



Employee Manual

Revised 07/08/2008

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Welcome to Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center

The purpose of this Employee Handbook is to outline in detail all of the Centers policies and procedures relative to all employees. We expect you to read it in its entirety and encourage you to discuss any questions you may have with the Center Director or the Owner.

The Director will review the policies and procedures of this Handbook on a periodical basis and implement revisions where applicable. Any changes will be given to you as soon as they are available.

Violation of any policy or procedure in this Handbook could lead to termination.

Any exceptions to the policies or procedures in the Handbook must be approved by the Center Director and/or the Owner.

It is our hope that everyone will achieve his or her highest level of job performance possible:

- Children enrolled in our program are encouraged to be children.
- We provide an environment that stimulates their minds.
- Through play, children are able to develop intellectually by engaging in activities that foster creativity, imagination, socialization, cooperation and independence, while still allowing them to have fun.
- Caregivers prepare age-appropriate lesson plans bi-weekly to develop skills in areas of language arts, music, fine and gross motor development, arts and crafts, positive peer interaction and literacy.

Absences

Absences due to illness must be reported to the Center Director or the Owner immediately by calling their personal numbers given to you. Calling off leaving a message on the answering machine to the Center is **unacceptable**. In addition, you may not call off the morning you are scheduled to come in unless there is an emergency! **There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule! Failure to follow the proper call-off procedure will result in suspension and/or automatic termination! In addition, failure to report to work without calling will result in your dismissal.**

Four late days in a thirty-day period will result in a write up.

Five call offs in a six-month period will result in a three-day suspension without pay.

Excessive absences, even though reported, may result in a disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Accidents and Emergencies

Maintaining a safe work environment requires the continuous cooperation of all employees. We encourage all employees to communicate with fellow employees and their Director regarding safety issues. All employees will be provided care, first aid, and emergency service as required for injuries and illnesses.

Anti-Nepotism

Members of an employee's immediate family may be considered for employment on the basis of their qualifications. Immediate family may not be hired, however, if their employment would:

- Create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member;
- Have the potential for creating an adverse impact on work performance; or
- Create either an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

For the purpose of this policy, immediate family includes: spouse, parent, child, sibling, in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, and members of household. This policy also applies to romantic relationships.

Attendance and Punctuality

All Hopes and Dreams employees are expected to be on the job, on time, on a regular daily. Childcare work schedules are based upon the promises that all

employees will be at work and performing their assigned duties in a timely manner. On occasion, it may be necessary for an employee to be late or absent from work due to unforeseen illnesses or personal issues. However, absences and tardiness will have a negative impact on the overall moral of the staff and scheduling. Employees' hours will be set upon hiring. Schedules may change according to the need and enrollment. Staff is required to clock in/out for the regular schedule. Repeated or chronic tardiness will render the employee subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination, at the discretion of the Director.

Business Expense

All expenses must be pre-approved by the Director. In order for an employee to receive reimbursement for any reason, the request must be accompanied by a receipt.

Cellular Phone Use Policy

As a matter of general policy, cellular phones use while on duty is prohibited. However, employees may use their cellular phones in emergency situations only. In such cases, employees are required to obtain their Director approval to conduct their call in a designated area as determined by the Director/Owner.

Closed Circuit Television

Each nursery room is equipped with a closed circuit television camera. The purpose of these cameras is:

- To act as my eyes and ears when I am away or otherwise engaged in the daily administration of center business
- To protect each employee from possible liability if a parent accuses them of wrongdoing by providing factual accounts of an incident
- To provide both positive and negative visual documentation of employee performance if needed during annual evaluations
- To review caregiver interactions with infants and toddlers thus providing valuable information to be used during employee meetings or as an orientation video

Code of Ethics

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center employees will:

- Achieve their highest level of job performance possible.
- Will not abuse or waste Hopes and Dreams resources.
- Will not engage in fraud or falsification of Hopes and Dreams' records.
- Will comply with all legal requirements concerning breach of confidentiality agreement (with the Center and with wages).

