

## Code of Conduct

# STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS

As Willamette University (WU) employees and volunteers, it is our duty to safeguard the minors in our care. The following code of conduct describes the minimum expectations that we hold for employees and volunteers who interact with minors in a University program.

### 1. UNIVERSITY STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS

#### GENERAL CONTACT: IN PERSON, ONLINE, VERBAL, PHYSICAL

##### Expectations

- Have at least one other adult present during all interactions with minors; or interact in an observable, interruptible distance of another staff member.
- Limit physical contact to purposes that are consistent with the program's mission and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health related purpose, in the presence of another staff member, and with the consent of the minor.
- Use program-sponsored e-mail, phone and social media accounts for communication when there is an essential educational or programmatic reason to do so.
- Disclose any pre-existing relationships with minors in the minor program immediately to the program lead. Abide by these standards while affiliated with the minor program, despite any pre-existing personal relationships.

##### Discouraged or prohibited

(Note: Discouraged behaviors are indicated by use of the word "avoid." All other behaviors are prohibited.)

- Do not interact with a single minor where you cannot be observed by program staff/volunteers or other adults.
- Do not act in a manner that can be perceived as physical or verbal abuse.
- Do not discipline minors by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- Do not engage in purposeful communication or contact including in-person meetings, phone or other electronic communication including social networking, with minors outside of sanctioned program activities.
- Avoid texting and other forms of electronic one-on-one communication between a single staff member/volunteer and a minor.

#### EQUITABLE TREATMENT

##### Expectation

- Treat all minors equitably ( i.e. fairly and consistently) regardless of their actions or behavior, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, culture, place of birth, age, class, ability, health, citizenship, language, or other identities.

##### Prohibited

- Do not discriminate against a minor based on their sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, culture, place of birth, age, class, ability, health, citizenship, language, or other identities.

- Do not give personal gifts to minors or their parents (e.g. any item intended to give a minor and/or parent special attention that is not given to others).

## **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

### **Expectation**

- Understand and respect the physical and personal boundaries set by minors.

### **Prohibited**

- Do not engage in sexual contact of any kind (including any verbal or physical contact that can be perceived as sexual in nature.)
- Do not date or become romantically involved with minors.
- Do not discuss your own or a minor's sex life or sexual activities.
- Do not share sexually explicit material with minors.

## **SAFETY**

### **Expectations**

- The safety of minors must be your primary concern above all others.
- Report any concerns for suspected abuse or neglect of a minor to authorities per University policy requirements.
- Notify University representatives per policy requirements of any violations of these standards for interacting with minors.
- Follow all University transportation procedures for transporting minors.

### **Prohibited**

- Do not possess, sell, use, or be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or illegal drugs while engaged in program activities or on site.
- Do not bring or carry a weapon into the program.
- Do not transport minors in a personal vehicle.

## **EDUCATING MINORS**

Minors should be informed in an age-appropriate manner of their right to set their own physical limits for personal safety. They should be encouraged to tell an adult if someone is abusing them, or if they are in a situation or observe something that makes them uncomfortable.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATING UNIVERSITY STANDARDS**

Willamette University takes these matters seriously. In the case of suspected abuse or neglect of a minor or violations of the Standards for Interacting with Minors, the University will adhere to existing policies and procedures for corrective action. Actions taken will first and foremost consider the need to ensure the safety of minors participating in the program.

## **2. HOW TO REPORT VIOLATIONS OF THE STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS**

**Employees and volunteers of minor programs are required to report violations of the Standards for Interacting with Minors.**

If you believe a staff member involved in a WU minor program has violated the Standards for Interacting with Minors you must notify your supervisor and the Human Resources Office.

**If you believe the staff member has violated the Standards in a way that raises concerns for abuse or neglect, you must first contact either Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) at 1-855-503-SAFE (7233) or a law enforcement agency within the county where the person is located at the time of the report. If a minor is in imminent danger, it must be reported to 911.**

If you are unsure about whether someone's behavior is a violation of the standards, you can consult with your supervisor and contact the Human Resources Office at 503-370-6210, with your concerns and they can provide guidance.

### **3. HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

**All Willamette University employees and volunteers are Mandatory Reporters under Oregon law.**

If you have reasonable cause to believe that a minor has experienced abuse or neglect, or if a minor has disclosed abuse or neglect to you, you are required report that abuse to the proper authorities.

Those who are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect and who fail to do so may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**Employees or volunteers who become aware of suspected child abuse or neglect must:**

- 1. If the safety of a minor is of immediate concern, call the police:  
Call 911 for immediate intervention.**
- 2. For all other concerns, call ODHS at-1-855-503-SAFE (7233) or a law enforcement agency within the county where the person is located at the time of the report. Alternatively, call local police, specifically the jurisdiction where the incident occurred.**

In addition to reporting externally, Willamette University employees and volunteers must notify Campus Safety immediately at (503) 370-6911 to report any suspected child abuse or neglect occurring at or in association with any Willamette University programming. Your department will adhere to existing policies and procedures for corrective action regarding the employee or volunteer, including suspension or termination from employment or volunteer status.

Confidentiality of information related to abuse is crucial and should be limited to the immediate supervisor; any authorities called, and designated WU internal reporting recipient(s).

### **4. CONFIRMATION OF UNDERSTANDING**

I have read Willamette University's Standards for Interacting with Minors and I agree to abide by the standards as stated.

I UNDERSTAND VIOLATIONS OF THE STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION UP TO AND INCLUDING DISMISSAL. I ACKNOWLEDGE I AM AWARE OF MY RESPONSIBILITIES AND I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THE STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS.

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_