Maintaining the safety and health of DPH employees, partners, and visitors relies upon the control of hazardous conditions and prevention of unsafe behaviors. That is why it is important that we always know who is allowed into our workplace and that they have gone through appropriate screening. When the visitors are children, diligence to guard against unsafe conditions and unpredictable behaviors must be heightened.

The workplace is typically not an appropriate place for children of employees. However, DPH recognizes that employees may occasionally want to bring children to the workplace for brief visits, specific events, or family emergencies.

If a child does come to the workplace for the above reasons (brief visits, specific events, or family emergencies) here are some specific requirements:

1. Children are not to be brought to the workplace on a regular basis in lieu of childcare.
2. Children are not allowed in high risk areas, unless an exception has been agreed to by management of the area and the department security officer.
3. Generally, an employee who brings a child into the workplace shall not leave the child unsupervised. Employees are responsible for verifying with their manager the circumstances under which children are allowed in their specific workplace. If management allows the occasional workplace visit of children to the workplace, both the employee responsible for the child and workplace management must accept certain responsibilities (listed below) to protect the welfare of the child and the integrity of the workplace. The manager and the employee will be held responsible for any issues resulting from the visit.

An employee who brings a child to the workplace must:

* be the individual who primarily supervises and cares for the child while in the workplace;
* prevent any breach of confidential information;
* address with management any issues related to a child’s infectious disease; and
* accept full responsibility for all aspects of the child’s behavior, including: safety of the child, disruption to co-workers, unauthorized or inappropriate use of resources, and any damage to property or injury to persons.

Management must:

* determine that either hazards are not likely to exist, or that hazards can be controlled under the circumstances in which the child will be present;
* address potential issues of possible disruption to co-workers in the workplace;
* consider the extent to which the child’s presence in the workplace poses a risk of breaching confidentiality of information in the workplace;
* consider the extent to which the child’s presence is appropriate to the specific work being accomplished.
* consider the health of co-workers before an employee is allowed to bring a child with an infectious disease to the workplace.

Notwithstanding the exceptions provided (e.g. brief visits, specific events, or family emergencies), management has the authority to deny the presence of children in the workplace. Management may revoke previously granted permission for the employee to bring the child to the workplace (e.g., the child’s presence is later determined to be disruptive to the workplace).

Definitions:

**“Child”** or **“children”** means a person or persons less than 18 years of age.

**“Employee”**means any employee who has responsibility for a child, as defined above, while in the workplace regardless of the employee’s relationship to the child.

**“High risk area”**includes but is not limited to any area with: hazardous chemicals or substances; hazardous biological agents; or, hazardous equipment or processes. Examples of areas with these characteristics include:

* laboratories;
* machine shops workshop areas;
* mechanical rooms;
* steam plants;
* construction areas;
* maintenance garages;
* food preparation areas;
* fitness centers;
* high security areas; and
* areas that are excluded for general employee access.