- Will not exhibit threats (verbally or by bodily harm) to co-workers, parents, children, or anyone they come in contact with.
- Will always follow the proper safety practices when needed.
- Will understand that there is no tolerance for theft, profanity and /or insubordination.
- Will comply with all legal requirements concerning substance abuse (drug, alcohol, and smoking).
- Will follow the proper dress code.
- Will value individuals without regard to race, religion, color, gender, ethnicity, physical challenge and age.
- Will discuss any questions or concerns about the code of ethics with the Director.

Disciplinary Action

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center expects that all employees follow all policies and procedures.

Employees may be given a written warning which clearly details the misconduct. If the situation is not corrected, other actions may be taken. The written warning will be signed by the Director and the employee will be given a copy. An employee may receive up to two written warnings. Suspension without pay pending an investigation is the next step. The suspension may result in reinstatement or termination of employment.

Dress Code

All employees are encouraged to wear comfortable, appropriate fitting clothing. A professional appearance must be maintained at all times. Any employee not adhering to the dress code will be asked to change into appropriate clothing or leave work for the day. The following should be observed:

- Uniforms (scrubs, slippers) in good condition, clean etc.
- Personal hygiene should be practiced appropriately
- Halter tops, tube tops or other revealing clothing are strictly prohibited
- No tight fitting pants or jeans

Emergency Closings

When Federal Government closes due to severe weather conditions, the Center will follow the Federal Government schedule - which will also be on your local morning FOX 5, channel 7 and channel 9 television stations. The Center will have a delay only if the weather is so severe that the staff of Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center is unable to arrive at the Center.

In the event of a power failure, water shortage, lack of heat or air conditioning, or other emergencies, the Center will be required to close.

Employees are instructed to contact their Center Director or the Owner if they

have any questions.

Employee Lounge

The kitchen is available to all employees for lunch breaks/relief. Employees will not be permitted to eat or drink in designated areas for the children. Absolutely, no hot drinks, coffee, tea, or food allowed. **(No Exceptions).**

Employee Status

Full-time employees will adhere to a flexible schedule of thirty-five (35) to forty (40) hours per week.

Part-time employees have a basic schedule between ten (10) and thirty-four (34) hours per week.

Employment Classification

All employees are on three-month probation from their start date. During that time, Hopes and Dreams will evaluate their job performance to determine if he or she meets the requirements and standards of Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center, upon the end of their three-month probation the supervisor will review a statement with the employee about their current performance. Should the employee meet the necessary requirements and standards, the employee will attain their regular employment at the Center. If the employee does not meet the recommended requirements and standards, the employee will be terminated from Hopes and Dreams.

Employment benefits

We offer the following benefits:

- 1) Paid Holidays (refer to holiday section of handbook)
- 2) Late pick-up fees from parents are paid directly to employee staying late
- 3) Annual on-time and perfect attendance bonus of \$250.00
- 4) Discount of 20% on child care
- 5) Quarterly on-time and perfect attendance bonus of \$75.00 (permanent employees only)
- 6) Vacation 100% employer paid (permanent employees only)
- 7) Paid annual membership fees to the Prince Georges Child Resource Center to receive reduced fees for training classes (permanent employees only)
- 8) Social Security benefits which are required by law
- 9) Worker's Compensation to all employees regardless of employee status
- 10) Paid training, workshops and/or classes (permanent employees only)

Employee Childcare

On site childcare is available to all employees provided space is available. An employee weekly enrollment discount of 20% will be given for each child. Don't expect any special privileges, business is business.* Reduced tuition slots are limited based upon available accommodations and the Directors discretion.

Under most circumstances, employees will not be allowed to care for their own children

Equal Employment Opportunity

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center staff are committed to provide equal employment opportunities for all, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, and/ or disability. The opportunities include, but are not limited to recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, compensation, benefits and all of the other terms and conditions of employment.

