

Interim Best Practices

Minors in University Programs and Activities

These Interim Best Practices apply to all units, faculty, staff, volunteers, and contractors who supervise or interact with Minors (anyone under 18 not enrolled in a UMBC degree program).

1. Your department or unit must know when Minors are present

- Someone in your unit must be designated as the point of contact for each activity involving minors
- Unit leadership (chair, director, dean) must be aware that minors are present and know the nature of the activity
- Keep a basic internal record: who the minors are, dates, location, supervising adults
- If something goes wrong, escalate to unit leadership immediately and document it in writing

2. Parent/Guardian Consent is Required

Get written consent before the minor participates in anything. UMBC-approved forms must include:

- Parent/guardian contact information
- Medical information and emergency care authorization
- Keep forms physically on hand throughout the activity

3. Background Checks

Personnel in sustained, direct supervisory roles with minors – camp counselors, residential program staff, research supervisors – must have a background check on file before the program begins (see USM Policy [VII-1.15](#))

- UMBC faculty, employees, or student-employees with sustained, direct supervisory roles with minors: contact HRSTM
- Third-party/contractor staff: May use an external provider
- Youth camps: Youth Camps must be registered and certified; criminal background checks and fingerprinting are as required per Maryland law and regulation (CJIS and CPS) (see [Maryland Department of Health Youth Camps](#) and [UMBC Guidance for Youth Camps](#))

4. Supervision: The Two Adult Rule

No adult should be alone and unobserved with a minor. This is the baseline.

- Arrange schedules so a second adult is present or immediately accessible with open lines of sight
- Minors must be accounted for at all times
- Check-in/check-out: release minors only to authorized individuals listed on consent form
- Overnight residential programs require at least one adult present on the floor at all times

5. Labs and Research Settings

- Inform your chair or director in advance of approving any minor in a lab or research setting
- Contact Environmental Safety and Health (ESH) before the minor arrives if there is a potential for the minor to interact with any hazardous materials – Minors may not work with bloodborne pathogens, carcinogens, select agents, or radiological materials without written ESH approval, as well as any specific training as may be required.
- Minors should never be alone in a closed lab with a faculty member: the two-adult rule applies
- Minors using UMBC computers, systems, or network resources are subject to the UMBC Acceptable Use Policy (UMBC Policy [X-1.00.01](#)); supervising adults are responsible for ensuring that a minor's access is scoped to the approved activity, actively supervised, and consistent with parental consent
- See the UMBC Minor Visitor Agreement for additional requirements and approvals

6. Contracted or Third-Party Programs

If an outside operator is running a program involving minors on UMBC's campus (e.g., a program placing minors in residence halls):

- A written contract must be executed in advance of arrival
- Contract will require operator to warrant background checks have been completed for all staff, volunteers, and contractors with access to minors
- UMBC's obligations (including mandatory reporting) apply regardless the operator

7. Mandatory Reporting

All UMBC faculty, staff, students, and contractors are mandated reporters under Maryland law. Report reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect in accordance with USM Policy [VI-1.50](#), Policy on the Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect, as well as with established UMBC [child protection procedures](#).

8. Employed Minors

Contact HRSTM if a minor may receive any payment for the activity. Maryland requires a work permit for all employed minors under 18, and there may be legal limitations on type of work and hours.

9. Disability Accommodations

Families may request accommodations that differ from standard student accommodations. The ADA and Section 504 apply to Minor program participants.

10. Prohibited Conduct

These apply to everyone, no exceptions:

- No one-on-one, unobserved contact with a minor
- No transporting a minor in a personal vehicle
- No photographing or recording minors without written parental consent
- No sharing a sleeping space with a minor
- No personal social media or direct messaging with a minor without parental consent and supervisor awareness

11. Virtual Programs

These best practices extend to virtual settings. If your program or activity interacts with minors online, the core requirements apply regardless of whether participants are physically on campus. Recording is prohibited absent parent/guardian written consent.

These requirements apply beyond UMBC's campus

UMBC faculty and staff working with minors as part of a university-sponsored program or activity remain subject to the core requirements of this guidance regardless of where that activity takes place. Programs operating under a contract or agreement with another organization may have more stringent obligations based on the terms of the contract.

Quick contacts:

HRSTM: hrstm@umbc.edu; hrbackground@umbc.edu

ECR (reporting suspected child abuse and neglect): ecr@umbc.edu

Environmental Safety & Health (lab/hazard review): esh@umbc.edu

UMBC Police: 410-455-5555

OGC: ogc@umbc.edu

This guidance is interim and does not supersede applicable law or policy.