

Protection of Minors and Reporting Abuse

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Policy Type [University](#)

Contact Office

[Youth Protection \(Office of\)](#)

Oversight Executive

[Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer](#) [Executive Vice President and Provost](#)

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Applies To

Academic Division The Medical Center

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Reason for Policy

The University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for minors participating in University-sponsored activities and programs on University property and in University facilities or under the authority of the University at other locations. To safeguard these individuals and provide for their well-being and comply with applicable laws, the University has established minimum requirements for those who work with or interact with individuals under the age of 18.

Definition of Terms

Associated Individuals

(1) Students who are registered or enrolled for credit-bearing coursework and (2) University employees, consisting of all full-time and part-time faculty, University staff, Medical Center employees, classified staff, wage employees (including temps), professional research staff, and post-doctoral fellows.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Physical abuse, physical neglect, medical neglect, sexual abuse, or emotional/mental maltreatment of a child.

Covered Program

An organized program involving direct contact with minors that is sponsored by a University academic or administrative unit and takes place on or off University property. It also includes an organized program involving direct contact with minors conducted by a third party that takes place on University property.

Covered Program Staff

All individuals who work with or otherwise come into direct contact with minors in a covered program. This includes members of the University (faculty, staff, Medical Center employees, and students), volunteers, and all individuals employed by, contracted by, or volunteering for a third party for a covered program.

Direct Contact

Care, guidance, control, or supervision of minors in one-to-one or group settings.

Minor (child)

An individual under the age of 18.

Organized Program

An academic, athletic, or recreational activity offered to minor participants. This includes, but is not limited to: summer camps, sports camps, academic camps, theater camps, music camps, workshops, conferences, competitions, group experiential learning opportunities, and other enrichment programs. Organized programs can be residential or non-residential.

Sponsoring Unit

An academic or administrative unit that is responsible for the coordination of space usage and/or for conducting the covered program activity.

Third Party

An organization or individual or external program from outside of the University that uses University facilities to conduct a covered program pursuant to an approved contract or other use agreement with a sponsoring University academic or administrative unit. For example, athletic camp or academic camp.

University Facility

Any defined space of the University, including a room, lab, series of labs, building, or controlled outdoor area.

University Property

Land or buildings that the University owns or leases and that is under the control of the Board of Visitors. University property also includes premises the University uses for activities of its offices, departments, personnel, or students.

Visiting Faculty

Visiting faculty receive academic appointments at the University to participate in teaching, research, or clinical work in a sponsoring department or school while maintaining affiliation with their primary place of employment. They may serve as the instructor of record for courses offered for credit at the University.

Visiting Scholar

Visiting scholars receive appointments at the University to participate in scholarly or research activities in a sponsoring department or school while maintaining affiliation with their primary place of employment. They are not considered faculty, and thus may not serve as the instructor of record for any course offered for credit at the University.

Volunteer

An individual permitted under specific conditions to perform agreed upon activities on behalf of the University, but not in an employment capacity and therefore is not entitled to compensation and employment benefits.

Policy Statement

Associated individuals, visiting faculty, visiting scholars, and volunteers who interact with minors on Grounds or under the authority of the University at other locations must contact the Office of Youth Protection to determine whether their program or activity must comply with the provisions of this policy. All associated individuals, visiting faculty, visiting scholars, and volunteers who work with or interact with minors must be familiar with and comply with the provisions of this policy, any related University policies, and applicable procedures. This includes a program or activity conducted on University property, in a University facility, or under the authority of the University at another location. In addition, third parties who are being sponsored by a University academic or administrative unit for use of a University facility must adhere to this policy and associated procedures.

Licensed child day centers operated by the University or the Medical Center are exempt from this policy due to adherence to separate state regulations as licensed facilities in Virginia.

I. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect:

1. Requirement to Report:

All associated individuals, visiting faculty/scholars, volunteers, and third party members of the University community who, in their professional or official capacity have reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, must report the matter immediately to the local department of social services of the county or city wherein the child

resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline 1-800-552-7096 and to the University of Virginia Office of Youth Protection via Just Report It as set forth in Section III, Responsibilities below. If the suspected child abuse or neglect presents an imminent or ongoing danger or emergency, contact 911 immediately. [For more detail on what constitutes child abuse or neglect, refer to [VA Code 63.2-100.](#)]

No person is required to make a report if the person has actual knowledge that the same matter has already been reported to the Department of Social Services' child abuse and neglect hotline and the University of Virginia Office of Youth Protection. If there is any doubt about whether a report has been made or included all relevant information, an additional report shall be made.

Note: All persons, regardless of employer, providing patient care or other services within or for the benefit of the Medical Center shall follow UVA Medical Center Policy No. 0213 Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation of Patients.

2. Protection for Reporting Parties:

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 63.2-1509, any person who makes a report or provides records or information of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Virginia Department of Social Services or who testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from such report, records, or information shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability or administrative penalty or sanction on account of such report, records, information, or testimony, unless such person acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

II. Requirements for Programs and Activities involving Minors:

1. Sponsoring Unit:

All covered programs must have a University sponsoring unit, and the sponsoring unit must identify a designee to coordinate the registration, background check, and training process.

