

## Ensuring safe environments for youth activities affiliated with the University of Maryland



DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY,  
SUSTAINABILITY & RISK

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to introduce the University of Maryland Strategic Plan for Youth Protection. This represents a foundational step in embedding youth protection as a core element of the university's risk management and compliance infrastructure.

In early 2024, the President's Cabinet formally prioritized enhancing the oversight of minors on campus. This focus reflects our deep institutional commitment to the safety and well-being of minors who participate in university-affiliated programs, services, and activities. It also acknowledges the complexity of supporting non-matriculating minors across our complex, decentralized campus environment.

Further reinforcing this goal, a 2024 memo from the State of Maryland's Office of the Attorney General called for formal, centralized oversight at system institutions. A subsequent 2024 campus-wide survey conducted by UMD's Department of Environmental Safety, Sustainability & Risk (ESSR) revealed that youth protection programs vary widely across departments, and that there is room for improvement in the procedures used in connection with those programs. Failing to give this important function the attention that it deserves would not only place the university at significant risk of reputational damage, legal exposure, and financial liability, but, most importantly, it would increase the potential for real harm to children entrusted to our care.

To address these challenges, the University has taken decisive action. Jay Rosselló, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel, has been appointed as the risk owner for Youth Protection. His leadership brings critical insight, strategic oversight, and institutional expertise to this high-priority area.

To further strengthen our efforts in effectively safeguarding minors and ensuring adherence to regulations and best practices, a Youth Protection Compliance Manager position was created in ESSR. This strategic role is essential to leading the development and implementation of a comprehensive youth protection framework.

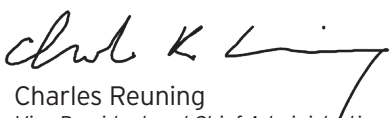
In June 2025, Megan McWilliams joined the university as its inaugural Youth Protection Compliance Manager. She brings specialized expertise and a mission-driven approach to building a sustainable youth protection infrastructure. Megan is leading the development of an enterprise-wide risk management system that supports consistent standards, training, and accountability, ultimately fostering a culture of safeguarding and excellence in the University's engagement with minors.

This strategic plan is informed by key sources, including the 2012 Minors on Campus Committee's draft policy, the February 2025 Risk Profile, and benchmarking research through the Higher Education Protection Network and Big Ten peer institutions. These resources have helped shape a forward-looking strategy grounded in best practices and institutional collaboration.

To ensure broad engagement, ESSR will work closely with Youth Protection Advocates from across the university. These individuals will form the Youth Protection Committee, a strategic body tasked with guiding implementation, developing minimum standards, and exploring the creation of a formal university-wide Youth Protection Policy.

Together, we are building a culture of shared responsibility that prioritizes the safety of minors and strengthens our institutional resilience. We look forward to working with you to advance this important mission.

Sincerely,



Charles Reuning  
Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer



Jay Rosselló  
Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel



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## Mission

Establish an enterprise wide risk management system for any university-affiliated activity that interacts with non-matriculating minors under the age of 18, promoting a culture of safeguarding at the University of Maryland.

## Division of Administration FY26 Initiative

This strategic plan is directly informed by one of the key Fiscal Year 2026 goals from the Division of Administration: Formalize a Youth Protection Program Across Campus. Taking the key components, including establishing a youth protection committee, conducting benchmarking assessments and collaboratively developing a set of minimum standards, the Strategic Plan expands this initiative into a comprehensive blueprint leading to a formalized system of supporting and safeguarding minors on campus.

## Strategic Goals



## Governance and Compliance

To strengthen governance and mitigate the risk of insufficient oversight in youth-related activities, the Youth Protection Compliance Manager is establishing a formal structure to ensure clear accountability and compliance. Central to this effort is the creation of a cross-campus **Youth Protection Committee**, composed of advocates from offices across campus with particular stakes or expertise in engaging with minors. This governance framework will help unify standards, close oversight gaps, and inform minimum standards that will ensure youth activities operate under consistent and transparent expectations.

ESSR will launch and operationalize a **centralized registration system** for youth activities, with 100% of known programs registered by the end of FY27.

Additionally, ESSR will identify and train **Youth Protection Designees** in university units that interact with minors enhancing accountability across campus. Together, these efforts will lay the foundation for a sustainable, campus-wide youth protection infrastructure that promotes accountability, consistency, and safety in all youth-related activities.

