

# Moody Early Childhood Center

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*2026-2027 Employee Handbook*



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# Employee Handbook

Welcome to **Moody Early Childhood Center**! We are a model Early Childhood Center that provides quality childcare and education to the children we serve. As an employee of **Moody Early Childhood Center**, you will be expected to exemplify excellence as well as quality of service and care. By following the employee policy and procedures outlined in this handbook, combined with the NAEYC Code of Ethics, you will be well on your way to meeting these goals. This handbook is a broad tool for conduct. You will be oriented on more specific policies and procedures through our on-going professional development training to help guide your decision-making and best practices. Be sure to always keep the Code of Conduct at the forefront of all decision-making concerning children.

## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

### CORE VALUES

As an employee, it is important that you know what your colleagues here at MECC value, and how those values and behaviors are demonstrated as we work together to achieve the goals of our organization.

Under the guidance of our Executive Director, we strive to uphold three core values with everything that we do as a team.

- **Act with Integrity**
- **Serve with Respect**
- **Consider Others Before Self**

| Value Phrase                       | Value         | Behavior                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Act with Integrity</b>          | Dependability | I am accountable for my work and actions; and I consider how the work I do affects others.                                                 |
|                                    | Honesty       | I am responsible for my work and decisions, and I am accurate and truthful.                                                                |
|                                    | Openness      | I listen and respect others' opinions, encourage questions, provide feedback and share knowledge.                                          |
| <b>Serve with Respect</b>          | Courtesy      | I use good manners by saying "please," "thank you," and "good morning."                                                                    |
|                                    | Communication | I am mindful of what I say and how I say it; gossip and assumptions are not for me.                                                        |
|                                    | Recognition   | I acknowledge good work from departments and individuals in meaningful ways, verbally and in writing, and give credit where credit is due. |
| <b>Consider Others Before Self</b> | Cooperation   | I consider the needs of others and their departments; agree to disagree when necessary, and compromise for the good of the organization.   |
|                                    | Caring        | I get to know others, and I am sensitive to their needs.                                                                                   |
|                                    | Fairness      | I apply policies and procedures equally and give others the benefit of the doubt.                                                          |

### MISSION STATEMENT

**Moody Early Childhood Center** provides a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate program which fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child-friendly environment. MECC fosters innovation, embraces teamwork, strives for excellence, respects and supports families, commits to service at all levels, respects and appreciates diversity, actively listens and seeks to understand, communicates openly and productively, uses resources creatively and responsibly and abides by the NAEYC code of ethics.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** provides a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate program, which fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child-friendly environment.

- **We** foster innovation.
- **We** embrace teamwork.
- **We** strive for excellence.
- **We** respect and support families.
- **We** commit to service at all levels.
- **We** respect and appreciate diversity.
- **We** actively listen and seek to understand.
- **We** communicate openly and productively.
- **We** use resources creatively and responsibly.
- **We** abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethics and Statement of Commitment.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** meets all requirements as a nationally recognized, outstanding childcare center.

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of **Moody Early Childhood Center** is to ensure that Galveston children, regardless of their families' economic status, enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

## MOTTO

***"Giving all Galveston children the opportunity to soar"***

## PREFACE

We have prepared this handbook to provide you with information about our policies, rules, and present benefits. Please set aside some time to become familiar with this handbook. It will be very helpful in answering any questions that arise. We recognize, however, that no Handbook can answer every question. If you do not find an answer to your question in this handbook, or if you would like a particular policy or procedure clarified, please feel free to ask the Director of Education or Chief Operations Officer. We will be glad to help you answer every question.

This handbook is designed to be a summary of personnel policies and practices as they apply to all Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) personnel, unless otherwise provided in a valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreement. Although this handbook is not a contract or legal document, it does provide a working guide for use in understanding and applying all policies and practices. It is meant to be helpful to all employees and their supervisors.

Please understand that circumstances may surface that require changes in the policies, practices, and benefits described in this manual. As a result, Moody Early Childhood Center reserves the right to amend the contents as deemed appropriate. An updated copy of this handbook is posted on the MECC website, <http://moodychildhoodcenter.org/en/careers>, or the office will make a printed copy for you upon request. Changes to the policies will be amended to the online copy and highlighted. Staff will be notified when changes are posted.

