



Policy Name:	Protection of Minors					
Section Number:	4.06	Section Title:	Office of the President			
Policy Owner:	Chief Student Affairs Officer		Last updated:	February 2020	Reviewed:	March 2020
Status:	Active		Due for Review:	March 2025		

I. Overview

Jones County Junior College (Jones College) is committed to providing a safe environment for minors who participate in Jones College sponsored programs or in programs operated by outside entities that are held in College facilities.

II. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and the implementing procedure, the following definitions shall apply:

Minor: An individual under the age of 18 who is participating in a Jones College sponsored program on Jones College premises or another location or in programs operated by outside agencies that are held in Jones College facilities. For purposes of this policy, this definition does not include Jones College-enrolled students or employees under the age of 18.

Authorized Adult/Program Staff: Individuals 18 years or older who supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee Minors involved in a Covered Program. These include but are not limited to, faculty, staff, volunteers, students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. An Authorized Adult may hold such positions as counselor, coach, chaperone, instructors, etc. This definition does not include individuals who work with the program but do not have contact with the minor participants. Those excluded can include guest speakers, presenters, judges, or other individuals who have only short-term interactions with the participants while in the presence of Program Staff.

Program/Activity Director: The individual employed by Jones College responsible for the administration of any Jones College sponsored or Jones College affiliated Program. The Director can also be an individual not employed by Jones College who controls an activity held on Jones College Premises.

Guardian: A Minor's parent, legal guardian, or other person over the age of 18 who has been designated by a Minor's parent or legal guardian to be responsible for the Minor.

Covered Program:

Programs or group activities that are marketed to, designed for, or includes minors as participants. A covered program may be offered by students, employees, departments or administration of Jones College.

Covered Programs may also include activities held by non-College entities on Jones College premises or in Jones College facilities. By way of example only, the following activities would NOT, as a general rule, be deemed to be Covered Programs:

- activities or events on campus that are open to the general public and at which a parent/guardian/chaperone is reasonably expected to be present at all times or to otherwise provide appropriate supervision of the Minors (e.g., athletic events, concerts, theater productions, Treats in the Street, open house events);
- activities, even if not open to the general public, at which a parent/guardian is present with the Minor at all times;
- campus visits as part of a field trip or event hosted by a childcare facility, elementary or secondary school, community college, religious organization or other group where supervision would reasonably be expected to be provided by such group (e.g., departmental visits by elementary schools, library visits);
- athletic, academic, musical or other competitions that involve no significant, substantive programming beyond the competition itself (e.g., high school football game, academic contests, ACT testing, choral or band competitions);
- campus tours to prospective students, including prospective athletes);
- activities that have as their primary purpose recruiting students to enroll at Jones College;
- services provided by any licensed childcare facility housed on campus or under Jones College's oversight, or any entity that provides counseling or other medical or mental health treatment to Minors;
- off-campus activities, including clinical, practicum or student teaching experiences;
- off-campus activities undertaken by Jones students or employees that are not part of an off-campus program sponsored by Jones College, even if these activities are undertaken in order to satisfy service or volunteer hour requirements (e.g., tutoring, coaching or mentoring Minors as an individual activity, working with Boys Club or Girls Club); and
- private, personal events that occur on campus.

Sponsoring Unit:

Jones College organization, department or administrative unit that offers a Covered Program involving minors.

III. Reporting Abuse

No form of child abuse, as defined by Mississippi law, or abuse of a Minor, whether physical, emotional, or sexual will be permitted or tolerated under any circumstances. Harm or threatened harm to a Minor's health or welfare can occur through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual misconduct or attempted sexual misconduct. It can also occur through negligent treatment or maltreatment of a Minor, which could include the failure to provide adequate nourishment, medical treatment, supervision, clothing, or shelter.

State law provides that anyone having reasonable cause to suspect that a minor is neglected or abused must immediately report the activity to the Department of Child Protection Services. See Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-353 (as amended 2012).

For purposes of this reporting obligation, a neglected child is a child:

- i. Whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, neglects or refuses, when able so to do, to provide for him proper and necessary care or support, or education as required by law, or medical, surgical, or other care necessary for his well-being; however, a parent who withholds medical treatment from any child who in good faith is under treatment by spiritual means alone through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by a duly accredited

- practitioner thereof shall not, for that reason alone, be considered to be neglectful under any provision of this chapter; or
- ii. Who is otherwise without proper care, custody, supervision or support; or
 - iii. Who, for any reason, lacks the special care made necessary for him by reason of his mental condition, whether the mental condition is having mental illness or having an intellectual disability; or
 - iv. Who, for any reason, lacks the care necessary for his health, morals or well-being.

Similarly, for purposes of reporting, an abused child is a child whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, whether legally obligated to do so or not, has caused or allowed to be caused, upon the child, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, mental injury, non-accidental physical injury or other maltreatment. However, physical discipline, including spanking, performed on a child by a parent, guardian or custodian in a reasonable manner shall not be deemed abuse under this section. (Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-105).

Additionally, under Miss. Code Ann. § 97-5-51, health care practitioners, clergy members, teaching or child care providers, law enforcement officers and commercial image processors, who are performing their occupational duties, are required to report a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a “sex crime against a minor” under the age of 16. The report under this statute should be made immediately to the law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction in which the sex crime is believed to have occurred, to Child Protection Services, or in accordance with any applicable licensing requirement.

Jones College also requires anyone who has reasonable cause to suspect that a Minor has been injured, harmed, abused or neglected to immediately report the matter to Campus Police or the Office of Student Affairs. If an incident occurs off campus, then an immediate report should be made to the Program Director.

In deciding whether or not to report an incident or situation of suspected abuse or neglect, it is not required that you have proof that abuse or neglect has occurred. Any uncertainty in deciding to report suspected abuse or neglect should be resolved in favor of making a good faith report as outlined above.

IV. Requirements for Covered Programs

All Covered Programs are required to comply with the following procedures:

- a. **Registration.** The Program Director of a Covered Program must register the Covered Program with the Office of Student Affairs by completing the appropriate Form available in the Student Affairs Office. Student Affairs will determine if the program requested is a Covered Program as defined in this policy.
- b. **Background Examination.** All Authorized Adults must have a background examination on file with the College. All examinations must be completed prior to the commencement of the Covered Program. It is the responsibility of the Program Director to comply with this policy.
- c. **Training.** The Program Director shall be responsible for ensuring that all Authorized Adults working in a Covered Program have completed appropriate training prior to the commencement of the Covered Program and providing proof of training to the Office of Student Affairs.
- d. JCJC reserves the right to require outside organizations that rent or reserve college facilities to purchase an appropriate certificate of liability/property damage insurance and a policy for sexual molestation in the amount of one million dollars each.
- e. JCJC also reserves the right to decline requests for events or cancel events scheduled during natural disasters, pandemics or states of emergency issued by state or national government.

V. Non-College Entities

Any entity using Jones College's facilities for the conduct of an event or program that would be a Covered Program if under the oversight of the College shall sign a Protection of Minors Agreement that obligates the third-party sponsor to comply with this Policy and any additional terms that Jones deems necessary for the protection of Minors. The Agreement shall also require the third-party sponsor to provide proof of compliance to Jones College upon request.

VI. Code of Conduct for Interacting with Minors

- Do not spend time alone, either on or off campus, with a Minor away from others. If one-on-one interaction is required, meet in open, well-lit rooms or spaces with windows observable by other adults from the Program.
- Do not engage in any sexual actions, make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, or share or view sexually explicit material with or within the vicinity of Minors.
- Do not touch Minors in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- Do not shower, bathe, or undress with or in the presence of a Minor.
- Do not engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a Minor, including but not limited to verbal abuse, hitting, punching, poking, or restraining, except as required to protect a Minor or others from harm. All incidents involving such conduct, whether or not required to protect a Minor or others from harm, must be documented and disclosed promptly to the Program Director and the Minor's parent/guardian.
- Be aware of the impact of your words and language on Minors.
- Do not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty or when responsible for a Minor's welfare.
- Do not meet with Minors outside of established times for Program activities. Any exceptions require parental authorization and must include more than one adult from the Program.
- Do not engage or converse with Minors through email, text messages, social networking websites, or other forms of social media at any time except and unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communications is consistent with the mission of the Program and the college.
- When transporting Minors in a Program, more than one adult from the Program must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple Minors will be in the vehicle at all times through the transportation. Avoid using personal vehicles if possible.
- Do not tell children "this is just between the two of us" or use similar language that encourages Minors to keep secrets from their parent/guardians.