

# **FAQ's – Auburn University Policy on Minors**

## **Why has Auburn University adopted this policy?**

The university has adopted the [Policy on Minors](#) to provide guidance for those in the university community who participate in programs or activities that involve minors under the age of 19. The primary goal of the policy is to promote the well-being and safety of minors who participate in programs run by or associated with Auburn University.

For more information on this policy please visit the [Minors on Campus](#) website.

## **I'm not involved in any programs involving minors at Auburn. Does the policy apply to me?**

If you are not involved in any programs or activities involving minors, most of the provisions of the policy will not apply to you. Everyone, however, is expected to 1) review the policy, 2) review the Child Protection and Reporting of Child Abuse Policy 3) help to protect the safety and well-being of minors with whom they may interact, and 4) report known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor. The policy does not apply to personal activities that are apart from your role or responsibilities as a student, faculty member or staff member, but the guidance provided by the policy may be helpful and important in non-university contexts.

Exceptions to this policy include: (1) undergraduate and graduate academic programs in which minors are enrolled for academic credit; (2) events on campus which are open to the general public and which minors attend at the sole discretion of their parents or guardians; and, (3) campus tours or visits by minors considered to be prospective students; and (4) other programs as may be designated from time to time by the appropriate university official in advance and in writing as exempted from this policy.

## **Am I required to register programs and activities involving minors?**

Yes. Program sponsoring units should register events as soon as possible but no later than 60 days prior to the first scheduled date of the event. Programs or activities in which minors are expected to participate should be registered with the university's [Event Management Protocol](#) website. Information is to be completed by the appropriate program director. For more information about registering a program you may also call 334-844-9999 or email [AUEvent@auburn.edu](mailto:AUEvent@auburn.edu).

Please note that the [Program/Activity Departmental Approval Form](#) should be submitted at the time the event is registered. This form provides the review committee with a summary of the event and requires dean or department ahead signature to confirm the event is approved by your unit.

For more information on event registration please visit [HERE](#).

**How long on average will it take the Event Management Committee to respond with an approval for my event?**

Please allow up to two (2) weeks for a response from the review committee. Information provided to the Event Management Protocol website will be submitted to, and reviewed by, the appropriate members of the review committee. The review committee may request additional information from the program director. The Office of Communications and Marketing has oversight of the Event Management Protocol and will approve the event once all proper information has been submitted and reviewed. Please be prepared to submit additional information as requested. No program involving minors can take place until registered and reviewed.

**I would like to host a non-university program involving children on Auburn's campus. What do I need to do in order to do so?**

Non-University organizations that wish to operate programs or activities involving minors on campus must comply with the university's Policy on Minors, including requirements relating to reporting suspected abuse or neglect of minors, completing all relevant training, and background checks.

Prior to the start of any program or activity involving minors, Non-university organizations must certify that they have conducted criminal background checks of their employees, volunteers, and representatives that meet or exceed Auburn's standards and notified the program director of any background check that returned a conviction or other adverse information.

**Do annual events need to be re-submitted to the event management system every year?**

Yes; however, the event management system is designed to allow events to be renewed for the following year. This is not done automatically. It does require the event organizer to renew manually within the system but all information is copied over for the renewed event. You will be required to update any forms and provide current lists of employees, volunteers, etc. and proof of background checks and training.

**I'm a student 19 years or older participating in a program involving minors. Does the policy apply to me?**

Yes. All faculty, staff and students who are involved in a university-run or -affiliated program or activities involving minors must comply with this policy

**What training is in order to participate in a program involving minors?**

Program or activity directors, staff, volunteers and all authorized adults working with minors in university programs or activities are required to review the [Policy on Minors](#) and [Child Protection and Reporting of Child Abuse Policy](#). These policies provide helpful tips for maintaining a safe and positive environment when working with minors and steps to take if you suspect that a minor has been abused or neglected.

In addition, program or activity directors, staff, volunteers and all authorized adults who have direct contact with, minors, must complete a free online training course entitled: [Sexual Misconduct: How Teachers/Educators Can Protect Our Children](#).

**Why is the university requiring criminal background checks prior to participating in activities involving minors?**

The university is committed to promoting the well-being and safety of children who participate in university programs or activities and in programs that outside organizations deliver on campus. Criminal background checks may reveal prior convictions that would make it inappropriate for someone to participate in a program or activity with minors. Program or activity directors, staff, volunteers and all authorized adults working with minors in university programs or activities are required to complete a background check every 3 years.

**Who is required to have a criminal background check?**

All “authorized adults” who have “direct contact” with minors are required to complete a criminal background check. Authorized adults are defined as individuals, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in program activities, or recreational, and/or residential facilities. This includes but is not limited to faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants.

Direct contact is defined as providing care, supervision, guidance or control of minors and/or having routine interaction with minors.

Temporary guest speakers, presenters and other individuals who have no direct contact with program participants other than short term activities supervised by program staff are not required to have a criminal background check.

**I am operating a program involving minors. How do I arrange for background checks for my staff?**

[Human Resources](#) oversees the processing of criminal background checks for university programs and activities. More information concerning how to request background checks and their cost can be found at their website.

**Are waivers allowed and how can I request one?**

Any requests for clarification as to whether a particular program or activity is subject to this policy should be sent to Risk Management & Safety. Requests for a waiver to all of, or any portion of, this policy should first be approved by the program director and his or her dean or director. The request should then be sent to Risk Management & Safety for appropriate review with the review committee using the [Policy on Minors Program/Activity Departmental Request for Exemption Form](#). Risk Management & Safety will review the request with the appropriate

members of the review committee and may request additional information or supporting documentation as needed. The review committee will advise the program director in writing as to their decision.

Please allow up to 2 weeks for a response from the review committee regarding exceptions to this policy.

**When might I need to make a report under the Child Protection and Reporting of Child Abuse Policy?**

If you are participating in a program or activity involving minors and you know, suspect, or receive information indicating that a minor has been abused or neglected or is otherwise unsafe, you must make a report. Please call 911 immediately the review the [Child Protection and Reporting of Child Abuse Policy](#) for further information.

**What if I'm not sure whether a minor I'm working with has been abused or neglected?**

If you have any suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, report it---even when you have doubts, it is better to report your suspicions than to ignore them.

It is the university's position that, in addition to the mandated statutory reporting requirements for certain individuals and entities, *all university personnel and volunteers who have a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected must immediately make a report.* Neither Alabama law nor any university policy allows you to delegate the duty to report child abuse or neglect.