

# University Sponsored Programs for Children and Youth

**Subject:** Personnel

**Policy:** Background Checks and Program Information for University-Sponsored Programs for Children and Youth

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## 100.00 Introduction and Purpose

As part of its educational mission, Montana State University offers many university programs that include children and youth. This policy promotes the protection and safety of children and youth in these programs.

## 200.00 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Children and Youth** - any person under the age of eighteen (18) who is not enrolled or accepted for enrollment at the University. Students who are "dually enrolled" in University programs while also enrolled in elementary, middle, or high school are not included in this policy unless such enrollment includes a residential component in University housing.

**Programs** - all events, operations or activities designed for the participation children and youth such as camps, lessons, workshops, clubs, teams, projects, practices, tours, or open-houses.

The term "programs" does not include: 1) Single performances or events open to the general public that are not targeted toward children and youth (such as intercollegiate athletic competitions, plays, concerts); 2) Regularly scheduled classes or activities designed primarily for enrolled students or student recruits who are age 17 and above; .

**University Sponsored** - a program sponsored by a department of the university or otherwise offered by university employees as part of their employment at the university.

**Work directly** - individual, face to face contact with children in the performance of the assignment. This does not include employees or volunteers who are part of group activities but who have no responsibility to directly interact with children and youth as part of their assignment. E.g., volunteers called in for a specific one-time group activity who will be supervised by employees or volunteers who are responsible for the direct contact.

## 300.00 Background checks:

University Sponsored Programs for children and youth must ensure that all employees, students, volunteers, or other personnel who will work directly with children and youth have been subject to a criminal background check and sex offender registry check within the last twelve months before working with children and youth. Individual departments or programs may obtain a waiver from Human Resources to use a longer period for background checks of employees and students where there are adequate practices in place to monitor for any criminal conduct which may occur during the extended period. Human resources shall maintain documentation of the waiver and the justification for the waiver, including the specific monitoring practice(s) in place. Individual programs or units may require more frequent updates and may require a new background check for any employee or volunteer at any time. University Sponsored programs will use the vendor and the same policies that MSU uses for pre-employment background checks.

A person whose criminal background check and/or sex offender registry check includes a record of sexually based offenses or crimes against children is not eligible to work as a volunteer or employee for University Sponsored Programs. If criminal background reports include a record of other offenses, programs will consult the appropriate offices (University Human Resources, Legal Counsel or the University Police Chief) to determine if

those offenses should preclude participation.

Programs that are discrete, occasional events for which a large number of volunteers are essential, may elect to adopt measures and safeguards instead of background checks for the one-time volunteers (for example, Science Olympiads, children's reading/activity days). The measures adopted must include requirements that the volunteers work only in public places, not alone with children and youth, and be supervised by a background-checked person. Programs must compile the names and addresses of the volunteers prior to the event and check the names against the sex offender registry. Volunteers must then present photo identification to be checked at the event.

#### 400.00 Program information:

Units sponsoring programs that include children and youth must maintain an up-to-date list of those programs. The list will include each program's dates, times, locations, attendance (age range and number of participants) and a program contact. In the event of an emergency, the university will be aware of the presence of children and youth on campus and may take the appropriate course of action to address their health and safety.

Academic and administrative supervisors are responsible for ensuring that programs are in compliance with this provision.

#### 500.00 Guidelines:

The University has adopted [Guidelines for University Programs for Children](#)

[Printable Version: Guidelines for University Programs for Children](#)

Units responsible for such programs should be familiar with the Guidelines and should have each volunteer or employee review and sign the Guidelines.