

## RISK INFORMATION – SCHOOLS PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS

The information provided in this paper is intended to assist school staff in providing parents with sufficient information to enable them to provide informed consent for their children to attend off-campus activities organised by a school.

### Introduction to Parental Permission Forms

Schools have a non-delegable duty of care in relation to their students. This duty extends to off-campus activities. A school cannot rely solely on a third party to provide the correct level of care.

It is unlikely that the school is able to avoid liability for negligent acts; however, any attempt to do so should be clearly expressed with wording that specifically refers to excluding liability for negligence. Wording of forms should be reviewed by the schools legal advisors, particularly in respect of any exclusion or indemnity components.

Parental permission forms are intended to provide information to parents so that they can provide informed consent for their child to attend the described activity.

The proposed activity should be described in full including underlying risks and proposed controls. Any proposed transport options should be described so that specific permission can be given.

The medical and dietary component of permission forms enable parents to provide information outlining any pre-existing conditions that might impact a student's ability to fully take part in the activity or assist in the provision of emergency treatment options. It also captures parents' consent to obtain emergency treatment and their agreement to pay the costs of such treatment.

### Activity Information and Registration

Provide a full description of the activity and its associated risks and controls. Information provided will include:

- Educational purpose of the activity
- Cost of activity and any financial assistance available
- Location and/or itinerary; facilities available
- Pertinent accommodation and sleeping arrangements
- Activity schedule
- Relevant risks and safety precautions (perhaps access should be given to Activity Risk Assessments)
- Specialized clothing and equipment requirements

## **RISK INFORMATION – SCHOOLS PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS**

- Number of adults who will accompany and supervise students
- Supervisory arrangements, especially for self-reliant activities and excursions for young children
- Contact person and contact details
- Contingency plans including alternate activity program

Include a statement of booking conditions including participant behavioural expectations. Advise circumstances that could lead to expulsion from the activity (what happens and in what order) and parental obligation to arrange return travel.

Provide details of relevant school insurance cover; where applicable, advise the need for student travel insurance.

Capture participant information including skill levels pertaining to certain activities, e.g. swimming proficiency.

Capture parent and emergency contact information. Increasingly, parents of children live apart and custodial and/or contact restrictions may be in place. It is important that activity supervisors understand those arrangements.

Privacy status of information provided should be made clear.

Outline proposed transport arrangements.

Obtain parental consent to attend the activity and to utilise described transport. Consent is for participation in the activity not for absolution of negligent acts or omissions (refer to Introduction above for commentary about exclusion of liability for negligence).

Obtain participant agreement to abide by camp behavioural expectations.

Specific permission is required to take photos of students and/or use their images in any public manner.

### **Medical and Dietary Information and Approval**

Parents are asked to provide details of relevant medical information. Relevant information will include Medicare details, family doctor details and details of ambulance and private medical insurance cover.

Obtain details of current medical conditions and any management or treatment plan options. Details may include allergy conditions (anaphylaxis, penicillin, coeliac, paracetamol, SPF reaction), asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or fits, developmental or behavioural problems (attention deficit disorder, hyperactive, Asperger syndrome, autism), bed wetting, sleep walking, skin conditions, recent fractures, disabilities, migraine, sight impairment, hearing impairment and/or travel sickness.

## RISK INFORMATION – SCHOOLS PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS

Food allergy or dietary requirements are needed to inform venue catering staff.

Obtain parental confirmation that the child has no pre-existing medical conditions that would prevent participation in proposed activities and that activities will not exacerbate any pre-existing conditions. Receive parental consent to obtain medical treatment in emergency situations and acceptance of responsibility for costs of medical treatment.

### References

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, “Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors/ Forms” August 2013,

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/safety/Pages/outdoorforms.aspx>

WA Department of Education, “Excursions off School Site Activities”, June 2011,

<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/policy-planning-and-accountability/policies-framework/policies/excursions-off-school-site-activities.en?bbp.s=9&bbp.e=select&bbp.v=6&bbp.i=d0.a.1.2.1.8.1.7.1&bbp.8.policyID=11684723&q11n.enc=UTF-8&bbp.9.pane=3>

NSW Department of Education and Communities, “Excursions Implementation procedures”, May 2009,

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_admin/excursions/excursion\\_pol/implementation\\_1\\_PD20040010.shtml?level=Schools&categories=Schools%7Cschool+activities%7Cexcursions](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/excursions/excursion_pol/implementation_1_PD20040010.shtml?level=Schools&categories=Schools%7Cschool+activities%7Cexcursions)