



# The Pennsylvania State University Youth Program Guide

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This guide is available as a supplemental document to university policy. It is not intended to replace any specific policy or institutional/individual department procedural guidelines. Suggestions for additional information are always welcome.

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## YOUTH PROGRAMMING MISSION & VISION

The Pennsylvania State University is a leader in higher education and carries out its mission of teaching, research, and service with pride and a focus on the future. In furtherance of this mission, youth programming at Penn State strives to extend the resources and expertise of the University from a variety of disciplines to pre-college youth through experiential and educational opportunities. The Pennsylvania State University is committed to promoting a safe environment for all youth participating in programs, activities, and services offered through the University.

## DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this guide, the terms below may be used throughout this document.

**Authorized Adult(s)** – Individuals, age 18 and older, paid, or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in program activities, recreational, and/or residential facilities. This includes faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. The Authorized Adults' roles may include positions such as counselors, chaperones, coaches, and instructors. Authorized Adults are considered mandated reporters as defined by Pennsylvania law. Further guidance on reporting child abuse for Penn State employees is provided in Policy AD72: [Reporting Suspected Child Abuse](#) and University Human Resources policies.

**Care** – to have temporary charge, or temporarily having the responsibility of supervising minors.

**Child** – An individual under 18 years of age. Also referred to as a minor in University policies and documents.

**Care, Custody and Control** – refers to the legal responsibility and authority of a person or organization to take care of a child's well-being, safety, and development.

**Day Program** – Program participants attend for a specific time during each day and then return home. These programs may be one or more days in length.

**Direct Contact** – Positions with the possibility of care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children.

**Immediate Vicinity** – An area near a group that allows for the group's activities to be observable and immediately interruptible.

**Mandated Reporter** – Mandated reporters are individuals who are mandated by law to report known or suspected child maltreatment. All University employees, volunteers, and independent contractors are required to report all instances of suspected child abuse.

**Minor** – An individual under 18 years of age. Sometimes referred to as a child in University policies and documents.

**One-on-One Contact** – Interaction between any Authorized Adult and a participant without at least one other Authorized Adult or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) being present in the immediate vicinity.

**Programs** – Programs, activities, and services offered by the University, or by non-University groups using University facilities that may be subject to Policies [AD02: Non-University Groups Using University Facilities](#) or [AD03: Conducting Educational Programs Using the Name of the University](#). This includes but is not limited to workshops, sport camps, camps, academic programming, conferences, pre-enrollment visits, 4H or Cooperative Extension programs, and similar activities.

**Program Participant** – Any minor, as defined in policy [AD39: Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities](#), which is participating in a youth program, activity or service sponsored by the University. Sometimes referred to as a camper, child, or minor.

**Residential Program** – Programs that utilize on or off campus housing for the duration of their program.

**Specialized Activity** – An activity created, or structured, to focus on a specific skill.

**University Facilities** – Facilities owned by, or under the control of, the University except for the Penn State Hershey Medical Center campus and the Student Health Center (University Park) which will follow separate policies that reflect the unique activities that occur in those locations.

**Virtual Youth Program** – Any youth program, activity or service that is conducted through a University approved virtual delivery platform.

**Watercraft** – A craft for water transport (i.e., boat, canoe, kayak, or standup paddleboard).

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

### Program Philosophy and Goals

While the University has an overall vision for youth programming, each program has its own mission, vision, and goals. These are available for review by a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) before a decision is made to enroll their child into a program. A program’s mission, vision, and goals focus on specific outcomes that participants will achieve through the activities in the program. For example, outcomes could involve specific skills, knowledge, or abilities but can also focus on a diversified experience which may include mental, physical, and emotional health.

The Youth Programs Compliance Office provides guidance on policies and programs involving minors. The office is responsible for coordinating compliance with the University’s policies impacting youth protection and serves as the focal point for review and communication of updated procedures and processes to comply with such policies.

### University Policies Governing Youth Programs, Activities and Services

While there are several University policies that govern the delivery of all university-sponsored youth programs, activities, and services, it is important to highlight specific policies.



### **University Policy AD02: Non-University Groups Using University Facilities**

This policy defines the responsibilities and limitations of the University when responding to requests for the use of facilities when the activities are not related to an educational program operated by the University. The policy's intent is to ensure optimum use of resources and develop and maintain good public relations with organized groups wishing to use them. This policy does not apply to The Nittany Lion Inn or the Bryce Jordan Center. For a more detailed account of this policy, please consult AD02: [Non-University Groups Using University Facilities directly](#).

### **University Policy AD03: Conducting Educational Programs Using the Name of the University**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent, high-quality delivery of programs, financial accountability, and optimal use of University resources and facilities for any group conducting non-credit educational programs (camps, conferences, courses, workshops, institutes, symposiums, seminars, etc.) using the University name, regardless of facilities used.

### **University Policy AD35: University Archives and Records Management**

This policy specifies the regulations by which University records are defined, captured, utilized, stored, disposed of, and properly archived when they meet the University's criteria for constituting a "University Record." Record retention schedules can be found [here](#).

### **University Policy AD39: Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities**

The purpose of this policy is to provide operational requirements for appropriate program management and adequate supervision of children who are entrusted to the University's care through involvement in university youth programs, activities, services and/or events that have been designed primarily to serve children.

