

# Program Handbook for Program Staff and Volunteers

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## Policy - Minors on Campus

**Overview:** Northern Michigan University is proactive and committed to preventing sexual abuse. We strive to offer a safe and enjoyable educational environment for all minors attending NMU programs. In support of that goal, this policy sets forth minimum requirements for conducting university youth programs.

**Applicability:** These requirements apply to all programs operated by the university, non-university sponsored programs taking place on the campus grounds, and programs under the direction and authority of the university at locations off campus. Minor is defined as any person under the age of eighteen who is not enrolled, accepted for enrollment, or participating in a pre-enrollment activity such as a campus visit or scholarship competition.

For all university-sponsored youth programs, the program administrator will:

- Register the program: the program administrator will plan appropriately to ensure completion of the registration process before the program begins (up to 60 days);
- Ensure proper criminal background screening, including a check of the sex offender registry(ies);
- Ensure proper driving history screening;
- Ensure the established Minors on Campus Code of Conduct is distributed and followed;
- Use Northern Michigan University approved participant handbooks, forms, and handouts;
- Adhere to all reporting obligations; and
- Ensure that faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and applicable third parties complete required training.

Program administrators for non-university sponsored programs must complete the Safety of Minors Addendum for the Facility Use Agreement.

No deviation from the policy or the supporting guidelines are allowed without specific approval of the NMU Police Department. Specific guidelines to support this policy are administered and approved by the NMU Police Department.

Related Policy: [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

## Guidelines

**These guidelines are supported by a set of approved forms, tools, checklists, and other resources on the minors on campus website at [www.nmu.edu/minorsoncampus](http://www.nmu.edu/minorsoncampus)**

## **Definitions and Clarifications:**

**Program Administrator:** Person with primary and direct operational responsibility for managing a program.

**Minor:** Any person under the age of eighteen who is not enrolled, accepted for enrollment, or participating in a pre-enrollment activity such as a campus visit or scholarship competition.

**Approval process:** The approval process, including background checks, driving checks, and other required processes will take up to 60 days. Program administrators must plan accordingly.

**Direct contact:** Providing care, supervision, guidance, or control of minors or having routine interaction with minors.

**One-on-one contact:** Personal, unsupervised interaction between any program staff and a participant without at least one other program staff, parent or legal guardian being present.

**Program:** Activities offered by academic or administrative units of the university or by non-university groups using university facilities where the parents or legal guardians are not on-site and responsible for the care, custody, or control of their children.

**Program staff:** Individuals, paid or unpaid, who interact with, treat, supervise, coach, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in program activities. This does not include guest speakers, presenters, or other individuals who have no direct contact with program participants other than short term activities continuously supervised by program staff.

**Sponsoring Unit:** The academic or administrative unit of the university that offers a program or gives approval for the use of university facilities.

**Student-Internships/Off-Campus Learning Opportunities:** When NMU students are placed in internships or participate in off-campus learning opportunities hosted by entities that serve children, the hosting entity's policies, code of conduct, and background check requirements apply. Program registration is not required.

**Third Party:** Individual who is not an NMU employee or student.

**Volunteer:** Unpaid program staff. Some volunteers are required to be vetted with a criminal background check and some are not. See the background check requirements to discern whether the volunteer must be formally vetted with a criminal background check and/or sex offender registry check.

**Youth athlete:** An individual who participates in an athletic activity and who is under 18 years of age.

**Youth athletic activity:** A program or event, including practices and competition, during which youth athletes participate in an organized athletic activity against another team, club, entity, or individual.

**Youth program:** Any class, camp, program, youth athletic activity, or other learning activity that includes participation by minors.

**Exclusions to Youth Programs:** The term "youth program" does not include (1) private, personal events (e.g., birthday parties, weddings) that occur at University facilities, (2) events open to the general public (e.g., intercollegiate athletic events, concerts), (3) Institutional Research Board (IRB) supervised research, or (4) other programs as may be designated from time to time by Public Safety and Policy Services in writing and added to the registration listing maintained by Risk Management.

## **Program Registration**

All youth programs must be registered. The initial registration form is available on the [nmu.edu/minorsoncampus](http://nmu.edu/minorsoncampus) website. The initial registration form is completed by the program administrator. When the initial form is submitted, the program administrator is automatically e-mailed with the information necessary to complete the registration process. Risk Management maintains the public-facing website that shows the status of all university program registration. Programs that have completed the initial registration form are given a status of Pending. When background checks are confirmed and the final attestations are checked on the Minors on Campus Portal, by the program administrator, the status is changed to Approved.

