

## **Policy on Minors Participating in University-Sponsored or University-Approved Programs Frequently Asked Questions**

- **Why has the University of Wyoming adopted this policy?**

The University has adopted the Policy on Minors to provide guidance for those in the University community who participate in programs or activities that involve non-enrolled minors under the age of 18. The primary goal of the policy is to promote the well-being and safety of minors who participate in University of Wyoming sponsored or approved programs. The Policy also clarifies responsibilities and provides guidance to help those who work with minors.
- **What type of program is covered under the policy?**

All programs involving non-enrolled children and teens under age 18 fall under the policy. Examples include:

  - Workshops
  - Sports Camps
  - Academic Camps
  - Conferences
  - 4-H or Cooperative Extension Programs
- **Does the Policy apply to every encounter with a child or minor on campus?**

No. There are some scenarios that are exempt from the Policy. For example:

  - Events open to the general public where parents/guardians are invited/expected to provide supervision of Minors.
  - Events where parents/guardians are explicitly required to accompany minors.
  - Service areas open to the general public and not being used as part of a Program for example Jacoby Golf Course, University Store, UW Transit Services, etc.
  - Activities designed for regularly enrolled University students, including credit courses, community service projects, etc.
  - Practicum activities, student teaching, or college-approved academic curriculum activities that include University student interaction with Minors.
  - Orientation programs for freshmen or transfer students.
  - Campus tours, visitation programs, athletic recruitment visits, and student host arrangements for prospective students that are governed by a separate policy.
  - Field trips supervised by a minor participant's school or organization and not sponsored by the University.
  - Patient or client care related activities relating to Minors.
  - The University Early Care and Education Center which is governed by separate laws, licensing requirements, and operating procedures.
  - The Lab School.
- **My Department employees minors as part-time employees during the summer. Does the Policy apply to the minors we hire?**

No. Employment is a separate arrangement with the University and is not covered by the Policy. Although the Policy does not apply to these employment relationships, individuals who employ or work with minors still need to 1) review the mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse/neglect, 2) help protect the safety and well-being

of minors with whom they may interact, and 3) report known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor.

- **I'm not involved in any programs involving minors at the University of Wyoming. Does the policy apply to me?**

If you are not involved in any programs or activities involving minors, most of the provisions of the Policy will not apply to you. Everyone, however, is expected to 1) review the Policy, 2) review the mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse/neglect, 3) help to protect the safety and well-being of minors with whom they may interact, and 4) report known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor. The policy does not apply to personal activities that are separate from your role or responsibilities as a student, faculty member or staff member of the University of Wyoming, but the guidance provided by the Policy may be helpful and important in non-university contexts.

- **I'm a student over the age of 18 working in a University program involving minors as a camp advisor. Does the policy apply to me?**

Yes. All faculty, staff, students and volunteers who are involved in programs or activities involving minors that are sponsored by the University or occur on its campus must comply with the Policy.

- **Why is the University requiring criminal background checks prior to participating in activities involving minors?**

The University is committed to promoting the well-being and safety of minors who participate in University programs or activities and in programs that outside organizations deliver on campus. Criminal background checks may reveal prior convictions that would make it inappropriate for someone to participate in a program or activity with minors. All authorized adults (including program staff, paid or unpaid individuals overseeing minors, coaches, instructors, etc.) working with minors are required to complete a background check every 3 years, after a break in service exceeding 1 year, or upon a change in status.

- **Who is required to have a background check?**

All "authorized adults" who have "direct contact" with minors are required to complete a background check. Authorized adults, also referred to as program staff, are defined as individuals, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in program activities, or recreational, and/or residential facilities. This includes but is not limited to faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. Direct contact is defined as providing care, supervision, guidance or control of minors and/or having routine interaction with minors. Temporary guest speakers, presenters and other individual who have no direct contact with program participants other than short term activities directly supervised by program staff are not required to have background checks.

- **My department will be hosting a program for minors on campus. Do we need approval of the program?**

At least 45 days prior to registration of participants or other communications with prospective participants regarding the program, the Sponsoring Unit must submit the Program guidelines to the University Risk Management and Safety Office for a determination by Risk Management and General Counsel that the guidelines are compliant with the Policy. Please see the Submission Guidelines and Checklist for further information about submitting your program for review. Once a program is

approved, it will only need to be resubmitted if the program guidelines or documents are amended.

- **My department sponsors an enrichment camp for minors on campus each summer. We routinely have volunteers from outside the University come in to assist us with the camp as program staff and as guides as the campers move around campus. Will our volunteers be subject to the background check requirements and training required by the Policy?**

Yes. The background checks and training requirements are applicable to all authorized adults, which includes those persons who are volunteers.

- **My department sponsors an academic camp for minors on campus each summer. We frequently have guest speakers who present information to the camp participants. Will the guest speakers be subject to the background check requirements and training required by the Policy?**

No. The policy definition of an authorized adult requiring a background check excludes temporary guest speakers, presenters and other individuals who have no direct contact with program participants other than short term activities directly supervised by program staff.

- **I am operating a University program involving minors. How do I arrange for background checks for program staff?**

University Human Resources oversees the processing of background checks for University programs and activities. Please contact Human Resources for additional information.

- **When might I need to make a report under the Policy?**

If you are participating in a program or activity involving minors and you know, suspect or receive information indicating that a minor has been abused or neglected or is otherwise unsafe, you must make a report. Reports may be made to local law enforcement or to the child protective agency. If the child is in imminent danger call 911.

- **What if I'm not sure whether a minor I'm working with has been abused or neglected?**

If you have any suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, report it! Even when you have doubts, it is better to report your suspicions than to ignore them.

- **What training am I required to have in order to participate in a program involving minors?**

All authorized adults working with minors are required to go through training provided by the University academic, administrative or athletic unit sponsoring the program. At a minimum you will receive an initial training, a thorough training every three years, and refresher training annually. Contact the sponsoring unit for details regarding your required training.

- **We are an outside group not affiliated with the University that wants to hold a program involving minors on the University of Wyoming Campus. What are we required to do?**

Non-University organizations wishing to operate a program or activity involving minors on campus must comply with the University's Minors Policy, including requirements relating to reporting suspected abuse or neglect of minors, providing training to your program staff, and background checking individuals involved in your program. Prior to the start of any program or activity involving minors, non-university organizations must

sign an agreement with the University. In that agreement, you must agree 1) to operate in compliance with the Minors Policy, 2) agree to indemnify and hold the University harmless for any claims associated with your program, including any claims associated with supervision and safety of minors, and 3) provide insurance as required by the University. Any exception requested by non-University groups shall be authorized in writing by the Vice President for Administration.