The Purpose of Hopes and Dreams Infant/ Toddler Center is to provide an age appropriate practice in a safe, secure and loving environment. We realize and understand that all children are unique and learn at their own pace; therefore, our caregivers incorporate a variety of different learning styles that reflect the diversity of each child and focus on the individual needs of each child. Our goal is to challenge children to reach their full potential without overwhelming them.

Flexible Hours

The total hours each employee work each week will be determined by the number of children in attendance daily. The director will require an early dismissal (of one or more employees) when attendance is low. First, volunteers will be requested, if no one volunteers the director will initiate mandatory early dismissal. This mandatory early dismissal will be on a rotating basis. All employees are reminded to clock out at the end of their scheduled time and collect late pick up fees from parents for overtime compensation.

Holidays

All Full time employees (excluding those in non-pay status) are eligible for 8 paid holidays per year as follows:

- New Year's Day
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

The holiday calendar will be handed out by the Center Director in January of each year.

When a holiday falls on a weekend, it will be observed on either the preceding Friday or the following Monday.

You will not receive holiday pay if you are on a leave of absences.

Employees who are scheduled to work but call in sick the day before and/ or the day after a holiday will not be eligible for holiday pay unless you provide a written statement signed by a physician.

Part-Time employees receive holiday pay according to the following schedule:

Jury Duty

It is your civic duty as a citizen to report for jury duty whenever called. If you are called for jury duty, you must notify your Director or Supervisor within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the jury summons.

You are expected to return to work when it does not conflict with the obligation of the court.

Leave of Absence

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center will grant leaves of absence, without pay, under certain circumstances. All leave without pay must be approved by the Center Director and/or the Owner and will only be granted for extenuating circumstances.

According to the Family and Medical Leave Act, employees may request an unpaid leave of up to 12 weeks during any 12 month period for maternity leave, birth, adoption or foster placement of a child, to care for a spouse or immediate family member with a serious illness, or if the employee has a serious illness. Requests for an unpaid leave must be made in writing to the Director at least 48-72 hours or to the beginning date of the leave (when possible) and documentation supporting the reason *for* the unpaid leave must be provided.

Unpaid leave is available only after all of the accrued vacation days have been used.

The employee assumes the right and responsibility before returning to work at Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center. He or she must contact the Director thirty days before the last date of their leave to discuss their return to work. Upon return, the employee will be offered an equivalent job, but not necessarily his or her old job.

There is no guarantee that employees on unpaid leave will be reinstated to their previous position. If the same or similar position is not available, Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center and Hope Hammond reserve the right to give the employee a lower-level position with a salary equivalent to that position. If the employee is not satisfied with the status, the employee's status will be converted to a resignation.

Employees who do not return to work after an unpaid leave of absence will be automatically terminated.

Parking Policy

Employees are asked to park on the gravel spaces in front of the play yard or the street in front of the owner's house on both sides of the street. **Under no**

circumstances are you to use the private driveway of other property owners for turning around. Please do not park in front of other property owners homes. There are four turnaround spaces available for your use. The handicapped space and the apron(*) directly behind it across the street, and the driveway of the owner and the apron across from her house. (*) An apron is the part of a sidewalk cut lower to accommodate a car driving across.

Payroll

There are federal and state wage hour laws that regulate the pay practice of all employees in order to fairly and equitably compensate all employees.

All employees will be paid every two weeks.

You must use the time clock to clock in and clock out on a daily basis.

This includes arrival times, and departure times and/or lunch breaks

Any employee who punches in or out for work before their shift starts or after their shift ends will only be paid for the shift he/she was assigned, unless approved by the director. Any overtime must be approved in advance by the Director.

All full-time employees will work 8 hours per day with a mandatory 1-hour lunch period. A total of 40 hours per week must be worked.

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center will comply with federal regulations for fair labor. All employees must either be a U.S. citizen or verify their legal right to work in the United States.

