

Minors in Research and Academic Areas

Policy

Revision Date: 05/05/2025

Applies To: All research, academic, and service units involved in operations involving minors. This does not apply to minors enrolled as U-M students.

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Minors in Research and Academic Areas Policy Statement

Unsupervised volunteers and visitors, including *minors*, create a risk for injury and increased liability for the University of Michigan (U-M). Environment, Health & Safety (EHS) requires that a *responsible person (18 years of age or older)* appointed by the Chair or *Department Head* directly supervise all minors when they enter a research lab, shop, and/or studio to work or for a visit. Departmental policy to this effect will reduce or eliminate the risk of personal injury to minors in research and academic areas and the risk of damage to projects and property.

All University of Michigan (U-M) employees **must** comply with the requirements contained in this document and complete all required training.

Minors in Research and Academic Areas Policy

The Minors in *Research and Academic Areas* Policy is derived from the following U-M policies:

- [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 201.20 - Employment of Minors](#)
- [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 601.34 - Children on Campus](#)
- [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 605.01 - Safety, Health and Environmental Policy](#)

It provides guidance to reduce or eliminate the risk of personal injury to minors in research lab, shop, or studio operations and the risk of damage to projects and property. The Minors in Research and Academic Areas Program does not pertain to the following individuals:

IF THE INDIVIDUAL IS A ...	THEN REFER TO THE FOLLOWING WEB PAGE
Minor enrolled as U-M a student	This Policy is Not Applicable
Volunteer for Michigan Medicine	Michigan Medicine Volunteer Services
Non-minor visiting or volunteering	EHS Visitors & Volunteers
Minor participating as a subject in university-sponsored research	Children on Campus

Related Minors in Research and Academic Areas Policy Documents

- [Illness or Injury Report Form \(Work Connections\)](#)
- [Incident and Near Miss Form \(EHS\)](#)

Additional Resources

All reference guidelines, regulations, and other documents are available in [Appendix A](#) of this document.

Observation-Only Visits

In general, minor children without a valid reason should not be permitted in research and academic areas that may contain hazardous materials and/or equipment. Minors participating as "observation-only" visitors are not allowed to perform tasks in research or academic facilities. An example of an observation-only visit is when high school students tour a laboratory or research area.

Approval Process

Anyone wishing to bring a minor into research or academic facilities **must**:

1. Seek approval per their Department's procedure.
2. Refer to the [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 601.34 - Children on Campus](#). Specific requirements regarding program registration, code of conduct, background screening, training, and reporting requirements apply to minors working or volunteering in U-M facilities.

Personal Protective Equipment Requirements

Minors **must** be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed based on work activity underway in the area they are visiting. At a minimum, safety glasses, long pants, and closed-toe shoes **must** be worn.

Training

Observation only minors **must** receive a brief discussion of potential hazards that may be encountered in the area during their visit and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

Minors Performing Research and Academic Activities (Volunteer or Employed)

It is recommended that minors participating as volunteers are at least sixteen; fourteen is the minimum age for legal employment. If minors are participating in research and academic activities as employees, refer to the [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 201.20 - Employment of Minors](#) for a listing of jobs and titles that have State Department of Education approval for minors. The following table identifies work restrictions for minors participating in lab, shop, or studio activities.

Work Restrictions for Minors Participating in Lab, Shop, or Studio Activities

HAZARDS	RESTRICTIONS
Chemicals	Minors are not allowed to use or be exposed to any hazardous substance which means a contaminant, substance, mixture of substances that is toxic, corrosive, an irritant, a strong sensitizer, or flammable or which generates pressure through decomposition, heat, or other means if the substance or mixture of substances is capable of causing substantial personal injury, impairment, or substantial illness through absorption, inhalation, or personal contact. Substances, as described above, would be designated with the signal word "DANGER". How to locate the signal word on a label .

Biological Materials	Any biological materials, including animal substances and tissues designated as BSL2 on the IBC application, may not be used by minors in the lab. Additionally, animals administered biological material designated by the IBC as BSL2 may not be used.
Radioactive Materials, Radiation-Producing Machines	The use of radioisotopes and/or radiation-producing equipment has dose limitations for minors. Use must be approved through EHS-RSS.
Animal Use	<u>Lab directors</u> may apply for an exception to the ULAM Director to allow a minor to work with lab animals under the direct supervision of an Authorized User approved by the Animal Care and Use Program (ACUP). Refer to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Policy on the Classification and Expectations of Personnel Involved with Animal Activities .
Respiratory Use	Minors are not allowed to be assigned work tasks that require the following respiratory protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A self-contained breathing apparatus • A supplied-air respirator • An air-purifying respirator • A gas mask • A chemical cartridge respirator
Equipment Use	Minors are not allowed to be assigned work task that involves the following types of equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power-driven woodworking machinery • Power-driven metal-forming, metal-punching, and metal-shearing machines. • Power-driven saws • Power-driven hoisting apparatus, including a power industrial truck, crane, or hoist. • Knives, blades (cryostat, microtome, vibratome)

Work Permits

"Minors under the age of 18 cannot be employed or permitted to work, **with or without pay**, or volunteer until the person, company, business, firm or corporation proposing to employ the minor obtains and keeps on file at the minor's place of employment (work location) a current and valid age-appropriate work permit, which has been issued by a state of Michigan issuing officer of the school district, intermediate school district, public school academy or nonpublic school prior to starting work." (Work Permit Information, 2023)

Refer to the [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 201.20 - Employment of Minors](#), and consult your Department HR representative to ensure all requirements are met. EHS does not retain these records.

Approval Process

The minor may not begin working until EHS has sent a final approval email. The approval email and attached documentation **must** be available to provide to inspectors upon request.

1. Complete the attached Work Activity Form [for Minors Performing Research or Other Academic Activities](#). Email the form to minorsinresearch@umich.edu.
2. EHS will review the proposed Work Activity Form.
3. EHS may deny the proposed Work Activity if the requesting lab(s) have prior compliance issues or failure to adhere to U-M laboratory or EHS policies.

4. Upon EHS approval, EHS will send the Informed Consent and Authorization to the Minor and their Parent/Guardian for digital signatures via SignNow.
5. EHS will send an Approval document to the laboratory (PI)/shop/studio director and the Responsible Person for digital signatures via SignNow.
6. Final approval is provided in the form of an email to all parties involved and will include signed documents, the Work Activity Form, and the Youth Employment Standard Poster.

Personal Protective Equipment Requirements

Minors **must** be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed based on the work activity underway in the laboratory. At a minimum, safety glasses, long pants, and closed-toe shoes **must** be worn. Long hair must be secured back.

Training

EHS Student Laboratory Safety training or General Laboratory Safety training **must** be completed by each minor prior to using or being exposed to any hazardous materials or operations.

Training courses can be found on the My Link learning management system. To create a Friend Account, follow these [instructions](#).

AREA OF WORK	TRAINING REQUIRED
Research Laboratory	EHS_BLS025w Chemical Laboratory Safety
Shops or Studios	EHS_BLS001w Hazard Communication for Individuals Working in Research Support Units, Labs, and Shops

Additional EHS training courses as deemed necessary by the minor's supervisor. Additional training may include:

- Centrifuge Training
- Laser Safety Basic Training
- Radiation Safety
- X-ray Diffraction

Lab/Shop/Studio - Specific Training

Lab/shop/studio-specific training should be provided by the Director or Supervisor and **must** cover the necessary work practices, procedures, and policies to ensure that minors are protected from all potentially hazardous chemicals, biological pathogens, and dangerous equipment used in the work environment. Training on emergency procedures **must** also be included.

