

# **WVU YOUTH PROGRAMMING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1 – OUR ROLE IN YOUTH PROTECTION</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Mission	3
1.3 Definitions	4
1.4 Frequently Asked Questions	6
<b>SECTION 2 – OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Program Registration and Documentation	8
2.2 ADA Accommodations and Program Access	9
2.2.1 <i>Program Director's Role in The Interactive Process of Accommodations</i>	10
2.3 Emergency Preparedness	11
2.3.1 <i>WVU Youth Programming Emergency Response Plan</i>	11
2.3.2 <i>Communication and Reunification Plans</i>	12
2.4 Arrival and Departure Procedures	13
2.5 Medical Requirements	14
2.5.1 <i>Immunization Requirements</i>	14
2.5.2 <i>Medical Information and Treatment Authorization</i>	15
2.5.3 <i>Storing and Dispensing Medicine</i>	15
2.5.4 <i>First Aid and EMS</i>	16
2.6 Adult Authorization	17
2.6.1 <i>Training</i>	17
2.6.2 <i>Background and DMV Checks</i>	18
2.7 Transportation of Youth	20



2.8	Supervision Ratios	21
	2.8.1 <i>One-on-One Interactions</i>	22
2.9	Reporting Requirements	23
	2.9.1 <i>Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect</i>	23
	2.9.2 <i>Reporting a Violation of Standards for Interacting with Youth</i>	24
2.10	Codes of Conduct	24
2.11	Document Retention	27
2.12	Virtual Programming	27

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<b>SECTION 3 – STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>28</b>
---	-----------

3.1	University Standards for Interacting with Youth	28
	3.1.1 <i>General Contact</i>	28
	3.1.2 <i>Equitable Treatment</i>	29
	3.1.3 <i>Sexual Misconduct</i>	30
	3.1.4 <i>Safety</i>	30
	3.1.5 <i>Educating Youth</i>	31
	3.1.6 <i>Consequences of Violating University Standards</i>	31
3.2	Prohibited Conduct	31
3.3	Alcohol, Substance Abuse and Tobacco Policy	32
3.4	Bullying and Violence	33
3.5	Harassment and Discrimination	33
3.6	Virtual Interactions and Social Media Policy	34



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# SECTION 1 – OUR ROLE IN YOUTH PROTECTION

## 1.1 Introduction

Adopted in early 2018 by the West Virginia University Board of Governors (BOG), [BOG Governance Rule 1.7 – Rule on Child Protection](#) establishes the minimum standards that our University follows when interacting with Visiting Children on WVU campuses and sponsored programs. This rule designates the Title IX Coordinator and/or their designee to implement additional guidelines, training and protocols to ensure the appropriate supervision of Visiting Children.

This document is a supplement to BOG Rule 1.7 Section 3.2.1 and is not intended to replace or supersede any institutional, state or federal policies or laws. The guidelines and requirements outlined throughout this document serve as a minimum standard for WVU Youth Programming, and as such individual Units may have additional or alternative materials required for their specific programs.

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## 1.2 Mission

West Virginia University is committed to the protection of children participating in programs and activities on campus, as well as in WVU-sponsored off-campus events. In furtherance of this commitment and consistent with Board of Governors Rule 1.7, the Division of Campus Engagement and Compliance will:

- Stay informed on developments impacting youth protection in West Virginia and nationally.
- Be an active resource for WVU units planning to host programs involving Visiting Children (“Host Units”), to create a positive and safe experiential learning environment for program participants.
- Partner with Host Units to ensure they develop, implement and regularly review guidelines for the supervision and safety of Visiting Children.



- Facilitate an Adult Authorization program to ensure that adults who have Direct Contact with Visiting Children have undergone required background checks and training.

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### 1.3 Definitions

There are many terms used throughout this document that are defined below. Some come from WVU Board of Governors Governance Rule 1.7, found here:

<https://policies.wvu.edu/finalized-bog-rules/bog-governance-rule-1-7-rule-on-child-protection>

- “Authorized Adult” means any Member of the University Community who is 18 years of age or older who has a complete and valid Child Abuse Prevention training, Title IX training and background check.
- “Child” means any person under the age of eighteen (18) years.
- “Child Abuse or Neglect” means Sexual Abuse, physical injury, mental or emotional injury, sale or attempted sale, negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by an adult, any other act that endangers or attempts to endanger the health, safety, or well-being of a child, or anything else that is otherwise prohibited by a West Virginia law intended to protect children.
- “Designated Individual” means the person(s) authorized to pick a youth participant up from a program per the participant’s parent/legal guardian.
- “Direct Contact” means when an adult’s interaction with a Visiting Child involves the care, supervision, guidance, or control of a Visiting Child.
- “Mandatory Reporters” means any individual obligated by West Virginia law to report any type of Child Abuse or Neglect, including physical or Sexual Abuse. Under West Virginia law, any authorized adult who is actively participating in a WVU youth program or activity is a Mandatory Reporter. For more see W. Va. Code § 49-2-803 (2018).



