



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Office of the President

SUBJECT: Youth Protection	Effective Date: 12/20/2018	Policy Number: 2-005	
	Supersedes:	Page 1	Of 7
	Responsible Authority: Chief Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Officer		

APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy applies to all University of Central Florida (UCF) and UCF direct support organization (DSO) employees and volunteers working with minors in a program sponsored or operated by the university, regardless of the program location. This policy also applies to all third parties conducting programs involving minors while on university property.

Except for the statutorily mandated reporting requirements outlined in the Procedures Section VI. below, this policy will not apply to the following:

1. Events open to the public where guardians or chaperones are invited or expected to accompany and supervise minors;
2. Field trips or visits supervised by a minor’s school or organization;
3. Patient-care activities relating to minors;
4. Recruited student-athlete “official visits” involving minors;
5. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved research involving minors; or
6. Licensed childcare facilities on campus.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The university hosts a variety of academic, recreational, and service programs that engage minors. All programs vary significantly, and specific policies and procedures are most effective if tailored to the complexity and scale of each program. The purpose of the policy is to explain the university’s minimum standards and expectations for providing a safe environment for all minors.

Additionally, Section 39.201, Florida Statutes, mandates that any person who knows of or suspects child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to report it to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). The statute lists persons particularly responsible for reporting. As an institution that places priority on safety, the university has created this policy to ensure employees, volunteers, students, and third parties abide by these laws.

POLICY STATEMENT

UCF is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all programs associated with the university. This policy sets forth UCF's expectations for the protection of minors and outlines the required procedures for background screening, training, and registering of programs involving minors. These procedures are in place to ensure all persons understand how to minimize the threat of child abuse and neglect, recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect, and respond promptly and effectively should child abuse and neglect be observed, suspected, or disclosed. University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk is responsible for overseeing compliance with this policy. Every program covered by this policy must have a program sponsor who is responsible for meeting all background screening, training, and registration requirements.

All individuals working (whether for pay or as a volunteer) for UCF or a UCF DSO who sponsors or participates in an applicable program that involves minors, must act in accordance with this policy and the accompanying procedures. Any third party conducting programs involving minors while on university property must also act in accordance with this policy and the accompanying procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Campus Liaison. The UCF employee who serves as the primary university contact between a Third Party and the university with regard to a Third Party program. The Campus Liaison will work with the Third Party Program Sponsor to ensure compliance with this policy.

Care, Custody, and Control. When an individual has primary responsibility for supervision of minors at any given point throughout the program involving minors.

Child Abuse or Neglect. Infliction of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a minor.

Mandated Reporter. As specified in Section 39.201, Florida Statutes, any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare required to report to such knowledge or suspicion to DCF. Certain university employees are required to provide their names under state law. Reporter names will remain

confidential and exempt from public disclosure in accordance with and subject to Section 39.202, Florida Statutes.

Minor. Any unmarried person under the age of 18 who has not been emancipated by order of the court, excluding minors who are enrolled, dually enrolled, or accepted for enrollment at the university (including courses offered through the UCF Division of Continuing Education), and minors who are employed by the university.

Program. An event or activity sponsored or operated by the university where minors are under the care, custody and control of university or DSO employees or volunteers, including but not limited to summer, vacation, and after school camps, classes, clubs, organizations and groups, regardless of subject matter or academic or non-academic character of the organized activity (i.e., whether recreational, athletic, academic, artistic, or social). The definition of Program also includes Third Party events or activities involving minors that are hosted on university property.

Program Sponsor. The UCF employee primarily responsible for the operational management and oversight of a university-operated program involving minors. With regard to programs involving minors that are operated by a Third Party using university facilities, the program sponsor is the individual identified by the Third Party as the primary manager of the program.

Program Staff. Any person, compensated or volunteer, who is responsible for the care, custody, and control of a minor throughout a program.

Third Party. An individual or organization, external to the university, which operates a program that involves minors on the university's property. For purposes of this policy, Third Party includes a student organization registered with the University ("RSO").

PROCEDURES

I. Designation of Program Sponsor

Every Program must have a designated program sponsor who is responsible for meeting all background screening, training, and registration requirements.

II. Background Screening Requirements

All program sponsors and program staff must successfully pass a level two background screening in accordance with UCF Policy 3-011 *Background Checks*.

Screenings are required to be completed at least once every five years to remain in compliance with Section 39.001, Florida Statutes, and industry standard. If there is a break in service for longer than 90 days, the individual must be screened and cleared again, prior to returning to work with minors. UCF also reserves the right to conduct screenings at any time after a program has begun.

Volunteers who assist on an intermittent basis for less than 10 hours per month need not be screened, as long as a person who meets the level two screening requirement is always present and has the volunteer within sight.

Program sponsors must pass their level two background screening and are also responsible for ensuring all program staff complete the level two background screening process at least five business days prior to the program start date.