All part-time employees will work 4 hours per day with a 30-minute mandatory lunch break period. A maximum of 20 hours per week must be worked.

The Center opens at 7:00 a.m. and closes at 6:00 p.m.

All employees are required to know their work schedule, including their arrival time, lunchtime and departure time.

Overtime Pay – You will be eligible to receive overtime pay of one and one-half (1 1/2) times your regular hourly wage for **approved** hours worked over eight hours per day, or over 40 hours in one week. If during that week, you were away from the job because of a job-related injury, paid holiday, jury duty, vacation day, or personal day, those hours worked will not be counted as hours worked for the purpose of computing eligibility for overtime

Since there are certain exceptions to the definitions given above, any questions should be taken to the Director.

Personal Property

We will not assume responsibility of any kind for any employee's personal property. We will not store, replace, repair or make reimbursements. Please do not bring your personal

property to work. Adequate locker space will be provided for the storage of purses, lunch bags, books/magazines and medications. You must provide your own lock.

Resignation

If you choose to resign from the center, it is requested that you submit a written two-week notice.

Supervision and Problem Resolution

An open door philosophy is an essential part of maintaining open communications and a positive work environment. We are interested in knowing our employees' ideas, questions, suggestions, problems and concerns. In most instances, your Director is the person best qualified to solve a problem or answer a question and you are encouraged to communicate your concerns and suggestions to them.

However, there may be times when you wish to discuss a concern or problem with someone other than your Director. You are encouraged to bring these matters to any other member of management and/or staff member.

Smoking

Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center promotes a healthy, comfortable, smoke-free environment for its entire employees, children and families. Smoking in or around the Center is prohibited.

Solicitation

Soliciting, collecting money, or circulating petitions on child care property without written permission from the Director is prohibited

Professional Development

Regardless of your previous education or experience, employees will be expected to continue studies of and training in the early education practices in order to keep abreast of new developments in the field. This continued study and training may take place on the employee's own time outside of regular working hours, and as recommended by the Director.

Two days each year the Center will be closed for in-service training. The in-service days will consist of training and individual time for planning, goal setting, etc.

Upon completion of your six hours of training, a certificate will be issued.

Six hours of training are required yearly by Office of Childcare Administration. Information on workshops, *conferences and training dates will be given to you*

as soon as they are available.

Required attendance for training to obtain your six hours of credit and attendance at staff *meetings* is mandatory

Vacations

The eligibility for paid vacation is based on the status of employment and length of continuous service.

Upon hiring, each full-time (40 hour/week) employee will receive 16 hours of vacation to be used in their first year of employment. Each full-time (40 hours each week) employee will accrue 2.15 hours per pay period equivalent to seven days per year to be used in the following year. After one year of employment, vacation days are accrued at 2.15 hours provided you worked at least 72 hours per pay period, also to be used in the following years. Vacation days must be used each year or be forfeited without compensation. The following chart outlines how vacation days are accrued for full-time employees:

Period	vacation days
0-12 months	2 days
After 1 st anniversary	5 days
After 2 nd anniversary and on	7 days

Part-time employees are entitled to 16 hours per year after their first full year of service.

Requests for vacation must be approved in advance by the Director, who will take in consideration the employees' length of service. No deductions from pay will be made for vacation or holiday closings.

Requests for vacation time must be submitted to the Director and approved by the Director at least three weeks in advance. If any conflicts arise in vacation requests, preference will be given to the employee with the longest length of continuous service.

The Director has the responsibility to maintain adequate staffing levels and has the authority to limit the approval of vacation requests in order to meet operational needs. Requests will normally be granted as long as your absence will not seriously affect the operation of the Center. Usually, only one employee may be out on a vacation day in a department at any one time.

*Please note, Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center does not offer insurance benefit coverage at this time.

