

## **Guidelines: Minors in Hazardous Areas**

### **1. General**

UNM is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment for all members of the campus community and visitors. This policy governs minors in any university laboratory and/or environment that contain hazardous chemicals, biohazards or infectious materials, radioactive materials or radiation-producing equipment, as well as physical hazards including but not limited to compressed gases, high voltage, extreme temperature, excessive noise, or lasers.

The principles underlying this policy are that minors may be more susceptible to certain hazards and may be less aware of the potential risks and hazards in laboratories.

### **2. Definitions**

**Biohazards** – Any infectious agent and/or materials (e.g. biological toxins) produced by a living organism that causes disease in another living organism, including but not limited to human blood, bodily fluids, tissues and organs, recombinant DNA materials, bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, plants or plant pests carrying plant disease, animals carrying infectious diseases, plant and animal toxins, animal dander and other similar materials.

**Hazardous Material** – Any item or agent (biological, chemical, physical) which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment, either by itself or through interaction with other factors.

**Minor** – any person who has not attained the age of 18. This policy does not apply to students enrolled in courses listed in a campus course catalog having a laboratory component. This policy also does not apply to minors who are patients/health research volunteers.

**Select Agent and Toxin**- Regulated materials which pose a severe threat to public health and safety. Regulations on the use, storage, and transportation are covered under 42 CFR Part 73, 7 CFR Part 331, and 9 CFR Part 121. A list of select agents and toxins can be found at <http://www.selectagents.gov>.

### **3. Restrictions**

Minors under the age of 14 are not allowed in UNM laboratories [access to other areas may also be prohibited by departments], other than as part of an approved and supervised tour. This includes children and family members of laboratory personnel. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis pending approval and review from the university Bio Safety Officer or other ranking university official with appropriate authority.

Minors between the ages of 15 and 18 are generally prohibited from the following:

- Laboratories posted a Biosafety Level 3 or Biosafety Level 4;
- Laboratories posted at Biosafety Level 2;
- Areas with high radiation or airborne radioactivity;
- Areas with hazardous chemicals such as carcinogens, teratogens, mutagens, toxins, acutely toxic or controlled substances;
- Select Agent laboratory facilities;
- Facilities that house or conduct procedures on research animals unless prior approval and clearance has been granted.

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- Areas that require operation of equipment or machinery that requires specialized training, skills, or personal protective equipment, such that an individual who is not trained or skilled could incur serious injuries.

### **4. Supervision of Minors**

The Principal Investigator (PI) has the responsibility for the health and safety of minors working in his or her laboratory. If a PI allows minors to be present in a laboratory, the PI must obtain written authorization for a minor to participate in the laboratory and observe all specific restrictions and procedures required by UNM. The PI must also ensure and verify that the “Minor in Lab Consent Form” has been completed and received prior to allowing a minor into the laboratory.

A minor may only work in a laboratory under direct supervision by the PI or designated lab personnel. Minors shall not be left unsupervised in the laboratory.

The PI shall ensure that standard safety precautions are followed and that proper personal protective equipment (PPE) is available and utilized at all times (lab coats, safety glasses, gloves, etc.).

### **5. Training for Minors**

Minors working in laboratories are required to complete all appropriate safety training before beginning work. The PI is responsible for ensure that the minor receives the appropriate safety training. All lab-specific training provided to the minors is required to be documented and retained by the PI for at least one year.