

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 References 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](#)