- “Member of the University Community” means (i) an individual engaged in any University activity or program, whether on or off campus; (ii) any individual lawfully on University property; (iii) any individual that is a University Student, Faculty, Staff, University official, University volunteer, or a University visitor; and (iv) any vendor or contractor, including that vendor’s or contractor’s employees and independent contractors, who are working on campus.
- “Program Director” means any WVU employee responsible for overseeing the logistics and operations of a Youth Program, regardless of job title (i.e. “program coordinator”, “program director”, “assistant director”, etc.).
- “Program Staff” means any Member of the University Community who is 18 years of age or older participating in a youth program. Examples of Program Staff include but are not limited to: volunteers, counselors, instructors, program assistants and directors.
- “Sexual Abuse” is a form of Child Abuse or Neglect and means any wrongful or otherwise illegal act that involves the sexual molestation or exploitation of child or is otherwise sexual in nature, whether physical injuries are sustained or not.
- “Student” means an individual subject to the West Virginia University Board of Governors Policy 31 (or its successor Rule), University Student Conduct and Discipline Policy.
- “Title IX Coordinator” means the University’s Title IX Coordinator or his or her designee.
- “Unit” means any department, budget unit, college, other identifiable employee group, or combination thereof.
- “Youth Participant” means any person under the age of eighteen (18) years who is attending a WVU program or activity.
- “Youth Program” means any event, activity or extended-engagement where children are the audience. This includes but is not limited to workshops, sport camps,



camps, academic programming, conferences, pre-enrollment visits, Extension programs and similar activities.

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## **1.5 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why do we have BOG Governance Rule 1.7: Rule on Child Protection?**

West Virginia University is enhancing the existing efforts on children's programming by sharing best practices and centralizing resources to ensure a positive and safe environment within our offerings. West Virginia University is committed to providing protection of children on the University's premises or involved in University sponsored programs including West Virginia University Institute of Technology and West Virginia University Potomac State College.

### **Who does Rule 1.7 apply to?**

The Rule applies to West Virginia University, including West Virginia University Institute of Technology and West Virginia University Potomac State College (collectively the "University"), and all Members of the University Community. "Member of the University Community" means (i) an individual engaged in any University activity or program, whether on or off campus; (ii) any individual lawfully on University property; (iii) any individual that is a University Student, Faculty, Staff, University official, University volunteer, or a University visitor; and (iv) any vendor or contractor, including that vendor's or contractor's employees and independent contractors, who are working on campus.

### **What programs fall under Rule 1.7?**

All programs involving children under the age eighteen (18).

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Summer Camps
- Specialty Camps such as academic camps or patient camps



- Outreach activities
- Sport camps
- Workshops, conferences and educational programs
- Tutoring
- Licensed childcare facilities and programs
- Sponsored student organization activities
- Any University sponsored program on or off the University's premises

**Are there exclusions to Rule 1.7?**

Exclusions to this policy include programs related to or involving children at general public events where parents or guardians are invited and expected to provide supervision of children. Any person under the age of eighteen (18) years who is enrolled as a WVU student does not count as a “Visiting Child” and as such these rules do not apply to them.





## SECTION 2: OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Program Registration and Documentation

University Units are recommended to register their youth program with the Division of Campus Engagement and Compliance at least 60 days, but no later than 30 days, prior to the start of scheduled activities. Basic logistical information about the program is required upon registration including:

- Program Title
- Description of Activities
- WVU Host Unit
- Duration/Occurrences
- Location
- Expected number and age range of youth participants

The Program Registration Form can be found on

<https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/youth-protection>

Various documentation is required prior to the start of and during a youth program that collects and communicates logistical, operational and personnel information. These documents must be stored by the program director/unit and ready to present to the Youth Protection Program Specialist upon request.

**The following forms and documents are required for all WVU Youth Programs:**

- WVU Youth Programs Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Participant Attendance Sheet
- Program Staff Attendance Sheet
- Visitor Sign-In/-Out Log
- Participant Code of Conducts
- Program Staff Code of Conducts
- Medical Treatment Authorization Forms



- Transportation Forms
- Media Release Forms\*
  - *\*Media release forms are not required if the program does not intend to take any pictures, videos or audio of the youth participants or program staff.*

Details about these documents can be found throughout this guidebook.

