



GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION WAIVER USE

When participants in an activity sign waivers, they are voluntarily relinquishing their privileges to which they are legally entitled. Waivers are also referred to as “exculpatory agreements” because the participants are exculpating, or forgiving in advance, any future negligent conduct (NRPA, 1996).

It is important for USF departments, organizations and clubs to utilize waivers to both protect the University from unnecessary liability and to inform students of the known risks associated with the event in which they are participating.

However, it is also important to recognize what a waiver does not do. For example, waivers do not excuse failure to train, failure to check equipment, failure to supervise and failure to take reasonable precautions. A participant cannot waive or release his or her right to any claim “based upon the willful or wanton misconduct of the provider” (NRPA, 1996).

Waivers should be used when a student or other individual participates in an elective or other voluntary activity such as:

- ✓ a field trip
- ✓ study abroad
- ✓ recruitment program
- ✓ recreation program
- ✓ off-campus activity
- ✓ van/other transportation travel
- ✓ athletic activities
- ✓ on-campus facilities use

Waiver forms once signed by participants should be copied. The original copy should be kept with the advisor/department head on campus and any copies should be with the event coordinator(s) for if a situation arises.

Please refer to the **Participant Waiver** sample template that can be tailored to specific events and activities. Please utilize this sample to guide the generation and implementation of an acknowledgement of risk and waiver of liability for your department/area/student organization.

If event requires travel, please also refer to the **Travel Waiver** form.

If any participants are driving, please also refer to the **Driver Waiver** for those participants.