Third parties must adhere to the provisions of policy [PRM-017: Duties Toward Speakers and Use of University Facilities or Property](#), Section 1.b to first obtain approval to hold the activity/program on University property.

2. Registration and Approval:

Covered programs must be approved by the head of the sponsoring unit. A sponsoring unit designee is responsible for registering programs with the Office of Youth Protection. Registration must be completed no later than 30 calendar days prior to the commencement date of the program.

The covered program will be approved to operate only if required registration information is complete and if minimum covered program staffing ratios are met based on the anticipated number of minors attending the covered program. The University has established a minimum age of eight for minors attending an overnight UVA covered program.

Any third party conducting a covered program on University property must have coverage of insurance and the sponsoring unit designee must contact the Office of Property & Liability Risk Management prior to the covered program to confirm coverage level.

i. Programs/Activities not considered Covered Programs:

The following programs and activities are not considered covered programs:

- University classes (as listed in the University catalog) that have matriculated or enrolled students under the age of 18.
- Events such as UVA collegiate sporting events, concerts, festivals, speaker series, and other educational or entertainment events on University property that are open to the general public where minors may be present but are not in the care or custody of University staff.
- Health Systems patient interactions (which are governed by regulations and legal reporting requirements relating to clinical activities).
- Programs or activities where the expectation is a minor's parent or guardian will be present.
- University residential housing programs where the only minors participating in the program are (i) University undergraduate or graduate students; or (ii) dependents of University students or employees residing with the student/employee in University residential housing for families.
- Groups of children (preschool through 12th grade) visiting University premises for the purpose of conducting tours or as patrons of educational or entertainment events with the students being in the care and custody of the touring or visiting staff.
- Research programs that are subject to the Institutional Review Board guidelines, policies, and oversight for research involving human subjects.
- Non-University programs where the only involvement of the University is in assisting with the placement of University students as volunteers, interns (i.e., individuals who are completing an internship – a supervised, credit-bearing learning experience in a professional setting focused on applying skills and concepts from a program of study into authentic contexts), etc., and the program is not located on University property.
- University programs where the only involvement of a minor is in the capacity as an employee, intern, observer, or volunteer. (For definition of "observer" and applicable policy, see Medical Center policy [Management of Observers and Mentees at the Medical Center](#). For policies and procedures relevant to minors participating as volunteers in University programs, see [HRM-001 Authorization and Engagement of Volunteers](#).)

3. Mandatory Background Check:

In addition to HRM-034 requirements for employee background checks, a background check must be completed for all covered program staff.

Background checks must be completed for new covered program staff prior to a covered program staff member having any direct contact with minors as part of a covered program. For covered program staff not subjected to HRM-034, a background check with a satisfactory outcome completed within twenty-four months prior to the start of the covered program will satisfy this requirement.

The background completion date for each covered program staff member must be included in the registration with the Office of Youth Protection.

Background checks must:

- Comply with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA).
- Cover a minimum of 7 years of Criminal History verification at the county, national, and international (if applicable) levels.
- Include an alias search (if applicable).

- Include a national Sexual Offender check.
- Have been completed within the previous 24 months of the covered program session start-date.

Each sponsoring unit or their designee will be required to submit the background check results to the Office of Youth Protection for all covered program staff at least 72 hours prior to the start of the covered program session. Should a covered program staff person be an employee of the University who has had a University-run background check in the last 24 months, the sponsoring unit may indicate that on the submission form.

Covered program staff may not work in any covered program until their background check is completed, reviewed, and approved.

Associated individuals must obtain background checks through the University. If third party, visiting faculty, scholars, and volunteer covered program staff wish to use a background check not obtained through the University, prior approval must be received from the Office of Youth Protection.

4. Ongoing Responsibility to Disclose Criminal Convictions:

See HRM-034 for details on employees' ongoing responsibility to disclose criminal convictions. From the date of the last background check, any covered program staff convicted for any crime (excluding moving traffic violations) has five calendar days to report the conviction. In accordance with HRM-034, University employees should disclose via the online employee conviction disclosure form.

Covered program staff who are students should report in accordance with [STAF-003: Statement of Students Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Covered program staff who are not employees should report via the disclosure form on the [Office of Youth Protection website](#).

5. Training:

In addition to any training required by a department or sponsoring unit, all covered program staff are required to complete the University of Virginia online Youth Protection training module at least 72 hours prior to the start of the covered program. Returning covered program staff must complete the Youth Protection training module every 24 months.

6. Policy Exceptions:

The Office of Youth Protection must approve exceptions to this Policy.

7. Code of Conduct for Protection of Minors:

Participants, family members of participants, attendees, covered program staff, other visitors, and associated parties for events/activities involving minors on University Grounds or under the authority of the University at other locations are expected to always adhere to the Code of Conduct for Protection of Minors. See [Appendix A for Code of Conduct for Respect and Civility](#).

