
RULE STATEMENT

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) is committed to ensuring that programs for minors—which are sponsored by or conducted under the direction of AgriLife Extension—will provide activities in a safe, nurturing environment. AgriLife Extension units that conduct programs for minors will comply with The Texas A&M University System (A&M System) Regulations and these rules.

REASON FOR RULE

This rule is required by A&M System Regulation 24.01.06, *Programs for Minors*, and provides guidelines for AgriLife Extension units conducting programs for minors. These guidelines are necessary to ensure compliance with State and Federal laws and A&M System Policies and Regulations.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.0 All programs for minors, including third-party programs using AgriLife facilities, will be approved in writing by the Texas A&M AgriLife (AgriLife) Compliance Officer/designee. (Note: 4-H camps and programs will be approved in accordance with 4-H guidelines.)
- 2.0 In accordance with A&M System Regulation 24.01.06, section 5, criminal and sex offender background checks will be conducted annually on all employees and volunteers who will have contact with minors. AgriLife Human Resources will review the background checks for current employees and the AgriLife Extension Specialist 4-H and Youth Development will review the background checks for volunteers. Determinations will be made to allow or disqualify the individual from participating in these programs as specified in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06.
- 3.0 Except for parent-child relationships, communication, including by social media, between minors and counselors outside the official camp/program communications is prohibited.
- 4.0 Anyone suspecting or having a cause to believe that a minor has been subjected to abuse, molestation, or neglect must immediately make a report to local law enforcement. The AgriLife Compliance Officer/designee must also be notified. All participating employees, volunteers, and third-party personnel must be informed of this requirement.
- 5.0 Distribution of required medication works best when managed by the parent/guardian of the minor. The parent/guardian will be responsible for distribution of medication to the minor unless prior arrangements have been made with the camp nurse/first aid person and/or the camp coordinator.
 - A. The Texas 4-H Conference Center will continue to follow their established protocol for distribution of medication to camp participants.
 - B. If the camp or program has a camp nurse/designated first aid person, the medication(s) will be turned over to the camp nurse/first aid person who will be responsible for providing the medication to the minor as required.
 - C. If the camp or program does not have a camp nurse/designated first aid person, the medication(s) will be distributed by the parent/guardian or, through prior arrangements, may be turned over to a program staff employee/volunteer, who will be responsible for providing these medications to the minor as required. If the

medication is to be distributed by a program staff employee/volunteer, prior written authorization from the parent/guardian must be obtained using the “Authorization for Dispensing Medication” form or equivalent.

- 6.0 For overnight camps, day camps that are more than two days in duration, and day programs for which we have been given the care and custody of a minor and a parent is not with the minor, a 4-H Waiver, Indemnification, and Medical Treatment Authorization Form or Waiver, Indemnification, and Medical Treatment form, AG-909, will be completed, and provided to the camp/program staff. These documents will be filed in Laserfiche in section 7.21.3, if access is available or in paper form and retained in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule. A copy in paper form will be available to the camp director/sponsor during the camp. These documents may contain information protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and access to that information should be strictly controlled—see especially form AG-909, page 3. Note: all persons with access to these forms will be required to remain current on their Youth Protection Training. (4-H camps/programs will use the 4-H forms, and file them in Laserfiche in section 7.3.6.4 if access is available.)
- 7.0 During the planning phase for all programs for minors, a risk assessment will be conducted by the camp director/sponsor or designee to mitigate risks associated with the activities of the event. This risk assessment will be conducted using the A&M System [Risk Assessment Matrix](#) and may include, but is not to be limited to, the following:
- A. A review of any and all activities associated with the event.
 - B. An inspection of any agency-owned facility to ensure it meets health and safety standards. For overnight camps: are housing facilities (including toilet/bathing areas) adequate, and do they meet the required standards.
 - C. Review plans for agency-provided food to ensure adequacy and safety. Consider the possibility of any special needs or requirements for allergen-free food.
 - D. Identification of first-aid/health care providers for the camp/program.
 - E. If transportation is to be provided, identify potential safety issues including, but not limited to drivers, types of vehicles, need for driver certifications, (i.e. 15-passenger vans, etc.), distance of travel, etc.
 - F. Personal protective equipment which may be required.
 - G. Issues relating to dispensing medications, if any.
- File the risk assessment in the unit folder in Laserfiche section 7.21.2 in a camp/program folder if access is available, or in paper form and retain in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule.
- Note: Risk assessments for 4-H camps will follow the established 4-H guidelines unless these conflict with the A&M System Regulations and/or Federal/State laws.
- 8.0 Job duty descriptions for each position involved in the operation of programs will be placed in a unit file, GreatJobs, or other appropriate file, and will be retained in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule.
- 9.0 The recommended participant to counselor ratio is 8:1.
- 10.0 A dedicated camp/program director will be appointed in writing for each camp/program for minors, including third-party programs using AgriLife Extension/AgriLife Research facilities. (4-H programs using AgriLife Extension or AgriLife Research facilities will follow 4-H guidelines.)
- 11.0 When notified that a minor with special needs will attend a camp/program, the minor’s special needs will be accommodated whenever possible and in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws, A&M System regulations and Agency rules.
- 12.0 All units sponsoring programs, including third-party programs, must purchase general liability and accident medical insurance through the A&M System Risk Management Camp Insurance Program, as identified in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06. (4-H camps will follow the 4-H guidelines for general liability insurance whenever practical.) If a third-party program has insurance from another source that meets Risk Management standards

and it has been validated that such third-party insurance is equivalent in limits and coverage to the program provided through A&M System Risk Management, the third-party camp will not be required to purchase additional insurance.

- 13.0 All AgriLife Extension employees will be required to complete training as required in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06 every two years. AgriLife Extension volunteer positions involving contact with minors at a camp/program for minors will be required to complete training as required in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06 every two years. This training may be the A&M System Child Protection Training, or one approved as designated in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06. For any personnel hired specifically for a position involving contact with minors at programs, the training must be completed within the first five days of hire, and be prior to any contact with minors. Certificates will be retained in TrainTraq, in the personnel file (if a non-A&M System training is used), or for volunteers using non-A&M System training, in the appropriate Laserfiche or unit file and retained as required by A&M System Regulation 24.01.06 and the Records Retention Schedule.
- 14.0 The unit holding/sponsoring the camp/program for minors will be required to submit the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) ["Campus Program for Minors" form](#) for each camp/program within five days of the start of the camp if the camp/program for minors meets the following criteria:
- A. has more than 20 campers who are not enrolled at the institution;
 - B. is not a licensed day or youth camp; and
 - C. campers attend or temporarily reside at the camp for all or part of at least four days.
- The form will be submitted via e-mail/mail to TDSHS at the appropriate address as listed on the form, and a copy should be retained in the unit files.
- 17.0 A copy of the participant roster and employee/volunteer roster will be maintained for two years in accordance with A&M System Regulation 21.01.06. These will be placed in Laserfiche in section 7.21.7, or if Laserfiche access is not available, in paper format until Laserfiche access is obtained.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[A&M System Regulation 24.01.06, Programs for Minors](#)

[Texas A&M AgriLife Research Rule 24.06.01.A1, Programs for Minors](#)

[Risk Assessment Matrix](#)

[Campus Program for Minors Information Form](#)

[Waiver, Indemnification, and Medical Treatment Authorization Form](#)

[Authorization for Dispensing Medication \(form 7238\)](#)

DEFINITIONS

Definitions are contained in A&M System Regulation 24.01.06, Programs for Minors page 4.

CONTACT OFFICE

For additional questions, contact Texas A&M AgriLife Risk and Compliance at 979-845-7879.