

## MINORS ON CAMPUS

**Scope**

This policy is for any person under the age of eighteen (18) in a College-sponsored Program or a Program held at Mercer County Community College Facilities wherein the employees/coordinators/volunteers of those Programs have Custodial Responsibility for the participating Minors.

This policy does not apply to general public events where parents/guardians are invited/expected/required to provide supervision of Minors. Nor does it apply to Minors enrolled in or accepted for enrollment in credit-granting courses.

**Definitions**

1. **Minor** - A person under the age of eighteen (18) who is not enrolled in or accepted for enrollment in credit-granting courses at the College.
2. **Mercer County Community College Facilities** - Facilities owned by or under the control of the College.
3. **Program(s)** - Programs, activities or camps sponsored by academic or administrative units of the College, or by non-College entities using College Facilities that involve Minors. This includes but is not limited to workshops, athletic camps, academic camps, conferences, admissions events, internships, etc.
4. **Custodial Responsibility** – Responsibility for taking care of and ensuring the well-being of a Minor.
5. **Sponsoring Unit** - The academic or administrative unit of the College which offers a Program, and/or the College unit that grants approval for the use of College Facilities sponsored by non-College entities.
6. **Authorized Adult** - Individuals, age 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee Minors in Programs. This includes but is not limited to faculty, staff, administrators, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. The Authorized Adults' roles may include positions as counselors, chaperones, coaches, instructors, etc. Authorized Adults are considered to be Mandated Reporters as defined by New Jersey law. Further guidance on reporting child abuse is provided at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/>.
7. **Mandated Reporters** - Any person having a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report the same immediately to Department of Children and Families' Child Protection and Permanency by telephone at 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873).
8. **Program Director** - The individual responsible for organizing the Program and overseeing its administration, including management of Authorized Adults, as well as supervision of Minors.
9. **Direct Contact** – The positions with the possibility of care, supervision, guidance or control of Minors and/or routine interaction with Minors.

10. **One-On-One Contact** – The personal, unsupervised interaction between any Authorized Adult and a Minor without at least one other Authorized Adult, parent/legal guardian present.

### **Policy**

All Sponsoring Units, offering or approving a Program which involves Minors that are participating in a Program, or a non-College group offering a Program on campus, shall:

1. Ensure adequate supervision of Minors while they are in College Owned/Operated Facilities. All Programs involving Minors must be supervised by Authorized Adults or by the Minors' parent/legal guardians at all times. Some of the factors to consider in determining "adequate supervision" are the number and age of the Minors, the activities involved in the Program and the age and experience of the Authorized Adults. The ratio of Authorized Adults to Minors must reflect the gender distribution of the Minors, and should meet the following standards:
  - One Authorized Adult for every four Minors ages 4 and 5
  - One Authorized Adult for every seven Minors ages 6 to 8
  - One Authorized Adult for every seven Minors ages 9 to 14
  - One Authorized Adult for every ten Minors ages 15 to 17

For Summer Camps, the standards are:

- One Authorized Adult and One Counselor for every 14 campers for ages 2 ½ to 4
  - One Authorized Adult and One Counselor for every 20 campers for ages 5 to 17
2. Provide information to parent/legal guardian detailing the manner in which the Minors can be contacted during the Program, including during an emergency, in writing prior to the start of the Program.
  3. Establish security and emergency measures for Minors by the party with custodial responsibility. Such measures must include, but are not limited to:
    - Collection of emergency contact information for parent/legal guardian of each Minor;
    - Drop-off and pick-up procedures (at a minimum, such measures shall require every Minor to be checked-in; and every Minor under the age of 13 to be checked-out);
    - Containment of Minors in specified areas during free time, mealtimes and before the Program begins;
    - Where to go if lost; and
    - Steps to take in the event of an emergency (including medical or behavioral problem, natural disasters, or other significant Program disruptions). (Prior to the start of a program, all Authorized Adults and Minors, as well as parents/legal guardians of Minors, must be advised of these measures in writing prior to the participation of the Minors in a Program.)
    - Arrange to access emergency medical services at all locations. Medical care appropriate for the nature of the Program, expected attendance and other variables should be arranged

by the Director/Coordinator in advance of the start of the Program. Additionally, a completed **Medical Treatment Authorization Form** should be maintained on file for all Minors in advance of the start of the Program. Medical information is confidential and cannot be disclosed, except as provided by law.

- Obtain all necessary Release Forms as part of the Program registration process. All data gathered shall be confidential, is subject to Sponsoring Unit records retention guidelines, and shall not be disclosed, except as provided by law.
  - Require Authorized Adults to abide by the code of conduct requirements articulated in this policy.
  - Ensure that Minors and Authorized Adults abide by all policies as set forth by the Policies of the Board of Trustees, Student Code Of Conduct, and or all College regulations and Program rules. Non-compliance with rules may result in removal from the Program.
  - All Authorized Adults who have Direct Contact with Minors are required to have a current background check successfully completed before beginning work with Minors.
4. Mercer County Community College mandates training for all Authorized Adults who are college employees and who are to be in charge of a college sponsored program that involves Minors. Training for all Authorized Adults must include, at a minimum, information about responsibilities and expectations; policies, procedures, and enforcement; appropriate crisis/emergency responses; safety and security precautions; confidentiality issues involving Minors; Mandated Reporters; and College responsibility/liability. Authorized Adults must know how to request local emergency services and how to report suspected child abuse.
5. If a Minor discloses any type of assault or abuse (at any time previously or during the Program), or an Authorized Adult has reason to suspect that a Minor has been subject to such assault or abuse, the Authorized Adults shall immediately report any known violation or reasonably suspected violation of this Policy as follows:
- For situations that involve life threatening emergencies, dial 911.
  - For situations that require action in less than 24 hours, call the Department of Children and Families' Child Protection and Permanency, child abuse reporting hotline: 1-877-652-2873. Anonymous reporting on the hotline is allowed.
  - Authorized Adults shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of Minors participating in Programs, including removal of Minors from dangerous or potentially dangerous situations, irrespective of any other limitation or requirement. If a situation is felt to present immediate danger to a Minor, the Office of College Safety and Security should be called as soon as possible, and then followed up with a call to the State of New Jersey at **1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873)**.
  - For situations pertaining to college sponsored programs, besides following reporting through one of the mechanisms above, Authorized Adults are required to report the matter to the Program Director and to the Office of College Safety and Security. These persons shall immediately report the matter to the Vice President of Finance

and Administration or his/her designee. If the Authorized Adult believes that the Program Director may be involved in the allegations of assault or abuse, the Authorized Adult must go directly to the Vice President of Finance and Administration or his/her designee.

6. Authorized Adults are to discontinue any further participation in Programs covered by this policy when an allegation of inappropriate conduct has been made against him or her, until such allegation has been satisfactorily resolved.

Approved:        Board of Trustees  
                      March 16, 2017