

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

1. Policy

The University (ULM) recognizes that children and their parents participate in various university-sponsored activities and programs on campus year round and such family-oriented activities are supported and encouraged by the University. However, for reasons that include safety of children, work productivity, and assuring professional and efficient performance of campus operations, ULM cannot routinely accommodate children in campus workplaces. Although ULM strives to be a family-friendly environment, it must be recognized that it is not appropriate to regularly bring children to work as a substitute for making arrangements for regular child care while at work.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY (herein “Policy”) is to establish guidelines to address and outline the circumstances under which it is appropriate to permit children in the workplace.

3. Responsibility

Each manager is responsible for enforcing this Policy and implementing controls to prevent abuse of the exceptions listed under subsection B of Section 6. Each department head is responsible for the fair implementation of this Policy.

4. Definitions

“*Brief visits*” is defined as a maximum of two hours on those occasions when the employee’s absence would cause a disruption in the workplace.

“*Child*” or “*Children*” means a child under the age of 16 who is not enrolled in classes at ULM.

“*Parent*” means any employee who has responsibility for a child while in the workplace, regardless of the employee’s relationship to the child.

“*Workplace*” refers to all ULM facilities that may be used as offices, laboratories, studios, classrooms, or clinics, as well as any other spaces used in carrying out the university’s threefold mission of teaching, research, and service.

5. Applicability

This Policy applies to all employees of ULM – classified, unclassified, student workers, and graduate assistants.

6. Procedures

A. General Rule. In general, ULM cannot routinely accommodate children in campus workplaces. The workplace is not an appropriate place for children to be present on a frequent or continuing basis. As an employer, ULM cannot permit either staff or academic employees to provide child care at the worksite or office. There are safety hazards and possible university and supervisory liability in the event of an accident or injury.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

B. Exceptions. Exceptions to the general rule set forth in subsection A of this section include:

- (1) Children and their parent(s)/family may participate in officially sponsored institutional programmatic activities for children with appropriate adult supervision.
- (2) Workplace assignments in which one of the conditions of the employment is residency in a campus facility, *e.g.*, live-in resident hall director.
- (3) Visits coordinated with and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor after considering and satisfactorily addressing the factors set forth in subsection C of this section, provided the employee supervises the child at all times during the visit. Such visits may include:
 - (a) Special occasions that are employer-sanctioned and at which attendance by children is encouraged (*e.g.*, national bring your child to work programs).
 - (b) Brief visits, as defined in this Policy, such as in instances where an employee brings his/her child into the workplace to introduce that child to co-workers; visits during exceptional times when common sense would dictate that it is more efficient for the employee to bring the child into the workplace (*e.g.*, following or before a physicians visit). **BRIEF VISITS SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN TWO HOURS.**
- (4) Compliance with federal and state law, rule or regulation.

C. Factors. The circumstances under which children may be brought into a particular workplace setting should be established by the employee's supervisor taking into account the following factors:

- (1) whether the parent agrees to supervise the child at all times and is willing to accept full responsibility for the child's safety and for any damage to property or injury to persons that is caused by the child's presence; and
- (2) the extent to which the child's presence in the workplace:
 - (a) poses a risk of breach of confidentiality with respect to information in the workplace;
 - (b) creates a potential danger to the child and exposes the University to liability;
 - (c) disrupts the work environment (including the parent's or co-worker's work productivity) or creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to achievement of the specific goals and objectives of the workplace; or
 - (d) such other factors as the supervisor deems appropriate.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

D. Notification. Employees are required to inform their immediate supervisor in advance of bringing a child into the workplace. Where health and safety risk is too great, the manager can decide that it is inappropriate that the child be allowed to be in the workplace.

E. Supervision of Children & Assumption of Risk.

- (1) At all times children remain the sole responsibility of their parent.
- (2) When authorized to bring a child into the workplace, the parent employee must supervise the child at all times and should not leave such child in the custody of another University employee or student, even for brief periods of time.
- (3) Employees are fully responsible for the behavior and actions of their children while in the workplace. Such responsibility includes supervision which is close enough to prevent accidents.
- (4) Parents must continually assess the risk to which their children are/could be subjected and attempt to minimize such risk, take into account that children will be unfamiliar with the working environment, and accompany their children at all times.
- (5) Parents will be asked to remove from the workplace children who are disruptive in any way to the work of other staff, students, visitors or contractors on site.
- (6) It is neither reasonable nor appropriate for an employee to request or require a co-worker to supervise the employee's child.
- (7) An employee who brings his/her child into the workplace, under any circumstance whatsoever, is deemed to have accepted full responsibility for the child's safety and for any damage to property or injury to persons (including the child) that is caused by the child's presence.

F. Accommodations. All members of the ULM community are encouraged to remain sensitive to the needs of working parents, and supervisors and managers are asked to attempt to accommodate working parents who have special needs as a result of family obligations. Various leave options (*e.g.*, annual leave, compensatory leave, FMLA) and/or alternative work schedules, as applicable, may be considered by the immediate supervisor as a means of accommodating the employee.

7. Exemptions

This Policy does not apply to a child attending organized events (*e.g.*, math fairs) where the child is the responsibility of the child's school or other institution, unless the employee removes their child from the event.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

8. Exclusions to Exceptions

A. Children with, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or illness shall not be brought into the workplace.

B. The exceptions listed under subsection B of Section 6 are not applicable to, and children shall not be permitted as visitors in, work areas where safety and/or confidentiality factors exist. Examples of such high-risk safety areas generally include, but are not limited to:

- Shops, mechanical rooms, or confined spaces
- Any areas with excessive noise, temperatures, inadequate ventilation or pollutants
- University vehicles (including rented vehicles, golf carts, and utility vehicles), heavy duty or other motorized equipment
- Any other high-risk areas (rooftops, construction zones, etc.)
- 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.

9. Policy Violations

Violations of this Policy should be brought to the attention of the employee's supervisor and/or Human Resources.

10. Effective Date. This Policy is effective January 1, 2015.