

# SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

## Policy Manual

**SUBJECT:** Disruption of Workplace Setting

**NUMBER:** 4:41

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### 1. Preamble

The Board of Regents strives to attract the best and the brightest, and to encourage the pursuit of higher education among aspiring students, accomplished teachers and researchers, and diligent administrators. As part of this education mission, the Regental system sponsors many recruiting activities and welcomes young children and families to many special events. However, in consideration of safety and in order to create an environment most conducive to learning and efficient to work activities, children, family, pets (other than service animals as defined below), and other non-work related individuals are prohibited from routinely being brought to the workplace.

### 2. Applicability

This policy applies to employees and persons who visit or participate in classes, programs, events, or other activities who may wish to bring dependent children, family, pets, or others to the workplace. This policy does not apply to approved institutional programs that involve children, including designated research programs with child subjects, youth camps hosted at any of the Regental institutions, childcare services offered in childcare facilities, or an occasional brief visit. In addition, this policy will not apply to school sponsored activities or special events that are designed to promote interaction between the community, our staff members, their families, and our students.

Service animals are defined as animals trained to assist people with disabilities in the activities of normal living. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) definition of service animals is "any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items."

### 3. Procedure

It is the policy of the BOR not to allow children in work areas, hallways, libraries, lounges; areas adjacent to classrooms, laboratories, or offices; or in institutional housing (except for family housing) except under brief or exceptional circumstances during the standard working hours. This policy helps to ensure safety and to prevent children from inadvertently distracting faculty, staff, and students from their work or pursuit of an

education. Children and pets are expressly prohibited from entering hazardous areas at all times. Laboratories, kitchens, and workshops are examples of locations that often present hazards. Questions regarding whether an area has been deemed hazardous should be directed to the human resources department.

#### **4. Guidelines When Children Are Present**

In those brief or exceptional circumstances where children are allowed, the following guidelines apply:

- Children must remain under direct supervision at all times.
- A child who has an illness that prevents or would prevent them from being accepted by a regular daycare provider should never be brought to campus.
- Children must not be allowed in any unsafe work area, or where their presence may put the safety of others in jeopardy including but not limited to laboratories or workshops.
- The presence of the child must not disrupt the work or learning environment or negatively impact productivity.
- Students should not bring children to class, however, if an emergency situation occurs prior approval of the faculty member must be sought before the child is brought into the classroom.
- Any request from the workplace that children be removed due to disruption must be honored immediately.
- The student or employee who brings a child to campus, regardless of permission granted, is solely responsible for the child and their safety and may not ask any other student or employee to supervise the child.

#### **5. Responsibility**

Employees and students who have both a professional responsibility to the institution and a parental/guardian responsibility for a child, may face difficult decisions when balancing the need for productivity at work or in the classroom with the need to accommodate, nurture and protect the child. If employees must attend to their children and short term childcare cannot be arranged, employees may request an alternative work schedule (BOR Policy 4:39, Alternative Work Schedule), may utilize comp-time if eligible, may request annual leave, or may request leave without pay to accommodate their children during working hours.

**SOURCE:** BOR, March 2006.