## **Criminal Background Check Requirements**

Except for exclusions noted below, all individuals who have unsupervised access to minors at a youth program must have satisfactorily completed a criminal background check (including the sex offender registry check) within the last twelve months. The process is defined by Human Resources and the NMU Police Department.

In addition, an external organization sponsoring a youth program on campus or using NMU facilities for a youth program must attest as part of the program registration process that all program staff working or volunteering at the program have been subject to a criminal background check (including the sex offender registry check) within the last twelve months. The attestation is included in the Safety of Minors Addendum for the Facility Use Agreement.

There are exceptions to the criminal background check requirement. Specifically, the criminal background check requirements do not apply under the following circumstances:

- The youth program format requires the participating minor to be accompanied at all times by a parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative;
- NMU students hosting siblings or other family members;
- NMU students hosting high school students as part of a pre-enrollment visit for prospective students;

- NMU students who volunteer under the direct supervision of an NMU employee (e.g. student athletes during sports camps);
- Individuals under the age of 18 who volunteer or work under the direct supervision of an NMU employee;
- External organizations using NMU facilities open to the general public are not required to provide certification of criminal background checks, even if minors are present. (e.g. the U.P. Builders' Show).

**Sex offender registry:** All persons who are subject to a criminal background check will also be reviewed for inclusion in the applicable sex offender registry. In addition, NMU students who work or volunteer unsupervised with youth or are present during youth programming overnight stays will be subject to a sex offender registry review.

**Criminal Background Check and Sex Offender Registry Results:** Individuals who do not have satisfactory criminal background check results will be provided with an opportunity to explain the results and give clarifying information to Human Resources and the NMU Police Department.

Confirmed inclusion on the sex offender registry will result in automatic exclusion from youth programming. Human Resources and NMU PD will review the results of other background check verification and any clarifying information and make a determination as to whether the individual being assessed will be allowed to work with youth. Fair Credit Reporting Act adverse action processes will be followed.

## **Transporting Minors – Driving History Screening**

The program administrator will ensure that program staff who transport youth will be subject to a review by the NMU Police Department, that may include requirements that the driver must:

- be at least 19 years of age;
- have been subject to a Michigan driver records check within the last twelve months;
- have a valid driver's license;
- not have three or more convictions for moving violations within the past 36 months;
- not have been convicted of operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, leaving the scene of an accident, failure to report an accident, driving with a suspended license or reckless driving within the past 36 months;
- not have been convicted of obtaining a vehicle unlawfully, possessing a stolen vehicle, or using a vehicle in a crime or in connection with an unlawful act.

Any discrepancies will be reviewed by the NMU Police Department. Exceptions to the requirements may only be waived by the NMU Police Department.

The use of private vehicles for transporting minors should be avoided. When private vehicles must be used, contact Risk Management; proof of automobile liability insurance must be delivered to Risk Management.

More than one program staff must be present in the vehicle, except when there are multiple minors for the duration of the transportation.

## **Minors on Campus Code of Conduct(s)**

Clarifying Note: There is a Code of Conduct for program staff and a code of conduct for participants.

### **Code of Conduct for Program Staff**

Our goal is to provide the highest quality program in a safe environment for every participant. Please assist us in maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment by following the Code of Conduct, below:

Program staff should be positive role models for minors and act in a responsible manner. It is expected that all program staff will adhere to the following expectations.

1. Anyone who knows, suspects, or receives information indicating that a child or teen has been abused or neglected, or who has other concerns about the safety of children or teens **MUST** inform the program administrator, the NMU Police Department (906 227-2151) or the Michigan Department of Human Services at (855) 444-3911.
2. Do not engage in any sexual activity, make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, share sexually explicit material with minors, or assist in any way to provide access to such material to minors.
3. Do not engage or allow minors to engage you in romantic or sexual conversations or related matters. Similarly, do not treat minors as confidantes; refrain from sharing sensitive personal information about yourself. Examples of sensitive personal information that should not be shared with minors are information about financial challenges, workplace challenges, drug or alcohol use, and romantic relationships.
4. Do not touch minors in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate. All personal contact should generally only be in the open, and in response to the minor's needs, for a purpose that is consistent with the program's mission and culture, or for a clear educational, developmental, or health-related purpose (e.g., treatment of an injury). Any refusal or resistance from the minor should be respected.
5. Do not shower, bathe, or undress with, or in the presence of, a minor.
6. Profanity, vulgarity, or harassing language is prohibited.
7. Do not be alone with a minor. If one-on-one contact is required, meet in open, well-illuminated spaces or rooms with windows observable by other program staff.
8. Do not meet with minors outside of established times for program activities. Any exceptions require written parent/guardian authorization and must include more than one program staff.
9. Do not invite minors to your home or other private locations. Any exceptions require authorization by the program administrator and written authorization by a parent/guardian.
10. Do not provide gifts to minors or their families independent of items provided by the program.