### **University Policy AD55: Role of the Department of Distance Education/World Campus**

This policy ensures high-quality program design and delivery, financial accountability, and participant services in all distance education programs that use technology to serve off-campus/virtual youth programming.

### **University Policy AD72: Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to University employees, volunteers, and independent contractors regarding mandated reporting requirements when reporting suspected child abuse pursuant to Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and pursuant to Penn State Policy. This Policy is intended to be applied broadly and, when in doubt, members of the University community should always report suspected child abuse.

### **University Policy HR99: Background Check Process**

This University policy outlines a process that ensures background checks and clearances are completed for anyone, age 16 and over, (paid or unpaid) engaged by Penn State in any capacity. This includes, but is not limited to, employees, volunteers, adjunct faculty, consultants, and contractors who conduct their work on Penn State premises, or who represent Penn State at non-Penn State locations, visiting scholars, graduate assistants, or other similar positions. This policy specifically outlines the clearances required by Pennsylvania's Child Protection Services Law to work with children.

For more University policies that impact youth programming please refer to [Appendix A: University Policies and Procedures for Working with Minors](#).

## YOUTH PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH MANAGEMENT

University policy [AD39: Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities](#) defines the types of youth programs offered at the University. Below are examples of the types of programs that can be found at Penn State:

- **University Sponsored Youth Programs:** Programs involving minors that are delivered in the name of Penn State. See the examples provided in the definition section above.
- **University Sponsored Off-Site/School Based Program:** Programs taking place in a facility not owned or operated by Penn State. For example, visiting local school districts for programming.
- **Third Party Program:** A program delivered by a non-University group utilizing University facilities.
- **Public Event:** Events during which the University does not assume the care, custody, and/or control of the minors present, instead holding the expectation that a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) is present.

### Pre-Program Operations

Laying the groundwork for a youth program is essential to providing quality experiences. The following sections review administrative tasks, procedures, and processes that should be completed prior to the first day of program operation when participants are on-site.

### Program Approval and Registration

All Penn State sponsored youth programs must obtain approval from Unit, College, and/Department Leadership, or their designee.

### Youth Program Inventory

The Youth Program Inventory is the official university record of all youth programs. Upon Unit, College, or Department approval of a youth program, the program administrator/Program Director, or their designee, must add the program to the Youth Program Inventory. Entering a program into the Youth Program Inventory, including simply a “test” program, prompts the staff member to be added to the youth compliance office communication email distribution list and youth program meeting invites.

The inventory can be found [here](#). Programs must be added to the youth program inventory no later than **60 days prior to the event**. If a program is canceled, the individual who added the program must remove the program **prior** to the program’s start date.

Final staff rosters are to be uploaded **no later than 30 days after** the program has ended. It is important that the name(s) on the rosters match the names used in the employment record. This ensures staff rosters are accurate for auditing background clearances and training requirements.

### Program Marketing

Below is a list of the University policies that address the standards and requirements for marketing programs in the name of the University.

- [AD03: Conducting Educational Programs Using the Name of the University](#)
- [AD07: Use of University Name, Symbols and/or Graphic Devices](#)



- [AD08: Purchase of Advertising](#)
- [AD54: Web Page Design and Image](#)
- [AD61: University Marketing and Communications](#)

### **Program Information, Eligibility, and Permission**

At times, there may be activities that require certain eligibility requirements (i.e., age, passing of a skills test). These requirements must be posted via website, registration materials, and pre-program communication as a reminder of the expectations for participating in the program. Being clear and concise when outlining specific program activities in the marketing materials is imperative. Including these details will help the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) make an informed decision on whether they want to register their child into the program.

### **Participant Registration**

Several online registration systems have been approved by the University for use with youth programs. Current approved systems are listed below. Please note that when using any format for youth program registration, the approved language is found [here](#) on the Office of Ethics and Compliance Youth Compliance web page.

- Cvent
- Active Network (University Park/Harrisburg Athletics and Behrend Campus only)
- DoubleKnot (Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center)
- Destiny
- Paper Registration

Additionally, some activities may require additional waivers, releases, or permissions from the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) prior to participation. These must be reviewed and approved by appropriate leadership, in coordination with Youth Program Compliance, before inclusion in the registration paperwork. These additional documents must be stored as part of all other registration materials.

Regardless of the registration platform chosen, the program is responsible for collecting, processing, and retaining all necessary registration materials in a secure location as outlined in university policy [AD35 – University Archives and Records Management](#). In the event of an audit, it is incumbent on the program to provide the required documents.

### **Accommodations and Accessibility**

Participants may have a variety of needs and it is important to understand, before the program begins, what those needs may be. Examples include insulin injection schedules, allergy concerns, physical restrictions, and any known diagnosed mental and/or social-emotional health conditions. If a participant requests accommodations the Program Director should make every effort to determine if accommodations are reasonable and feasible. Addressing any needs for staff and campers with special needs can be addressed by reaching out to a Campus Disability Coordinator. The list of these contacts can be found [here](#).

All Penn State campuses have an office designated to provide services for students with disabilities. For more information including how to contact these offices, please utilize the hyperlinks below:

### **Commonwealth Campus Student Disability Resources**

## University Park Student Disability Resources

Below is a list of additional University resources that can assist in determining if the requested accommodations are reasonable and the participant can attend the program.

