

# Michigan State University Earth and Environmental Sciences Department Field Safety Guidelines

Drafted October 2022

## When do the field safety guidelines apply to me?

Field work is when a professor, principal investigator, graduate student, student worker, or undergraduate student conducts work in the natural environment instead of an office or laboratory. People engage in field work to advance research and/or teach others. Field work occurs in locations outside of the office, classroom, laboratory, or campus.

Conferences, seminars, meetings, places on campus, and other institutions DO NOT count as field work. This guideline DOES NOT apply to any event or research hosted by an outside organization.

## Before going into the field

### Field Leads:

- ☐ Make sure all field leads, graduate students, student workers, and applicable undergraduate students have completed first aid training. This training will be provided by the department once a semester.
- ☐ Collect emergency contact information for all people going into the field. A sample form is listed in the appendix.
- ☐ List all personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your field locations and double check if the lab or department has this equipment.
- ☐ Create a schedule so there are always two people together in the field. NO ONE should be in the field by themselves.
- ☐ Compile site safety plans for each field site or city that will be visited while in the field. An example is provided in the appendix.
- ☐ Contact landowners to confirm it is ok to access their land.
- ☐ Create a plan for communication while in the field.
- ☐ Schedule travel and sleeping arrangements. See appendix for vehicle rentals and assigning roommates.
- ☐ Create a packing list so everyone going into the field knows what is needed.
- ☐ Find a point of contact. This is a person who will be staying at the university during the field work. See appendix for list of point of contact responsibilities.
- ☐ Receive a letter of support from the department. In the case people approach the group in the field the letter can be provided to show the group should be there.

### Individual:

- ☐ Provide field leads with emergency contact information. A sample form is listed in the appendix
- ☐ Go over region specific outdoor safety. See appendix for Michigan specific outdoor safety
- ☐ Review the attached information in the appendix about supporting dietary restriction, health concerns, minority groups, parents, and people with disabilities in the field.
- ☐ Review reporting guidelines, bystander intervention, and relationship violence and sexual harassment.

**Field lead should provide essential safety information in writing to all graduate students, student workers, and undergraduate students participating in field work. An example list of information follows:**

- ☐ Name of the point of contact
- ☐ Schedule and travel arrangements including field location and accommodations
- ☐ Packing list
- ☐ Site safety plans (see example in Appendix)
- ☐ First aid training information
- ☐ Contacts for participants to report safety and harassment incidents in the field (Department Chair, Undergraduate/Graduate Directors, OIE, Ombudsman)
- ☐ Attached information (see Appendix) about supporting dietary restrictions, health concerns, minority groups, parents, and people with disabilities in the field.

## Returning from the field

- ☐ Refill first aid kits
- ☐ Collect PPE
- ☐ Report any incidents in the field. See OIE for issues with harassment and sexual misconduct. Instructors should report other types of incidents to Undergraduate/Graduate Director and Department Chair or consult University Ombudsman.

## Field camp liaison

- ☐ Collect emergency contact information from students attending field camp
- ☐ Discuss travel arrangements with students
- ☐ Schedule first aid training to students attending field camp

\*The field camp liaison is automatically the point of contact

## Appendix

- Emergency contact information (<https://forms.gle/WX7E2NcxGqwwEadR9>) ([Word Doc](#))

- Vehicle rental
  - Safe driving practices
- Roommate assignments (<https://forms.gle/WX7E2NcxGqwvEadR9>) (Word Doc)
- Site safety plans  
(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yMu0J7S2zNPNf3IvbaqcDS7LpY9cTzv-/view?usp=sharing>) (Uploaded to Teams)
- Point of contact
  - Provide this person with the days and times the group will be in the field along with an emergency day and time the group needs to be back.
  - If this time passes and the point of contact does not hear from the group, the point of contact will contact emergency services.
  - The point of contact should have access to the emergency contact list along with the medication list.
- Information about supporting dietary restrictions, health concerns, minority groups, parents, and people with disabilities in the field.  
([https://www.ple.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Documents/pitt\\_biological\\_sciences\\_field\\_safety\\_manual\\_3-7-2022.pdf](https://www.ple.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Documents/pitt_biological_sciences_field_safety_manual_3-7-2022.pdf))
  - Section 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 - Considerations for Minoritized Scientists
  - Section 1.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2 - Considerations for Health and Disability
  - Section 1.3.7 - Make a daily communication plan
  - Section 1.3.8 - Provide basic accommodations to reduce stress and conflict
  - Section 1.3.9 - Get rid of 15-hour field days
  - Section 1.3.10 - Think carefully about the impact of alcohol
  - Section 1.3.11 - Accommodate nursing mothers
  - Section 1.4.3 - Don't be a bystander
  - Section 2.2.3 - Train and prepare team for communicating with the public
- Michigan specific outdoor safety  
([https://www.canva.com/design/DAFPhXTE4\\_oJGvBvSHayvLVgkSMqagqhQ/view?utm\\_content=DAFPhXTE4\\_o&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=publishsharelink](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFPhXTE4_oJGvBvSHayvLVgkSMqagqhQ/view?utm_content=DAFPhXTE4_o&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink))