

**Division of Environmental Health & Safety  
University of Kentucky**

**MINORS IN RESEARCH LABORATORIES OR ANIMAL FACILITIES PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this program is to document activities and safety protocols for minors who work or conduct research in a University of Kentucky (herein after UK) research laboratory, greenhouse, animal facility, or field work outside the UK campus and to obtain informed consent for those activities from parents or guardians.

**SCOPE:**

This policy covers minors, persons under the age of 18 whether student, employee, or volunteer, conducting research in all UK research laboratories, greenhouses, animal facilities, animal procedure rooms, animal housing areas, clinical laboratories and field work activities.

Minors under the age of 14 are **NOT PERMITTED** inside of any research laboratory, greenhouse, or animal facility at the University of Kentucky unless it is for UK sponsored programs which are designed for youth under the age of 14 and which have documented training and safety policies.

**\*Visiting minors, not previously approved as part of a UK program, tour, or science fair, are not allowed in any UK research laboratory, greenhouse, or animal facility for any reason.\***

**Program:**

1. Minors must meet the requirements of Section 2 to work or conduct research in UK research laboratories, greenhouses, or animal facilities. Minors are prohibited from all of the following as part of any research activity: All minors are prohibited from working with or conducting research in laboratory spaces that:
  - a. Are designated as BSL-3, ABSL-3, or higher for recombinant or infectious organisms
  - b. Store or contain
    - i. Select Agents or Toxins
    - ii. Explosives (Highly Reactive Chemicals)
    - iii. Radio-labeled material
  - c. Utilize Radioactive Materials or Radiation Sources (X-rays)
  - d. Utilize Acute Toxins
  - e. Utilize Acutely Toxic Chemicals
  - f. Operating farm machinery
  - g. Operating university vehicles
  - h. Working in machine shops

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) RESPONSIBILITIES:**

2. Minors must meet all the following requirements to work or conduct research in laboratories. Minors working as students do not have to register with Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) but all safety training and hazard assessments shall be completed as a part of the enrolled course:
  - a. The UK EH&S Program titled MINORS IN RESEARCH LABORATORIES OR ANIMAL FACILITIES has been read and understood by the minor.
  - b. THE PROJECT HAZARDS ASSESSMENT FORM has been reviewed by the minor and parent/legal guardian.
  - c. A MINORS RESEARCH PROPOSAL REGISTRATION FORM, with signatures from the PI/sponsor, parent/legal guardian and minor acknowledging the hazards described in the project hazards assessment form and a copy of the PROJECT HAZARDS ASSESSMENT FORM, is submitted to and approved by EH&S. If infectious agents and/or recombinant or synthetic nucleic acids are manipulated in the research the PI must have an approved Institutional Biosafety Committee registration.
  - d. HAZARD SPECIFIC SAFETY TRAINING and the appropriate EH&S online training is completed by the minor with the PI/Sponsor as approved by EH&S prior to commencement of work.
  - e. The minor is informed of the proper FIRE AND EMERGENCY/EVACUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES specific to both the laboratory and department. This information will include, but not be limited to, what happens when one dials 911, how/where to activate fire alarms, evacuation routes, and how to detect natural gas odors. Minors shall not be responsible for extinguishing a fire. The primary concern is personal safety. The secondary concern is notification of the fire department/ 911.
  - f. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, specific to the hazard, is provided to the minor with instructions for use and disposal.
  - g. The minor is SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES while in the laboratory and never left alone.
  - h. HOURS WORKED will comply with UK Human Resources Policy and Procedure Number 16.0: Employment of Minors.
  - i. The LABORATORY IS IN FULL COMPLIANCE with all applicable UK safety programs and regulations.
  - j. An ANIMAL CARE AND USE PROTOCOL currently approved by the IACUC must be amended to include minors who work in any capacity with animals. All IACUC requirements (<https://www.research.uky.edu/office-attending-veterinarian/iacuc-training>) for access to research animals must be completed.

**MINOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

3. The minor understands and agrees to follow basic lab safety guidelines, including but not limited to:
  - a. Never work alone in any laboratory environment without direct, immediate adult supervision from the sponsor or someone designated by the sponsor.
  - b. Always follow the instructions of the sponsor or laboratory supervisor.
  - c. Always report any accident (regardless of severity) immediately to the sponsor or laboratory supervisor.
  - d. Always wear the personal protective equipment as directed and dispose of it appropriately. This personal protective equipment may include glasses, gloves, coats/gowns, and other face/body protection as dictated by the hazard being worked with or around.
  - e. Always keep your hands away from your face and wash them well with soap and water prior to leaving any laboratory area.
  - f. Never eat, drink, chew gum, apply make-up or lip balm, or touch contact lenses while in any laboratory environment.
  - g. Always wear full coverage shoes i.e. closed-toe and closed heel while in any laboratory.
  - h. Always tie back long hair.
  - i. Always wear clothing that reduces the amount of exposed skin. Shorts and sandals are prohibited in the laboratory.
  - j. Always ask questions if you don't understand the safety requirements.