### **ADA Parking/Campus Transportation**

Learn where Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking is available throughout campus. CATARIDE also provides curb-to-curb transportation primarily for persons sixty-five and over and people whose disabilities prevent their use of the CATABUS system.

### **Office of Equal Opportunity and Access - Accessibility**

Programs and departments pay for any accommodation needed and should budget accordingly. Limited central funds are available to cover up to half of the cost of accommodation in some cases. For questions on funding or other disability related issues, email [oeoa@psu.edu](mailto:oeoa@psu.edu)

### **Assistive Technology in Computer Labs**

Penn State holds licenses to many assistive software packages and should be contacted several months prior to the start of the program to discuss availability and the process for accessing the software.

## **Program Staffing**

Hiring staff can be an extensive process. This section outlines areas of the recruiting and hiring process and provides information and links for resources available to assist you.

### ***Hiring & Position Requisitions***

Manager forms used to initiate actions related to an individual's employment or appointment at Penn State can be found on the [Manager Forms and Related Resources](#) web page.

### ***Positions and Job Descriptions***

Below is a list of sample position titles and descriptions:

- **Counselor/Camp Aid:** This position is responsible for monitoring the participants and promoting a safe environment. They assist program instructors and help participants who need additional guidance. They are responsible for facilitating the participant check-in and check-out process each day and for walking them to and from program areas (if check-in is not located at the program location). Counselors report to the Program Director or other senior staff.
- **Program Assistant:** This position assists the Program Director in operational tasks such as processing registrations, answering general questions, and preparing program materials. This person reports to the Program Director.
- **Program Director:** This position provides managerial and administrative oversight of the program. This person creates schedules, develops curriculum, and executes the youth program and is responsible for ensuring compliance with policy and standards, including the maintenance of confidential materials, and entering programs into the Youth Program Inventory.
- **Program Instructor:** This position is responsible for curriculum creation and delivery. Instructors should possess classroom management skills and run the program with a mix of educational

standards and creative hands-on fun. This person should possess knowledge and/or a specific skill set required to instruct the subject matter. Instructors report to the Program Director.

- **Volunteers (unpaid):** Volunteers for University sponsored programs may not be used if they are working in a position that would otherwise be paid. If volunteers are approved for a program, the program is responsible for the collection and retention of all required paperwork, including volunteer clearances and training documentation.

For examples of job descriptions, please see [Appendix B: Example Job Descriptions](#).

### ***Staff Interviews***

Interacting with and supervising children in a youth program requires a specific skill set(s). The interview process is one tool that can assist in hiring qualified staff. The American Camp Association (ACA) provides the following [resource](#) to guide programs in developing questions to support the interview process.

### ***Background Clearance Process***

All University faculty, staff, volunteers, and independent contractors who are responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or control of, or have routine interaction with minors must obtain the clearances listed in Penn State policy [HR99](#) prior to working with minors. For more information, please visit [Background Screenings and Compliance Designations](#).

### ***Training and Education***

Once staff are confirmed for the program, additional program specific training and education will be required prior to the program's start. All training, materials, and expectations shall be presented clearly to staff members prior to interacting with program participants, including providing staff with an overview of all applicable policies. Except for those training courses available in the Learning Resource Network (LRN), the delivery method of program specific materials will be left to the discretion of the Program Director.

### ***Learning Resource Network (LRN)***

The Reporting Suspected Child Abuse training must be taken by all staff (paid/unpaid) before the start of the program through the LRN. There may be other University-required trainings designated for completion through the LRN. Please refer to the [University Compliance Training Plan](#).

### ***In-Person/Virtual Orientation***

Orientation materials should cover information about responsibilities and expectations; policies, procedures, and enforcement; appropriate crisis/emergency responses; safety and security precautions; confidentiality issues involving minors; mandated reporting; and University responsibility/liability. Counselors are mandated reporters as defined by Pennsylvania law and must report suspected child abuse and how to request local emergency services. For a better understanding of what a staff orientation packet could look like please view these [samples](#).

### ***Safety Orientation and Emergency Plan/Communications***

Programs are required to complete an individualized [Emergency Management Plan](#) to promote timely and effective responses in emergency situations. Staff orientation will include program safety procedures and while the specific emergency management planning guide does not need to be shared with each individual employee, steps within the plan must be made known.

## DAILY PROGRAM OPERATIONS

While Penn State youth programs are not accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA), their standards lay out key aspects of program operations that assist in promoting a safe environment for programs that serve children. While quality instruction and content are important, having processes and procedures in place for day-to-day operations is crucial to ensure a program runs smoothly.

### Daily Schedules

Detailed schedules describing all intended activities must be available to program staff, participants, and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s). These include program activities, mealtimes, structured free time, field trips (if applicable) and, for residential programs, wake up/lights out times. These schedules will be unique to each program and should be available via email, hardcopy, and/or program website before the program starts. All changes made to the schedule during the program must be communicated to staff, participant, and parents/guardians.

### Participant Supervision and Ratios

University Policy [AD39:Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities](#) identifies the ratios that must be met according to:

- type of program – day or residential
- age range of participants

**AT NO TIME** may a participant be alone with program staff, as there must always be a minimum of 2 Authorized Adults present.