Units that do not meet this requirement are subject to disciplinary action that may include the suspension of youth programs within that Unit for a specified period or until requirements are met.

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## 2.2 ADA Accommodations and Program Access

West Virginia University hosts a wide array of services, programs and activities which are open and available to the public and encourages individuals with disabilities to participate in these programs. Program coordinators should be prepared to both proactively address general accessibility issues as they plan events and participate in the interactive process of accommodation for individuals with disabilities who want to participate.

The ADA Coordinator ([ada@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:ada@mail.wvu.edu) or 304-293-4750) is available for consultation, advice, referral, training and technical assistance related to program accessibility. Requests for assistance should be made as far in advance as is feasible, but at least three weeks in advance of the event. Common accessibility issues include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring digital content, such as forms, websites, and social media, comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and are able to interact with assistive technology;
- Providing alternative formats such as audio recordings, Braille or large print;
- Providing ASL interpretation or live captioning services for events;
- Choosing accessible event locations;



- Identifying and removing physical barriers to access;
- Communicating with children who use adaptive communication devices and methods;
- Etiquette and guidance on working with individuals in an inclusive, supportive way.

Program participants and/or their parents may also contact Program Coordinators to seek accessibility information or request accommodations for themselves or their children. In order to ensure a consistent accommodation process, these individuals should always be referred to the ADA Coordinator at the University using this form:

[https://wvu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eDwlWFclRP1tMa](https://wvu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eDwlWFclRP1tMa)

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### ***2.2.1 Program Director's Role in the Interactive Process of Accommodations***

A program director's role in the interactive process is to help identify and implement options for accommodating individuals with disabilities. A program director's knowledge of the program's purpose, planned activities and the accessibility features of the location is essential to planning accommodations. After receiving the relevant information from the program participant to verify their disability and access needs, the ADA Coordinator will reach out to the program director to discuss options and plan implementation.

To prepare for this conversation, the program director should review and be ready to discuss:

- The activities planned for the event and required materials;
- The location of the event, known access issues, and accessibility features of the facility; and
- Steps already taken to create an accessible event for everyone.

After confirming the planned accommodation, the program director will receive a document outlining the accommodation, and the ADA Coordinator will make any



referrals or share any resources needed to implement the necessary modifications and services.

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## **2.3 Emergency Preparedness**

### ***2.3.1 WVU Youth Programming Emergency Response Plan***

All programs must have plans ready to keep Youth Participants safe in the event of an emergency. The Emergency Preparedness Plan addresses various circumstances that the Program Director and their staff should be ready for and is intended as a template to guide emergency planning and response by youth programs at West Virginia University. The following should be addressed prior to the start of the program:

- Communication Plan (see 2.3.2 for more)
- Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather
- Extreme Heat
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Evacuation and Sheltering
- Active Attacker – Run, Hide, Fight
- Bomb Threats
- Suspicious Package
- Threatening Communications
- Utility Failure
- Hazardous Materials Spill
- Lost or Missing Youth
- Field Trips or Travel
- Reunification (see 2.3.2 for more)



**Your response plans should answer these questions:**

- Who can direct your response (e.g., an evacuation)?
  - When and how will parents/legal guardians be notified of the emergency?
  - Who will decide what to tell your youth participants and when? How will you signal an emergency -- and the type of emergency -- to those in your program or facility?
  - How will everyone in the facility be accounted for after an evacuation?
  - What will be taken during evacuation?
  - To where will children, staff, and others be evacuated?
  - How will children and staff be transported?
  - What coordinating actions with University or community public safety and/or emergency management officials are necessary?
  - Who is responsible for each action documented in your plan?
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### ***2.3.2 Communication and Reunification Plans***

The ability to communicate with and reunify youth participants with their parents/legal guardians following an emergency incident was identified as a priority with WVU Youth Programs and Campus Emergency Preparedness departments.

Reunification is a process that protects both the safety of the youth participant and provides for an accountable change of custody from the University to a recognized parent/legal guardian. In the event of reunification, parent/legal guardians will be notified where the reunification center will be located. Please wait for an official communication from the program director before going to the reunification center.



If a parent/legal guardian is notified that reunification is needed, there are some expectations that parents/legal guardians should be aware of:

- Be patient and do not pick up your child without checking in.
- Please remember to bring your photo identification to the check-in center to have your child released to you.
- Your child will only be released to a parent/legal guardian or designated individual.
- The designated individual must be a minimum of 18 years old.

