

# University Policy: Parental Notification of Incidents and Disciplinary Violations Involving the Use or Possession of Alcohol or a Controlled Substance

**Policy Category:** Student Policies

**Subject:** Parental notification of certain incidents and disciplinary violations

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President, Student Affairs

**Office Responsible for Review of this Policy:** Office of Campus Life

**Procedures:** Not Applicable

**Related University Policies:** Drug Policy; Alcohol Policy; Medical Transports: Alcohol and Other Drugs

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## I. SCOPE

This policy establishes the conditions under which the University will notify parents or guardians about student incidents and disciplinary violations involving the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.

## II. POLICY STATEMENT

Under specified conditions, the University will notify parents or guardians of student incidents and disciplinary violations involving the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance. The University is guided by provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and laws of the District of Columbia in its notification practices.

## III. POLICY

The central commitment of American University is to the development of thoughtful, responsible human beings in the context of a challenging yet supportive academic community. Consistent with this philosophy, the University communicates its expectations for students' behavior through a Student Conduct Code. Violations of the Code are addressed through the student conduct system.

Among the categories of misconduct subject to disciplinary action under the Code are violations of published University policies pertaining to the sale, distribution, manufacture, use, or possession of alcohol or any illegal drug, and related violations of local, state, or federal law. While universities are not required to

do so, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 does not restrict them from communicating directly with parents or guardians of students under the age of 21 who are found responsible for violations of the Code in these categories or involved in incidents that threaten their health and safety.

Consistent with the laws of the District of Columbia, American University regards students who have reached the age of 18 as adults with commensurate rights and responsibilities. Students are afforded the right to privacy in conduct matters, unless or until they forfeit that right through egregious or repeated violation of the University's alcohol or drug policies or of the law or are involved in incidents that threaten their health and safety. Notification of parents or guardians in these instances is carried out with consideration for the students' interests and safety.

American University will generally notify parents or guardians of a student's conduct related to alcohol or controlled substances when:

- (1) A student's violation of the University's alcohol or drug policies is judged by the dean of students or designee to be egregious, the student's health or safety may be at risk (whether or not there is a medical transport), or the student may have placed others at risk.
- (2) A student's violation of the University's alcohol or drug policies results in a student's removal from the residence halls, or suspension or expulsion from the University.
- (3) A student is found responsible for a violation of the University's drug policies or for a second violation of the University's alcohol or drug policies, however minor, and all subsequent violations of alcohol or drug policies.
- (4) When a student is under the age of 18 and is involved in an incident related to alcohol or other drug use.

#### **IV. EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVISIONS**

This Policy was last reviewed in October 2015. Revised on November 12, 2015