may determine that the individual may need bed rails for positioning or repositioning purposes. This need for bed rails as positioning or repositioning devices shall be reflected in the clinician’s written assessment, which determines the parameters for the use of bed rails for the identified need.
3. Mechanical restraints: Bed rails used for this purpose restrict movement; prevent an individual from harming themselves or others; and is generally intended to prevent the individual from getting out of bed independently. The individual’s PST shall adhere to DDS procedureI.E.PR.004 Program Review Committees regarding the use of mechanical restraints.

1. **Upon Identification of the Need for Bed & Side Rails**
2. The registered nurse or licensed practical nurse assigned to the residence or the individual shall ensure a prescriber’s order is obtained specific to the individual’s need for bed rails and that the order is renewed as per DDS or qualified residential provider policy.
3. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall ensure that a bed with side rails is made available for the individual in a timely manner. If there is an unanticipated delay in the residential site manager accessing an appropriate bed with side rails for an individual who has been determined to require such a bed, the individual’s planning and support team shall be notified and shall meet to review the circumstances and determine the most appropriate course of action and any interim plans that need to be put in place.
4. All beds with side rails shall be installed and maintained by the vendor or designated personnel.
5. **Initial Completion of the Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit** (I.E.PR.002 Attachment B)
6. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall ensure that all identified individuals in their residences have a completed initial Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit on site.
7. If the Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit has not been completed, the residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall convene a meeting of the individual’s PST to complete the initial Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit. This team shall include the residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, and a licensed clinician such as a licensed nurse, occupational therapist (OT), or physical therapist (PT).
8. Any issues identified in the audit shall be documented by the planning and support team along with a plan to address the identified issues.
9. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall be responsible to maintain the completed Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit in the individual’s file in the residence.
10. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall be responsible to ensure any identified issues from the individual’s Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit are resolved in a timely manner.
11. **Bed & Side Rail Safety Checklist**
12. Twice annually, at six-month intervals, and as needed, the residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall visually assess the bed and side rails, using the Bed & Side Rail Safety Checklist (I.E.PR.002 Attachment C). Any issues identified in the checklist shall be documented by the person completing the checklist along with a proposed plan to address the identified issues.
13. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee shall maintain the completed Bed & Side Rail Safety Checklist in the individual’s file in the residence.
14. The residential site manager, or the manager’s designee, shall be responsible to ensure any identified issues from the Bed & Side Rail Safety Checklists are resolved.
15. The nursing quarterly report and Individualized Plan (IP) shall reflect the current prescribing practitioner’s order as to the specific need for bed and side rails. Example: Include the following in the nursing quarterly report or IP: bed side rails remain appropriate per prescriber’s orders and as per the needs identified in the Individual Bed & Side Rail Assessment.
16. **References**

[FDA Guide to Bed Safety Bed Rails in Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Home Health Care: The Facts](https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/hospital-beds/guide-bed-safety-bed-rails-hospitals-nursing-homes-and-home-health-care-facts)

Direct Supply Equipment & Furnishings’® [Bed Entrapment Guide](https://ecomm-cdn.directsupply.cloud/marketing/promotions/resources-page/category/pdf/bed-entrapment-guide.pdf) (Please note the inclusion of this guide as a reference is not an endorsement by DDS of any product or service provided by Direct Supply Equipment & Furnishings)

1. **Attachments**

# I.E.PR.002 Attachment A [Individual Bed & Side Rail Assessment](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DDS/DDS_Manual/IE/IEPR002_Attachment_A_Bed_Side_Rail_Assessment_8_1_2023.docx)

I.E.PR.002 Attachment B [Bed & Side Rail Safety Audit](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DDS/DDS_Manual/IE/IEPR002_Attachment_B_Bed_Side_Rail_Safety_Audit_8_1_2023.docx)

I.E.PR.002 Attachment C [Bed & Side Rail Safety Checklist](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DDS/DDS_Manual/IE/IEPR002_Attachment_C_Bed_Side_Rail_Safety_Checklist_8_1_2023.docx)