



SWAU Youth Program Requirements and Procedures

Purpose

Note on Program Classification:

While students participating in the STEP Program are enrolled in university credit-bearing coursework, SWAU acknowledges that a number of participants may be under the age of 18. Therefore, although the STEP Program may not formally fall under the “campus program for minors” classification per Texas Education Code § 51.976, SWAU has elected to voluntarily implement the associated training and supervision protocols to safeguard all minors on campus.

This includes:

- Requiring all employees, faculty, student workers, and volunteers affiliated with the STEP Program to complete the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) approved Youth Camp Sexual Abuse and Child Molestation Awareness Training.
- Establishing clear supervision standards, appropriate conduct expectations, and procedures for reporting concerns.

These proactive measures reflect SWAU’s commitment to the well-being and safety of all students, particularly those under 18, during the duration of the STEP Program.

Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) is committed to providing a safe, enriching, and compliant experience for minors participating in university-hosted programs. In accordance with Texas Education Code § 51.976, all individuals working in or volunteering for youth programs on campus must complete a state-approved training and examination program relating to the prevention and awareness of sexual abuse and child molestation.

Definitions

Campus Program for Minors: A program operated by or on the campus of SWAU that offers recreational, athletic, religious, or educational activities to individuals under the age of 18, who are not enrolled in university credit-bearing coursework.

Covered Individual: Any person 18 years or older who will have direct contact with minors in SWAU programs.

This includes:

- Faculty and instructors
- Student workers
- Volunteers

- Staff (e.g., residence life, cafeteria)
- Program coordinators

Training Requirements

- All Covered Individuals must complete a Youth Camp Sexual Abuse and Child Molestation Awareness Training and Examination that is approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).
- Training must be completed every two years.
- Proof of training completion must be retained for at least two years.
- The training must be completed at least 5 days before the program start date.
- SWAU has adopted this requirement for all participants involved in the STEP Program and any future programs involving minors on campus.

Implementation for STEP Program (Summer 2025)

- All Covered Individuals participating in the STEP Program must complete DSHS-approved training by June 15, 2025.
- The Office of Student Success and the Office of Academic Administration will coordinate and verify training compliance.
- Training options will be provided to participants, including:
 - DSHS-approved online training
 - Group sessions (TBD)
- Participants must submit their certificate of completion to the designated STEP Program Coordinator.

Supervision & Conduct Expectations

- All activities involving minors must be supervised by at least two trained adults.
- Overnight supervision must be conducted by trained residence life personnel (e.g., deans, RAs).
- Adults should avoid being alone with a minor in non-public settings.
- Any suspicion of misconduct must be immediately reported to the Program Director and SWAU Campus Safety.

Reporting & Documentation

SWAU will maintain documentation of:

- Completed training certificates for all Covered Individuals
- Attendance logs and supervision assignments
- Incident reports and compliance records

This documentation may be subject to audit by the Texas Department of State Health Services.