8. Ratios of Covered Program Staff to Minors:

For residential covered programs, the minimum number of covered program staff to minors will be one covered program staff per the ratios below. Ratios must be maintained overnight.

Age Group	Number of Minors	Staffing Requirement
8 years old	6	Minimum of 1 covered program staff per the number of minors noted by age group. Example: group of 9 “9 – 14 years old” requires 2 staff members.
9 - 14 years old	8	
15 - 17 years old	10	

For non-residential covered programs, the minimum number of covered program staff to minors will be one covered program staff per the ratios below:

Age Group	Number of Minors	Staffing Requirement
4 - 5 years old	6	Minimum of 1 covered program staff per the number of minors noted by age group. Example: group of 13 “4 – 5 years old” requires 3 staff members.
6 - 8 years old	8	
9 - 14 years old	10	
15 - 17 years old	12	

For non-residential covered programs with minors under the age of four, contact the Office of Youth Protection for guidance on ratios.

III. Responsibilities:

Pursuant to this policy, *University employees* are responsible for:

- If in their professional or official capacity they have reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to the Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) via the toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline 1-800-552-7096 and to the Office of Youth Protection via *Just Report It* as soon as possible but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect an offense.

The *Office of Youth Protection* is responsible for:

- Determining if a program or activity is to be considered a “covered program.”
- Providing centralized program registration and Youth Protection training.
- Approving a covered program to operate based on compliance with registration, age requirement for residential programs, training, and background check requirements.
- Collecting reports of suspected child abuse and neglect.
- Maintaining a list of covered programs.

The ***Sponsoring Unit*** of a covered program is responsible for:

- Designating someone to oversee completion of covered program registration and completion of background checks and required Youth Protection training.
- Immediately notifying the Office of Youth Protection of any non-compliance.
- Verifying coverage of insurance for covered programs conducted by third parties and contacting the Office of Property & Liability Risk Management to confirm coverage.
- Verifying unassociated individuals have met all facilities requirements applicable to the space in which the program occurs.

The ***Head of a Sponsoring Unit*** is responsible for:

- Confirming that a covered program is in compliance with the policies and requirements of the University.
- Immediately notifying the Office of Youth Protection of any non-compliance.

Covered Program Staff are responsible for:

- If in their professional or official capacity they have reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to social services and the Office of Youth Protection as soon as possible but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect an offense.
- Immediately notifying the Office of Youth Protection of any non-compliance.
- Completing required Youth Protection training at least 72 hours prior to the start of the covered program and every two years thereafter for returning covered program staff.
- Completing background check requirements at least 72 hours prior to the start of the covered program.
- Maintaining care, guidance, control, or supervision of minors in covered programs while in their custody of care until custody has been transferred back to the parent or legal guardian.
- Remaining on site (program director or designee) during overnight residential programs.
- Establishing and adhering to procedures for formal transition for custody of care.
- Submitting training and background check completion information to the sponsoring unit.

IV. **Compliance with Policy:**

Any person required to make a report and who fails to do so as soon as possible, but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect a reportable offense of child abuse or neglect, may be fined. Persons who knowingly and intentionally fail to make reports in cases involving rape, sodomy, or object sexual penetration, may be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy and the associated procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

Failure to comply with this policy by unpaid volunteers, interns, and visiting faculty/scholars may result in an end of the assignment.

Failure to comply with this policy by third party covered program staff may result in disciplinary action that requires immediate removal from direct contact with minors, and/or University property and facilities.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the [Office of Youth Protection](#).

Procedures

See the [Office of Youth Protection website](#).

[Just Report It](#) - Reporting through *Just Report It* allows a reporter to meet multiple University reporting requirements.

Related Information

[HRM-001: Authorization and Engagement of Volunteers](#)

[HRM-034: Background Checks and Ongoing Responsibility for Employees to Disclose Criminal Convictions](#)

[HRM-040: Reporting by University Employees of Disclosures Relating to Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence \(the Title IX Policy\)](#)

[HRM-041: Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence](#)

[PRM-014: Use and Management of University Vehicles](#)

[PRM-017: Duties Toward Speakers and Use of University Facilities or Property](#)

[STAF-003: Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities](#)

UVA Medical Center Policy:

[Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation of Patients](#)

[Management of Observers and Mentees at the Medical Center](#)

[Code of Virginia § 63.2-1509](#). Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report.

Major Category [Human Resource Management](#)

Next Scheduled Review Tuesday, July 1, 2025

Revision History

Updated Section II.2 , II.8 and III to reflect minimum age for covered overnight programs; Updated Sections 7, 8, and Code of Conduct 12/21/22; Updated Section 3 6/30/22; Edited Appendix 12/16/21; Edited Policy and Appendix 9/7/21; Edited Appendix 4/22/21; 7/23/20; Edited 4/27/20.

Applies To Text

Academic Division and the Medical Center.

Category Cross Reference

[Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#)

Supersedes Policy Text

HRM-047: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting.

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Approved By Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

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