Should any provision in this Employee Handbook be found to be unenforceable or invalid, such findings do not invalidate the entire Employee Handbook, but only that particular provision.

This Employee Handbook replaces and supersedes any and all other Moody Early Childhood Center Employee Handbooks, or other MECC policies, whether written or verbal, except valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreements.

## EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

### AT WILL EMPLOYMENT

This handbook is prepared to provide you with information and guidelines. It is not a contract of employment between **Moody Early Childhood Center** and you, as the employee. Since Texas is an at-will employment state, you are not under contract for employment. Thus, employment with **Moody Early Childhood Center** is not for a definite term. The Center or you may terminate employment at any time, for any reason with or without cause.



Apart from the policy of “at-will employment” and other policies required by law, **Moody Early Childhood Center** may change other employment policies at any time, without prior notice to you. Exceptions to **Moody Early Childhood Center’s** policy of “at-will employment” can only be approved in writing by the Board of Directors. No oral promise of change in your at-will status is binding for **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

**Moody Early Childhood Center** strives for each employee to be treated with respect and in a fair and just manner. In keeping with this policy, all persons will be considered for employment, promotion, or training on the basis of qualifications without regard to race, age, handicapping condition, color, creed, sex, or national origin.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** guarantees fair treatment of all employees. The Center strives to maintain a work environment in which all staff are free from harassment and expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment of employees and co-workers on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities. However, all employees must be physically able to safely supervise young children.

## DIVERSITY

**Moody Early Childhood Center** values diversity as a strength and asset in all aspects of its operations and relationships. Diversity furthers individual and organizational goals and MECC’s mission. Management of diversity focuses on inclusive staffing, customer sensitivity, communication, teamwork, and partnership. In valuing diversity MECC employees will:

- Acknowledge and respect differences
- Be sensitive to the many cultures in and beyond the workplace
- Avoid conduct that offends any group
- Understand and serve fairly the diverse communities in which we operate
- Encourage policies and practices that are truly inclusive
- Embrace opportunities to work with our communities to deepen and broaden our mutual understanding of diversity issues.

Diversity within and outside MECC strengthens our performance and generates creativity, innovative problem solving, and enables us to effectively serve more markets and retain the very best employees.

The term diversity refers to any mixture of items characterized by both differences and similarities. The components of a diversity mixture can be people, concepts, or items.

MECC has adopted a Diversity Strategy, initiatives, vision, and will rely on this policy MECC’s value statement and core values to implement it. MECC will adhere to established standards, rules, regulations, and legal requirements.

- MECC’s Diversity Strategy is a long-range plan for improving organizational, team, and individual effectiveness by addressing diversity in all its relevant dimensions, including but not limited to the following goals:
  - To raise the level of knowledge of diversity as a business issue and incorporate it into MECC’s long-range business plan, goals, and objectives.
  - To integrate the diversity strategy in “the way we do business” by embedding it into everything we do, rather than position it as a “stand-alone” program.
  - To develop, achieve, and sustain a vision and a culture and unit subcultures that are aligned with MECC’s Value Statement and Core Values, and that optimally supports MECC’s mission.
- Diversity management is a continuous process, and structures and systems will be developed to identify issues, plan actions, and evaluate accomplishments on an ongoing basis.
- Diversity management is a business imperative for MECC that will enable it to maintain its industry leadership position and tap the full potential of its employees and customers while meeting their needs.
- MECC recognizes its diverse markets and will continue to research, design, and implement strategies to address its market properly.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at **Moody Early Childhood Center** will be based on merit, qualification, and ability. **Moody Early Childhood Center** does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age,

physical disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, diversity, termination, and access to benefits and training.