For more information regarding communication/reunification and emergency planning, please look at the WVU Youth Program Emergency Preparedness Plan. This document can be found at <https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/youth-protection/resources>

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## **2.4 Arrival and Departure Procedures**

### **Youth Programs must:**

1. Have procedures for the orderly arrival and departure of youth participants including the process for the unloading and loading of vehicles, and guidelines for supervision of the area during this time.
2. Have procedures for signing in and signing out youth participants
3. Provide written information regarding transportation to parents/legal guardians which include:
  - a. Pick-up and drop-off times and safety procedures related to pick-up and drop-off
  - b. A system to communicate changes or emergencies that would affect a youth participant's pick-up or drop-off time or location and
  - c. Safety rules for van or bus travel if provided by the program



4. Have forms on-site that record attendance of youth participants, program staff and visitors. These include:
  1. **Youth Participant Attendance Sheet** which includes the first and last name of the youth participant, arrival date and time, departure/pick-up date and time, designated individual dropping them off and designated individual picking them up.
  2. **Visitor Sign-In/Out Sheet** which documents any time visitors are present at the program and any time a participant or staff temporarily leave and return to the program.
  3. **Program Staff Attendance Sheet** which includes the first and last name of the staff, arrival date and time, final departure date and time, signatures of the staff member and whether they are an authorized adult.

The parent/legal guardian who registers the child for the program will be considered the primary point of contact and will be whom the program will communicate with concerning the child and authorizations unless otherwise noted.

A Youth Transportation Permission Form must be completed prior to the start of any program or activity per youth participant. The Youth Transportation Permission form can be found on WVU's Youth Protection website:

<https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/youth-protection/resources>

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## 2.5 Medical Requirements

### 2.5.1 Immunization Requirements

West Virginia requires all youth participants in programs to have a current immunization record showing the participant has been immunized in accordance with the West Virginia Department of Human Services Minimum State Vaccine Requirements. The immunizations are listed below:

- DTaP/DTP Td/Tdap



- Polio (IPV)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Varicella
- Hepatitis B

For more information on West Virginia immunization requirements, visit

<https://wvde.us/student-support-well-being/school-health/immunizations/>

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### ***2.5.2 Medical Information and Treatment Authorization***

The Unit must collect a Medical Information and Treatment Authorization Form from each youth participant detailing the medication name(s), time(s) to be dispensed, and dosage(s) and authorization for the program staff to dispense any medications.

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### ***2.5.3 Storing and Dispensing Medication***

- Prescription medications must be in the original containers labeled with the youth participant's name, date, directions, and the physician's name.
- Non-prescription medications are labeled with the youth participant's name and the date the medication was brought to the program. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container.
- The program staff will dispense medications, prescriptions or non-prescription, in accordance with the label directions.
- It is the parent's responsibility to pick up all medication at the end of the program. Any medication left after the last day of the program will be discarded. Medication that has expired will be sent home and parents will be notified to provide a replacement.
- WVU Youth Program staff are expected to keep a record of all medication dispensed during the program.





### **2.5.4 First Aid and EMS**

All youth programs must have a first aid kit on site for the purpose of providing first aid to participants or program staff in incidents of accident or illness. First aid kits should be easily accessible to all program staff and be clearly marked in the case of needing to find and use one. Appropriate supplies and equipment that are in the first aid kit may include:

- Adhesive Bandages (Band-Aids)
- Liquid bandage (individual use packets)
- Bandage scissors
- Blanket
- Cotton
- Gauze Pads (such as 4" x 4" or 3" x 3")
- Ice Packs (chemical) (or use Ziploc bags if ice is available)
- Medical Gloves (Nitrile preferred)
- Medical Tape
- Cleansing Towelettes (individual use packets)
- Roller Gauze (recommended 1"-3")
- Triangular Bandages
- Elastic Bandages (Ace wrap)
- Gauze Bandages (self-adhering)
- Antibiotic ointment (individual use packets)
- Burn treatment (individual use packets)
- First Aid Cream (individual use packets)



## 2.6 Adult Authorization

Any adult who has Direct Contact with children at a WVU youth program must complete an authorization process prior to the start of the program. Adult authorization consists of two trainings— *Title IX* and *Child Abuse Prevention*— and *either*\* background check clearance or national sex offender registry clearance. This applies to all faculty, staff, students and youth program staff who may supervise, lead, guide or take care or control of a youth participant. Adults who have completed these requirements are considered **Authorized Adults** for the purposes of WVU youth programs. For more information see [WVU BOG Governance Rule 1.7 Sections 3.3.1-3.3.3](#).

- *\*Youth program staff must complete a background check prior to the start of the program and again every 3 years. In the second and third year (non-background check years), the program staff must clear any checks to the [National Sex Offender Public Website](#).*

In addition to these requirements, any adult who is responsible for transporting youth participants during the program are also required to have a yearly DMV check.

