



ADMINISTRATIVE RULES OF MONTANA



37.98.1821 EXPEDITION: SOLO EXPERIENCE

- (1) If the program utilizes solo experiences as part of the therapeutic process during expeditions, the program shall have policies and procedures for the utilization of solo experiences. Policies and procedures for solo experiences, at a minimum, must require:
 - (a) a written solo plan that must include, but is not limited to:
 - (i) the goals, methods, and techniques to be used and time frames for each participant;
 - (ii) an evaluation of the maturity level, health and physical ability of the youth, indicating that a solo expedition is reasonable;
 - (iii) documented instructions on the solo experience, including expectations, restrictions, communication, environment and emergency procedures; and
 - (iv) documented instructions on a back up plan in case the primary plan does not work; and
 - (b) a staff member be designated to coordinate and implement the plan.
- (2) Staff shall be familiar with the site chosen to conduct solo experiences, and shall conduct a pre-site investigation and preparation. These activities must be documented in the daily expedition log including:
 - (a) a description of the terrain selected and the appropriateness for the level of participation skill of the youth;
 - (b) a review of hazardous conditions; and
 - (c) a description of arrangements made prior to the solo experience for medication, food and water drop-offs if needed.
- (3) Youth must be supervised during solo experiences. Written plans for supervision must be drafted prior to the solo, and a copy of these written plans shall be placed in the daily expedition log. A plan of supervision must include at a minimum:
 - (a) the assignment of a specific staff member responsible for the supervision of the solo participant;
 - (b) predetermined procedures for:
 - (i) placing youth at a distance from each other and the central staff site to allow for appropriate supervision and emergency communication;
 - (ii) placing youth requiring special attention closer to the central staff site;

- (c) a method of clearly defining physical boundaries;
 - (d) instruction of youth to not participate in potentially dangerous activities;
 - (e) notification and check-in systems including a procedure for checking the youth's emotional and physical condition daily;
 - (f) a requirement that visual checks be conducted at regular intervals, with the actual time between visual checks being dependent upon the youth's maturity, experience and other relevant factors as determined by the youth's condition, provided, however, that the time between visual checks may never exceed 12 hours; and
 - (g) emergency planning, including:
 - (i) instructing the youth on safety and emergency procedures, including evacuation routes;
 - (ii) providing each youth with signaling capabilities, including a whistle, for emergency notification;
 - (iii) instructing of other youth on how to respond if the emergency notification system is put into use; and
 - (iv) providing a check-in system should an emergency occur.
- (4) The youth must be debriefed immediately after a solo expedition. The debriefing must at a minimum:
- (a) include a written summary of the youth's participation and progress achieved; and
 - (b) be provided in written form to the placing agency and, upon request, to the youth's parents or legal guardian.

Authorizing statute(s): Sec. 50-5-220, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Sec. 50-5-220, MCA

History: NEW, 2004 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 8/6/04.