



Parental Involvement Guidelines

Guiding Principle

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the parental involvement guidelines allow University of Wisconsin-Madison staff members from University Housing and the Offices of the Dean of Students divisions to contact and notify parents/guardians of certain serious behaviors/incidents involving their students who are under 21 years of age. While staff will always regard students as autonomous adults and work with them in a developmentally appropriate manner when addressing behavioral concerns, parents/guardians can often influence students differently than staff. Therefore, these guidelines are intended to provide the opportunity to occasionally partner with parents/guardians in order to assist students who may be struggling with alcohol/drug abuse, mental health disorders, or safety-related concerns when such partnership would have educational and health-related benefit to the student.

Process

In cases when staff are made aware of applicable incidents as listed below and staff in their professional judgment determine that parental involvement would have educational or health benefit to the student, staff from the Student Advocacy & Judicial Affairs (SAJA) unit in the Offices of the Dean of Students and from Residence Life programs in the Division of University Housing will* contact parents/guardians of students when one or more of the following conditions applies:

- When there is an alcohol or other drug violation of UWS 17 that results in a sanction of probation, which would mean subsequent violations could result in suspension or expulsion from the university, for an underage student; or
- When a student's behavior has and may continue to pose a serious risk to the health, safety or well-being of themselves or of other persons. Specific examples would include;
 - When an underage student is transported to a detox facility or hospital for an overdose of alcohol or other drugs; or
 - When a student has attempted suicide or has engaged in suicidal demonstrations/ideation and when staff feel the student may be a danger to themselves and/or has been a disruption in the living environment and to other students.

If one or more of the above criteria are met, staff will meet with the student and let the student know of the plan to contact their parents/guardians. If the staff member, after consulting with a supervisor, determines that parents/guardians involvement may help in abatement of the concerning behavior, the student shall be encouraged to make the initial contact with the parent or guardian. The staff member would then follow up with a phone call, or in some cases, a letter to the parents/guardians. This contact would briefly describe the situation and ask for assistance in redirecting the student to more constructive or healthful behaviors. Should a student decide to ignore our requests for a meeting, notification will be sent to the student informing them of our intent to involve their parents or guardians and the parents/guardians will subsequently be contacted.

SAJA staff will inform the appropriate residence hall staff of parent/guardian notifications involving students living in University residence halls. Similarly, Residence Life staff will inform the SAJA staff of all such notifications.

**There may be circumstances where parental notification may be impossible or inappropriate due to unusual or extenuating personal or family circumstances. Students will be afforded the opportunity to demonstrate that notification would be counterproductive or would present a danger to the student's well-being.*

APPROVED 9-06-05

These guidelines were reviewed and approved with a majority vote by the Dean of Students Advisory Board on February 15, 2005.

Offices of the Dean of Students

75 Bascom Hall, 500 Lincoln Drive • Madison, WI 53706 • 608/263-5700 • TTY: 608/263-2400 • URL: www.wisc.edu/students