



Minors in UTRGV Research laboratories Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management

General

1. The purpose of the minor student's participation in laboratory activities at UTRGV is to provide the student with an introduction to an academic field of study and research and/or to offer the student an educational mentoring opportunity. The laboratory experience at UTRGV is solely for the benefit of the student. Accordingly, at no time will there be an employment relationship between the student and UTRGV, and the student may not receive any wages or other compensation for any of his or her educational activities at UTRGV.
2. Signed parental consent and liability waiver forms are required for all participants under 18, and must be obtained prior the commencement of any activities. For ongoing recognized programs with competitive application processes, these forms may be obtained once the students who will participate have been selected. For individual mentorships, the forms can be obtained by contacting the EHSRM (665-3690) (882-5929) office.
3. All departments sponsoring UTRGV University approved educational programs are mandated to purchase the UT System CAMP Accident and Liability insurance. The program is responsible for the purchase of insurance and can be obtained by contacting the EHSRM (665-3690) (882-5929)

SAFETY AND SECURITY

4. No person under the age of 14 may enter a UTRGV research laboratory.
5. Student's ages of 14- 17 may enter a UTRGV laboratory as part of a UTRGV University approved educational program (e.g. STEM; High Scholars Program; HHMI.) or individual educational mentorship with a faculty member. All minors working in research laboratories that are not part of an approved program are classified as volunteers and are required to have prior approval from the provosts' office. Minors classified as volunteers are required to have an approved supervisory plan.

Youths aged 6-13 may enter University research laboratories for one-time educational or recruitment purposes.

6. Minors are prohibited from working with **radioactive materials, infectious agents (BSL-2 and BSL-3), acutely toxic agents (rat LD50 < 50mg/kg), carcinogens (IARC) Group 1 or 2A, nano particles and controlled substances** Activities involving these specific agents can be allowed only after a review from the EHSRM.

7. All proposed activities conducted by minors in University research laboratories must adhere to any requirements or restrictions imposed by the UTRGV University Office of Environmental Health and Safety (“EHSRM”), the department or school (e.g. HIPAA training for School of Medicine activities), the Department Chair, and where appropriate other bodies such as the IRB and IACUC.
8. All required training must be completed by the minor prior to engaging in lab activities. General Laboratory Safety training must be conducted “in person” by the EHSRM staff. In addition to the general training provided by the EHSRM, documented specific training is required regarding the specific procedures respective to the work being conducted by the minor.

Non-laboratory (e.g. classroom/lecture) portions of an educational program may begin prior to the completion of EHSRM, IRB, HIPAA, IACUC or other stipulated training.

9. All laboratory personnel who interact with a minors in the laboratory are required to attend Child Protection Training and comply with the requirements specific to working with minors. Child Protection training is available by contacting the EHSRM at 665-3690, or 882-5929)
10. All minors are required to be **supervised at all times** by the Principal Investigator or a qualified scientific supervisor. At no time should a minor be alone in a UTRGV laboratory. It is recommended that at least two laboratory personnel (in addition to the minor student) s be present at all times when working in a laboratory.
11. **UTRGV faculty members** or **Program Directors** sponsoring minors shall be responsible for the following:
 1. Arranging for all stipulated training to be completed **before** the laboratory activity begins.
 2. Certifying that the parental consent form has been signed by the minor’s parent/guardian and received by the sponsor.
 3. For students classified as volunteers, ensuring that the application has been approved by the provosts’ office.
 4. Ensuring that the appropriate PPE is obtained prior to laboratory activities.
 5. Ensuring that the student is appropriately supervised at all times.
 6. Compliance with all applicable rules and regulations including, but not limited to, laboratory work practices, the use of PPE, and use of engineering controls.

Compliance

EHSRM has the authority to suspend laboratory activities, including removal of the student if EHSRM finds violations with this policy. Violations of this policy will be reported to the department chair.

Definitions

Minor – Person under the age of 18.

Research Laboratory - Any part of a building used or intended to be used for scientific or technical activities which may be hazardous; used primarily for research. This policy also covers off-campus UTRGV properties/facilities, on-and off-campus clinical facilities, and fieldwork locations where the approved educational activity is conducted under the supervision of a UTRGV faculty member.