

Liability Release Waiver Policy Update

Recently, the Office of Risk Management updated the liability release waiver policy and this has a direct impact on service-learning courses. To see the full liability release waiver policy, please visit:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/risk-management/liability-release-waiver-.html>

How will this affect my service-learning course?

Previously, if you were teaching a service-learning course with service activities as a required part of the course you were expected to have all your students complete a liability release waiver at the beginning of the semester. However, with the updated policy, "[Release, Waiver, and Agreement Not to Sue forms](#) are needed when activities are voluntary/optional. Students are not required to sign an agreement for field experiences or field trips which are mandatory (required) as part of a course for academic credit. Voluntary (optional) trips and activities, even when part of a course for credit, require a signed agreement."

Therefore:

If you have a service-learning course where it is required that students complete any community engagement activities, e.g. direct service, field trips, etc., as a required component of the course, then they do not need to complete a liability form for that activity.

However, if your service-learning activities are optional, then students would need to complete a liability form (available at [Release, Waiver, and Agreement Not to Sue forms](#)). For example, you may have a service-learning assignment as an option for extra credit in your course.

If I determine it is necessary to have my service-learning students complete a liability waiver, what do I do with them afterwards?

Previously, the Center for Community and Civic Engagement retained the liability waiver records for all service-learning courses at BGSU. However, with this new policy "Signed agreements are to be maintained by the sponsoring department for 8 years following the completion of the event, per the University records retention schedule. Documents can be maintained hard copy or scanned electronically."

Therefore:

As the faculty of record for your service-learning course, if you determine based on the policy that it is necessary to have your students complete liability forms for optional community engagement/service activities in your courses, then you must retain those records in your academic department. The Center for Community and Civic Engagement will send out a reminder at the beginning of each semester to remind you of the updated policy, but we will no longer collect or retain any liability waivers for service-learning courses.