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### 2.6.1 Trainings

*WVU Child Abuse Prevention* and *Title IX* trainings are required for any employee, student, parent/legal guardian, independent contractor, or volunteer who will serve as an authorized adult and are valid for three years. Both trainings can be completed either in-person or online and take approximately 45-60 minutes each. Groups requesting back-to-back in-person trainings should prepare two hours for instruction and answering questions.

Individuals that are not up to date on their youth protection training requirements are prohibited from overseeing youth participants at any WVU youth program. Program directors are responsible for ensuring that only authorized program staff oversee youth participants.



- **WVU Child Abuse Prevention**

- The WVU Child Abuse Prevention training provides education on how to minimize the threat of child abuse and to respond promptly and effectively should abuse be observed, suspected or disclosed.
- Questions regarding the WVU Child Abuse Prevention training, scheduling online or in-person training should contact our Youth Protection Program Specialist at youthprotection@mail.wvu.edu or by phone at 304-293-5600.

- **Title IX**

- The Title IX training provides education on federal protections for participants and program staff, and how to respond promptly and effectively should prohibited behavior be observed, suspected or disclosed.
- Questions regarding the Title IX training, scheduling online or in-person training should contact our Title IX Prevention Specialist at titleix@mail.wvu.edu or by phone at 304-293-5600.

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### **2.6.2 Background and DMV Checks**

Background clearance is required for any employee, student, parent/legal guardian, independent contractor, or volunteer who will serve as an authorized adult and is valid for three years. This process can take anywhere from 12 hours to weeks, so program directors should submit program staff needing checked at least 30 days prior to the start of the event. While background clearance is valid for three years, a sex offender registry check must be cleared yearly. This is submitted at the same time as the background check (“year one”), but in years two and three a separate check must be cleared via the National Sex Offender Public Website: <https://www.nsopw.gov/search-public-sex-offender-registries>



DMV clearance is required for adults responsible for transporting youth participants during the program and are valid for one year. DMV checks are usually much quicker but should be submitted at least 15 days prior to the event.

Program Directors can use the “Youth Program Background/DMV Check Request Form” at <https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/youth-protection> to request checks for their youth program staff. Program directors are expected to maintain records for their youth program staff and to complete necessary checks prior to the start of programming.

Below outlines the process for conducting background checks on individuals falling under BOG Rule 1.7:

1. Program Director requests Background Check and/or DMV check through the “Youth Program Background/DNC Check Request Form”. This request is saved for the user to easily check later.
2. Background checks will be initiated by the WVU Division of Campus Engagement and Compliance through the University’s third-party vendor. Once initiated, the candidate will receive an email from the third-party vendor with instructions. The candidate follows the instructions contained in the email and logs into a secure website where they will enter all necessary information.
3. The third-party vendor will send out an email to the Youth Protection Program Specialist once the background check is complete. If the results are clear, the clearance date will be updated in the program director’s request and the WVU Adult Authorization Database.

At no time is the Program Director given a copy of the background check or told what the check may contain.

4. If there is an alert on the background check, the candidate will receive an email and from that point forward will no longer have access to the background check. The candidate is entered into the youth protection database, which will flag an



alert if the individual tries to work or volunteer for any department or program through the University in the future.

**If these requirements have not been met, the adult cannot work for or participate in the program.**

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## **2.7 Transportation of Youth**

If a youth program requires the transportation of youth participants during the program, any authorized adult who will be responsible for driving a vehicle with youth participants inside must complete an annual DMV check (*see Section 2.6.2*).

Adults must never be alone in a vehicle with youth participants. Even with multiple participants, at least two (2) authorized adults must be present per vehicle.

For DMV positions, a candidate cannot volunteer or be hired into a driving position if they have had:

- one (1) DUI within the last five (5) years or
- two (2) DUIs within the past seven (7) years (until the most recent DUI is older than five (5) years old).

If the candidate has been convicted or pled no contest to three (3) DUIs, he/she is permanently barred from driving on behalf of the University. In addition to this, if during the past seven years the applicant has:

- three (3) or more speeding, reckless driving, or similar convictions and/or
- three (3) or more at-fault accidents, or
- any combination of the above totaling three (3) incidents,

they cannot drive on behalf of the University. Speeding violations under 10 mph over the limit may be excluded at the discretion of the Committee.



