



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 778

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1542

Senate, April 28, 2025

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF HANDCUFFS ON YOUNG CHILDREN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 46b-122a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

3 (a) There shall be a presumption in juvenile proceedings that all
4 mechanical restraints shall be removed from a preadjudicated detained
5 [juvenile] child prior to and throughout the detainee's appearance in
6 court. In juvenile proceedings, in-court use of mechanical restraints on
7 preadjudicated detainees shall be by order of the court and pursuant to
8 Judicial Branch written policy. The Judicial Branch shall keep statistics
9 on the use of mechanical restraints on [juveniles] a child during
10 proceedings and, notwithstanding any provision of section 46b-124,
11 shall provide such statistics to any member of the public upon request,
12 provided any identifying information concerning a juvenile is redacted.

13 (b) Beginning at the point of initial contact with a police officer, no

14 preadjudicated child under fourteen years of age may be restrained
15 using handcuffs, except as provided in subsection (a) of this section or
16 when necessary for purposes of public safety or because the child is
17 using or threatening to use physical force on a police officer who is
18 engaging with such child.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	October 1, 2025	46b-122a
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JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which generally prohibits the use of handcuffs to restrain children under age 14 who have not been adjudicated, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1542*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF HANDCUFFS ON YOUNG CHILDREN.*****SUMMARY**

This bill generally prohibits using handcuffs to restrain children under age 14 who have not been adjudicated, beginning at the point of initial contact with a police officer.

The bill makes exceptions when handcuffing is:

1. necessary for public safety,
2. necessary because the child is using or threatening to use physical force on a police officer who is engaging with the child, or
3. ordered by the court under its existing policy on using mechanical restraints in court (see BACKGROUND).

The bill also makes a corresponding change in the law that required the court to develop its policy on using mechanical restraints in court, by replacing the term “juvenile” with the term “child.”

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***Judicial Branch Policy on Using Mechanical Restraints in Juvenile Courts***

The judicial branch policy, which existing law authorizes, establishes a presumption that mechanical restraints (including handcuffs) will be removed from a juvenile prior to and throughout his or her appearance in juvenile court. Under the policy, in-court restraints may be used only

following a judge's order in accordance with the policy.

The policy requires a Court Support Services Division officer to complete a form before transporting a juvenile to the juvenile court. On the form, the officer must indicate whether restraints are recommended and, if so, the types. The policy specifies factors that must be present to support using these restraints (e.g., whether the juvenile has threatened or attempted to escape or is charged with a class A felony).

If the juvenile's lawyer or other parties disagree with the recommendation, they may address the court before the juvenile appears in court. After hearing from all parties, the judge determines which restraints, if any, are appropriate.

Any restraints removed under this policy must be immediately reapplied after the court hearing, in a secure area outside the courtroom.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 6 (04/10/2025)