
RULE SUMMARY

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.

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 or non-AgriLife facilities, will be approved in writing by the Texas A&M AgriLife (AgriLife) Compliance Officer/designee. (Note: 4-H programs will be approved in accordance with employee's plan of work.)
- 2.0 Criminal and sex offender background checks will be conducted triennially on volunteers and annually on other individuals involved with a program for 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 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, including the suspicion that a digital device has been used to photograph a minor in a compromising position, must immediately make a report to local law enforcement. The Director of the Ethics and Compliance Office must also be notified. All participating employees, volunteers, and third-party personnel must be informed of this requirement prior to the start of the program..
- 5.0 The distribution of medicine shall be as follows:
 - A. 4-H members and/or parents/guardians participating in a 4-H event or activity are expected to notify and disclose in detail to the event management any health issues, special needs, or allergies that may prevent them from fully participating or pose a risk to themselves and/or other participants. Parents/guardians of the 4-H members that are taking medication should decide if event management should be notified of their child's need for assistance with taking the medications. Participants who are 15 years of age and older are permitted to be responsible for their own medication, however, consent must be provided by the parent/guardian of the participant using the Permission for Self Medication Form.
 - i. The Texas 4-H Conference Center will continue to follow their established protocol for distribution of medication to program participants.

- B. When a program has a nurse/designated first aid person, the medication(s) will be turned over to the nurse/first aid person, who will be responsible for providing the medication to the minor as required and documented.
 - C. If medication will be dispensed by the program, all medication must be stored:
 - i. out of reach of all participants,
 - ii. locked in storage in a manner that does not contaminate food, or
 - iii. refrigerated, if required, separate from food.
 - D. When the program does not have a nurse/designated first aid person, the medication(s) will be distributed by the parent/guardian or, through prior arrangements, may be turned over to the dedicated program director, or their designee, who will be responsible for providing the medication(s) to the minor as directed by the label or parent/guardian. If the medication is to be distributed by the program director, or their designee, prior written authorization from the parent/guardian must be obtained using the “Authorization for Dispensing Medication” form or equivalent.
- 6.0 Each program participant must complete the Indemnification, and Medical Treatment Authorization Form or Waiver, Indemnification, and Medical Treatment form, AG-909, will be completed, and provided to the 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 A&M System Records Retention Schedule. A copy in paper form will be available to the dedicated program director during the program. 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 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 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 program 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. Periodic evaluation of Facilities Use Agreements or inspection reports during risk assessment to determine proper facilities inspection.
 - 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 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.
- File the risk assessment in the unit folder in Laserfiche section 7.21.2 in a 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 programs 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 in Workday or other appropriate file, and will be retained in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule.
- 9.0 For each program, the minor/counselor ratio will be 8:1 or less, with no fewer than 2 adult counselors at any time. There will be no one-on-one contact with an adult/counselor and a minor unless in full view of other participants/counselors of the program.

- 10.0 When notified that a minor with special needs will attend a 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 and procedures.
- 11.0 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 programs will follow the 4-H guidelines for general liability insurance whenever practical.) If a third-party program has insurance from another source that meets A&M 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 program will not be required to purchase additional insurance through the A&M System.
- 12.0 All AgriLife Extension employee program counselors and volunteer positions involving contact with minors at a program for minors will be required to successfully complete the System-approved Child Protection Training Course as stated 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 in 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 section 7.21.6 and retained for two years as required by A&M System Regulation 24.01.06 and the Records Retention Schedule.
- 13.0 The unit holding/sponsoring the program for minors will be required to submit the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) ["Campus Program for Minors" form](#) for each program within five days of the start of the program if the program for minors meets the following criteria:
- A. Has more than 20 participants who are not enrolled at the institution.
 - B. Not a licensed day or youth program.
 - C. Participants attend or temporarily reside at the program for all or part of at least four days.
- The form will be submitted via email/mail to TDSHS at the appropriate address as listed on the form, and a copy should be retained in the unit files.
- 15.0 A copy of the participant roster and employee/volunteer roster will be maintained in accordance with A&M System Regulation 24.01.06.

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*](#)

[Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab Rule 24.06.01.V1, *Programs for Minors*](#)

[Risk Assessment Matrix](#)

[Campus Program for Minors Form](#)

[Permission for Self Medication Form](#)

[Texas 4-H Protecting Our Youth](#)

[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](#).

CONTACT OFFICE

Questions regarding this rule should be referred to Texas A&M AgriLife Ethics and Compliance at 979-845-7879.

REVISION HISTORY

Approved: May 23, 2014
Revised: February 22, 2016
Revised: August 13, 2020

Next Scheduled Review: August 13, 2025