Minors and Pets in Laboratories, and other areas using or storing hazardous materials

1. **Purpose / Background**
   To ensure the health and safety of children, minors and visitors at MIT to laboratories, registered spaces and other areas using or storing hazardous materials, machinery or processes. Restricted Areas will be limited to MIT students and employees or other persons on official business.

   The Institute promotes a healthy learning and research environment by controlling potential health hazards and nuisances including prohibiting pets from laboratories and other registered spaces. The exception is for service dogs, police dogs and animals used in research or teaching. Pets may directly or by other means transmit organisms, allergens or disease to the Community and research animals. They also pose a safety risk from bites.

2. **Scope**
   This SOP applies to all animal facilities, laboratories, registered spaces, and other areas using or storing hazardous materials, machinery or processes. It also applies to the Department, Lab or Center (DLC) Director, DLC EHS Coordinator, PI, students, employees and visitors to those spaces. The Division of Comparative Medicine (DCM) has a written policy of not allowing children in their Department’s animal facilities. This policy is published in the DCM Lab Animal Users’ Handbook which is distributed to all animal-using labs and is available on the DCM and Committee on Animal Care websites.

3. **Prerequisites**
   Visitors and minors between the ages of 12 – 18 are not permitted in the above Restricted Areas with the exception of MIT sponsored tours, educational programs or visits which must be developed and approved by the DLC prior to the event (see EHS-MIT SOP #EHS 0036 Visitors and Tours Guideline). Minors under age 18 not affiliated with MIT who plan to work in laboratories must get prior approval and training (see EHS-MIT SOP #EHS 0056 Projects Involving Minors). Anyone wanting to bring children under 12 years old into these areas must receive prior written approval by the PI (someone other than themselves) and any other DLC specific requirements and provide an escort familiar with the hazards. In addition to access to Restricted Areas, please see SOP Projects Involving Minors https://ehs.mit.edu/site/sops for additional policies regarding minors on the MIT campus.

4. **Procedures**
   Authorization for entry into Restricted Areas for minors and visitors requires prior written approval by the PI and any other DLC specific requirements. Supervision must be provided by the PI, EHS Coordinator, lab supervisor or other qualified individual. Procedures must be in place to ensure that all those entering the space are protected from hazards and informed about relevant safety and emergency procedures. All applicable parts of the DLC’s Chemical Hygiene Plan, Exposure Control Plan, Required Procedures for Radiation Protection and Emergency Preparedness Plan that refer to visitors, minors and pets should be followed.

5. **Roles & Responsibilities**
   DLC Head, PI, EHS Coordinator, students and employees
It is the responsibility of the DLC head, PI, EHS Coordinator, students and employees to identify and register hazardous areas and limit access to them. It is also their responsibility to provide supervision, orientation/information on potential health and safety hazards associated with the space and emergency procedures to minors, their parent(s) or guardian and visitors to their space. It is the responsibility of any pet owner to abide by this SOP and not bring pets into restricted areas except for exemptions noted in section 1.0.

6. **Training**
   Training required by minors or visitors to the restricted areas will be provided by the PI, EHS Coordinator, EHS Representative or other qualified individual. Training for minors working in labs is covered in EHS-MIT SOP #EHS 0056 *Projects Involving Minors*

7. **Monitoring Requirements**
   N/A

8. **Record Management**
   All signed authorizations shall be maintained at the local level within the DLC.

9. **References**
   Prudent Practices in the Laboratory: Handling and Disposal of Chemicals

   9.1. **Standards**
   OSHA 29CFR1910.1450 Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories
   OSHA Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens 29CFR1910.1030

   9.2. **Other SOP/ SOGs/Policies**
   EHS-MIT SOP #EHS 0036 *Visitors and Tours Guideline*
   EHS-MIT SOP #EHS 0056 *Projects Involving Minors*
   DCM Lab Animal Users’ Handbook
   DLC Chemical Hygiene Plans

10. **Definitions**
   10.1. **Hazardous area** is any area that uses chemical, biological or radiological material which is registered in the EHS Management System.

   10.2. **Hazardous activity** is any activity that uses hazardous materials or processes deemed hazardous by the DLC or EHS.

   10.3 **A minor** is anyone between the ages of 12 – 18 years old.

   10.4 **A child** is anyone less than 12 years old.

   10.5 **Registered space** is a laboratory or other facility space that is registered in the EHS-Management System and associates with that space the PI/Supervisor, EHS Representative and

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See Legal Disclaimer at: [http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/legal-disclaimer](http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/legal-disclaimer)
core hazards found there (see https://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/32-principal-investigator-pispace-registration).

10.6 **Restricted Area** laboratories, registered spaces and other areas using or storing hazardous materials, machinery or processes.

10.7 **A Visitor** is an individual who is not employed by MIT, and will be visiting the Institute for less than 30 days in order to observe/tour a Department, Laboratory or Center or participate in an activity/program. The term “visitor” specifically applies to those individuals who will be in an environment they are unfamiliar with, and may be unaware of the hazards specific to that area or activity e.g., a non-researcher in a laboratory.