



Applies to: Faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers working in activities and programs with minors in the course of their university duties.

POLICY

Issued: 01/01/2013

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The university is committed to providing the best experience possible for **minors**. Faculty, staff, **appointees**, students, student employees, graduate associates, and **volunteers** are therefore expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct when interacting with minors. This policy establishes requirements for those in the university community who work in **activities and programs with minors**, with the goal of safeguarding the wellbeing of minors.

Ohio State expects parents or guardians to provide supervision over minors on campus unless they are involved in an activity or program with minors. Parents or guardians should not leave minors unsupervised on university property.

In addition to the requirements of this policy, faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers must adhere to obligations that may be imposed by applicable law, including but not limited to Ohio Revised Code Sections 2151.421 and 2921.22.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and welfare of minors who participate in activities and programs with minors, whom are entrusted to the university's care. To support the protection of minors, this policy outlines what is required of faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers who work in activities and programs with minors, and informs individuals of their reporting obligations in instances of known or suspected **child abuse or neglect** of minors.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Activities and programs with minors	Any: (1) event, operation, or endeavor operated, conducted, or organized by the university, (2) that includes minors, and (3) during which parents or guardians are not expected to be responsible for the care, custody, or control of the minors.
Appointee	An individual deemed to have an affiliation with the university in a non-compensatory capacity as designated in the applicable Human Resources Information System.
Care, custody, or control	When an adult(s) is present and has primary responsibility for supervision of minors at any given point throughout activity or program with minors. At least one adult must have care, custody, or control of minors at all times during the activity or program with minors.
Child abuse or neglect	When a child has suffered or faces a substantial threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability or condition that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect. This also includes any conduct of a sexual nature that may be harmful to a minor's mental, emotional, or physical welfare.
Minor	Any individual under the age of 18 or under 21 years old incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability who is a participant in an activity or program with minors. This does not include persons under the age of 18 who are enrolled for academic credit or have been accepted for enrollment.
One-on-one interactions	An intentional or purposeful interaction when one individual to whom the policy applies is alone with one minor.
Volunteer	Any individual working in an unpaid capacity in an activity or program with minors, which includes interns or practicum students.



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Policy Details

I. Scope

- A. Only those faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers that work with minors in activities and programs with minors fall within scope of this policy. Personnel that work in activities or programs with minors, but not with the minors themselves, are not within scope of this policy.
- B. All activities and programs with minors are within the scope of this policy except as explicitly excluded in section C. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Activities and programs with minors the university operates on campus or in university facilities, including but not limited to overnight camps, licensed childcare facilities, instructional programs, day camps, academic camps, and sports camps.
 2. Activities and programs with minors the university operates that do not take place on campus, including but not limited to outreach and community service activities.
 3. Faculty or staff who bring a minor to campus as an intern or volunteer outside of a structured activity or program with minors (e.g., to intern in a laboratory).
- C. This policy does not apply to:
 1. Undergraduate and graduate academic programs in which individuals under the age of 18 are enrolled for academic credit or who have been accepted for enrollment.
 2. Events on campus open to the general public, which minors attend.
 3. Medical care given in an in-patient or out-patient setting pertaining to minors in the Wexner Medical Center or other university patient-care setting.
 4. Institutional review board (IRB)-approved research.
 5. Student organizations operating, facilitating, or sponsoring activities and programs with minors.
 6. Minors working for the university as employees.
 7. Activities and programs with minors operated, conducted, or organized by non-university entities which take place on campus or in university facilities, including but not limited to facility rentals to third party organizations.
 8. Activities and programs with minors granted a specific exemption from part or all of the policy in advance of the event taking place, after a written application has been reviewed and approved by the Minors Policy Governance Committee.

II. Summary of Policy Requirements

- A. The following requirements are an overview only and are detailed in the Procedure section beginning on page three.
 1. All activities and programs with minors must [register](#) annually with the Office of Human Resources.
 2. Those working in activities and programs with minors who witness child abuse or neglect, or have information that would lead a reasonable person to believe a minor faces a substantial threat of such abuse or neglect, must follow reporting procedures.
 3. Certain individuals must be background checked before working in activities and programs with minors and regularly thereafter.
 4. Colleges and units must ensure that individuals working in activities and programs with minors complete annual training administered or approved by the Office of Human Resources.
 5. All individuals must sign and agree to abide by the Standards of Behavior before working in activities and programs with minors, and on an annual basis thereafter. The Standards of Behavior prohibits **one-on-one interactions** unless otherwise authorized in accordance with this policy.
 6. Activities and programs with minors are subject to site visits conducted by the Office of Human Resources.