### Goal 1: Establish Standardized Procedures for Centralized Program Management

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Develop minimum standards and best practices	Minimum standards and best practices created and assessed through stakeholder reviews
Establish university standards for a centralized youth compliance risk management system	Policy drafted and advanced
Establish Youth Protection Designees	Designee structure introduced across campus units

### Goal 2: Launch a Youth Activity Registry for University Affiliated Programs Involving Minors

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Track the number of university-affiliated activities that interact with minors	Registration system created and rolled out across the university
Track youth protection requirements	System created to track key components of all registered youth activities



**Goal 3: Lead Compliance Assessments & Audits**

<b>Specific Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Action</b>
Determine screening requirements for all non-Maryland Department of Health (MDH) licensed youth activities	Criteria and processes established
Establish criteria for the review and approval of background checks	Criteria established and approved
Oversee MDH required criminal background checks	Criminal background checks tracked and appropriate record keeping conducted
Oversee MDH required Child Protective Services clearances	CPS clearances tracked and appropriate record keeping conducted
Develop youth activities self-assessment compliance checklist	Compliance checklist created which will serve as a metric tracking system
Provide regular status and compliance reports to university leadership	Reporting schedule identified





## Operational Excellence

To enhance administrative support and improve operational excellence, the Youth Protection Compliance Manager, in collaboration with the Youth Protection Committee, is enhancing communication, resources, and institutional coordination. This includes the creation of a **comprehensive youth protection guidance package** reviewed by the Office of General Counsel and an **overhaul of the Youth Programs webpage**. Ahead of the 2026 Summer Camp season ESSR will review existing reporting pathways and distribute clear, shareable materials outlining youth protection procedures.

### Goal 1: Ensure Clear Reporting Mechanisms

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Review existing reporting pathways	Pathways reviewed and documented
Employees, minors and parents/guardians clearly informed of the reporting mechanisms	Shareable materials designed

### Goal 2: Develop and Improve Youth Protection Resources

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Develop a set of uniformed templates	Templates created and reviewed by the Office of General Counsel
Update the ESSR Youth Programs webpage	Website updated incorporating new guidance package and training resources

### Goal 3: Maintain Up-to-Date Knowledge of Youth Protection Laws, Trends, and Best Practices

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Join Higher Education Protection Network and Big Ten Group	Registration complete and membership maintained
Attend youth protection conferences, webinars, and other learning opportunities	Conferences and webinars attended



# Training and Capacity Building

To foster a safer and more informed environment for youth engagement, ESSR is launching a **strategic training and capacity-building initiative** aimed at equipping university and affiliated program staff with essential knowledge and resources. This effort establishes clear, accessible, and targeted learning opportunities. Within FY26, ESSR will introduce a required youth protection training in Workday for university employees who interact with minors, along with a specialized training for summer camp staff. Looking ahead to FY27, units across the university will have received the Youth Protection Introduction Presentation, expanding awareness and reinforcing best practices. Through these initiatives, ESSR is building a culture of preparedness, accountability, and care in all youth-serving spaces.

## Goal 1: Launch Training on Best Practices on Engaging with Minors

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Launch required training for university employees who interact with minors	Training established in Workday
Launch required training for camp leaders or staff that interact with minors	Training available to non-university employees and university students who have significant interactions with minors
Develop and review additional supportive trainings	Supportive training developed and available on ESSR Youth Programs webpage

## Goal 2: Provide Consultation to Support Minors as a Unique Population on Campus

Specific Goal	Measurable Action
Create an Introduction to Youth Protection presentation and meet with relevant offices across campus to present the topic	Slideshow created and presented to relevant offices
Offer scheduled summer camp office hours for key support and remain available throughout the year for ad hoc consultations	Summer camp office hours established





## Commitment to Action and Accountability

Through this strategic plan, the University of Maryland affirms its commitment to building a robust and sustainable youth protection infrastructure that reflects best practices, legal requirements, and institutional values. Together, we are building a culture of shared responsibility that prioritizes the safety of minors and strengthens our institutional resilience. To ensure transparency and accountability, achievements toward the strategic plan will be shared annually on the Youth Protection website. Additionally, university leadership will receive quarterly compliance reports to monitor progress and address emerging needs.

By establishing clear ownership, engaging campus-wide stakeholders, and implementing centralized oversight mechanisms, the university is proactively addressing a critical enterprise risk. These efforts will not only enhance compliance and reduce liability but also foster a culture of care, accountability, and excellence in all youth-related activities, ensuring that minors who engage with our campus are protected, supported, and valued.