## 2.8 Supervision Ratios

When parents/legal guardians are not expected to stay and/or supervise their child at an event, standards must be in place to always ensure proper supervision of youth participants. These standards must take into consideration the number and age of youth participants, whether the event involves overnight stay or is day-only and the activities involved during the program. The table below outlines the minimum adult-to-youth ratio\* for youth programming. *\*Only those considered authorized adults may count toward this ratio, and adults must be at least two (2) years older than the youth with whom they are working with.*

**Each program must have a minimum ‘Authorized Adult to Youth Participant’ ratio of the following:**

Participant Age	Number of Adults	Overnight Participants	Day-Only Participants
5 Years or Less	1	5	6
6-8 Years	1	6	8
9-14 Years	1	8	10
15-18 Years	1	10	12

The supervision ratio is intended to be used as a “max capacity” for youth participants per program staff adult; for example: If there are between 11-20 youth participants in a group— aged ten to twelve years old— two adult staff are required to be present (per the previous table’s ratios). Three adults would be required if the group had between 21-30 youth participants.

When the program serves youth with physical, medical, cognitive, or behavioral needs who require additional staff support to participate in the activity (e.g., participants with physical, mental, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities), the following ratios of staff or personal attendants to youth are suggested:



Youth Description	Staff	Youth
Needing constant individual assistance or support	1	1
Needing close but not constant assistance or supervision	1	2
Needing occasional assistance	1	4
Needing minimal assistance	1	5

Any exceptions to the general ratios should be in accordance with the type of activity, the area and characteristics of the participants and must be approved by the Youth Protection Program Specialist. Certain program policies may specify no exceptions.

In “high risk” areas or situations, two authorized adults must always be present regardless the number of youth participants. Examples of these include but are not limited to:

- Restroom and shower areas,
- Transportation of youth participants during the program,
- Residential housing for an overnight program

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### **2.8.1 One-on-One Interactions**

Appropriate supervision and interaction between participants and staff are key to safety. WVU youth programs are expected to follow the minimum standard of **“Rule of Three”**, which is **‘two (2) authorized adults to every one (1) youth participant’** or **‘two (2) youth participants to every one (1) authorized adult’**.

At no time should program staff be alone with a youth participant outside the presence of others. If a one-on-one interaction is unavoidable or for programmatic purposes, use the following precautions:

- Meet in open, well illuminated spaces or rooms with windows observable by other program staff;



- Meet in a location with visual and audio recording on and accessible;
  - See if there a second authorized adult nearby to sit-in or stay near.
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## 2.9 Reporting Requirements

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### 2.9.1 Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

West Virginia law requires certain individuals with knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect to report it immediately to the appropriate authorities. This mandatory reporting requirement applies to all adults involved in WVU youth programs.

If an individual suspects a child is being abused or neglected, they are required to report it to all of the following entities:

- **West Virginia Department of Human Services, Child Protective Services**
  - 1-800-352-6513
- **West Virginia State Police Crimes Against Children Unit**
  - 304-293-6400
- **West Virginia University Division of Campus Engagement and Compliance**
  - 304-293-5600 or
  - <https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/home/submit-a-complaint>
- **If the situation presents an immediate danger, call 911**

Information to provide when you call:

- Information about the youth, e.g., name, age, contact information and name of parent/legal guardian(s).
- Information about the person suspected of committing the abuse or neglect.





- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, including location and description of the incident.
- Any knowledge of previous incidences.

By West Virginia law a mandated reporter who knowingly fails to report any known or suspected child abuse or neglect can be found guilty of a misdemeanor, face time in jail and fines. West Virginia Code 49-2-810 prohibits retaliation against good faith reporting of suspected abuse or neglect.

For more information or to file a complaint, please visit:

<https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/resources>

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### ***2.9.2 Reporting a Violation of Standards for Interacting with Youth***

If you believe a program staff member has violated the Standards for Interacting with Youth you must notify the Division of Campus Engagement and Compliance at 304-293-5600 or [youthprotection@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:youthprotection@mail.wvu.edu).

- If you believe the program staff has violated the Standards in a way that raises concerns for abuse or neglect, you must first follow the steps for reporting child abuse and neglect (see prior page).

If you are unsure about whether someone's behavior is a violation of the standards, you can consult with your supervisor or WVU's Youth Protection Prevention Specialist with your concerns and they can provide guidance.

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## **2.10 Codes of Conduct**

Codes of Conduct are required from all individuals involved in a Youth Program, including both youth participants and youth program staff. These forms provide an opportunity to review expectations for behavior during the program. Codes of Conduct establish rules, guidelines and standards to follow while involved in the program and communicates consequences for undesirable behavior.



