



The University of Vermont

Policy V.3.14.2

Responsible Official: Vice President for  
Operations and Public Safety

Effective Date: August 17, 2016

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# Minors in Laboratories

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## Policy Statement

All employees are expected to adhere to the requirements established below with respect to minors in laboratories.

## Reason for the Policy

To maintain a safe workplace and comply with applicable safety regulations.

## Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all University of Vermont faculty, staff, students, visiting minors and their sponsors.

## Policy Elaboration

In keeping with the UVM mission of education and outreach, it is appropriate for persons under the age of eighteen years to occasionally enter research laboratories for educational purposes. Because the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) restricts the amount of radiation exposure that minors can receive and because there are a wide variety of chemical and biological hazards associated with laboratory work, it is necessary to establish requirements for the appropriate supervision of minors in laboratory areas. These requirements are necessary to protect a child's health and safety and to prevent harm arising from a child's exposure to harmful agents or conditions. This policy clarifies existing radiation safety regulations at UVM and addresses the issue of minors in laboratories who handle or may be exposed to hazardous chemicals, biological materials or radioactive materials.

### A. People Affected

1. Persons below twelve years of age are not allowed in laboratories.
2. Persons between ages 12 and 14 are not permitted access to a hazardous chemical, biohazard or radiation handling laboratory except for short-term (up to two days) group

visits, such as a high school or middle school tour of a laboratory. Adequate adult supervision must be provided by the organization sponsoring the visit. The Department of Risk Management & Safety must be notified before the visit in order to review necessary training or oversight when access is provided to organized groups. Risk Management & Safety will provide a letter of agreement to be signed by the participating organization to address concerns about responsibility for minors.

The investigator responsible for the laboratory hosting the visit must ensure compliance with all safety policies and regulations. If appropriate, a radiation film badge must be worn. The NRC limits persons under eighteen years of age to 10% of the exposure to those eighteen years of age and older. The investigator is also responsible to ensure that any visitors handling hazardous materials receive all the appropriate on-line, classroom and hands-on lab safety training. The investigator, or designee, must be present in the lab during visits.

3. Persons between fourteen and eighteen years of age are permitted access to hazardous chemical, biological and radiation handling laboratories for both short-term and extended visits for education-related reasons. They must receive appropriate lab safety training and be directly supervised by the investigator his/her designee. If handling pathogens or rDNA, the investigator must add the minor's name to the personnel list in the IBC protocol and provide specific training on the pathogen work.

**Note:** If the person is expected to use radioactive materials, he/she is required to become a certified radiation handler by successfully completing a written examination administered by the Radiation Safety Office (RSO).

#### B. Areas Affected

1. All laboratories are considered hazardous areas subject to this policy. "Laboratories" are rooms in which hazardous chemicals, radioactive materials, or biological materials are handled or stored.
2. Rooms with unusual hazards, such as machine rooms, electrical rooms, and equipment rooms, are considered "other hazardous areas." These hazards are addressed in the UVM Minors on Campus Policy.
3. Hallways and offices adjacent to laboratories are not considered hazardous, but adult supervision is required for minors to be in those areas because of the potential for emergencies associated with laboratory work.
4. Specific areas requiring adult supervision under this policy include:
  - Bioresearch Complex
  - Colchester Research Facility
  - Cook Building
  - Delehanty

- Given Building
- Health Sciences Research Facility
- Hills Building
- Jeffords Hall
- Marsh Life Science Building & Carrigan Wing
- Perkins Hall
- Rowell Building
- RSEN labs at 705 Spear Street, Rubenstein Ecoscience Center and Aiken Building
- Stafford Building
- STEM Laboratory Building
- Terrill Hall
- Votey Building
- Other areas as designated by a lab supervisor and/or Risk Management & Safety.

### C. Enforcement

As with all other policies affecting the use of hazardous materials, enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of the supervisor of the user of the hazardous material. The supervisor must exercise professional judgment to ensure that this policy is appropriately followed. Problems with compliance with the policy should be referred to the Dean of the College responsible for the building, to the Radiation Safety Committee or Institutional BioSafety Committee, or to the Department of Risk Management & Safety. Employees will not be retaliated against for raising compliance concerns to appropriate authorities.

## **Definitions**

*Minors*: persons under 18 years of age.

## **Procedures**

See Policy Elaboration

## **Forms**

Minors in Lab permission form

[https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Risk-Management-and-Safety/minors\\_in\\_labs\\_permission.pdf](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Risk-Management-and-Safety/minors_in_labs_permission.pdf)

MOU with outside organizations bringing minors to campus labs

<https://www.uvm.edu/riskmanagement/laboratory-safety-notebook>

## Contacts

Questions related to the interpretation of this policy should be directed to:

Risk Management & Safety  
(802) 656-3242  
<https://www.uvm.edu/riskmanagement>

Environmental Health & Safety  
<https://www.uvm.edu/riskmanagement/safety>

Radiation Safety Office  
<https://www.uvm.edu/riskmanagement/radiation-safety>

The Vice President for Operations and Public Safety and Administration is the responsible official for this policy.

## Related Documents/Policies

Laboratory Health and Safety Policy  
<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Policies/policies/labsafety.pdf>

Protecting Minors Policy  
<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Policies/policies/protectminors.pdf>

## Effective Date

Approved by the President August 16, 2016