

University of South Carolina Programs Involving Minors Program/Activity Staff Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all program/activity staff (“Staff”), including volunteers who are working with Minors in a university program or activity. Along with any program/activity-specific guidelines and procedures, Staff are required to comply with all applicable laws, university policies, and the requirements herein.

- (1) **General** – Staff should work cooperatively with youth, families, university faculty, other Staff, community members and others in a courteous, respectful manner demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model.
 - Staff should represent the university and the program/activity with grace and dignity, behave appropriately, refrain from using profanity or language unbecoming of a responsible adult, exhibit good sportsmanship, and demonstrate effective conflict management skills.
 - Staff should enforce and not make exceptions to the code of conduct, rules, policies and guidelines established by the program/activity director, including state laws and regulations.
- (2) **Two Adult Rule** – Generally, two Staff should always be present with a Minor. When it is necessary to speak privately with a Minor, meet in unlocked, open, well-illuminated spaces or rooms within sight of other Staff.
- (3) **Mentoring** – Programs/activities that involve mentoring or private instruction (tutoring, laboratory, music lessons, etc.) where there is only one Staff present should take place in a room or other space that is in full view from outside the room even when the door is closed. These Programs/Activities should only take place in authorized facilities, never a private residence.
- (4) **Time and Place** – Staff should not meet with Minors outside of the established time or place designated for the program/activity.
- (5) **Transportation** – Minors can only be transported for the specific purposes of the program for which the parent/guardian has provided explicit consent, and only as approved in university policy 4.00. Transportation must be by a university-obtained vehicle. All drivers must be certified / trained and have proper clearance to operate a state vehicle transporting minor participants. Minor participants under the age of eighteen (18) may not be transported in a fifteen (15) passenger van or in a personal vehicle.
- (6) **Privacy** – The privacy of all individuals should be respected in situations such as toileting, showering and changing clothes. When it is necessary to supervise Minors in such activities, at least two Staff should be present and only to ensure health and/or safety.
- (7) **Confidentiality**- Staff must not discuss participant specific information with any unauthorized person, including contact information, health information, incidents, or specific actions.
- (8) **Touching** – Staff may not strike, hit, shove, or administer corporal punishment to Minors. Do not touch Minors in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate. Always avoid touching areas that are normally covered by swimsuits. When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front.
- (9) **Overnight Stays**– When supervising overnight activities, Staff may not share sleeping areas with Minors.
- (10) **Sexual Conduct and Communications Prohibited** – Engaging in any sexual conduct, making sexual comments, telling sexual jokes, or sharing sexually explicit material (or assisting in any

way to provide access to such material) with Minors is prohibited. Staff must not engage or allow Minors to engage them in romantic or sexual conversations, activities, including on any forms of electronic media.

- (11) **Online Communications** – Staff should not engage or communicate with Minors through email, text messages, social networking websites, internet chat rooms, or other forms of social media at any time, except and unless such activity is part of the programmatic curriculum or plan and the content of the communication is consistent with the mission of the program/activity and the university.
- (12) **Other Communications** – Staff must not share sensitive personal information with Minors, including information about personal, financial or workplace challenges, drug or alcohol use, religious or political beliefs, and romantic relationships.
- (13) **Discipline** – Any discipline used should be constructive, not humiliating or isolating. Physical punishment is not an appropriate form of discipline and IS NOT allowed.
- (14) **Photography** – Photographing Minors is prohibited, except for program/activity-related purposes where the parent or guardian has executed a photo and media release. Use of any device capable of recording and transmitting visual images in shower areas, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected is strictly prohibited.
- (15) **Gifts** – Staff may not provide gifts to Minors other than items provided by the program/activity.
- (16) **Administering Medication** – Medication must only be administered to a Minor in accordance with the parent/guardian’s written instructions. Staff may not provide or administer medication without first consulting the program/activity director.
- (17) **Substance Use Prohibited** – Staff may not use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any prescription medication that impairs their ability to perform their duties during the program/activity.
 - Staff may not condone others’ use of alcohol or illegal drugs during the program/activity.
 - USC is a tobacco-free campus; smoking and tobacco use is prohibited.
- (18) **Discrimination, Hazing or Bullying Prohibited**- Staff must comply with USC’s Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.
 - Hazing initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any program/activity.
 - Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited.
- (19) **Reporting**–
 - Staff must report any accident, injury or illness of a Minor immediately to the program/activity Director and to the Office for the Protection of Minors at minors@mailbox.sc.edu
 - Staff must report incidents involving sexual or physical abuse or neglect of a Minor immediately to the program/activity director, the USC Police at 803-777-4215 (or to local campus police for non-Columbia campuses), and at minors@mailbox.sc.edu.

My signature confirms that I have read and understand this code of conduct. My signature further confirms that I agree to abide by this code of conduct. Failure to abide by this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action or sanctions against me, including but not limited to, removal from the program/activity, exclusion from future programs/activities, termination, and/or criminal prosecution.

Printed Name	Signature	Date
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