Units are responsible for providing and maintaining a Code of Conduct for each youth participant and program staff per youth program. Units are encouraged to customize their Codes of Conduct and add items as necessary, but each Code of Conduct must at a minimum include the following:

**For Youth Participant Code of Conducts:**

- possession or use of alcohol and other drugs, fireworks, guns, and other weapons is prohibited
- 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.
- operation of a motor vehicle must be approved by both the program director and participant's parent/legal guardian prior to the event; any unauthorized use is prohibited
- visual and/or audio recording in "high risk" areas is prohibited. These areas include bathrooms, shower houses, overnight residential housing, and other locations where a participant has an expectation to privacy.

**For Program Staff/Volunteer Code of Conducts:**

- University Standards for Interacting with Youth (see Section 3.1);
- Reporting Requirements (see Section 2.9).



## **2.11 Document Retention**

All youth programs are required to follow University Standards for Records Retention and Disposal, found here: <https://registrar.wvu.edu/files/d/e8fac016-277f-4bd8-9598-82f2724f76f3/standards-for-records-retention-and-disposal.pdf>

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## **2.12 Virtual Programming**

Virtual programs are expected to follow the same policies and procedures as in-person programs. For standards on virtual interactions, see Section 3.6.



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## SECTION 3 – STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

### 3.1 University Standards for Interacting with Youth

West Virginia University has a responsibility to safeguard the youth in our care. As such the University Standards for Interacting with Youth describes the minimum expectations that we hold for youth program staff and other personnel who interact with youth in a University program. **This Standard (Section 3.1-3.1.6) must be included in all youth program staff Codes of Conduct.**

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#### 3.1.1 General Contact

##### Expectations

- At a minimum, observe the “Rule of Three,” as defined in Section 2.8.1 of the *West Virginia University Youth Programming Policies and Guidelines*.
- Limit physical contact to purposes that are consistent with the program’s mission and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health related purpose, in the presence of another staff member, and with the consent of the youth.
- Use program-sponsored e-mail, phone and social media accounts for communication when there is an essential educational or programmatic reason to do so.
- Disclose any pre-existing relationships with youth in the youth program immediately to the program lead. Abide by these standards while affiliated with the youth program, despite any pre-existing personal relationships.

##### Prohibited

- Never be alone with a single youth where you cannot be observed by program staff or other adults.



- Do not act in a manner that can be perceived as physical or verbal abuse.
  - Do not discipline youth by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
  - Avoid engaging in purposeful communication or contact including in-person meetings, phone or other electronic communication including social networking, with youth outside of sponsored program activities.
    - If direct communication with youth is necessary, always include at least the child's parent/legal guardian or another WVU authorized adult.
  - Never engage in texting or other forms of electronic one-on-one communication between a single adult staff and youth participant.
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### **3.1.2 Equitable Treatment**

#### **Expectation**

- Treat all youth equitably, i.e. fairly and consistently, regardless of their actions or behavior, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, culture, place of birth, age, class, ability, health, citizenship, language, or other identities.

#### **Prohibited**

- Do not discriminate against a youth based on their sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, culture, place of birth, age, class, ability, health, citizenship, language, or other identities.
- Do not give personal gifts to youth or their parents, e.g., any item intended to give a youth and/or parent special attention that is not given to others.



### **3.1.3 Sexual Misconduct**

#### **Expectation**

- Understand and respect the physical and personal boundaries set by youth.

#### **Prohibited**

- Do not engage in sexual contact of any kind (including any verbal or physical contact that can be perceived as sexual in nature.)
  - Do not date or become romantically involved with youth.
  - Do not discuss your own or a youth's sex life or sexual activities.
  - Do not share sexually explicit material with youth.
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### **3.1.4 Safety**

#### **Expectations**

- The safety of youth must be your primary concern above all others.
- Report any concerns for suspected abuse or neglect of a youth to authorities per University policy requirements.
- Notify University representatives per policy requirements of any violations of these standards for interacting with youth.
- Follow all University transportation procedures for transporting youth.

#### **Prohibited**

- Do not possess, sell, use, or be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or illegal drugs while engaged in program activities or on site.
- Do not bring or carry a weapon into the program.
- Do not transport youth in a personal vehicle.



### **3.1.5 Educating Youth**

Youth should be informed in an age-appropriate manner of their right to set their own physical limits for personal safety. They should be encouraged to tell an adult if someone is abusing them, or if they are in a situation or observe something that makes them uncomfortable.

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### **3.1.6 Consequences of Violating University Standards**

West Virginia University and [program name] take these matters seriously. In the case of suspected abuse or neglect of a youth or violations of the Standards for Interacting with Youth, the University and [program name] will adhere to existing policies and procedures for corrective action. Actions taken will first and foremost consider the need to ensure the safety of youth participating in the program. See [BOG Rule 1.7 Section 5](#) for more information.

