

SUBJECT:	Minors Involved in Nebraska Methodist College Programs
REVIEWED/REVISED:	9/2015; 1/2022
PURPOSE:	Set forth the minimum expectations and requirements regarding Minors who participate in activities and programs
POLICY OWNER:	Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness

POLICY:

This statement sets forth the minimum expectations and requirements regarding minors who participate in activities and programs taking place on Nebraska Methodist College's (hereinafter "College" or "NMC") land, in its facilities, or under the authority and direction of the College at other locations. Specific NMC programs can, and may be required to, set forth more requirements and more rigorous expectations depending on the degree of interaction with minors within the program. The College expects each and every member of the NMC community to adhere to and act in accordance with this policy. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this policy may lead to disciplinary action and/or revocation of the opportunity to use College facilities.

This policy affects all units of NMC with the exception of those academic courses wherein interaction with minors is integral to the educational and patient-care related purposes of the academic course. Such academic courses may be subject to their own policies relating to minors.

This policy does not apply to general public events where parents/guardians are invited/expected to provide supervision of minors.

Definitions:

1. **Minors:** A person under the age of nineteen (19) who is not enrolled or accepted for enrollment at NMC.
2. **College Facilities:** Facilities owned by, or under the control of, the College with the exception of the Whispering Pine townhomes.
3. **Program:** Programs and activities offered by various academic or administrative units of the College, or by non-College groups using College facilities which are subject to separately-executed Facility Rental Agreements. This includes, but is not limited to, workshops, conferences, pre-enrollment visits, community outreach programs, and student organization sponsored programs.
4. **Adult:** Individuals, age 19 and older, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in College Facilities or NMC-sponsored programs or activities. This includes but is not

limited to faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants.

The following requirements govern participation in programs covered by this policy:

1. **Program Registration:** The person in charge of the program shall have the program reviewed with the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness within sufficient time to meet the requirements of this policy.
2. **Execute Proper Written Agreements(s):** In all covered programs or activities, if necessary, the parent/guardian shall execute the appropriate agreements as established by the College.
3. **Conduct Background Checks:** The coordinator of the program, whether the Program is sponsored by NMC or a private concern, will be required to conduct a criminal background check on all adults, including but not limited to faculty, staff, students, and volunteers, who work with, instruct, or who come into contact with Minors. These criminal background checks will be conducted by an agency approved by NMHS Human Resources or NMC Campus Health. If a criminal record history is revealed, an appropriate evaluation will take place. NMC also strongly encourages the coordinator of the program to request references of any participating Adults for the purpose of providing additional information.
4. **Required Training:** In recognition of the imperative of protecting minors, NMC requires that all adults working with minors be trained regarding policies and issues relating to interactions with minors. This training shall be at least annually before an adult begins working with minors. Adult training shall be documented, with the adult signing a statement indicating his/her understanding and receipt of NMC policies and procedures. This training shall include:
 1. NMC policies regarding interactions with minors;
 2. Use of background checks to screen adults working with minors;
 3. Responsibility for modeling respectful behaviors
 4. Consequences of conduct violations involving minors;
 5. Behavioral signs that minor victims may exhibit;
 6. Sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
 7. Inappropriate behavior with minors;
 8. Other appropriate topics; and
 9. Reporting requirements and procedures.
5. **Behavioral Expectations when interacting with Minors:** Adults should be positive role model for minors, and act in a caring, honest, respectful and responsible manner that is consistent with the mission and core values of NMC. Adults working in NMC programs covered by this policy must follow these expectations to avoid behaviors that could cause harm or be misinterpreted:
 1. Do not engage in any sexual activity, make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, or share sexually explicit material (or assist in any way to provide access to such material) with minors.
 2. Do not be alone with a single minor. One-on-one interactions should occur only when at least two adults are present at all times with a minor. If a one-on-one interaction is required, meet in open, well-illuminated spaces or rooms with windows observable by other adults from the program, unless the one-in-one interaction is expressly authorized by the coordinator of the program being undertaken by a healthcare provider.

3. Do not meet with minors outside of established times for program activities. Any exceptions require the written parental authorization and must include more than one adult from a program.
4. Do not invite minors to your home. Any exceptions, if any, required the written authorization by the minor's parent/guardian.
5. Do not engage or allow minors to engage you in romantic or sexual conversations, or related matters, unless required in the role of counselor or healthcare provider.
6. Do not engage or communicate with minors through email, text message, social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.), internet chat rooms, or other forms of social media except and unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communication is consistent with the mission of NMC.
7. Do not touch a minor in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate. Touching should generally only be in the open and in response to the minor's needs, for purpose that is consistent with the program's mission and culture, and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health-related (i.e. treatment of any injury) purpose. Any resistance by the minor should be respected.
8. Do not engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, in the presence of, a minor, including but not limited to verbal abuse, striking, hitting, punching, 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 coordinator of the program and the minor's parent/guardian.
9. Do not use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty or when responsible for a minor's welfare.
10. When transporting minors in a program, more than one adult from the program must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple minors will be in the vehicle at all times though the transportation. Avoid using personal vehicles if possible.
11. Possession of or use of any type of weapon or explosive device is prohibited.

Title IX: Sexual Harassment Policy

NMC maintains and strictly adheres to its Sexual Harassment Policy. Any reports of sexual harassment, assault, or violence are subject to the processes, procedures, and sanctions as provided for in the Sexual Harassment Policy in addition to reporting to law enforcement and Department of Health and Human Services.

Reporting Allegation(s) of Inappropriate Behavior or Abuse of a Minor

Every member of the NMC community has an obligation to immediately report any instance or suspected instance of the abuse of or inappropriate interaction with a Minor - "If you see something, say something." Nebraska law requires any person who has a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or observes such a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in child abuse or neglect, report it to the proper law enforcement agency or to the Department of Health and Human Services. Accordingly, if you have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred, including sexual assault:

1. You must report it;
2. You should give as much information and details as possible;
3. Reporting adults are immune from liability, civil or criminal, if the report is made in good faith and not giving maliciously false statements;
4. If you willfully fail to make a report, you will be in violation of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-717.

DHHS has established the following toll-free number to be used by any person at any hours of the day or night to report child abuse (800) 652-1999.

Any member of the NMC community who suspects any inappropriate behavior or abuse of minor is also required to contact and report the inappropriate behavior and/or abuse to the coordinator of the program, a College administrator, and/or campus security.