



<b>Title</b>	Protection of Minors and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Office of Audit, Compliance & Ethics
<b>Applies to</b>	All personnel associated with the University including faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, residents and fellows.
<b>Campus Applicability</b>	All University campuses including Storrs, regional campuses, the Law School and UConn Health (University).
<b>Effective Date</b>	April 1, 2016
<b>For More Information Contact</b>	Minor Protection Coordinator / Office of Audit, Compliance & Ethics
<b>Contact Information</b>	(860) 486-5682
<b>Official Website</b>	<a href="http://minorprotection.uconn.edu/">http://minorprotection.uconn.edu/</a>

## Protection of Minors and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

### 1. REASON FOR POLICY

The University of Connecticut is committed to promoting a high quality, secure and safe environment for minors who are active in the University community. This policy and the accompanying procedures establish consistent standards intended to support the University in meeting its commitments to promote the protection of minors who participate in activities sponsored by the University and to inform all members of the University community of their obligation to report any instances of known or suspected child abuse or neglect.

### 2. APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all University employees, including faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, residents and fellows. Except as provided below, it also applies to any activity that takes place on University property or is sponsored by the University and is open to the participation of minors.

This policy does not apply to: (1) events open to the public where parents/guardians or adult chaperones are invited/expected to accompany and supervise their children; (2) undergraduate and graduate programs in which minors are enrolled for academic credit or have been accepted for enrollment; (3) students who are dually enrolled in University credit-bearing courses while also enrolled in elementary, middle, and/or high school, UNLESS such enrollment includes overnight housing in University facilities; (4) minors employed by the University; (5) field trips or visits solely supervised by a minor's school or

organization; (6) patient-care related activities relating to minors; (7) non-university programs undertaking activities in or on University land or facilities under the sole supervision of said program; (8) university programs which take place outside of the University under the supervision of a separate organization; (9) licensed child care facilities; and (10) other activities granted advance and written exemption from part or all of the policy.

### 3. DEFINITIONS<sup>1</sup>

- A. **Authorized Adult:** A University employee, student, or volunteer (paid or unpaid) who has (1) successfully passed a Background Screening within the last four years, (2) completed the University minor's protection training within the last year, and (3) has been registered with the University's Minor Protection Coordinator.
- B. **University Sponsored Activities Involving Minors:** A program or activity open to the participation of minors that is sponsored, operated, or supported by the University and where minors, who are not enrolled or accepted for enrollment in credit-granting courses at the University or who are not an employee of the University, are under the supervision of the University or its representatives.
- C. **Background Screening:** A criminal history search that is consistent with University Criminal Background Check Policies, which has been successfully completed within the past four years. Such investigation may include the following searches by a nationally recognized background check vendor:
- i. Social Security Number verification/past address trace;
  - ii. federal criminal history record search for felony and misdemeanor convictions covering, at minimum, the last seven years in all states lived in;
  - iii. a statewide or county level criminal history record search for felony and misdemeanor convictions covering, at minimum, the last seven years in all states lived in; and
  - iv. sex offender registry searches at the county level in every jurisdiction where the candidate currently resides or has resided.
- D. **Child Abuse:** A non-accidental physical injury to a minor, or an injury that is inconsistent with the history given of it, or a condition resulting in maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment.
- E. **Child Neglect:** The abandonment or denial of proper care and attention (physically, emotionally, or morally) of a minor, or the permitting of a minor to live under conditions, circumstances, or associations injurious to the minor's well-being. (Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-120(6))
- F. **Minor:** Any individual under the age of 18, who has not been legally emancipated.

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<sup>1</sup> Several of these definitions are adapted in whole or in part from the Connecticut General Statutes. For additional guidance from the Connecticut Department of Children and Family Services about the definitions of child abuse and neglect, see <http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=2534&Q=316956>. (Last accessed 2/11/2016.)

- G. **Mandated Reporter:** An individual designated under Section 17a-101(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes as someone who is **required** to report or cause a report to be made of Child Abuse or Child Neglect. **All employees of the University, except student employees, are Mandated Reporters under state law.**
- H. **Minor Protection Coordinator:** An individual designated by the University to develop procedures to implement this policy and best practices for the protection of minors involved in University Sponsored activities involving minors , and to provide coordination, training, and monitoring in order to promote the effective implementation of this policy.

#### 4. REPORTING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Pursuant to state law, all University employees (except student employees) are Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and/or Child Neglect and must comply with the reporting requirements in Connecticut's mandated reporting laws. (Connecticut General Statutes Sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d)

Connecticut state law, requires that reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect be made orally, as soon as possible, but no later than 12 hours to law enforcement or the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and followed up in writing within 48 hours.

DCF's 24-hour hotline for reporting suspected Child Abuse or Child Neglect is (800) 842-2288, and additional guidance on these reporting requirements may be found here: <http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=2556&Q=314384>. (Last accessed 2/11/2016.)

University employees are protected under state law for the good faith reporting of suspected Child Abuse or Child Neglect, even if a later investigation fails to substantiate the allegations.

In addition to this statutory reporting requirement, University employees must also comply with any other University policies that impose additional reporting obligations, such as the [\*Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Interpersonal Violence\*](#).

#### 5. REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY SPONSORED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING MINORS

To better protect minors participating in activities sponsored by the University, all Programs must meet the following requirements, in addition to any applicable federal, state, or local law, and University policies. Please Note: A more comprehensive description of the following requirements are detailed in the accompanying procedures.

- A. University Sponsored activities involving minors must register with the University's Minor Protection Coordinator with sufficient advance notice to confirm the requirements of this policy have been met.
- B. No individual, paid or unpaid, shall be allowed to supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee any Minor who participates in University Sponsored activities involving minors unless he or she is an Authorized Adult.

- C. All University Sponsored activities involving minors must implement standards to safeguard the welfare of participating minors, and must also comply with University standards included in the accompanying procedures.
- D. All University Sponsored activities involving minors are subject to periodic audits to verify compliance with this policy and the accompanying procedures.
- E. Any exceptions must be requested with sufficient notice and approved in writing by the Minor Protection Coordinator in consultation with Minor Protection Oversight Committee prior to the start of program operations.

## **6. ENFORCEMENT**

Violations of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with University By-Laws, General Rules of Conduct for All University Employees, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and applicable Student Code.

### **POLICY HISTORY**

**Policy created:** *April 1, 2016*

**Revisions:** *TBD*

### **PROCEDURES**

Procedures for the Protection of Minors and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect can be found at: <http://minorprotection.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1652/2016/03/Procedures-for-the-Protection-of-Minors-and-Reporting-of-Child-Abuse-and-Neglect.pdf>