

Chaperone Guidelines For UA Events

The University of Alaska conducts a variety of events and activities where chaperoning may be desired, or may be required due to the young age of participants. The intent of this guide is to provide assistance to university administrators and managers in developing a program responsive to these needs. This guide includes some of the basic considerations when developing a program where chaperones are going to be utilized. However, some programs may need more or less structure and detail depending upon the nature of and length of the event as well as the age and capabilities of the participants. Should you have need of additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact risk management.

Selection of Chaperones

Chaperones should have criminal background checks and be gender appropriate for the participant group. Background checks are available at Alaska State Troopers offices and may be able to be conducted through campus human resource departments. Background checks should be given to the event director for review. Any questions on qualification should be discussed with risk management.

Chaperones should have some experience with the participant age group, be able to work effectively with that age group, and be over the age of 21. Chaperones should be given appropriate orientation and instruction and any important rules should be put in writing to assure clarity and be available for reference. Chaperones can be volunteers, however, at least one university employee should be available to the group at all times.

Chaperone Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations

Some of the areas they may require discussion and establishment of guidelines include:

- Activity planning
- Orientation
- Rules of conduct
- Curfew and monitoring for overnight events
- Interaction with university faculty and staff
- Parent interaction
- Diversity of staff and participants to include cultural expectations
- Relation with others on campus and/or at the location of the event
- Common problems and how to deal with and/or report them
- Tips on talking with participants and active listening skills
- Confidentiality
- Participant health, emergencies, and crisis management

- Personal safety and crime prevention
- Insurance

Following are some of the basic issues applicable to nearly every chaperoned event:

Behavior & Disciplinary Procedures for Participants

Important rules should be written. Use of alcohol or illegal drugs/substances or other major infractions should be at a zero infraction tolerance level (break the rules and you go home at your parents' cost). The behavior expectations and rules should be in a contractual form and signed by both the participants and parents or guardians prior to participation. They should include codes of conduct and curfew times if the event includes an overnight.

Chaperones should promptly report any behavior incidents (curfew violations, use of alcohol, etc.) to the event director.

Supervision

Depending on the ages of the participants, the nature, and the location of the activity, recommended chaperone to participant ratios generally range from 1:5 to 1:10.

Suggested ratios:	Elementary school age:	1 chaperone to 5
	Middle/junior high school age:	1 chaperone to 8
	High school age:	1 chaperone to 10

Please note that there should always be at least two adults present with every group so that, in the event of an emergency, the group will not be left unsupervised.

Checking in and out

A formal check-in and check-out procedure for the participants should be used.

Transportation

Non UA employee chaperones may not be used as drivers to transport event participants without prior written approval of campus risk management.

Emergency Procedures

Chaperones should maintain an operating cell phone and be provided with a phone list of persons to call if there is an incident or emergency.

Emergency procedures should be developed and include: what-to-do scenarios, contact information, first aid and medical services, transportation, etc. All chaperones should receive training on emergency procedures prior to beginning their assignment and age appropriate training should also be provided to participants (evacuation points, reporting injuries, etc.). Campus environmental health and safety staff can assist you in developing appropriate procedures and training.

Incident/Accident Reporting

Incidents or accidents and near misses should be reported in writing. Do not determine cause on the reports, just report the facts. An incident report form is available at <http://www.alaska.edu/risksafety/download/IncidentRpt.pdf>.

First Aid/CPR

One or more of the chaperones should be currently certified and trained in first aid and CPR. One or more first aid kits should be carried with the group. Standard OSHA-type kits are available in most department stores. ABSOLUTELY NO medicines (ingestible, topical, inhalable, etc.) should be carried in the kits. Only dispense medicines to children which have been provided by the parents or guardians along with written specific directions provided by the parents, guardians or professional health care providers.

Before conducting wilderness camping, hiking, foreign travel, activities on open water, or other high risk activities that require chaperones, please contact risk management at least 30 days in advance for a program risk review.

Pre-event Orientation

All chaperones should attend a pre-event orientation with the event director or coordinator at which time the event activities will be outlined, participants with special needs identified, and chaperone expectations, responsibilities, and emergency procedures discussed.

Program Participant Orientation

At the Participant Orientation, the chaperones should be formally introduced to the participants they will be working with and the chaperone roles, responsibility, and authority defined for the participants. The code of conduct for participants and other expectations during the event should be discussed at this time along with emergency procedures. Inform the participants where a chaperone or other official can always be found in case of an emergency.

Insurance

- **Workers' Compensation:** Qualified volunteers may be provided workers compensation benefits as determined by risk management. (Employees are covered under their normal benefits package if acting as a chaperone in course and scope of their job.)
- **Liability:** The University may defend and indemnify employees and qualified volunteers operating within the course and scope of their employment for injury or damage claims.
- **Property Damage:** Damages caused by participants are the responsibility of the parents or guardians as consistent with local and state statutes.
- **Personal Property:** The University does not provide insurance coverage for personal property.
- **Other:** Volunteer chaperones are responsible for their personal insurance needs such as privately owned auto, health, and property coverage.

See <http://www.alaska.edu/risksafety/html/ins.xml> for additional details on insurance for volunteers.

Sample Agreement: Chaperone Responsibilities

(Insert this text for overnight events)

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a chaperone at the _____(event). As chaperones, you will be assisting in the health and safety of the participants during this event. Your adherence to the guidelines outlined below is essential in promoting a safe and successful event.

The [conference] will have a strict ____ p.m. curfew for all participants. This means that all participants must be in their assigned rooms at that time. You will be provided with a room list showing which participants are assigned to which room.

Your duties will be as follows:

1. Attend the program participant orientation. You will be introduced to the participants at this time. ***You will be given a list of participants and their room assignments.***
2. Adhere to guidelines established by the event director or coordinator.
3. Refrain from use of alcohol, unlawful drugs/substances.
4. Maintain an operating cell phone and phone list on your person at all times. You will be given a phone list of persons to call if there is an incident or emergency.
5. Attend to all of the obligations associated with chaperoning and insure that personal distractions will not interfere with those obligations.
6. Know the behavior expectations for the participants.
7. Discourage inappropriate conduct and activities such as sexual contact, drug and alcohol use, rough housing, and damage to property.
8. Promptly report any behavior incidents (curfew violations, use of alcohol, etc.) to _____
9. Circulate through your assigned area at least once per hour ***prior to curfew*** to monitor noise levels and behavior.
10. Report concerns as soon as possible to a university or other appropriate official.
11. ***Conduct a bed check of participants at [10] p.m. by knocking on each door and checking to see that each participant is in their assigned room and that there are no visitors in the room. Female chaperones are to check female participant rooms and male chaperones are to check male participant rooms.***
12. ***Conduct hourly hall checks between 10 and 3 am.***
13. Should there be an accident or incident, you will be requested to complete an incident report with a detailed accounting of what happened. All accident and incidents should be reported.
14. Maintain a positive attitude and have fun!