

**University Policy 5??: Field Research Safety Policy**

**Category:** TBD

**Sub Category:** *(if applicable)* TBD

**Covered Individuals:** University Employees, Students, and Volunteers

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President of Research

**Policy Custodian:** Vice President of Research

**Last Revised:** N/A

**Previous USU Policy Number:** N/A

**5??.1 Purpose and Scope**

Utah State University (USU) is committed to providing opportunities for faculty, staff and students to collect data outside the semi-controlled workplaces found in USU campuses, laboratories, or libraries as part of a course or formal research study. This policy is meant to establish the minimum safety requirements for conducting field research including anything from data collection in a populated area to a remote location in Alaska.

There is no research or educational objective that justifies taking avoidable risks with the health and safety of yourself or others. All individuals performing field research or course work on behalf of USU are responsible for ensuring they work in a safe and conscientious manner and follow this policy at all times. Failure to follow these policies and procedures may make you individually liable in the case of accident or injury.

This policy is expected to be fully adopted by September 1st 2022. With the expectation that by the beginning of the 2023 field research season (i.e. May, 2023) all USU field research activities are in full compliance. All projects initiated after September 1st 2023, must have available funding to cover all costs associated with the requirements of the policy.

**5??.2 Policy**

2.1 General Requirements for Field Research Safety:

2.1.1 Travel all field research activities that require a travel authorization must adhere to USU Travel Policy 515. See Travel Policy 515 for travel authorization requirements.

2.1.2 Safety all field research activities or trips must file a Field Safety Plan (FSP) with their department or college that at a minimum addresses the requirements identified in the USU Field Safety Handbook.

2.1.3 Communications Plan all field safety plans must include a communications plan that establishes; the means of communication, and the frequency of communication as determined by the guidelines set forth in the USU Field Safety Handbook.

* Field research activities conducted in a wilderness location or any other location that does not have continuous reliable cell phone service must have an alternate means of communication readily available (i.e. satellite phone, spot tracker, inReach or other approved method). See USU Field Safety Handbook for details on suggested equipment.

2.1.4 First Aid Kits all field research activities must have access to a first aid kit. See the USU Field Safety Handbook for which type of first aid kit is required for your type of research or location.

2.2 Training

2.2.1 Medical training required medical training depends upon location and remoteness of field research site or activity type. See the USU Field Safety Handbook for details.

2.2.2 Other training site specific safety training or project specific safety training may also be required. As set forth by the project supervisor, department, college, or other USU policies. (e.g. OHV Training course required by USU Policy 539)

**5??.3 Responsibilities**

3.1 College or Department Responsibilities

Establish and implement a College or Department Field Research Safety Program that shall, at a minimum, include:

* Conditions under which working alone is prohibited.
* An internal review and endorsement procedure that demonstrates it (the College or Department) is satisfied that the supervisor’s Field Safety Plan is appropriate and that the action plan items have been, are being, or will be implemented.
* An accountability procedure that verifies its employees’ departure from (check-out), and return to (check-in), their day-to-day place of work (e.g. USU Main Campus, Ag Research Station, etc.).

3.2 Supervisor Responsibilities

* Follow all procedures, guidelines, provisions, and/or responsibilities described in your College or Department’s Field Research Safety Program.
* Follow currently recognized best safety practices for the location, environment and type of research.
* Manage the development and implementation of your research group’s project specific Field Safety Plan prior to conducting any field research. See USU Field Safety Handbook for requirements.
* Provide and document employee training:
	+ Including University, College, or Department, required safety training(s).
	+ Safety training identified as risk-appropriate in the Field Safety Plan.
* Annually update Field Safety Plan(s).

3.3 Faculty, Staff, Student Employee, Students, Graduate Student or Volunteer Responsibilities

* Conduct all field research in accordance with your operational unit’s Field Safety Plan and College or Department’s Field Research Program.
* In a timely manner, inform your supervisor of any changes to existing or newly discovered risks that might undermine the hazard control measures described in the Field Safety Plan.
* Take adequate precautions to protect your own safety at all times.

**5??.4 References**

* USU Field Safety Handbook (hyperlink)

**5??.5 Related USU Policies**

* Policy 515 [Travel](https://www.usu.edu/policies/515/)
* Policy 539 [Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Usage](https://www.usu.edu/policies/539/)

**Information below is not included as part of the contents of the official Policy.** Itis provided only as a convenience for readers/users and may be changed at any time by persons authorized by the President, subject to review by the USU Policy Committee.

**Resources**

* None.

**Policy History**

Original issue date: TBD

Last review date: N/A

Next scheduled review date: N/A

Previous revision dates: N/A