

Parental Notification for Alcohol and Other Drug Cases

	1 st Level of AOD Education	2 nd Level of AOD Education	3 rd Level of AOD Education
# of anticipated cases per year	450	60-70	15-20
Goal	Opportunity for <i>student to address issues</i> on his/her own	Opportunity for <i>student to address issues</i> on his/her own; provide <i>information</i> to parents; opportunity for parents to partner for <i>prevention</i>	Opportunity for <i>student to address issues</i> on his/her own; enlist parent partnership for <i>health intervention</i>
Action	No p.n.	a) If no Medical Amnesty Protocol (MAP) cases, Dean of Students (DOS) is <i>authorized to send letter to parents</i> b) If MAP case, <i>no notification</i>	The Judicial Administrator's Office (JAO) is <i>authorized to notify parents</i>

Key Points:

- ◆ **Overall philosophy of Cornell University:** College students, as young adults, should be given the opportunity to learn from mistakes on their own. Parents may be contacted by Cornell University when, in its sole discretion and consistent with federal and state laws and university policy, the contact would benefit the student.
- ◆ **Definition of parental notification (p.n.):** Notification of parents or guardians without student consent, consistent with exceptions permitted by federal and state laws and university policy
- ◆ **Types of conduct/violations** that may result in alcohol and other drug (aod) referral: Code of Conduct violations such as underage possession of alcohol, possession of other drugs, possession of an illegal id, disorderly conduct, property damage, or assault that is related to aod; House Rules violations such as minor in the presence of alcohol
- ◆ **Students would be informed** of planned communication *in advance* and encouraged to communicate with parents prior to University contact with parents
- ◆ **Students** would be provided ample opportunity to *express concern* to DOS or JAO prior to initiation of p.n.
- ◆ **At student's request**, communication with parents is available at any time, even a first-level matter
- ◆ **If there is a perceived emergency**, University may engage in p.n. at any time
- ◆ University administrators are **planning communication roll-out** to student body and relevant University departments
- ◆ This plan was **developed by a committee of the President's Council on Alcohol and Other Drugs** and included students and administrators

How does this change University procedures?

Cornell University continues to value the ability of students to learn and grow from their mistakes and mature as young adults. *FERPA continues to permit* parents to be notified, among other things, when there is an alcohol or drug violation and when students are financially dependent on their parents. P.N. has been at the discretion of the Judicial Administrator for any aod-violation, which will continue to be the case.

The *changes at Cornell are* as follows:

- ◆ A letter may be sent at 2nd incidents
- ◆ Contact may be made at 3rd incidents
- ◆ House Rules cases may be included in cases to be eligible for p.n.
- ◆ P.N. will be tracked and evaluated

How does this new protocol compare with that of other colleges and universities?

Lowery et al (2004) collected information from *349 public and private, 2 year and 4 year* schools to examine the extent to which schools have implemented p.n. in Spring 2002. They found:

- ◆ 46% of schools reported a formal p.n. (40% of public schools; 55% of private schools)
- ◆ Of the 160 schools with p.n.: 29% had strict notification (notification on every offense); 22% had repeat offense notification; 27% had severity triggered notification; 22% had discretionary notification.
- ◆ 54% of institutions notified parents by letter; 25% notified by letter and phone call; 13% notified by phone call

The *majority of Ivy and COFHE* schools responding to queries on professional listserves in Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 report *discretionary notification*. Notable exceptions include Oberlin and Princeton, which contact parents after a 2nd violation, and Wesleyan. The Wesleyan policy is to ask students to notify their parents and a member of the Dean of Students Office follows up within five days to answer any questions the parents may have regarding the incident. This is instituted after any alcohol offense that results in a student being placed on probation.

What were some of the considerations that went into the development of p.n.? Why now?

The purpose of p.n. is to *provide information* to the parent—*not to be punitive*. Our experience has been that students who have third incidents typically have significant problems with their substance use that cannot be easily addressed or changed in the University environment. Our hope for these students is to give them every opportunity to address what problems there may be so that they can come back to the University with the capacity to be as healthy and successful as possible, and, if appropriate to use, p.n. would enlist the parents' or guardians' help in this endeavor. The letter at a second incident sets the stage so that should a 3rd incident occur, the parent or guardian is forewarned that there might be a concern.

Other considerations:

- ◆ This system of review for p.n. *clarifies and streamlines current processes* within Cornell
- ◆ Considering cases for p.n. is *consistent* with other ways Cornell is connecting with parents