



UWM POLICY REGARDING CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

No: S-70

Date: December 23, 2015

Authority: UWSA Office of Operations Review and Audit's *Review of Policies Related to the Reporting of Crimes Against Children* (May 2012).

Initiator: Department of Legal Affairs, Department of Human Resources

Responsible Party: Department of Human Resources, Department of University Safety & Assurances

I. Purpose

Maintaining the safety and health of University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (UWM) employees, students, guests and visitors relies upon the control of hazardous conditions and prevention of unsafe behaviors. When the visitors are minor children, a greater standard of care must be taken in protecting against unsafe conditions and unpredictable behaviors.

Generally, the workplace is not an appropriate place for the minor children of employees. However, UWM recognizes that employees may occasionally want to bring minor children to the workplace for brief visits, specific campus events, situational convenience, or family emergencies.

II. Definitions

Child or **children** means a person or persons less than 18 years of age, and not enrolled or admitted for enrollment in classes at UWM or any other University of Wisconsin institution.

Employee means any employee of any employment category that has responsibility for a child while in the workplace, regardless of the employee's relationship to the child.

Employer includes supervisors, managers, department chairs, deans, directors, provosts, or chancellors in any School/College/Division or Department.

High risk area includes any area deemed high risk by the campus risk manager including an attractive nuisance such as a construction site, or any area with hazardous levels of radiation, hazardous chemicals or substances, hazardous biological agents or vectors, or hazardous equipment or processes, or animal research. Examples of areas with these characteristics include:

- laboratories (excluding those designed for minor research subjects)
- machine shops, woodworking shops, or similar workshop areas
- mechanical rooms
- steam plant
- construction areas
- maintenance garages
- animal care or research facilities
- food preparation areas
- fitness centers
- high security areas, and
- areas that are excluded for general employee or student access.

III. Exclusions

Except as provided elsewhere in this policy or other university policies, laws and regulations that limit access to or otherwise regulate high-risk areas, this policy **does not apply** when a child:

- is enrolled or admitted as a university student;
- is employed by the university;
- is attending a university-sanctioned childcare facility;
- is attending a university-sanctioned camp, child care program, or youth enrichment program; or
- has a parent or responsible party with a workplace assignment in which one of the conditions of the employment is residency in a campus facility (e.g., live-in residence hall director).

IV. Policy

This policy addresses the factors to consider when allowing an employee to bring a minor child into the workplace.

Circumstances in which employees may wish to bring children into the workplace generally fall into the following categories:

1. *Brief visits* (e.g., an employee brings his/her child, grandchild or other minor relative in to introduce that child to co-workers).
2. *Specific campus events* that are employer-sanctioned and at which attendance by children is encouraged.
3. *In the event of an emergency.*

Abuse. Children are not to be brought to the workplace on a repeated basis in lieu of childcare.

High risk areas. Children are restricted from high risk areas such as laboratories, studios, shops, construction sites and other campus areas where physical, chemical, biological or other potential health hazards are present. Children must be kept away from any area with a known hazardous condition. Infants and children must be protected from any area with even a potential exposure or hazardous condition. Minor children are restricted from areas that store or use research animals, hazardous chemicals, radioisotopes, carcinogens, or biohazardous agents.

Responsibilities. Generally, an employee who brings a child into the workplace shall not leave the child unsupervised. Employees are responsible for verifying with their School/College/Department the circumstances under which children are allowed in their specific workplace. If the employer allows the occasional workplace visit of children, both the employee responsible for the child and the employer must accept certain responsibilities to protect the welfare of the child and the integrity of the workplace:

An employee who brings a child to the workplace must:

- supervise and care for the child while in the workplace;
- prevent any breach of confidential information;
- address with the employer any issues related to a child's infectious disease; and
- accept full responsibility for all aspects of the child's behavior, including: safety of the child, disruption to coworkers, unauthorized or inappropriate use of university resources, and any damage to property or injury to persons.
- ensure minimal disruption to the employee's own performance of his/her duties

The employer must:

- determine either that hazards are not likely to exist, or that hazards can be controlled under the circumstances in which the child will be present;
- address potential issues of disruption to the employee and coworkers in the workplace;
- consider the extent to which the child's presence in the workplace poses a risk of breaching confidentiality of information in the workplace;
- consider the extent to which the child's presence is appropriate to the specific work being accomplished.
- consider the health of coworkers before an employee is allowed to bring a child with an infectious disease to the workplace.

V. Procedures

Denial of permission. The employer reserves the authority to deny the presence of children in the workplace. The employer may revoke previously-granted permission for a child to be allowed in the workplace (e.g., the child's presence is later determined to be disruptive to the workplace).

Violations. Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action according to established policies governing conduct and standards of behavior.

VI. Contact Information

For information and guidance about bringing children into high risk areas, contact the Office of University Safety and Assurances, Engelmann Hall 270, (414) 229-6339.