11. Do not engage or communicate with minors through email, text messages, social networking websites, phone, internet chat rooms, multiplayer online games, or other forms of social media at any time except and unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communication is consistent with the mission of the program and the university. Should communication be necessary, include a third person.
12. Do not engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a minor, including, but not limited to, verbal abuse, striking, hitting, punching, poking, spanking, or restraining. If restraint is necessary to protect a minor or other minors from harm, all incidents must be documented and disclosed to the program administrator and the minor's parent/guardian. All incidents involving such conduct must be documented and disclosed promptly to the program administrator.
13. NMU is a tobacco-free campus; the tobacco-free policy is available online. Do not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty, or in the presence of minors involved in a program, or when responsible for a minor's welfare.
14. Possession or use of any type of weapon or explosive device is prohibited unless authorized in advance by campus law enforcement.
15. Do not provide alcohol or illegal substances to a minor.
16. Do not provide medication to a minor unless authorized by the program's medication management guidelines.
17. When transporting minors, more than one program staff from the program must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple minors will be in the vehicle at all times through the transportation. Avoid using personal vehicles if possible and comply with the program's transportation guidelines. All incidents involving such conduct shall be reported to the program administrator.
18. Do not tell minors, "This is between the two of us," or use similar language that encourages minors to keep secrets from their parents/guardians or for you to keep secrets from the program administrator.
19. Program staff may not take pictures of minors or post information about minors to social media sites without permission from a parent/guardian and the program administrator.
20. While this code contains specific rules, there is also an expectation that if program faculty, staff, volunteers or others witness a violation of these rules that they will act immediately. For instance, if you witness any program staff isolating a program participant, speak up, bring the participant back to the group, or take other appropriate action and remind all participants of the code rules designed to keep all persons safe. Further, you must report the incident to the program supervisor so that further action can be initiated if necessary.

Individuals associated with a youth program alleged to have violated NMU policies or conduct rules of the program will be reported to the NMU Police Department for possible dismissal and removal from the program.

## Participant Code of Conduct

Our goal is to provide the highest quality program in a safe environment for every participant. Please assist us in maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment by following the Code of Conduct, below:

We will:

- Learn and follow the rules.
- Be respectful of the feelings and properties of others. Show others courtesy and treat them the same way that we want to be treated.
- Show respect to the staff and cooperate with their instructions and rules.
- Communicate with others in an appropriate manner. We will not use foul words, vulgarity, or harassing language.
- Never verbally or physically harm other participants and/or staff.
- Understand that any form of violence, including pushing, kicking, hitting, or fighting is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Respect privacy. Using cameras, imaging, or digital recording devices is prohibited near showers, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected.
- Use the buddy system. Each participant/camper will be accompanied by another participant/camper at all times.
- Use equipment and supplies in an appropriate manner.
- Stay in safe areas. Don't leave the building or areas designated by your program supervisor or staff. When moving across campus and crossing streets, only cross in the designated crosswalks.
- Tell an adult if you or someone else is hurt or injured.
- Stay until it is time to go. Participants are to remain in designated areas on campus for the duration of the program unless program activities require otherwise. If a participant needs to leave campus for some reason, the program administrator must receive written permission from the parent or guardian and grant specific permission.
- Be fully responsible for our actions and understand the consequences of any inappropriate actions.

Other NMU Rules:

- Sexual abuse or harassment will not be tolerated.
- Hazing, bullying, and cyber bullying will not be tolerated.
- Possession or use of weapons or explosive devices is prohibited; NMU Police Department exceptions are allowed.
- Misuse of internet privileges is prohibited. Attempting to access unauthorized sites will not be tolerated.
- Tampering with fire equipment, security equipment, or locks is prohibited. This includes fire extinguishers, fire alarms, smoke detectors, etc.
- Vandalism and pranks are prohibited. Misuse of equipment and damaging property is prohibited. Any damage caused will be charged to the responsible party. All furniture

must remain unchanged and kept in place. Replacement cost will be charged to anyone who removes or damages university property.

- Tobacco is prohibited on all campus property; NMU's tobacco-free policy details the rules and requirements.
- The possession or use of alcohol and other drugs is prohibited.