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## **3.2 Prohibited Conduct**

Program staff must not engage in behaviors that could cause harm or be misconstrued as possibly causing harm. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- One-on-one contact with youth participants outside the presence of others.
- Meeting with youth participants outside of established times for program activities.
- Touching youth participants in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- Engaging in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, youth participants.
- Showering, bathing, or undressing with or in the presence of youth participants.





- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while at a youth program.
  - Being alone in a vehicle with a youth participant at any time.
  - Having direct electronic contact with youth participants.
  - Making sexual materials in any form available to youth participants participating in programs or activities; or assisting in any way with gaining access to such materials.
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### **3.3 Alcohol, Substance Abuse and Tobacco Policy**

Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigs/vaping) and illegal substances is strictly prohibited while participating in or in the presence of a WVU Youth Program. The University is committed to being a drug-free campus. Youth participants and program staff suspected of possessing, selling, or distributing drugs will be reported to the West Virginia University Police Department (WVUPD) and dismissed from the program. The university prohibits the use of all forms of tobacco products, including e-cigs and other vaping devices, on the university campus. Youth participants and program staff must refrain from using tobacco during the program session.

- Participants/Staff may not possess or use alcohol, tobacco (including ecigs/vaping) or illegal substances on or around the university owned/leased property.
- Participants/Staff may not return to the university campus intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

**WVU Youth Programs has zero-tolerance for drugs and alcohol.**



### 3.4 Bullying and Violence

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Youth attending programs are susceptible to potential bullying situations. To prevent and target bullying tactics, program staff must create a positive and caring environment.

If a behavior does arise that causes a disturbance, it is remedied immediately. West Virginia University has zero-tolerance for bullying. Please reiterate the following to youth participants prior to and during the program:

- If a bully bothers you, ask the program staff or director for help.
- Report bullying when you see and hear about it. Telling is not tattling

**Any form of physical, sexual or verbal violence is prohibited and will not be tolerated.**

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### 3.5 Harassment And Discrimination

WVU youth programs has zero-tolerance for harassment and discrimination. Any form of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited at WVU youth programs and may result in dismissal from the program. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment or discrimination of a sexual, religious, racial or ethnic nature, or retaliation against someone who has made a complaint of harassment and/or discrimination. All program staff and participants are expected to maintain an equitable, welcoming and inclusive environment free from harassment and discrimination.

For more information on Title IX, including resources and reporting options, visit <https://campusengagement.wvu.edu/compliance/title-ix>

If harassment and/or discrimination of any kind it witnessed or suspected, you are encouraged to report it to the program director. The program director must report any allegation of child abuse, child neglect and sexual harassment to the Title IX



coordinator, James Goins Jr. at:

- 304-293-8363
- [james.goins@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:james.goins@mail.wvu.edu)

**“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”**

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### **3.6 Virtual Interactions and Social Media Policy**

The following describes the minimum expectations we hold for personnel who have virtual interactions with youth in a University youth program. Virtual interactions may include the use of technology, but are not limited to e-mail, smart phones, text messaging, learning management systems, online communications platforms, and social media to carry out program activities.

The following standards apply to any interaction between youth program staff and participants, whether held in-person, online, or via other technologies. Specifically, in virtual settings, program staff are expected to:

- Limit virtual contact to purposes consistent with the program’s mission and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health-related purpose, in the presence of another staff member and/or participant’s parent/legal guardian and with the consent of the participant and participant’s parent/legal guardian.
- Conduct all virtual interactions in a manner that promotes safety and complies with the general contact guidance outlined in the Standards for Interacting with Youth, including:
  - Observing the Rule of Three in online meetings and all other virtual communications.



- Virtual interactions are considered “high risk” areas and require at least two authorized adults present.
  - Using only program-sponsored e-mail, phone, video conferencing, or social media platforms.
  - Avoiding text and electronic one-on-one communication between a single program staff and participant. Instead, use technologies and platforms which are accessible by multiple program staff (e.g., a shared email inbox or a group chat functionality) and/or the participant’s parent.
  - Not engaging in purposeful communications or contact, including phone or electronic communication or social networking, with youth participants outside of sanctioned program activities.
- Treat all participants equitably, including ensuring equitable access to and support for any technology needed to fully participate in program activities.
  - Proactively address harassment, bullying, or other inappropriate conduct of youth participants.
  - Never share sexually implicit or explicit content online with participants.
  - Be mindful of your online presence and the content shared publicly via your social media or other platforms.
  - Ensure online and virtual interactions are conducted via safe, known platforms that limit risks to youth participants.