### Staff-Participant Interaction

Staff members represent Penn State, and fostering a positive relationship will encourage a future encounter with Penn State. During staff orientation, it is important to discuss staff-participant interactions. It is particularly helpful to have staff members act out scenarios for certain situations. A thorough document of expectations is required by all programs. Various examples of staff expectations are listed below.

- engage with participants throughout the day, often counselors make more of an impression on the program participants than the program curriculum or the program instructor
- treat every participant equally
- escort participants, by two or more authorized adults, to and from all classrooms and spaces on campus, even if they seem old enough to walk themselves
- refrain from using inappropriate language or having inappropriate discussions
- avoid engaging in any physical interaction with participants that can be seen as inappropriate (e.g., hugging, tickling, rough housing, etc.)
- do not share contact information or social media information with youth participants
- avoid playing favorites with program participants
- refrain from sharing confidential information about other program participants

### Codes of Conduct

This section reviews behavioral expectations for program participants, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), and program staff. Expectations will be clearly communicated to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) prior to the program's start, and during staff and participant orientation sessions.

The Program Director creates rules and guidelines, including consequences for undesirable behavior, before the program begins. These must be reviewed with the program staff during their orientation. Ensuring accountability can also be achieved by adding the “Code of Conduct” to the registration materials.

### Program Participants

The Code of Conduct will be provided to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) for them to review with their child and sign-off on an affirmation statement as part of their registration paperwork. A thorough document of expectations is required by all programs. These documents must include the following expectations:

- possession or use of alcohol and other drugs, fireworks, guns, and other weapons is prohibited
- operation of a motor vehicle by minors is prohibited while attending and participating in the program
- parking of staff and participant vehicles must be in accordance with University parking regulations
- rules and procedures governing when and under what circumstances participants may leave University property during the program.
- no violence, including sexual abuse or harassment, will be tolerated
- hazing of any kind is prohibited. Bullying including verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited
- no theft of property regardless of owner will be tolerated
- no use of tobacco products (smoking is prohibited in all University buildings) will be tolerated
- misuse or damage of University property is prohibited, charges will be assessed against those participants who are responsible for damage or misuse of University property.
- inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, and digital devices is prohibited including use of such devices in showers, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants
- expectations for parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are to be made clear prior to the start of the program
- complete and return any required paperwork before the program begins
- notify program staff of any accommodation requests before the program begins
- ensure the participant attends every day of the program, be able to sign-in/out on time, and ensure the child is prepared with the necessary gear
- communicate with staff prior to the program start time if a participant must be absent, arrive late, or leave early
- work together with program staff to resolve issues that arise with your participant
- Title IX prohibits sex discrimination (including sexual harassment and/or sexual abuse) against youth participants in any of the University’s education programs or activities, including recreational and/or athletic programs or services operated by the University. Please click [here](#) to review the University’s Title IX policy and procedures. To report an incident of suspected sex or gender-based discrimination, please contact Penn State’s Title IX Coordinator via the [Office of Ethics and Compliance web page](#)

## Program Staff

Staff will attend orientation before the program starts. During orientation, all staff behavior expectations are to be reviewed. Staff will sign a code of conduct after expectations and responsibilities have been reviewed. Although not complete, below are some examples of staff expectations.

- complete any required compliance training and employment paperwork prior to the start of the program
- dress appropriately and arrive on time every day
- maintain respectful and effective communication with all participants and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
- demonstrate appropriate use of language, program materials, and in virtual programs appropriate use of images, screenshots, and digital devices
- create an environment where everyone is welcomed and given the opportunity to succeed
- do not post program pictures to private social media accounts
- all program communication must be done through official channels
- do not share any personal information, email, or social media accounts with minor participants

Throughout the program, the Program Director should continually observe staff performance and provide feedback to encourage improvement and recognize/reinforce strong performance.

If program staff are found in violation of any of expectations set forth by the Program Director, the supervisor will have a conversation with the staff member and create a plan of action to address the behavior. If the behavior goes unchanged in the time limit agreed upon in the action plan, further action may be needed. In this situation, Human Resources should be consulted.

## Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is an ongoing process that should be encouraged throughout the duration of the program. A full evaluation and debriefing should be completed at the end of the program. Program planning and desired outcomes should be aligned with and reflect the mission and vision of the program and those of Penn State University. Learning objectives provide staff, participants, and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) with a clear set of program expectations.

Include program staff, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), and participants in the evaluation process. The information gathered should be used in the overall quality improvement process for the program. The ACA offers a free Camp Program Quality Assessment tool that you may access [here](#).

## Arrival and Departure Check-In/Out Procedures

Each program must have a check-in and check-out system for the arrival and departure of participants. A list of adults approved to pick up a child must be provided as part of the registration process. For day programs, individuals approved to pick up participants must show photo ID and sign the child out every day.

## Residential Participant Release and Verification

A check-out system must be in place for residential programs to ensure the participant is departing from the program with an approved individual(s). Photo ID from the adult picking up the participant is required for the participant to be released from the program. In addition, to appropriately process an



early departure from residential programs, a program staff member, **as well as** the adult picking up the participant, must accompany the participant to the commons desk/registration desk for checkout.