Vacation Pay for Terminated employees

Employees leaving Hopes and Dreams due to voluntary resignation, retirement or dismissal will be eligible for their unused vacation hours in the following circumstances:

- Upon resignation , if two weeks notice are provided ; an employee that does not provide adequate notice of at least two weeks upon resignation forfeits any rights to unused vacation pay; and
- Upon termination for reasons other than gross misconduct, gross negligence or other cause.

Sick Days

A sick day is time off **without pay** due to illness or medical/dental treatments. It is a condition that interferes with the employee satisfactory completing their job.

Telephone Use Policy

Because a large percentage of our business is conducted over the phone, it is essential to project a professional telephone manner at all times.

Although Hopes and Dreams realize that there are some limited occasions when an employee may need to use the phone for personal reasons, it is expected that the calls will be **short** and **infrequent**. Additionally, no long distance personal calls may be made on Hopes and Dreams phones without prior approval from employee's Director/Owner.

Employees will be provided an emergency phone number in the case that you need to be reached. The telephone number you may give out is (301-699-7833), consider this your direct line. This is also the number for our fax machine. **Please note that this is for emergency use only.**

Shaken Baby Syndrome

Under no circumstances will a baby be shaken while in our care. Shaking a baby violently for even 2-3 seconds can cause bleeding into and around the baby's brain and can destroy brain cells, lead to blindness, mental retardation, paralysis, seizures or death. Sometimes we are unable to calm a fussy baby and the best action to take is no action. If the baby has been fed, changed, and is not sick, let the baby cry for several minutes in an attempt to gain self control, but continue to monitor the baby regularly. If you feel the need to shake a baby that seems to continually cry **DON'T**, please place the baby in their crib and notify a co-worker or the director immediately. Don't let a preventable action ruin your career and leave you in jail for an undetermined amount of time on possible felony charges.

Sudden Infant Death (SIDS)

SIDS is the "sudden death of an infant under one year of age which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history." It is our policy to place each infant on their back to continue resting.

Written documentation from a doctor forbidding this sleeping position must be on file to place infants on their stomach. We will cooperate fully with each person investigating the death of an infant while enrolled here. They are here to obtain facts for their reports, not place blame.

Work Rules

The following regulations constitute our work rules. Inappropriate behavior, as described within these rules are prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination with or without written notice. First offenses can result in immediate termination.

1. Disrespectful treatment (including profanity, gossiping, physical , neglect or verbal threats) of infants, parents, visitors, volunteers and other employees
2. Failure to keep your room neat and clean and to plan and implement age appropriate experiences as determined by the director
3. Unauthorized discussion (gossip) of information pertaining to infants, parents, or other employees with friends, co-workers, relatives, the general public or the news media
4. Possession of firearms while on childcare property
5. Interfering with another employee's work
6. Abuse, destruction, neglect, or loss of child care property
7. Violating any written policies and encouraging or inciting others to do the same
8. Incompetence (inability to perform your specific job requirements)
9. Insubordination: refusal of an employee to follow instructions, or perform designated work where such instructions or work normally and properly are required of an employee
10. Dishonesty or theft of center or personal property
11. Charging personal calls including long distance and directory assistance phone calls to work
12. Falsification of records-employment or center
13. Failure to report to your assigned room at the beginning of the work day or leaving work prior to the end of the work day
14. Sleeping on the job-even during lunch breaks
15. Having unauthorized visitors during work hours without permission (including former employees, relatives and friends)
16. Failure to report an accident involving an on the job injury or damage to child care property

- 17.Soliciting, collecting money, or circulating petitions on child care property without written permission from the director for each occurrence
- 18.Excessive absenteeism

Employees Acknowledgement

- I have accepted and read the personnel policies handbook of Hopes and Dreams Infant/Toddler Center.
- I expect to be guided by the rules and policies contained therein.
- I understand that my employment is at will and may be terminated by me or the Director at any time for any reason.
- I also understand that any or all of the provisions contained in the personnel policies and procedures handbook may be modified, amended, or eliminated at anytime with or without notice.

Employee Signature: _____Date:_____

Director'sSignature:_____Date:_____