### **Housing and Overnight Rules:**

- All curfews, if applicable, will be followed.
- No minor will be housed in a room alone.
- Participants in an overnight program are not permitted to be housed in the same room with an adult unless the person is the minor's parent or legal guardian.
- By default, minors will be housed with other minors who have the same gender identity assigned at birth. Requests for exceptions should be made to the program administrator.

### **Consequences for misbehavior or breaking our code of conduct rules may be:**

1st Offense: Verbal warning

2nd Offense: Written warning and incident report

3rd Offense: Removal from site and parents notified

*If behavior persists and the situation is severe or egregious, the program administrator will immediately suspend the participant. After due process, permanent expulsion from the program may result.*

### **Handbooks, Forms, and Templates**

The [minors on campus website](#) holds printable templates for all required forms. The forms are to be used as applicable for all NMU programs hosting minors. The program administrator may modify them to show the program name, hosting department, or to add approved logos. However, any other modification to the forms must be approved by Risk Management.

### **Reporting Obligations**

Youth program staff, volunteers, and other individuals associated with a youth program must adhere to university protocols for reporting child abuse, child neglect, sexual assault, and child pornography

The university expects support for and accountability from those working with children and teens through shared responsibility for reporting misconduct, criminal activity or known or suspected abuse or neglect of children and teens.

**Anyone participating in a university-sponsored program or a non-university-sponsored program operating in university facilities who knows, suspects, or receives information indicating that a child or teen has been abused or neglected, or who has other concerns about the safety of children or teens MUST inform the program administrator, the NMU**

**Police Department (906 227-2151) or the Michigan Department of Human Services at (855) 444-3911.**

## **Legally Mandated Reporters and Their Obligations**

Michigan's Child Protection Law, MCL § 722.621, et seq., designates individuals in certain occupations and professions as mandated reporters. Mandated reporters must immediately report known or suspected mental or physical abuse or neglect of a child made known to them in their professional or official capacity directly to the Department of Human Services by calling **855-444-3911** (24/7 toll free number). A written report must be submitted to the Department of Human Services within 72 hours of the initial verbal report. Even those who are not mandated reporters may report known or reasonably suspected child abuse to the Department of Human Services.

Mandated reporters include those employed in the following positions: physician, dentist, physician's assistant, registered dental hygienist, medical examiner, nurse, person licensed to provide emergency medical care, audiologist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor, social worker, licensed master's social worker, licensed bachelor's social worker, registered social service technician, social service technician, a person employed in a professional capacity in any office of the friend of the court, school administrator, school counselor or teacher, law enforcement officer, member of the clergy, or regulated child care provider.

University faculty, staff or students who are working with minors in their professional or official capacity and who have questions about whether they may be considered mandated reporters under Michigan law should contact their supervisor, program administrator, dean or vice president.

## **Training**

All program staff working with minors are required to be trained on policies and issues related to minor health, wellness, safety, and security. The training should be completed annually and may differ based on role. Documentation of training completion is required to be maintained by the program administrator. Training must address the following topics:

- Detecting and reporting abuse or neglect
- First aid/CPR and medication management
- Concussion management for youth sport programs and other programs as applicable
- Participant conduct management and disciplinary procedure
- Program staff code of conduct
- Sexual and other unlawful harassment
- Clergy Act
- Safety and security protocols

## **Additional Guideline information**

Concussion Awareness: Units operating a youth athletic activity must comply with the requirements of the Michigan sports concussion law. Resources are available on the [minors on campus website](#)

**Participant Orientation:** Units are expected to provide an orientation to participants that addresses the following topics:

- University rules, program rules, and behavioral expectations;
- Program safety and security procedures; and
- What to do if something makes you feel bad or uncomfortable (tell an adult you trust).

**Volunteer Orientation:** Program administrators will conduct an orientation to volunteers that is consistent with the amount of time they will have contact with minors. Appropriate orientation will include meeting the program staff; a recap of the Minors on Campus Handbook (volunteers receive a copy or a link to the on-line handbook prior to the first day of the program); verification of their identity using a picture ID to ensure that they have been properly background checked, if applicable; and a reminder of how to report emergencies. Best practices include distributing a name-tag, badge, lanyard, or other marker identifying each official volunteer.

## **Non-University-Sponsored Programs**

When university facilities are rented for activities and programs designed for minors, the standard rental agreement will be supplemented with a special addendum addressing the safety of minors. The form, titled “Safety of Minors Addendum for the Facility Use Agreement,” is available on the [minors on campus website](#). The form must be completed before the facility use agreement will be accepted by the university.