

# Protection of Children in the Workplace

Effective: [date]

Contact: [Environmental Health and Safety \(EH&S\)](#)

## Introduction

Iowa State University provides many opportunities for children to be on campus, either through campus events, scheduled programming or as guests of students and employees. The university recognizes its obligation for the safety and well-being of children that comes with their presence at university facilities. University facilities and grounds can present a variety of potential hazards to individuals unfamiliar with them. Risks associated with these potential hazards are greater for children who often lack the hazard recognition abilities of an adult.

The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria that welcome children to the university, minimize the risk of injury to children, and promote an environment conducive to accomplishment of the university's mission. This policy is intended to foster respect for the needs of all parties impacted by the presence of children in the workplace.

## Policy Statement

Employee supervisors and managers of university activities have the authority to approve or deny the presence of non-student children in the workplace under appropriate circumstances. In approving or denying continued presence of non-student children, supervisors and managers shall consider the factors indicated below. See Resources section below for "Employee/Manager Discussion Guide."

Non-student children will not be permitted in workplace areas that involve high-risk safety issues or where confidentiality factors exist unless it is for short-term visits, guided tours, or similar situations as outlined in this policy.

## Scope

This policy applies to employees, students and visitors who may wish to bring a non-student child to the workplace. This policy does not apply to cases of incidental or intermittent presence of non-student children, as defined below. This policy does not apply to minors who are enrolled as Iowa State University students, employed by Iowa State University, participants in approved university camps or youth enrichment programs, or the Child Development Laboratory School.

This policy does not apply to residences provided to employees by the university as part of their employment, such as Residence Hall Director apartments and Farm Manager homes. Nor does it apply to events and celebrations where families are encouraged to participate.

Instructors are responsible for the learning environment in classrooms as provided by the Classroom Disruption Policy. Under that policy the presence of a non-student child in the classroom is at the discretion of the instructor.

## **Definitions**

As used in this policy, the terms:

“Incidental or intermittent” means non-regular and brief (under the circumstances) presence on campus. It includes visits to introduce children to co-workers, short-term visits between events, or emergencies. Incidental or intermittent presence is acceptable only under circumstances where there is not a safety hazard beyond that usually encountered in a typical home or office environment, and as long as the child remains under the direct supervision of the parent. Incidental or intermittent presence does not include situations where children need to be supervised more than momentarily by university employees other than the parent.

“Non-student child” means a child under the age of 18 who is not enrolled in classes at the university.

“Parent” means any employee, student, or visitor who has responsibility for a non-student child while in the workplace regardless of the relationship.

“Workplace” means room, office, laboratory, university vehicle, or other areas in the immediate vicinity of where persons are conducting work on behalf of the university. A common space in a building or outdoor area generally open to the public is not a workplace. An area off campus where university work is being conducted is a workplace, but workplace does not include an employee’s home.

## **Factors**

Careful consideration should be given to the following factors when determining the situations in which a non-student child may be present in the work place.

- **Safety and Health:** The primary consideration when approving the presence of children is the safety and health of the child and others present in the workplace. Consideration should be given to the kinds of hazards and whether such hazards can be controlled under the circumstances in which the non-student child will be present. The parent is responsible for care of the child in all circumstances.
- **Disruption:** Non-student children should not create an undue disruption to the accomplishment of the university’s work.
- **Age and Behavioral Characteristics:** Acceptability of children in the workplace depends on the age and behavioral characteristics of the non-student child and relates to issues of safety and disruption.

- Nature of the Workplace: Some workplaces are more adaptable to the presence of non-student children than others. Considerations of confidentiality and professionalism are appropriate depending on the circumstances.
- Welcoming Environment: Allowing non-student children to be present in the workplace on a reasonable basis may be advantageous to the whole workplace environment, and contribute to enhanced satisfaction with work and study.

### **High Risk Areas**

In general, children are not permitted in high risk safety areas. Examples of high-risk safety areas generally include, but are not limited to:

- Power plants, shops, mechanical rooms, confined spaces, food preparation areas.
- Any areas, indoors or out, containing power tools or machinery with exposed moving parts or rotating equipment (e.g. mechanical rooms or construction areas).
- University vehicles, low-speed vehicles, heavy duty or other motorized equipment.
- Laboratories or specialized work areas that include chemicals, biological hazards, radioactive hazards, flammables, explosives, compressed gasses, sharp objects, lasers, research animals, hazardous wastes or other environmental hazards.
- Any other high-risk areas (rooftops, construction zones, etc.)

In workplace areas where high-risk safety and/or confidentiality factors exist, short-term visits for non-student children may be authorized for guided tours or other reasons based on the following criteria:

- Permission from the appropriate responsible authority is obtained, (e.g., the director for access to the power plant and the employee's supervisor and laboratory head or principal investigator for laboratories or specialized areas.) Recurring visits, such as tours, only require initial approval. Subsequent visits should meet the safety criteria established for the initial activity.
- Appropriate precautionary measures are taken and hazards have been considered or removed during the visit.
- Direct adult supervision of non-student children is provided at all times in high-risk safety areas.
- Additional safety measures, as deemed necessary, are taken in high-risk safety areas, such as written parental consent authorizing the site visit, written waivers of liability, pre-entry safety briefings and/or a shut down of operations during the visit.
- Responsible authorities should consult with the Office of Risk Management and the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (Office of Environment, Safety, Health and Assurance for Ames Laboratory buildings) before granting permission for non-student

children to be present in high-risk safety areas. See Resources section below for “High Risk Area Approval” procedures.

## **Resources**

[Classroom Disruption Policy](#)

Employee/Manager Discussion Guide [insert link]

[Environment, Safety, Health & Assurance \(Ames Laboratory\)](#)

[Department of Environmental Health and Safety \(EH&S\)](#)

High Risk Area Approval Summary[insert link]

[Office of Risk Management](#)

[University Counsel](#)