## Transportation

For day programs, most participants are dropped off by their parent(s)/legal guardian(s). Sometimes, participants arrive on their own. In order for this to occur, the participant's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must complete the walk/bike/drive section on the Youth Program Registration form. If circumstances require a residential program participant to commute instead of residing on campus, the program must have written documentation stating the participant and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) agree to this arrangement. Personal vehicles may not be used to transport participants by program staff. Likewise, for those program participants that drive themselves to a program, their personal vehicles may not be used during program hours to transport participants. No form of personal transportation may be used during programming for a residential program.

## Program Trip Itinerary and Travel Procedures

Some programs may include off-site trips to supplement the curriculum and educational experience. Participant and emergency information must be available on the trip, including:

- roster of participants
- itinerary of activities if this includes fields trips provide address and phone number of destination
- communication plan
- emergency contact information
- access to medical information in case of an emergency

To obtain the use of a University owned vehicle for purposes of transporting program staff/participants, or any other questions regarding transportation available through the University Park, please visit Penn State Transportation Services or call one of the following:

- Transportations Services – 814-865-1436
- Fleet Services – 814-865-7571

For Commonwealth Campuses, please contact your Business Services Office to discuss transportation options.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

All programs must have procedures in place to address the healthcare needs of participants and staff. While there are standards that all programs must meet, day, resident, outdoor, and sports programs will require different levels of healthcare based on the program's individualized programs.

### Healthcare Policies and Procedures

Please refer to the two University policies below for healthcare requirements.

- AD3: Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities

- ADG04: [Providing Emergency Medical Services at University Events at University Park](#)

Processes for Commonwealth Campuses will vary based on the availability of on-site University health services. If services are not available at a campus location, the program's Emergency Management Planning Guide must outline steps to be taken in a medical emergency.

### **Required Health Forms/Documentation**

All required health information for participants will be submitted via an approved registration system using the University's youth registration form located [here](#).

### **Medication Storage and Administration**

University policy AD39: [Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities](#) provides guidelines for medication storage and administration. The "Guide to Medicine Usage at Camp" can be found [here](#). The required Medication Log can be located [here](#).

### **First Aid Kits**

For University guidance on the purchase or creation of first aid kits please visit policy SY21: [First Aid Kits](#).

### **Emergency Assistance**

If emergency assistance is necessary, refer to the procedures and contacts in the programs [Emergency Management Planning Guide](#).

### **Weather**

Weather and changing conditions can significantly impact program operations. Thunderstorms are the most common type of severe weather. However, winter storms, extreme hot/cold temperatures, flooding, and tornadoes can occur. Programs routinely involved in outdoor activities must utilize a smartphone weather app. If a program is in a remote location without cellular or internet service, it is recommended the program obtain a NOAA approved battery-operated weather radio.

Programs need to consult their individual [Emergency Management Plan](#) for specific guidelines regarding severe weather. [Appendix E: Weather Guidelines Example](#) provides a good example of detailed weather guidelines for programs.

## **FACILITIES**

### **Program Site Usage/Rental**

To inquire about the use/rental of a University Park space for purposes of Youth Programming, or any other questions regarding facilities, please visit the [Student Affairs](#) web page. University Park Student Affairs provides facility scheduling for classrooms, outdoor space, athletic space, and banner/poster space.

For the use/rental of a Commonwealth campus facility, please find the web site for the rentals through the particular campus. Each campus has a designated facility use/rental page for their campus.

## Housing and Food Service

For programs managed by Conferences and Institutes (C&I) at University Park, food services and housing will be coordinated through C&I. For programs at University Park running independently, via an AD03: Conducting Educational Programs Using the Name of the University exception, arrangements for housing and food services are to be made directly with these units.

For Commonwealth Campuses, please contact your Housing and Food Services manager for information about the cost and availability of these services at your campus location.

Programs also have the option to supply their own food. Consider any dietary and allergy restrictions participants may have. To learn more, please visit Penn State Corporate Controller for information on the policies and procedures regarding food service for on-campus programming.

## SPECIALIZED ACTIVITIES

Programs may choose to incorporate specialized activities and must adhere to any and all safety rules and regulations applicable to the activity.

### Safety and Maintenance for Specialized Activities

To promote a safe environment during specialized activities, the staff must be trained and/or certified by a nationally recognized association on how to safely facilitate the activities as well as how to properly use all equipment.

#### Lab-Oriented Safety Checks

- all lab activities must be approved by the appropriate level of leadership. It is imperative staff are aware of potential hazards and implement all necessary safety procedures
- between sessions, check potentially hazardous equipment for signs of wear, such as cracks in glassware
- follow all University guidelines for storage of chemicals and other hazardous materials:
  - SY39: Hazardous Chemical Inventory Management
  - SY20: Hazardous Waste Disposal
  - when in doubt about how to store or dispose of waste (such as whether it is classified as hazardous) contact the facilities coordinator or Environmental Health & Safety
- if using a borrowed lab space, inspect the lab for hazards before the program begins. Examples of hazards to look for:
  - flammable materials
  - unlocked drawers/cabinets
  - glassware
  - wheeled stools – these are particularly hazardous for younger participants!

#### Program Equipment Maintenance and Safety Checks

Programs must follow guidance from authoritative sources when conducting maintenance and safety checks for specialized equipment. Specialized equipment could include rope courses, zip lines, watercraft, sporting equipment, and lab materials.