If the background screening reveals adverse information or unfavorable results, the university will conduct an individualized assessment using criteria designed to identify potential risk to minors. A prior conviction shall not automatically disqualify a person from participating in a program or activity. Rather, HR, in consultation with persons who have the authority to recommend or decide, considers the relevance of the criminal history to the youth-serving role. This includes a case-by-case assessment of various factors like the nature and circumstances surrounding the offense, the conviction's temporal proximity, and any recidivism.

III. Youth Protection Program Training Requirements; Youth Protection Program Staff Code of Conduct

The University created a training course that is required of all program sponsors and program staff. Training consists of an online course that details pertinent information about recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. Program sponsors and program staff must successfully complete the training course, with a score of 90 percent or higher on the post-test, at least five business days prior to the program start date. The online training course is required every two years to remain compliant with federal and state laws.

Program sponsors are also responsible for ensuring that all program staff certify to their understanding of the Youth Protection Program Staff Code of Conduct available on the University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk website at least five business days prior to the program start date.

IV. Program Registration

All Programs subject to this policy must be registered with the University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk office (UCER). The program sponsor is responsible for registering the program with UCER at least 45 days prior to the program start date. A recurring program must re-register on an annual basis.

As part of the registration process, the program sponsor must submit the following information:

- a) Program title, description, length of session, and location, and university facilities being utilized if applicable.
- b) Overnight stay details, if applicable.
- c) Program sponsor's contact information and verification of background screening and clearance, as well as completion of youth protection training.

- d) A list of all program staff, to include the date the background check was completed and cleared, and the date the training was completed. This must be completed at least five business days prior to the program start date.
- e) A list of all participating minors, including date of birth and parent/guardian contact information. The final list must be submitted within five days after the program start date.

Once the registration has been submitted, University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk will review the information and communicate any deficiencies to the program sponsor.

V. Third Parties

Any third party, including RSO, that wishes to operate a program involving minors on university property must do so through a Campus Liaison employed by UCF. The Campus Liaison will register the program as listed above and obtain the following documentation from the third party program sponsor:

- a) Identification of the third party program sponsor, including contact information sufficient to allow the university to make contact with the program sponsor at any time of day.
- b) Certification that background screenings have been conducted on all third party program staff and that they have been cleared to meet this policy's requirements, as well as notify the university of any background check that returned a conviction or other adverse information.
- c) Certification that all third party program staff have completed the university's online training course and to their understanding of the Youth Protection Program Staff Code of Conduct or equivalent.

This documentation must be submitted at least five business days prior to the program start date.

VI. Reporting and Responding to Abuse

All UCF and UCF DSO employees and volunteers are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, as defined by Chapter 39 F.S., and must comply with Florida's mandated reporting laws. These laws require any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused or neglected, to report such knowledge or suspicion to DCF, regardless of where it occurs.

In addition, any Florida College System institution, state university, or nonpublic college, university, or school, as defined in subsection 39.205(3) or sections 1000.21 or 1005.02 F.S., whose administrators knowingly and willfully, upon receiving information from faculty, staff, or other institution employees, fail to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect committed on the property of the university, college, or school, or during an event or function sponsored by the university, college, or school, or who knowingly and willfully prevent another person from doing so, shall be subject to fines of one million dollars for each failure.

For the university to meet its obligations, all program sponsors and program staff, as well as all campus liaisons, are required to follow the reporting steps below if the person suspects, has been informed of, or witnesses child abuse or neglect:

1. Remove the child from immediate harm and call 9-1-1, if directly witnessed.
2. Report the abuse or neglect to the Florida DCF Hotline using one of the following:
 - a) Telephone: 1-800-962-2873; Florida Relay 711 or TTY: 1-800-955-8771
 - b) Fax: 1-800-914-0004
 - c) Online: <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>
3. Report the abuse or neglect to the UCF IntegrityLine using one of the following:
 - a) Telephone: 855-877-6049
 - b) Online: ucfintegrityline.com

Once the university is informed of child abuse or neglect, it will commence an institutional response. University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk will conduct an investigation as well as review the need for increased supervision, revised policies and procedures, and if additional training is necessary. Should the investigation yield that criminal activity has taken place, University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk will notify appropriate law enforcement authorities.

VII. Enforcement

University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk will strictly enforce this policy. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy and any related campus procedures may result in cancellation of the program, corrective action, up to and including termination of employment, dismissal from the university, issuance of no-trespass notices, and/or disqualification for participation in future activities.

Knowingly making a false report or complaint under this policy, or knowingly providing false or intentionally misleading information during an investigation, may also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment and/or dismissal from the university.

Third party noncompliance with this policy may result in action up to and including discontinuation of use, including debarment from future use, of university property or facilities and/or cancellation of the program. The university may also take necessary interim actions before determining whether a violation has occurred.

RELATED INFORMATION

[UCF Policy 2-004 Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence](#)

[UCF Policy 3-128 University Volunteers](#)

[UCF Policy 2-700 Reporting Misconduct and Protection from Retaliation](#)

[UCF Policy 3-011 Background Checks](#)

CONTACTS

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INITIATING AUTHORITY President

POLICY APPROVAL
(For use by the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 2-005

University Policies and
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President or Designee:  Date: 12/20/18