

## **Wesleyan University Policy on Health and Safety of Children and Youth**

APPLICATION: Trustees, Officers, Faculty, Staff, Employees, Volunteers and all Vendors or Users of Wesleyan Facilities

ISSUED: September 1, 2020

REVISED: September 1, 2020

- 1) Policy Statement. Wesleyan is particularly committed to protecting children and youth who participate in on-campus or Wesleyan-organized or affiliated programs. Wesleyan encourages the application of the utmost care when working with children and youth under 18 years of age (“Minors”) and, as a minimum, requires compliance with the terms of this policy and all applicable law.
- 2) Trustees, Officers, Faculty, Staff, Employees and Volunteers. Wesleyan requires all trustees, officers, faculty, staff, employees and University volunteers to comply with all provisions of this policy.
- 3) Vendors and Users of Wesleyan Facilities. As a pre-condition to providing goods and services or contracted use of Wesleyan facilities, vendors and such users of Wesleyan facilities agree to comply with all provisions of this policy and Wesleyan reserves the right to make such compliance a written condition to any use or vendor agreement with Wesleyan.
- 4) Policy Requirements.
  - a) Background Checks.
    - i) As a condition to employment with the University, all potential Wesleyan employees (excluding students) must pass a criminal and sex offender background check prior to commencing employment with Wesleyan.
    - ii) Any employee who, for any reason has not undergone a criminal and sex offender background check at Wesleyan, as well as all student employees, trustees and volunteers (including students) of the University who will have direct and unsupervised contact with Minors must pass a criminal and sex offender background check prior to commencing such contact.
    - iii) Vendors must ensure that all vendor employees or representatives who will have any unsupervised access to Wesleyan facilities and Minors therein (“Vendors”) pass a criminal and sex offender background check prior to such access.

- iv) Other contracted users of Wesleyan facilities (e.g. camp or other activity organizers or operators) must ensure that all user employees or representatives who will have any unsupervised access to Wesleyan facilities and Minors therein (“Users”), pass a criminal and sex offender background check prior to such access.
- v) Organizers of activities involving Minors should carefully consider additional background checks (e.g. motor vehicle checks) depending on individual responsibilities.

b) Training.

- i) All Wesleyan employees, trustees and volunteers who will have direct contact with Minors must complete, at a minimum, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families’ (“CTDCF”) training on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect which is available on the CTDCF website.
- ii) Vendors and Users shall ensure that all Vendor and User employees having direct contact with Minors shall complete, at a minimum, the CTDCF training on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect which is available on the CTDCF website.

c) Reporting.

- i) Any and all suspected abuse of Minors must be reported to a) CTDCF and/or law enforcement within 12 hours and followed by a written report within 48 hours; b) to Wesleyan Public Safety; and c) to the University General Counsel. For further information on CTDCF reporting, see the CTDCF website. **For the avoidance of doubt, all Wesleyan employees are mandated reporters.** In addition to the requirements of applicable law, Wesleyan requires all Vendors and Users, like Wesleyan employees, to report suspected abuse in compliance with applicable law and as outlined on the CTDCF website.
  - ii) For more information concerning signs of abuse and the processes and procedures for required reporting, please refer to the CTDCF website.
- d) Programs or Activities Involving Increased Risk. Care should be taken to avoid programs or activities with Minors that subject Minors to increased risk. Such programs or activities may include or involve:

- i) laboratories;
- ii) medical and counseling centers;

- iii) athletic facilities and activities;
  - iv) working studios or workshops;
  - v) boat or vehicle transportation;
  - vi) mechanical rooms, power plants or garages;
  - vii) animal facilities;
  - viii) food preparation areas;
  - ix) equipment;
  - x) construction areas; and
  - xi) other high-risk areas or activities
- e) Documentation Requirements. Organizers of events involving Minors must obtain appropriate legal releases and acknowledgements of rules and risks from the parents or legal guardians of all Minor participants, especially but not solely for high risk events as outlined above. Organizers should also confer with facility/activity experts to identify and manage particular risks (e.g. work with Wesleyan Environmental Health and Safety regarding any lab or workshop access and Wesleyan Transportation Services regarding any transportation issues).
- f) Guidelines for Interacting with Minors. All individuals subject to this Policy must observe the following guidelines for interacting with Minors on the Wesleyan campus or as part of Wesleyan related activities. These guidelines are in addition to all other requirements of this Policy and applicable law.
- i) Be Mindful of Boundaries: When interacting with Minors, maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries. Do not engage in behavior, including speech, gestures or physical contact that could be offensive to Minors.
  - ii) Physical Contact: In particular, physical contact with Minors should be avoided wherever possible and should occur only when necessary and appropriate. Be aware of how physical contact with Minors can be perceived. Take particular care to avoid hugs, signs of affection, tickling, rough-housing, wrestling, piggyback or shoulder rides or carries or massages.
  - iii) Discipline: Although limit-setting with Minors may be necessary for safety reasons, physical discipline is not acceptable behavior. Similarly, speech, gestures or other behaviors that can be perceived as bullying, demeaning, belittling, hurtful, or meant to embarrass are never appropriate.
  - iv) One on One Interactions. One on one meetings with Minors should be avoided but, if absolutely necessary, should be held in a public area or where observed by others. All practical effort should be made to meet with Minors only in the company of another adult. If a one on one

meeting cannot be avoided, another organizer should also be notified about the details of the meeting.

- v) Drugs, Alcohol and Other Prohibited Items. The use or possession of illegal drugs (including marijuana) and the use of tobacco products or alcohol is prohibited when interacting with Minors.
- vi) Gifts. Gifts should not be accepted from or given to Minors without the knowledge and permission of their parent/guardian and, in no event, should the value of such gift exceed \$25.
- vii) Communication with Minors. Communication with Minors is only allowed for the specific purpose of conducting the program involved. Do not call, text or engage with Minors using personal devices, email or social media, and do not engage with Minors about any personal subjects. In most, if not all cases, communication should occur with parents or guardians in lieu of minors.