Consider the following questions when developing an equipment maintenance plan:

- who is responsible for performing maintenance and safety checks on program equipment
- how often are maintenance and safety checks taking place
- what/whose standards are being utilized when analyzing equipment during checks
- how often is equipment replaced
- how are maintenance and safety checks documented

All safety and emergency procedures must be documented and clearly explained during program orientation. Staff must be knowledgeable in the specialized activities to supervise and teach participants in the correct manner of use. Staff can demonstrate proper procedures and allow participants to practice under direct supervision before beginning an activity.

The content of safety orientations for specialized equipment or procedures should be informed by manufacturer instructions or other forms of official documentation (e.g., material safety data sheets). For chemicals, consult [Penn State Environmental Health and Safety's Safety Data Sheet](#) webpage.

If all or a portion of the program takes place in a lab environment, the Program Director should request an orientation from an [Environmental Health and Safety](#) staff member. If there is not time for this in the orientation schedule, request relevant materials from them and include these with other orientation and on-boarding materials.

### **Aquatic Safety Regulations**

To use swimming facilities, Program Directors must coordinate with the facility Program Director to review the regulations of the aquatic areas, as well as supervision protocols for participants while at the pool. Please see the [Swim Testing and Group Usage Policies](#) for further details.

If a program plans to utilize facilities at University Park, please refer to the [Rules for Swimmers in Residential Programs](#). For Commonwealth Campuses, please refer to the guidelines provided by that campus's aquatics department.

### **Natural Bodies of Water Used for Aquatic Activities**

Natural bodies of water, as defined by the American Camp Association, include lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and the ocean. Physical control of these areas is often not possible, so understanding the hazards that could be present is paramount. Areas of steep drop off, ledges, undercurrents, and submerged hazards should be eliminated as much as possible. Controlling the boundaries of the swimming area to eliminate hazards is extremely important.

The emergency procedures for aquatic activities should be specific to the environment (e.g., pool, open water). Guidelines for activities within designated depths of the pool should be clearly stated, as well as ensuring participants understand boundaries and hazards (e.g., submerged rock or undercurrents) if the program is utilizing open water as a swimming area. While the rules and regulations for recreational swimming activities are established by the department/unit who oversees the swimming facilities, emergency procedures should be developed in the programs [Emergency Management Planning Guide](#).

### **Participant Classifications**

For swim testing procedures please see the [Swim Testing and Group Usage Policies](#).

### **Staff Swimming**

A program may implement rules regarding staff swimming with participants as it deems necessary. Factors to consider could include the ages of the participants, size of group, time of day, scheduling, and type of facility. If a program is allowing staff to swim with program participants, it is important that the rules and expectations for staff during this activity are addressed during staff orientation and within the staff manual/code of conduct.

## **VIRTUAL YOUTH PROGRAMMING**

For the most up-to-date guidance regarding virtual youth programs, please download and review the [Virtual Youth Program Guide](#).

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: University Policies and Procedures for Working with Youth

Use the links provided to refer to individual policies as needed.

[AD02:Non-University Groups Using Facilities](#)

[AD03:Conducting Educational Programs Using the Name of the University](#)

[AD26:Sales of Food and Beverages at University Locations](#)

[AD07:Use of University Name, Symbols and/or Graphic Devices](#)

[AD08:Purchase of Advertising](#)

[AD27:Commercial Sales Activities at University Locations](#)

[AD34:University Recycling Program](#)

[AD35:University Archives and Records Management](#)

[AD39:Minors Involved in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Held at the University and/or Housed in University Facilities](#)

[AD72:Reporting Suspected Child Abuse](#)

[AD73:Accessing Athletic and Recreational Facilities](#)

[AD85:Title IX Sexual Harassment](#)

[ADG04:Providing Emergency Medical Services at University Events at University Park](#)

[BS09:Initiating Purchases from Vendors Outside the University](#)

[HR02:Employment of Minors](#)

[HR99:Background Check Process](#)

[SA28:Emergency Evacuations and Fire Drills – Residence Halls](#)

[SY01:Environmental Health and Safety Policy](#)

[SY05:Persons, Other Than Students or Employees, who are Injured or Become Ill on University Property](#)

[SY21:First Aid Kits](#)

[SY28:Emergency Evacuations and Fire Drills – Residence Halls](#)

[AD54:Web Page Design and Image](#)

[AD61:University Marketing and Communications](#)



## Appendix B: Example Job Descriptions

Below are sample job descriptions used for hiring program staff:

### Summer Youth Counselor/Camp Aide

Penn State Wilkes-Barre Continuing Education is seeking college students or individuals with backgrounds in education, business, computers, science, and engineering to assist instructors in week-long summer day camps for elementary and middle school-aged students.

Responsibilities include:

- camp set up/clean up, assisting instructors and students with projects
- supervising students at breaks and lunchtimes, and promoting a fun environment daily
- excellent communication skills

Three publicly available clearances must be obtained for this position:

- PA State Police Criminal Background Check
- PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form
- FBI Criminal Background Check

### Youth Instructor/Co-Instructor

Conferences and Institutes are hiring instructors/co-instructors for various youth programs on campus.

Duties include:

- assisting with content development and instruction
- preparation of learning materials and activities
- presentation of specific subjects
- assisting with program activities.