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7. If an exemption from specific policy requirements is desired, an application must be submitted using the exemption process.
8. Colleges, units, and individuals must cooperate with investigations when they occur.

PROCEDURE

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I. Registration

- A. Units operating activities and programs with minors must register each activity or program with the Office of Human Resources at <https://apps.hr.osu.edu/minors>.
 1. Registration for ongoing and pre-established activities and programs with minors must be completed annually prior to the beginning of the university academic year.
 2. Registration for other activities and programs with minors should be completed 60 days in advance when possible, but must be completed before an activity or program with minors begins.

II. Reporting

- A. Any faculty, staff, appointee, student, student employee, graduate associate, or volunteer who in the course of their duties witnesses child abuse or neglect or has information that would lead a reasonable person to believe the minor faces a substantial threat of such abuse or neglect must immediately make **two** calls and within one business day submit **one** report:
 1. Call: 911 (child in imminent danger) or Children Services Agency (not imminent danger)
 - a. If child is in imminent danger (life threatening or abuse is being witnessed), call the local law enforcement authority at 911.
 - OR**
 - b. If child is not in imminent danger, call Children Services Agency: 855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453), which is a 24-hour automated telephone directory that will link callers directly to a child welfare or law enforcement office in their county. Municipal or county peace officers can be contacted as an alternative to Children Services.
 2. Call: University Police at 614-292-2121
 - a. The University Police must notify the Office of Human Resources, which will notify the unit HR professional and/or supervisor.
 3. Report: The faculty, staff, appointee, student, student employee, graduate associate, or volunteer must then complete a [Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report](#) and submit it to the Office of Human Resources within one business day.
- B. If consultation is needed regarding reporting, or if there are questions on the process or other support needed, please contact the youth policy coordinator at 614-688-8643.

III. Background Checks

- A. The requirements for background checks under this policy are separate and distinct from those addressed in Background Check policy 4.15. Background checks must be conducted on all faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associate, and volunteers working in activities and programs with minors as follows:
 1. Any faculty, staff, appointee, student, student employee, graduate associate, or volunteer working in activities and programs with minors, who is likely to have responsibility for the **care, custody, or control** of a minor as part of that activity or program, must have an Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) fingerprint background check completed before activity or program with minors begins.



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- a. College and unit activities and programs with minors have the option to require background checks on broader categories of individuals than just those who are likely to have responsibility for the care, custody, or control of a minor as part of an activity or program provided there is a business justification, that checks are made consistently across specific positions and the documented background check program has been approved by the Office of Human Resources.
- b. Units must perform background checks on broader categories of individuals if required by law.
2. Individuals required to be background checked who have not lived in Ohio for five consecutive years must have both a BCI and a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) check.
3. Individuals required to be background checked that have a break in service for less than 12 months must disclose any convictions that occurred during the break within three business days of commencement of participation in activities and programs with minors. If a break in service is longer than 12 months, individuals required to be background checked must have a new BCI and/or FBI background check before working in activities and programs with minors
4. A BCI check must be completed every four years to remain eligible to work in activities and programs with minors.
 - a. College and unit activities and programs with minors may perform background checks on applicable individuals more frequently, and must do so if required by law.
- B. Parental consent must be given for the background check in the case of an individual under the age of 18 requiring a check.
- C. A third party vendor background check, including those required at the time of hire for university employees, is insufficient for individuals requiring a background check under this policy.
- D. See [Background Check Resource Guide](#) for specific instructions in obtaining background checks.
- E. Records must be kept consistent with the unit's record keeping and the university Records Retention Schedule.

