

# 1 Children in the Workplace

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5 Contact: [Environmental Health and Safety \(EH&S\)](#)

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## 19 Introduction

20 Iowa State University provides many opportunities for children to be on campus, either through  
21 campus events, scheduled programming or as guests of students and employees. The university  
22 recognizes its obligation for the safety and well-being of children that comes with their presence at  
23 university facilities. University facilities and grounds can present a variety of potential hazards to  
24 individuals unfamiliar with them. Risks associated with these potential hazards are greater for  
25 children who often lack the hazard recognition abilities of an adult.

26 The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria that welcome children to the university, minimize the  
27 risk of injury to children, and promote an environment conducive to accomplishment of the  
28 university's mission. This policy is intended to foster respect for the needs of all parties impacted by  
29 the presence of children in the workplace.

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## 31 Policy Statement

### 32 Authorization

33 Department chairs and unit directors have the authority to approve or deny the presence of non-  
34 student children in the workplace under appropriate circumstances. In approving or denying

35 continued presence of non-student children, supervisors and managers should consider the factors  
36 indicated below. See [Resources](#) section below for *Employee/Manager Discussion*  
37 *Guide* and *Children in the Workplace Procedures and Guidance*.

### 38 **High Risk**

39 Non-student children will not be permitted in workplace areas that involve high risk safety issues or  
40 where confidentiality factors exist unless it is for experiential learning, short-term visits, guided tours,  
41 or similar situations as outlined in this policy. (See [High Risk Areas](#) below.)

### 42 **Covered by this Policy**

43 This policy applies to employees, students and visitors who may wish to bring a non-student child to  
44 the workplace.

45 If an ISU employee, collaborator or graduate assistant agrees to supervise a child under the age of  
46 18 on campus, that situation is subject to this policy if it is more than incidental or intermittent (as  
47 defined below) and is not part of a registered youth activity, program or camp. Examples include:

- 48 • Tours of ISU facilities
- 49 • Individual lessons (e.g., music) or tutoring/mentoring
- 50 • Individual non-student child doing research in a laboratory with a professor
- 51 • Job shadowing an ISU employee
- 52 • Individualized academic experiential learning/enrichment or internship

### 53 **Not Covered by this Policy**

54 This policy does not apply to cases of incidental or intermittent presence of non-student children, as  
55 defined below.

56 This policy does not apply to:

- 57 • Youth programs addressed within the Youth Activities, Pre-collegiate Programs, and Camps  
58 Policy;
- 59 • Activities with minors who are enrolled as Iowa State University students or employed by Iowa  
60 State University;
- 61 • Activities supervised by the Child Development Laboratory School, a day care provider  
62 contracted to the university or a day care provider affiliated with the university;
- 63 • Residences provided to employees by the university as part of their employment, such as  
64 residence hall director apartments and farm manager homes;
- 65 • ISU research projects with youth participating as human subjects (see IRB process for youth  
66 involved in research projects); or
- 67 • Events and celebrations where families are encouraged to participate.

68 Instructors are responsible for the learning environment in classrooms as provided by the Classroom  
69 Disruption Policy. Under that policy the presence of a non-student child in the classroom is at the  
70 discretion of the instructor.

## 71 **Requirements**

72 For situations subject to this policy, the following requirements must be met:

- 73 • Written permission for hosting the child must be obtained from department chair/unit director
- 74 • For any high risk work areas, the requirements set forth below must be met
- 75 • If the individual serving as a host is not the child's parent:
  - 76 ○ The ISU employee and any others who will have responsibility for the child must be
  - 77 approved via a background check; and
  - 78 ○ A signed written parental permission agreement and emergency contact information must be
  - 79 obtained

## 80 **Definitions**

81 Terms used in this policy are defined as follows:

82 **Incidental or intermittent:** Non-regular and brief (under the circumstances) presence on campus. It  
83 includes visits to introduce children to co-workers, short-term visits between events, or emergencies.  
84 Incidental or intermittent presence is acceptable only under circumstances where there is not a  
85 safety hazard beyond that usually encountered in a typical home or office environment, and as long  
86 as the child remains under the direct supervision of the parent. Incidental or intermittent presence  
87 does not include situations where children need to be supervised more than momentarily by  
88 university employees other than the parent.

89 **Non-student child:** A child under the age of 18 who is not enrolled in classes at the university.

90 **Parent:** Any employee, student, or visitor who is the parent or legal guardian and who has  
91 responsibility for a non-student child while in the workplace.

92 **Host:** A person other than the parent who will be responsible for the non-student child in the  
93 workplace.