Youth Program Instructors are responsible for ensuring the supervision and safety of minors participating in the program and will manage all aspects of the daily camp administration:

- including youth compliance policies and procedures
- emergency response
- direct communication with Youth Program Leaders and Program Manager.

Must be able to identify and respond to issues concerning camper interactions, behavior, mental health, and acclimation to the camp environment. Youth Program Instructors may face situations when they must act quickly and calmly using sound judgement, manage sensitive issues or information, address camper behavior issues, and immediately follow any necessary notification protocols. Prior experience and the ability to engage learners is preferred.

Three publicly available clearances must be obtained for this position:

- PA State Police Criminal Background Check
- PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form
- FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigations) Criminal Background Check

## Youth Program Leader

Along with instructors, Youth Program Leaders are responsible for:

- the supervision and safety of minors participating in this program including youth compliance policies and procedures, emergency response, direct communication with Program Director and Program Manager
- medication collection, storage and verification and oversight of participant health information.

Youth Program Leaders may assist with the development of instructional content and deliver lessons and activities.

Along with instructors, Youth Program Leaders share responsibility for monitoring the safety, whereabouts, and actions of participants during program hours, including non-instructional times, and must be able to identify and respond to issues concerning participant interactions and behavior.

Youth Program Leaders may face situations when they must act quickly and calmly using sound judgement, manage sensitive issues or information, address behavior issues, and immediately follow any necessary notification protocols.

Three publicly available clearances must be obtained for this position:

- PA State Police Criminal Background Check
- PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form
- FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigations) Criminal Background Check

## Appendix C: University Approved Registration Documents

Below is the link to access the youth program registration form. These forms are approved by the Office of General Council and Risk Management. No information on these forms can be omitted.

- [Youth Program Registration Form](#)

## Appendix D: Reporting Suspected Child Abuse Resources

Below are resources that will assist you in complying with University policy and requirements for reporting suspected child abuse:

- University Policy AD72: [Reporting Suspected Child Abuse](#)
- CY47 form (fillable PDF)
- County Children and Youth Program Directory

## Appendix E: Weather Guideline Examples

Penn State Camps prioritize the highest emphasis on the safety of our participants and staff. When there is lightning in the area, all outside activity will be suspended until the threatening weather leaves the area. When the heat outside (and in buildings without climate control) reaches unsafe levels, activities will be suspended until the temperature drops back into a safe range. When these situations arise, alternate programming will be offered. While this programming may not involve physical skill development, it will focus on other important aspects including strategy, team building, film sessions, discussions about college life relative to the student-athlete, etc. During inclement weather, if outdoors, find shelter.

### Shelter

Safe areas include:

- enclosed buildings
- fully enclosed metal vehicles with a hard metal roof and windows up
- low ground areas as a last resort (ditches, bottom of hill) – assume a crouched position – minimize your body area – do not lie flat

Unsafe areas include:

- open fields
- golf carts / gators
- metal bleachers (on or under)
- fences
- umbrellas, flag poles, light poles
- tall trees
- pools of standing water

## HEAT STRESS MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

### Guidelines for Hydration and Rest Breaks

1. Rest time should involve both unlimited hydration intake (water or electrolyte drinks) and rest without any activity involved. The site of the rest time should be a “cooling zone” and **NOT** in direct sunlight if possible.
2. Encourage program participants to drink 1-quart of fluid per hour.
3. When appropriate, the Sports Health Care staff executes the necessary interventions when operating under high and extreme or hazardous levels of risk.

Examples of these interventions include:

- moving outdoor activities to indoor venues to escape sun exposure
- suggesting that physical activity sessions be altered to avoid peak temperatures between noon and 5 p.m.
- securing air-conditioned rooms in the event medically necessary

- canceling physical activity sessions when deemed appropriate

**\*\*Any camp participant showing signs of heat illness that do not resolve immediately with rest and hydration will be referred to a health care facility.\*\***



## Appendix F: Head Injury Management Example

Head injuries, including suspected concussions, should be managed conservatively using the 'ABC' (A-Assess the situation, B-Be alert for signs and symptoms, C-Contact a health care professional) recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This includes immediate removal of a program participant from activities upon sustaining a head injury and using appropriate field clinical techniques to screen a program participant for typical signs and symptoms associated with a concussion. Upon presenting any associated signs and symptoms of a concussion, the participant will be removed from activity and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s)/coach will be notified. If a participant is diagnosed with a concussion while attending their program, they will not be progressed back into activity. Also, if a participant arrives at the program suffering from a current concussion, they will only be able to participate in limited activities with a note from a physician. NO further activity progression will happen during the program.

## **Appendix G: Watercraft Activities, Orientation, and Instruction Guidelines for Watercraft Use (Canoe, Kayaks, Paddle Boats, Paddle Boards, etc.)**

Below are guidelines for watercraft activities and the use of watercrafts:

A best practice would be any program that includes the use of a watercraft is led by a certified instructor in that area. For example, the American Canoe Association (ACA) certifies instructors as canoe instructors, kayak instructors, and stand-up paddle board instructors. Additionally, if the program takes place in a river, then a member of the staff would also need to be certified in “swift water rescue.”