IV. Training

- A. There are two ways to provide annual required training:
 1. The Office of Human Resources provides training for faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers with care, custody, or control of minors, with an online option. A different training is also available for those without care, custody, or control of minors. See resources section.
 2. If a college or unit chooses to not use the training resources provided by the Office of Human Resources and design its own, it must cover the topics outlined in part IV-D, as well as be preapproved by the youth policy coordinator at least 30 days in advance of activity or program with minors training.
- B. Colleges and units must ensure that faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers are trained annually before they work in activities and programs with minors.
- C. Records of such forms must be kept consistent with the unit's record keeping and the university Records Retention Schedule.
- D. Training content must include at minimum the following topics:
 1. Recognizing signs of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect;
 2. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect;
 - a. Who must report and what are the reporting requirements,
 - b. How, when, and where to report, and
 - c. Protection of good faith reporting;
 3. How to help prevent child abuse;
 4. Standards of Behavior; and



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5. All requirements in this policy.

V. Standards of Behavior

- A. Faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers working in activities and programs with minors are required to sign and abide by the Standards of Behavior. The purpose of these standards is to promote the safety and wellbeing of all minors.
- B. Colleges and units must have all faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers sign the [Standards of Behavior](#) form annually before they work in activities and programs with minors.
- C. Records of such forms must be kept consistent with the unit's record keeping and the university Records Retention Schedule.
- D. Faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers must self-disclose felony or misdemeanor convictions that occur after hire within three days of pleading guilty or being convicted in accordance with the Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions, policy 4.17.
- E. One-on-one interactions
 - 1. One-on-one interactions are prohibited unless authorized by the dean/vice president (or Wexner Medical Center equivalent) or their respective designee(s). Approved one-on-one interactions may only take place in open, well-illuminated spaces or rooms observable by other adults from the activity or program with minors.
 - 2. If the dean/vice president (or Wexner Medical Center equivalent) or their respective designee(s) determines that meeting in the manner specified above is not practical and approves other arrangements, an [Exemption Request](#) form can be submitted following the exemption process outlined in VII.

VI. Accountability

- A. Individuals violating this policy will be held accountable for their actions, which may include but is not limited to:
 - 1. Volunteers are subject to reprimand or loss of volunteer status;
 - 2. Students are subject to the Code of Student Conduct;
 - 3. Staff and student employees are subject to corrective action up to and including termination; and
 - 4. Faculty are subject to University Rule 3335-5-04. A finding that a faculty member failed to report child abuse or neglect or otherwise violated this policy may constitute gross incompetence or grave misconduct under Faculty Rule 3335-5-04(A).
- B. Site visits may be conducted by the Office of Human Resources to promote compliance.
- C. Colleges, units, and individuals must participate in site visits as required.

VII. Exemption Process

- A. If a dean/vice president (or Wexner Medical Center equivalent) or their respective designee(s) of an activity or program with minors deems that a section of this policy would place an undue hardship on an activity or program with minors, an exemption can be requested by the dean/vice president (or Wexner Medical Center equivalent) or their respective designee(s) by submitting an [Exemption Request](#) form.
- B. Absent extenuating circumstances, an [Exemption Request](#) form must be submitted to the youth policy coordinator no later than eight weeks prior to event taking place and will be reviewed by the Minors Policy Governance Committee. Approval or denial will be communicated at least four weeks prior to event. If an expedited process is required because of an extenuating circumstance, contact the youth policy coordinator immediately.

VIII. Investigations

Investigations of allegations of child abuse or neglect will be conducted in accordance with the investigatory protocols of children service agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and/or the university.



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Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Office of Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct background checks in accordance with this policy and the Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions, policy 4.17 and Background Check, policy 4.15. 2. Provide or approve training material. 3. Coordinate and/or conduct the investigation of allegations of child abuse or neglect as needed. 4. Conduct site visits to promote compliance and answer questions as needed.
Minors Policy Governance Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make determinations about this policy. 2. Review and decide requests for exemptions for portions of this policy.
Employing or volunteer sponsoring unit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish record-keeping systems that are required by this policy with activity and program leadership. 2. Register all activities and programs with minors with the Office of Human Resources. 3. Ensure that background checks are conducted in accordance with this policy and the Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions, policy 4.17 and Background Check, policy 4.15. 4. Ensure required annual training to faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers is completed. 5. Maintain records of required training in accordance with the records retention schedule for personnel files. 6. Enforce Standards of Behavior for faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers who work with minors in the settings covered by this policy. 7. Ensure the Standards of Behavior form is signed annually and maintain records of such form in accordance with the records retention schedule for personnel files. 8. Supervise faculty, staff, appointee, student, student employee, graduate associate, volunteer and minor participant behavior. 9. Report to and assist investigating agencies in any allegations of abuse. 10. Comply fully with site visits and investigations.
Faculty, staff, appointees, students, student employees, graduate associates, and volunteers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report any instances when child abuse or neglect has been witnessed or if there is information that a minor faces a substantial threat of child abuse or neglect, as required by this policy. 2. Complete and submit a Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report. 3. Consent to the background check. 4. Complete required training. 5. Sign and adhere to the Standards of Behavior. 6. Self-disclose criminal convictions in accordance with this policy and the Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions, policy 4.17 and Background Check, policy 4.15. 7. Comply fully with site visits and investigations.

