

SOP-I-0029	Children in the Workplace	
SOP Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal SOP - DELTA-level that does not directly affect entities outside of DELTA <input type="checkbox"/> External SOP - DELTA-level that affects these entities: <input type="checkbox"/> Unit SOP - DELTA individual unit(s) affected:	
Contact:	DELTA Business Office	
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1. Introduction

Distance Education and Learning Technology Applications (DELTA) values work/life balance and strives to develop SOPs that are supportive of families and those seeking flexibility in scheduling when feasible. With this in mind, children (defined as persons below the age of eighteen) are welcome to visit DELTA offices on occasion.

Though DELTA seeks to provide a family-friendly work environment, the regular and ongoing presence of employee's children in the workplace can present challenges for the following reasons:

- (1) the potential for interruption of work;
- (2) health and safety concerns;
- (3) liability to the University;
- (4) the welfare and safety of employees' children;
- (5) the maintenance of a professional work environment.

This SOP provides guidelines for employees and supervisors to help balance the employee's need for children's presence in the office on occasion with the challenges children in the office can present to the workplace. This policy does not apply to children of enrolled NC State students visiting a DELTA Testing Center to take an exam or test (see the Testing Center rules at: https://online-distance.ncsu.edu/current_students/testing-services/testing-services-on-campus/).

2. Definitions

Minor: any person under the age of 18.

Employee: an individual who works for the University full-time or part-time who is paid through the University's payroll system.

Children: any minor children of an employee, or minor children under the care or custody of an employee.

Workplace: any location on NC State's owned or controlled property where job functions are performed.

Visual range: distance at which an individual can be seen with the unaided eye

3. Purpose and Guidelines

The purpose of this SOP is to outline the parameters by which DELTA employees can bring children on campus and to the office.

When can children be in the office?

- (a) Children are welcome when the purpose of their visit is to participate in activities or classes specifically scheduled and designed for their benefit.
- (b) Children are permitted at the workplace for authorized events. DELTA events at which management allow children at the workplace include DELTA events such as awards programs, any designated "Bring Your Children to Work Day," and family-friendly DELTA social gatherings in which children are explicitly invited, such as office parties and picnics.
- (c) With supervisor approval, children are permitted for brief visits to the workplace to see what you do and meet your colleagues - we love to see your children grow!
- (d) With supervisor approval, children may be brought into the workplace by employees for occasional times when it is more practical for the employee to bring the child into the workplace than to take them elsewhere (e.g., following or before a personal appointment; during an occasional before-school drop-off or after-school pickup; on an occasional school break or part of a break that does not interrupt the employee's or others' work).
- (e) Children are not regularly permitted at the workplace for substantial lengths of time as a substitute for regular, established childcare, after school care, or daycare. It is not appropriate for children to be in the workplace for several hours at a time on a regular basis in lieu of other child care arrangements. Employees should discuss children's occasional presence in the office with their supervisors, consider the length of time involved, and determine what is reasonable, professional, and non-disruptive for the employee's required duties and the work environment. For example, a child being brought into the office every day after school for several hours per day, or during a large portion of a school holiday, school break or summer break in lieu of other arrangements being available is not appropriate; a child in the office with a parent a few times a year for consecutive days on a short break may be appropriate; a child in the office for a short amount of time more regularly during a brief transition period (e.g. after school drop-off at the end of the employee's workday; before school drop-off that does not interfere with employee's duties prior to start of school) may be allowed by a supervisor.
- (f) Children cannot be in the office if they are ill or possibly contagious.

Who is responsible when children are in the office?

The parent or guardian employee must supervise the child on such visits and ensure that they are not disruptive to other employees in the workplace. If approval to bring children into the workplace has been granted, employees will abide by the following conditions:

- Be sensitive and respectful of the needs of other employees, students and customers.
- Do not expect (or ask) other employees to care for or supervise their children.
- Take responsibility for the safety of their children at all times.
- Supervise their children at all times.

4. Responsibilities

Employees will:

- Secure permission from their supervisors before bringing children into the workplace.
- Ensure their children behave appropriately while in the workplace.
- Ensure their children stay within visual range at all times. Children cannot be left unattended in any workplace area at any time, including, but not limited to, employee offices, copy rooms, break rooms, hallways, conference rooms, or common areas, including the common areas outside of DELTA-occupied structures.
- Be responsible for ensuring the safety of the child.
- Be responsible for any damage caused by their children.
- Employees will not take children to meetings unless (a) permission has been granted by the supervisor; and (b) the child is not a distraction in the meeting to the parent or others, and (c) the content of the meetings is appropriate for the presence of a minor child (e.g. financial/budget meetings, personnel meetings, sensitive policy discussions, and meetings with external customers are not appropriate).
- Continue to perform the functions and responsibilities of the position if and when a child is present.

Supervisors will:

- Grant employees permission to bring children to the workplace for any recurring need or length of time only under unusual circumstances and for authorized events.
- Discuss with their senior management team member any situation regarding children in the workplace that they are not sure about for additional guidance.
- Be flexible in granting accrued leave to employees who need to make emergency child care arrangements. For occasional child care difficulties during normal business hours, managers should work with employees to grant leave, allow telecommuting as appropriate, or allow parents or guardians to make care arrangements when unforeseen problems arise.