Alternatively, a company that specializes in rentals or lessons of the watercraft can be hired to conduct this program topic. Whoever has ownership over this instruction could impact who holds the liability in the event of an accident. Please make sure to discuss this with risk management to determine what steps need to be taken to include this as part of the program.

## Appendix H: Horse and Livestock Guidelines

### ***Riding and Livestock Facilities***

*In today's animal agricultural industries various trends are present which may potentially increase the spread and level of infectious diseases in herds. Many of these diseases have food safety and/or economic concerns. In either case it is important to the animal industry both for confidence in agricultural products, market share and for economic reasons to prevent the spread of infectious diseases from farm to farm.*

*The series of management practices that are employed to prevent the importation of infectious agents from entering a farm is termed biosecurity. Biocontainment is like biosecurity. Biocontainment is the series of management practices that prevent the spread of infectious agents between animals on a farm or the management practices designed to prevent the infectious agent from leaving the farm.*

*As herd sizes increase and as animals are placed in more intensive housing, it may be easier for infectious diseases to enter and spread throughout a herd. In this regard relatively small herds with no or minimal animal additions and good animal comfort frequently have a lower prevalence of infectious disease and may have several advantages in developing a biosecurity and biocontainment program. One way to concisely think of biosecurity and biocontainment principles is to use the acronym IRS - **Isolation-Resistance-Sanitation**.*

*In jointly sponsored events, such as events held with fairs, riding, and livestock facilities, the other group would need to provide proof of \$1,000,000 liability insurance covering their liability for the event including liability for participant injuries. Events solely sponsored by Extension but inviting other groups to participate will be covered for Extension volunteers only.*

### ***Horse and Livestock Medications***

*All horses, ponies, mules, and donkeys at Penn State sponsored event must be inoculated for rabies at least 30 days prior to the event if this is the animal's initial inoculation. Re-vaccination is required annually. Vaccinations are required for all horses over six (6) months of age. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) will only recognize a rabies vaccination administered by a licensed veterinarian or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. The exact form to be used for rabies vaccination verification is not specified. We will accept any legitimate proof of vaccination provided by a licensed veterinarian that includes the veterinarian's signature, date of vaccination, and name and/or description of the horse. Acceptable forms of vaccination verification include, but are not limited to, standard rabies certificate, itemized bill signed by the veterinarian, or statement on business letterhead that is signed by the veterinarian. Verification of vaccination needs to be kept for two (2) years.*

*All horses, ponies, mules, and donkeys over six (6) months of age must have proof of current negative Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) status for all Penn State sponsored events. Any federal or Pennsylvania state recognized test results for EIA will be acceptable to document negative EIA status. Tests must be dated within 12 months of the show or event. 24.*

No horse, pony, mule, or donkey may participate in a Penn State sponsored event if it has been administered, in any manner, a forbidden substance. A forbidden substance is any substance, including but not limited to stimulants, depressants, or local anesthetics which might affect the performance of a horse. (Stimulants and depressants are defined as substances which stimulate or depress the circulatory, respiratory, or central nervous systems). Also prohibited are any drugs and substances, regardless of how harmless or innocuous they might be, which by their very nature might mask or screen the presence of the aforementioned prohibited drugs or prevent or delay testing procedures. The full use of modern therapeutic measures including phenylbutazone for the improvement and protection of the health of the horse is permitted, unless the treatment may also stimulate or depress the circulatory, respiratory, or central nervous systems. For more information on appropriate doses of common therapeutic medications please refer to 10 USEF Drug and Medication Guidelines or consult your veterinarian. Horses in competition are subject to examination by a licensed veterinarian appointed by the show committee. The examination may include physical, saliva, urine, and blood tests or any other tests or procedures necessary to effectuate the purposes of this rule. Said veterinarian may examine any or all horses in a class or classes in the shows. Should the chemical analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or other samples taken from the horse indicate the presence of a forbidden substance, this shall be prima facie evidence that a forbidden substance has been administered to the horse. When a positive report identifying a forbidden substance is received from the testing laboratory, a hearing will be held by the State Show Committee. Refusal to submit to the drug test will be interpreted as prima facie evidence of guilt and will result in suspension of exhibitor and animal from the remainder of the show and from any 4-H horse competitive events for a minimum of the following program year. Any horse or pony exhibited that receives any medication which contains a forbidden substance shall not be eligible for competition unless the following requirements are met, and the facts requested are furnished in writing.

- The medication must be therapeutic and necessary for the treatment of illness or injury.
- The horse must be withdrawn from competition for a period of not less than 24 hours after the medication is administered.
- The medication must be administered by a licensed veterinarian, if available and in his or her absence by the 4-H member or designated representative.
- Identification of medication; the amount, strength, and mode of administration.
- Date and time of administration.
- Identification of horse, its name, age, sex, color, and entry number.
- Diagnosis and reason for administration.
- Statement signed by person administering the medication.
- Statement filed with steward within one hour after administration or one hour after the steward returns to duty if administration was at a time other than Show hours.
- Statement signed by the steward and time of receipt recorded on the statement by the steward.

If the chemical analysis of the sample taken from a horse so treated indicates the presence of a forbidden substance, and all the requirements of paragraph have been fully complied with, the information in said medication report and any other relevant evidence shall be considered by the hearing committee in determining guilt or innocence of the 4-H member charged under the provisions of this rule.