Resources

- Background Check, policy 4.15, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy415.pdf
- Background Check Resource Guide, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150bgcguide.pdf
- Checklist of Responsibilities, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150responsibilities.xlsx
- Code of Student Conduct, studentlife.osu.edu/csc/
- Documentation/form tracking spreadsheet, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150tracking.xlsx

This is not required to be used, and serves as an example for those needing it.

- DocuSign Resource Guide, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150docusign.pdf
- Exemption Request form, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150exemption.pdf
- Frequently Asked Questions, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150faq.pdf
- Guidelines for Investigating Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment, <https://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/discrimination-investigation-guidelines.pdf>
- Registration, <https://apps.hr.osu.edu/minors>
- Required components flowchart, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150components.pdf
- Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions, policy 4.17, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy417.pdf
- Standards of Behavior for Employees/Volunteers, hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150standards-emplvol.pdf
- Standards of Behavior for Minor Participants, hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150standards-minors.pdf

Units can use this with minor participants if desired, but is not required.



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Statement of Nonconviction form, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150nonconviction.pdf

Some programs are required by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to use this form.

Whistleblower, policy 1.40, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy140.pdf

University Records Retention Schedule, library.osu.edu/documents/records-management/general-schedule.pdf

University Rule 3335-5-04, trustees.osu.edu/rules/university-rules/chapter-3335-5-faculty-governance-and-committees.html

Reporting Resources

Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report form,

hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150abuse.pdf

Reporting flowchart, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150reporting.pdf

Training Materials

Attendance Documentation, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150attendance.pdf

Attendance for in-person trainings may be tracked however is easiest but this method is recommended.

Training modules

Care, custody, or control responsibilities, required for those with care, custody, or control but anyone working with minors can choose this option if desired:

Go to <https://buckeyelearn.osu.edu> and log on using your name.# credentials. Type *Minor Participants* in the global search box near the top right of BuckeyeLearn. When search results begin to appear, press *Enter* on the keyboard. Locate the appropriate year and click on the course title. Click *Request* and once on your active transcript, click *Launch*.

Non-care, custody, or control responsibilities, required for those without care, custody, or control,

hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/150nonccc.pdf

Training Resources

BuckeyeLearn - Accessing Activities and Programs with Minor Participants Policy Training, <https://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/150-buckeyelearn-access.pdf>

BuckeyeLearn - Disable Pop-Up Blocker, <https://hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/buckeyelearn-disable-popup-blocker.pdf>

Ohio Revised Code

ORC 2151.03, Neglected child defined, codes.ohio.gov/orc/2151.03

ORC 2151.031, Abused child defined, codes.ohio.gov/orc/2151.031

ORC 2151.421, Reporting child abuse or neglect, codes.ohio.gov/orc/2151.421

ORC 2151.99, Penalty, codes.ohio.gov/orc/2151.99

ORC 2921.22, Failure to report a crime or knowledge of a death or burn injury, codes.ohio.gov/orc/2921.22

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy questions, exemption process, in-person training, registration process	Youth Policy Coordinator Employee Relations, Strategy, and Risk Management, Office of Human Resources	614-292-2800	minorspolicy@osu.edu hr.osu.edu/
Background checks	Background Checks and Fingerprinting, Office of Human Resources	614-292-3595	hr.osu.edu/services/background-checks-fingerprinting/
Emergencies	University Police, Department of Public Safety	911	ps.ohio-state.edu/



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Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Legal issues, mandatory reporter requirements	Office of Legal Affairs	614-292-0611	legal.osu.edu/
Reporting	University Police, Department of Public Safety	614-292-2121	ps.ohio-state.edu/
Statement of Nonconviction form	Ohio Department of Job and Family Services	866-886-3537	ifs.ohio.gov/

History

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