



Fact Sheet: Settings Rule and Locks

Overview

Under the new Medicaid rules about Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and settings, participants have the right to improved privacy in their sleeping or living unit including the ability to lock the bedroom and bathroom door.

Basic Requirements

A participant who lives in a provider-owned, controlled, or operated residential setting can choose to have a lock on their bedroom and bathroom door and to understand which staff have keys and when they will access the recipient's room or area. Participants also have a right to gain entrance into the setting through the front door or other established entry point by having a key or knowing the code for numerical locks.

The provider is required to have locks installed and available. Locks must:

1. Allow for easy exit from the participant's unit.
2. Unlock when the participant turns the handle or move the lever.
3. Comply with applicable state rules and current codes.
4. Be offered for the participant's use upon moving in.

Note: Single lever locks are recommended for use by the Anchorage Fire Department as a best practice. However, the choice of style of locks is a business decision that rests with the provider.

Limitations and Restrictions

There may be times when care needs require limitations or restrictions to ensure health, safety and welfare. Limitations or restrictions will not be used without the informed consent of the participant or their legal representative. It's important for participants to understand why limits or restrictions are imposed, when they will be reviewed for continued relevancy, and how those limits or restrictions reduce the risk of harm. Any limitation or restriction must be clearly documented in the Plan of Care.

A limitation or restriction can only be placed if:

1. There is a documented evidence-based need to protect from potential harm;
2. All less restrictive interventions have been tried;
3. A process of review has been established to determine a continued need for the limitation or restriction;
4. Documentation in the Plan of Care verifies the need, attempted less restrictive interventions, and scheduled reviews to support continuation

Contact/Resources

Email dstdscompliance@alaska.gov or go to the [Alaska HCBS Settings website](#).