

## RULES OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

### Student Responsibilities

You are a representative of the NIH/NIDDK STEP-UP program. Consequently, you must accept the responsibility for mature, professional, and acceptable behavior. During your summer research experience, you are expected to abide by the guidelines listed below. Please review them carefully.

### Guidelines for All Students

- **Intern Schedules:** The program is an 8 consecutive week, full-time program. The exact time you are to arrive and depart each day is to be decided on an individual basis with your mentor(s). If you have a long commute, please be sure and discuss this with your mentor(s) so your schedule can be adjusted accordingly. You will not be permitted to take vacations or participate in other programs while enrolled in STEP-UP.
- **Attendance:** It is expected that you will arrive on time. If you are going to be late, or are sick, you must call and/or email your mentor(s) as well as email your program coordinator.
- **Respect for Others:** The NIH prides itself on diversity. The NIH community, on campus in Bethesda, Maryland and in our intramural and extramural labs throughout the world, is a community that consists of many varying backgrounds and beliefs. Racist, sexist, and other derogatory comments will not be tolerated at any time during the Program and may be grounds for dismissal. We expect you to behave in a professional manner at all times.
- **Respect for Authority:** Safety for our students, mentors, and other laboratory personnel is a number one priority for NIH and the STEP-UP staff. You are expected to strictly adhere to the established policies and procedures set forth by the university, hospital, and/or laboratory in which you are working. At all times, you are expected to be courteous and respectful to your STEP-UP program staff, mentors, other laboratory personnel, as well as your peers. Disrespectful behavior and failure to follow rules and instructions given by individuals in positions of authority while in the research environment or at the research presentations in Bethesda are grounds for dismissal.
- **Substance Abuse:** Alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes and vape pens), and illegal drug use are strictly forbidden. Use of any of these substances will result in disciplinary action and immediate dismissal from the STEP-UP Program.
- **Damage or Loss:** You are expected to respect the property of the University or research environment at all times. You also assume the responsibility for damages or loss of personal property in the labs.
- **Electronic Usage:** Cell phones, iPods, tablets, and other personal entertainment devices must be in the off position during the program, including all seminars, tours, and clinic rotations. Cell phone, email, and internet usage should be limited to work-related tasks. Failure to comply may result in dismissal from the program.
- **Dress Code:** Casual dress is accepted, but you are expected to be clean and neat in your personal appearance. You should wear your STEP-UP lab coat during work hours. The STEP-UP Program

requires that students refrain from wearing such items as revealing clothing and from displaying visible cleavage, visible underwear, bare midriffs, etc. Shorts, sandals and flip-flops should not be worn in laboratory settings for safety reasons.

### **Disciplinary Procedures in the Laboratory Environment**

- Behavior of concern will be reported to the Program Coordinator by the Mentor, or other STEP-UP staff as appropriate.
- The Program Coordinator will take steps to corroborate the behavior with all individuals involved including the student and report to the STEP-UP Program Director.
- If unacceptable behavior is substantiated, the student will receive a warning and an opportunity to correct the behavior. Students will receive a maximum of two warnings.
- Parents will be notified after the second warning.
- If the student's behavior does not change after the second warning, he or she will be dismissed from the Program.

### **Disciplinary Procedures during the Symposium in Bethesda, MD**

- Behavior of concern will be reported to the Program Coordinator by the chaperone or other STEP-UP staff as appropriate.
- The Program Coordinator will take steps to corroborate the behavior with all individuals involved, including the student. If unacceptable behavior is substantiated, the student will receive a warning and an opportunity to correct the behavior. Student will receive a maximum of two warnings.
- Parents will be notified after the second warning.
- For persistent behavioral problems in spite of two warnings and notifying the responsible parent, the student will be considered for dismissal from the Program.
- The PI will discuss the situation with the other STEP-UP PIs and Coordinators in an effort to determine the best solution for resolving the problem and for maximizing the student's chances of completing the program with his/her peers.
- If it is determined that there is no other option but to dismiss the student in the best interest of the student and the other students in the program, the PI will notify the parents.
- The Program Coordinator and PI will secure new flight and departure plans for the student to return home safely. The parent will be notified to coordinate plans for departure and arrival at home.
- The student will be accompanied to the airport or other departure location by a chaperone to ensure safe departure, but the student will not be accompanied home.
- As stated in the signed and notarized response form, failure to comply with any of the STEP-UP rules and requirements may result in the forfeiture of any associated benefits and financial support received from the STEP-UP Program.

## Guidelines for Parents

While we always encourage parents to be involved in their son/daughter's education, we encourage the STEP-UP student participants to take responsibility for their own summer research experience. As such, we encourage students to talk to their parents about their summer experiences and for the students themselves to contact their mentor and Program Coordinator when problems or questions arise. This applies to the Research Symposium in August as well. This meeting in Bethesda is for the interns to learn from other budding scientists, learn about the NIH, and be exposed to new people and places. As such, if parents choose to attend the meeting, the following requirements must be followed:

- The Program Coordinator must be notified of your plans to attend the meeting by **July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025**.
- All student interns are required to share a room with another STEP-UP intern and not with their parent(s).
- Parents must secure their own hotel room. We are unable to hold or purchase rooms for parents.
- Students must attend all STEP-UP program activities and cannot be excused to have dinner with their parents or attend other non-NIH activities.
- Parents may join their son/daughter during the presentations at the NIH and the banquet dinner; for all other activities such as other meals and social activities, parents are not permitted.
- Parents who attend the banquet are responsible for payment to the Program for their banquet dinner(s). Parents should contact Ms. Dee Caffey-Fleming via email at [dcaffey@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:dcaffey@mednet.ucla.edu) by **July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025**.
- Students are accompanied by chaperones that supervise the travel to and from the hotel and airport as well as all other activities hosted by STEP-UP. Parents must find their own transportation to and from the hotel/airport.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print student's name legibly) have read, understand, and agree to follow all of the student responsibilities and guidelines set forth by the NIH/NIDDK STEP-UP program and the ***STEP-UP High School Program Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Action***. I realize that I must cooperate to the fullest extent and adhere to these rules to insure my own safety and that of my fellow students and mentors. I am aware that any violation of these rules, which results in unsafe conduct or misbehavior on my part, will result in being removed from the laboratory and/or dismissal from the Program. I acknowledge that failure to comply with any of the STEP-UP rules and requirements may result in the forfeiture of any associated benefits and financial support received from the STEP-UP Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print parent's name legibly) have read, understand, and agree to follow all of the parental guidelines set forth by the NIH/NIDDK STEP-UP Program and the ***STEP-UP High School Program Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Action***. I agree to cooperate to the fullest extent and adhere to these rules.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE