

## Introduction

SEA requires that all programs have a Student Protection Plan that is reviewed annually. All new staff and volunteers should be trained upon hire or commencement of work, as applicable, and all current staff and volunteers should be aware of and trained on the Protection Plan annually to ensure student safety throughout the year. SEA programs should develop a system for tracking when employees have been trained, what the training entailed, and when employees and volunteers are scheduled for any upcoming training.

## Overview

Below are the core components that SEA requires programs to address in their Student Protection Plans. Each component is addressed more thoroughly in the sections below.

- Staff/Volunteer Screening Process
- Staff/Volunteer Training
- Student Supervision Standards
- Appropriate Staff-Student Interactions
- Mandated Reporting Information
- Building Safety
- Student Transportation
- Field Trip Protocols
- Student Paperwork
- Student Health

## Staff/Volunteer Screening Process

**Background checks:** SEA member programs must have a written background check policy that requires criminal, sexual offender, and motor vehicle (as applicable) background checks of staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers should be informed prior to their hire or commencement of work, as applicable, that their employment/engagement is contingent upon a successful background check. The policy should include the following:

- The type and frequency of background checks conducted on volunteers (reference checks, driver checks, criminal record checks, sexual offender record checks, etc.), and forms required by staff/volunteers to complete these checks. SEA requires that programs, at a minimum, run criminal and sexual background checks:
  - on all new staff (18+ years) upon extending an offer of employment
  - on all new volunteers (18+ years), including homestay hosts, before allowing interactions with students
  - on all returning staff members and volunteers (18+ years) every five years

- ❑ Policy about how to keep staff/volunteer information confidential (social security numbers, results from background check, etc.)
- ❑ Guidelines for what the organization will do if something appears on the staff/volunteer background check

**Voluntary Self-Disclosure:** Staff members and volunteers, as part of their application process and annually thereafter, must sign a disclosure statement to self-report any arrests, convictions, or pending charges (and driving violations if applicable)

**Additional screening:** During the hiring process, all staff members should undergo additional screening, including an interview, reference checks, and verification of previous work history. Consider drug testing for certain staff as permissible by state law and as appropriate given staff responsibilities (e.g., staff with driving responsibilities).

**Third party background checks:** Programs that utilize a third party for a fee to conduct background checks must ensure that they follow the specific requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

## **Staff/Volunteer Training**

SEA member programs must train all staff and volunteers, and should have the following in place.

- ❑ Policy describing who, when and what training staff members and volunteers must receive
- ❑ Annual review with all staff of Student Protection Plan
- ❑ Mandatory training for all new staff upon hire, and returning staff at least every three years, and sooner if required by state law or if needed to maintain active certifications.
- ❑ Mandatory training for all staff includes:
  - ❑ Appropriate interactions with youth, including sexual harassment and abuse prevention
  - ❑ Van safety (for all staff who operate 12- and 15-passenger vans)
- ❑ Mandatory training for all frontline staff and supervisors includes:
  - ❑ Mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect
  - ❑ Youth suicide awareness & prevention, or other mental health training that includes suicide prevention
  - ❑ Age-appropriate First Aid and CPR Training from a nationally recognized provider
- ❑ Mandatory for all volunteers includes, at a minimum:
  - ❑ Appropriate interactions with youth, including sexual harassment and abuse prevention
  - ❑ Mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect



- ❑ Program orientation (program goals, philosophy, expectations/roles of volunteers, staff contact information, etc.)

## **Student Supervision Standards**

SEA member programs must be thoughtful and intentional about who is allowed to supervise students, and should have the following in place.

- ❑ Ratios for student supervision  
For guidance, the [American Camping Association](#) recommends these minimum ratios:
  - ❑ 6–8 years 1:6 for overnight, and 1:8 for day
  - ❑ 9–14 years 1:8 for overnight and 1:10 for day
  - ❑ 15–18 years 1:10 for overnight and 1:12 for day
- ❑ Plan for student supervision in the program (locker rooms, transitions, office space, classrooms, courts, field trips, etc.)
- ❑ Restrictions on who can be the sole supervisor of a group of students (age requirements, staff/volunteer, variations inside/outside of building, etc.)
- ❑ Policy on how staff and volunteers are monitored and supervised in their work with students
- ❑ Policy on accounting for students and protocols for handling emergencies (e.g. maintaining and having accessible the contact information for local medical centers and emergency service providers, student emergency contacts and medical records, etc.)
- ❑ Missing student plan

## **Appropriate Staff-Student Interactions**

SEA member programs must be explicit with staff and volunteers about what constitutes appropriate interactions with youth. Programs should have a policy that, at a minimum, outlines the following.

- ❑ Appropriate clothing and language
- ❑ Appropriate and inappropriate touching
- ❑ Prohibited conduct / Code of conduct
- ❑ Guidelines for one-on-one interactions with students (maintaining appropriate boundaries)
- ❑ Guidelines for social media accounts and communications with students and families
- ❑ Guidelines for phone, text, and email conversations

## **Mandated Reporting Information**

By federal law, all amateur youth sports organizations are mandated reporters. The Student Protection Plan should, at a minimum, outline the following.

- ❑ Staff/volunteer responsibilities as mandated reporters of abuse and neglect

- The definitions and signs of abuse & neglect, including who can be perpetrators
- The organization's process for responding to allegations of youth abuse & neglect, both within and outside of the organization

## **Building Safety**

The Student Protection Plan should include the following.

- Plan for when and where students are allowed in the building
- Plan for response in case of the threat of physical contact or fight, active shooter, fire emergency, weather emergency, health emergency, or bomb
- Plan for emergency building evacuation (where to exit, where to meet outside the building, responsibilities of staff, etc.)
- Plan for physical security of buildings (adequate lighting, use of security cameras, sign-on logs, access controls, etc.)

## **Student Transportation**

The Student Protection Plan should include the following.

- Outline of plan for safely transporting students (to/from practice, field trips, etc.), including safe pick-up and drop-off locations, seatbelt requirements, protocols for walking with students on city streets, and plan for students whose transportation options fall through (students left waiting at building after practice, students who miss their bus, etc.)
- Requirement to conduct driver record checks on all staff/volunteers responsible for driving students, and to ensure proper driving endorsements / licenses as applicable by state law.
- Plan for training staff/volunteers in advance of driving students
- Policy requiring hands-free driving and prohibiting distracted driving
- Accident and roadside assistance procedures
- Adequate and proper liability coverage for passenger transportation

## **Field Trip Protocols**

SEA member programs must be vigilant when taking students on trips outside the building, and should address the following in their Field Trip Protocols.

- Required staffing ratios
- Plan for notifying program leadership off-campus trips, including the names of students and staff, contact info, and location of trip
- Plan for notifying families of field trips, and getting signed parent permission for trips outside of regular program hours
- Plan for safe transportation of students during trip

- Required packing list for field trips (first aid kits, student paperwork, etc.)
- Plan for obtaining medical and emergency assistance when traveling to distant locations
- Plan for addressing any specific student medical needs/restrictions (dietary, allergies, asthma, etc.)
- Safety procedures for high-risk activities, as needed (swimming, hiking, etc.)
- Homestay policies

## Student Paperwork

The Student Protection Plan should outline what medical and emergency information programs will maintain for students, how often information will be updated, and how confidentiality will be maintained. Minimum information should include:

- Student's full name, date of birth, and address
- The names and contact information of guardians and emergency contacts
- Signed waivers authorizing medical treatment if guardian is unavailable
- Student's health insurance
- Copy of a physical examination recent within 18 months that documents the following:
  - Record of medical conditions and relevant past medical treatments
  - Record of allergies and/or dietary restrictions
  - Record of current medications, including prescribed and over-the-counter
  - Description of any current physical, mental, or psychological conditions requiring special treatments, consideration, restrictions, or exemptions while participating in the program
  - Certification by physician or parent that the student is up-to-date on all immunizations

## Student Health

To ensure student health and wellbeing in the program, SEA member programs should have the following:

- Policy on how and what staff will be informed of student allergies and medical conditions
- Guidelines for the storage and administration of medications to students
- Procedure for staff response to student injuries and illnesses while in the program
- Procedure for documenting staff handling of student injuries, illnesses, or other significant concerns (mental health, abuse/neglect, etc.)
- Procedures for ensuring the safety of students with medical conditions (asthma, allergies, etc.)
- Plan for how the program will respond to student mental health needs (depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, etc.).
- Policy on confidentiality of student information