94 **Workplace:** Room, office, laboratory, university vehicle, or other areas in the immediate vicinity of  
95 where persons are conducting work on behalf of the university. A common space in a building or  
96 outdoor area generally open to the public is not a workplace. An area off campus where university  
97 work is being conducted is a workplace, but workplace does not include an employee's home.

## 98 **Factors**

99 Careful consideration should be given to the following factors when determining the situations in  
100 which a non-student child may be present in the work place.

101 **Safety and health:** The primary consideration when approving the presence of children is the safety  
102 and health of the child and others present in the workplace. Consideration should be given to the  
103 kinds of hazards and whether such hazards can be controlled under the circumstances in which the  
104 non-student child will be present. The parent or host is responsible for care of the child in all  
105 circumstances.

106 **Disruption:** Non-student children should not create an undue disruption to the accomplishment of  
107 the university's work.

108 **Age and behavioral characteristics:** Acceptability of children in the workplace depends on the age  
109 and behavioral characteristics of the non-student child and relates to issues of safety and disruption.

110 **Nature of the workplace:** Some workplaces are more adaptable to the presence of non-student  
111 children than others. Considerations of confidentiality and professionalism are appropriate  
112 depending on the circumstances.

113 **Welcoming environment:** Allowing non-student children to be present in the workplace on a  
114 reasonable basis may be advantageous to the whole workplace environment, and contribute to  
115 enhanced satisfaction with work and study.

## 116 **High Risk Areas**

117 In general, children are not permitted in high risk safety areas. Examples of high risk safety areas  
118 generally include, but are not limited to:

- 119 • Power plants, shops, mechanical rooms, confined spaces, food preparation areas
- 120 • Any areas, indoors or out, containing power tools or machinery with exposed moving parts or  
121 rotating equipment (e.g. mechanical rooms or construction areas)
- 122 • University vehicles, low-speed vehicles, heavy duty or other motorized equipment
- 123 • Laboratories or specialized work areas that include chemical hazards, biological hazards,  
124 radioactive hazards, flammables, explosives, compressed gasses, sharp objects, lasers,  
125 research animals, hazardous wastes or other environmental hazards
- 126 • Any other high risk areas (rooftops, construction zones, etc.)

127 In workplace areas where high risk safety and/or confidentiality factors exist, short-term visits for  
128 non-student children may be authorized for guided tours, experiential learning or other reasons  
129 based on review and completion of all of the following criteria:

- 130 • Permission from the appropriate responsible authority is obtained, (e.g., the director for access  
131 to the power plant, the employee's department chair or unit head, the laboratory head or  
132 principal investigator for laboratories or specialized areas). Recurring visits, such as tours,  
133 require only initial approval. Subsequent visits should meet the safety criteria established for the  
134 initial activity.
- 135 • Appropriate precautionary measures are taken and hazards have been considered or removed  
136 during the visit.

- 137 • Direct adult supervision of non-student children is provided at all times in high risk safety areas.  
138 • Additional safety measures, as deemed necessary by Environmental Health and Safety or the  
139 Office of Risk Management, are taken in high risk safety areas, such as a signed written parental  
140 permission agreement authorizing the site visit, written waivers of liability, pre-entry safety  
141 briefings and/or a shut down of operations during the visit or appropriate safety training and use  
142 of personal protective equipment.
- 143 • Responsible authorities should consult with the Office of Risk Management and the Department  
144 of Environmental Health and Safety (Office of Environment, Safety, Health and Assurance for  
145 Ames Laboratory buildings) before granting permission for non-student children to be present in  
146 high risk safety areas. Contact the Office of Risk Management for "High Risk Area Approval"  
147 procedures.
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## 149 **Resources**

### 150 **Related Policies**

- 151 [Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps](#)  
152 [Classroom Disruption Policy, Faculty Handbook](#) (FHB 10.5)  
153 [Reporting Responsibility – Violations](#)  
154 [Violence-Free University](#)  
155 [Employment Verification and Background Checks](#)

### 156 **Guidance, Forms, Training**

- 157 [Children in the Workplace Procedures and Guidance \[PDF\]](#)  
158 [Employee/Manager Discussion Guide \[PDF\]](#)  
159 [Background Check Requests](#)  
160 [Youth and Children at ISU website](#)  
161 [Children in the Workplace \[Policy in PDF with line numbers\]](#)

### 162 **For Parents, Youth and Children**

- 163 [Youth and Children at ISU website](#)

### 164 **Offices**

- 165 [Office of Risk Management](#)  
166 [Environmental Health and Safety \(EH&S\)](#)  
167 [Environment, Safety, Health & Assurance \(Ames Laboratory\)](#)  
168 [Office of University Counsel](#)