

**UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES INVOLVING MINORS POLICY****SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Ferris State University campuses and locations and includes all faculty, staff, students, guests, volunteers, vendors, contractors, consultants, and others who do business with the University or participate in University programs.

Any program involving minors operated by outside parties on Ferris State University property must be operated consistent with the guidelines of this policy. All contracts for the use of University facilities by outside parties for programs involving minors must reference this requirement and provide a link to this policy.

**POLICY**

Ferris State University is committed to providing a safe and healthy University environment for minors who participate in University programs, or programs held in University facilities or on University property. This policy reaffirms that commitment and addresses the obligation to report known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor under applicable law.

Abuse or neglect in any form, within the University environment or during a University program or activity, is unacceptable. Incidents or observations of abuse or neglect of a minor cannot be ignored by any member of the University community and must be reported immediately.

Any form of abuse or neglect of a minor by a member of the University community will be cause for disciplinary action consistent with the applicable University policies and collective bargaining agreements as unacceptable personal conduct and may also result in criminal prosecution if federal, state, or local laws are violated.

This policy is not intended to supersede or conflict with the law or collective bargaining agreements. Abuse and neglect committed against a minor by any member of the University Community will be appropriately handled by the University's Department of Public Safety (DPS) or Child Protective Services and sent for a referral to available legal processes where necessary.

**Registering and Planning Events and Activities Involving Minors**

All University programs involving minors must be registered with the University and be developed and administered so as to:

1. Provide safe and protective environments for the participation of minors.
2. Establish a procedure for the notification of the minor's authorized parent/legal guardian in case of emergency.
3. Maintain a list of all University sponsored program participants. The list shall include each participant's name, local room assignment (if applicable), gender, and phone number(s) of an authorized parent or legal guardian, as well as emergency contact

information. This list should be maintained by the leadership of the University sponsored program and be readily available for five years after the participation end date.

4. Provide information to an authorized parent or legal guardian detailing the manner in which the minor participant can be contacted during the University program.
5. Obtain all media and liability releases as part of the University program registration process. All data gathered shall be confidential, is subject to records retention guidelines, and shall not be disclosed, except as provided by law.
6. Provide a list of all high-risk activities associated with the University program for review to the appropriate divisional Vice President or designee. In consultation with General Counsel and Safety, Health, Environmental & Risk Management offices, the supervisor will determine approval of the University program. A list of approved activities that have been assessed to determine the level of risk to minors will need to be included along with other details of the University program when registering the University program. The goal is to minimize the risk to minors participating in the University program.

### **Training of Authorized Adults**

Appropriate training for all authorized adults that come in direct contact with minors during University programs is required and will include training on protecting participants from abusive emotional and physical treatment, appropriate or required reporting of inappropriate incidents to proper authorities, Ferris State University policies regarding interaction with minors, and other appropriate topics.

### **Background Checks of Authorized Adults**

Background checks for authorized adults must be repeated every year. These criminal background checks will be conducted by an agency selected and approved by Human Resources or Student Employment, as appropriate. If a criminal record history is revealed, the divisional Vice President or designee will need to address the matter following appropriate University procedures. If the background check indicates a record of sexually based offenses or crimes against minors, that individual may not participate in the University program. Conducting a criminal background check on authorized adults will include but not be limited to University faculty, staff, students, and volunteers who may come into contact with minors. The sponsoring program must ensure and provide verification that background checks are completed before the start of the program or activity. Program involving minors operated by outside parties (e.g. cheerleaders, bands, and youth conferences) are required to sign a contract that includes confirmation that they have read and understand this policy, and have completed background checks on all adults that will be involved in the activity or event.

### **Duty to Report Abuse & Neglect of a Minor**

Anyone, including a child, who suspects child abuse or neglect has occurred can make a report by calling Ferris Department of Public Safety at (231) 591-5000 and, at the appropriate time, alerting the University's Title IX coordinator. Also, the Child Protection Law requires certain professionals report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Anyone witnessing a minor being subjected to suspected child abuse or neglect must **IMMEDIATELY** report the incident to the Ferris Department of Public Safety or the local law enforcement agencies by **Dialing 911**.

There are also persons on campus who are defined as Campus Security Authorities, who have an obligation to report crimes as defined in the Clery Act Compliance policy and Ferris Reporting Requirements. See related policies section to link to the policy.

### **Allegations Made Against Authorized Adult**

If any allegation of inappropriate conduct is made against an authorized adult participating in a University program, s/he is required to discontinue any further participation in that program and any University program involving minors unless, or until, such allegations have been satisfactorily resolved by the divisional Vice President.

### **Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Exclusions**

Events and activities excluded from the registration process include:

- Events open to the general public and not targeted to minors (e.g. athletic events, concerts, plays, etc.).
- Regularly scheduled classes, including dual-enrollment, or activities designed primarily for enrolled students of the University.
- Student recruitment activities, including open houses and admissions visits and tours that last no longer than one day and do not include an overnight stay.
- Programs for which a Registered Student Organization (RSO) is the sponsor.

### **Related Policies (Cross Reference)**

- Subpart 8-6 Sexual Assault Policy (Board Policy):  
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/Trustees/boardpolicy/Part8/Subpart-8-6rev5-8-15.pdf>
- Business Policy, Sexual Assault Policy:  
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/buspolletter/publicsafety/Sexual-Assult-Policy.pdf>
- Business Policy, Clery Act Compliance Policy:  
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/buspolletter/publicsafety/clery-act-compliance.pdf>
- Business Policy, Overnight Visitation Program:  
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/buspolletter/RLP-overnightvisitation.pdf>
- Title IX Policies:  
<http://www.ferris.edu/title-ix/policy.htm>
- Ferris Reporting Requirements  
<http://www.ferris.edu/title-ix/policy.htm>

## DEFINITIONS

- **Minor** – a minor, for the purpose of this Policy, is any person regardless of enrollment at Ferris State University, under the age of 18 years.
- **University Environment** – any facilities owned by or under the control of Ferris State University, which includes on campus grounds, housing, and off-campus locations.
- **University Community** – all faculty, staff, students, guests, volunteers, vendors, contractors, consultants and others who do business with the University or participate in University programs and activities.
- **University Program** – events and activities offered by any academic or administrative department of the University, registered student organizations events using University facilities that involve minors (which may include camps, sports lessons, workshops, residential, organizations, teams, projects, practices, research activities, , clinical settings, etc.).
- **Sponsoring Unit** – academic or administrative department, as well as registered student organizations of the University that offer a University program.
- **Authorized Adult** – an individual who is 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who is authorized to interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in University program activities or recreational and/or residential facilities.
- **Direct Contact** – a position that exercises direct supervision, guidance, or control of minors.
- **High-Risk Activities** – activities that may involve travel, overnight experiences, bathing or shower facilities, locker/changing rooms, the operation of power tools/machinery, water activities, laboratories, or animal facilities.
- **Campus Security Authority** – an official of an institution who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities.
- **Child Abuse** – harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare that occurs through nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or maltreatment.
- **Child Neglect** – harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare that occurs through either of the following:
  - Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.
  - Placing a child at an unreasonable risk to the child's health or welfare by failure to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so and has, or should have, knowledge of the risk.