Recordkeeping

DOCUMENT	ACTION
Onboarding Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Activity Form for Minors Performing Research or Other Academic Activities • U-M Informed Consent and Authorization for a Minor to Engage in Lab/Shop/Studio Activities form 	Must be maintained by the lab/shop/studio for at least two years after the minor turns 18 years old.
Training Documentation	Documented and maintained in the area where the minor worked.

Near Misses, Injuries, Accidents, and Illnesses Reports	Must be reported (for more information, refer to the Emergency Procedures section)
Youth Employment Standards Act 90 of 1978, as amended Posting Requirement from the Michigan Department of Education	Post conspicuously in areas where the minors work. NOTE: EHS will attach a copy of this document to the Approval Form
Work Permit	Must be maintained by the department where the Minor is working.

Emergency Procedures

All near misses, injuries, accidents, and illnesses involving minors (regardless of the level of participation) **must** be reported. Appropriate medical treatment may be necessary. Determine what **must** be done for each minor and ensure all responsible persons are aware of the procedures.

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	FORM TO COMPLETE	MEDICAL TREATMENT
Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident and Near Miss Form 	Refer minors to their own physician, an urgent care facility, or the nearest emergency center, depending on the nature of their issue.
Volunteer or Employee performing work activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident and Near Miss Form and submit to EHS Illness or Injury Report Form and submit to Work Connections 	Employed Minor: Follow the same procedure as employees. Reporting Incidents Website .

Appendix A: Referenced Documents

U-M

- [U-M Volunteer Guidelines - Office of General Council](#)
- [UMHS Volunteer Services Website](#)
- [Risk Management Services](#)
- IACUC [Policy on the Classification and Expectations of Personnel Involved with Animal Activities](#)

State of Michigan

- [Labor and Economic Opportunity Website](#)
- [Youth Employment Standards Act 90 of 1978, as amended Posting Requirement](#)

Federal Government

- [Child Labor Provisions for Nonagricultural Occupations under the Fair Labor Standards Act\(pdf\)](#)
- [OSHA Quick Card - Hazard Communication Standard Labels\(pdf\)](#)

Appendix B: Roles and Responsibilities

Deans, Directors, and Department Heads

- Actively support this Policy within individual units.
- Review and approve requests for minors observing and working in UM Labs/Shops/Studios.
- Ensure individuals responsible for minors follow all requirements in [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 601.34 - Children on Campus](#).

Laboratory/Shop/Studio Directors

- Follow and implement procedures in accordance with this Policy to obtain approvals as required for minors and maintain documentation of approvals.
- All responsible persons for minors **must** follow all requirements in [University of Michigan, Standard Practice Guide 601.34 - Children on Campus](#).
- Provide ongoing supervision of all minors. Designate a qualified supervisor and an alternate supervisor, if necessary.
- Never allow a minor to conduct activities without direct supervision at all times.
- Ensure minors receive training and maintain documentation of the training.
- Ensure minors are provided with PPE as required for their work.
- Contact EHS to request training, technical assistance, and to evaluate health and safety concerns within their unit.

EHS

- Review and approve minors working in labs/shops/studios.
- Provide technical assistance to operations regarding allowing minors into research and academic areas.
- Prepare and provide access to training tools for the work activities.

Glossary of Terms

TERM	DEFINITION
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Department Head	This individual holds authority over a Primary Investigator or other researcher and is in a position to review requests for visits. This raises the approval level beyond the individual lab or research facility.
Minor	A person under 18 years of age who is not enrolled in a degree program at U-M. Policies apply whether the minor is employed or volunteering to work.
Lab Director/Director	Lab director or Director for a research lab/shop/studio.
Research and Academic Area	Includes any space within a UM building as well as research conducted in field locations on behalf of the U-M. Includes activities where research, production, laboratory, shop, or studio operations are conducted as well as space where research animals are housed or supported.
Responsible Person	Any person (18 years of age or older) approved by a Lab Director or Department Head to oversee and/or supervise the activities of a visitor/volunteer/minor while in a U-M facility.