We encourage and support cultural diversity, gender equality, non-violence, and peaceful conflict resolution throughout every aspect of our programs. Our goal is to teach children to resist the bias that inundated much of today's popular culture. We believe that children can be empowered to reject negative stereotypes of race, gender, religion, and physical capabilities with the help of their parents and teachers. We ask for your support and your feedback to help us ensure that we are living up to our highest standards.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful acts and/or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### NOTICE INFORMING INDIVIDUALS ABOUT NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. **Moody Early Childhood Center** does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. **Moody Early Childhood Center:**

- Provides free aid and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats) •
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters
  - Information is written in other languages

If you need these services, contact Antonio Ford, Chief Operations Officer. If you believe that **Moody Early Childhood Center** has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. with: Antonio Ford, Chief Operations Officer, 1110 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Galveston, TX 77550, Telephone (409) 761-6930, Fax (409) 750-7177, Email [antonio@moodychildhoodcenter.org](mailto:antonio@moodychildhoodcenter.org). If you need help filing a grievance, Antonio Ford, Chief Operations Officer, is available to help you. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

#### INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT AND ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Moody Early Childhood Center recognizes that children with disabilities benefit from learning alongside their peers in a high-quality inclusive learning environment. Young children with disabilities in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs made larger gains in their cognitive, communication, and social-emotional development compared to their peers in segregated settings. In addition, inclusion has benefits for all children, not just children with disabilities. Young children without disabilities who participate in an inclusive classroom learn life skills such as empathy and compassion. If classroom staff or a caregiver believes a child is showing signs of a developmental delay, they are encouraged to discuss and determine if the same delay is seen in other environments. Staff will discuss ongoing observations and assessments with families and should discuss any delays noted. If the delays continue, a meeting with the family and the Child Study Team should be scheduled to discuss strategies and next steps the school and family can take, as well as provide the family with resources for outside assessments. Moody Early Childhood Center will ensure each child will

receive the benefit of services in a natural environment, which is a setting that a natural or typical children of the same age without regard to ability or disability, and the caregiver will learn methods for best serving the child when the center encourages caregivers to incorporate ECI or another service provider into classroom activities.

Staff will address appropriate developmental activities in the daily activity plan and will provide a child's special care needs with the accommodations recommended by a health-care professional or a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early childhood intervention program and will use any adaptive equipment that has been provided to the center for a child's use. Staff members will provide care that is consistent with the child's habits, interests, strengths, and any special needs, including any special supervision, needs, or care. All caregivers will adapt activities, equipment and procedures utilized at the center as necessary to ensure that the child remains in the natural environment and integrates children with and without special needs. Students receiving early intervention services or special education services can receive those services from a qualified service provider at MECC with parental requests and approval. Staff are highly encouraged to enroll in additional training activities to learn more about addressing students' needs.

In addition, student safety and positive discipline and guidance are priorities at MECC. Active supervision and ongoing monitoring are extremely important in maintaining high standards. When supervising all students, including infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, a staff member must know the children, including each child's name, age, and any special supervision needs to ensure each child's safety and well-being, including physical proximity and auditory and visual awareness of each child's on-going activity. They also must be able to intervene whenever necessary to ensure each child's safety. When deciding how closely to supervise a child, the caregiver must consider the age, current stage of development, individual differences and abilities, indoor/outdoor layout of the operation, circumstances, hazards, and risks surrounding the child, and the child's physical, mental, emotional, and social needs. A child with special needs may require additional supervision or their care may require more individualized attention or benefit from lower class ratios. Open communication with students' parents is imperative for all students, but especially those with special needs. If staff members feel there are additional strategies that would be successful, they need to discuss those changes with their supervisor, any special service providers that work with the child, and discuss the changes and needs for the changes with the parents.

During regular CST/RTI/ARD meetings, IEP or §504 reviews, the committee/team must:

- Assess whether a student's disability or impairment requires specific accommodation during emergency drills (§37.114).
- Explicitly identify each impairment and document tailored accommodations in the plan.
- Share this information with campus and district leaders responsible for emergency planning.
- Invite emergency-planning staff to participate in accommodation decision discussions

#### REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WORKERS POLICY

As required by the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), **Moody Early Childhood Center** will provide reasonable accommodations to employees and applicants with limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause undue hardship to **Moody Early Childhood Center's** operations.

An employee or applicant may request accommodation due to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition by submitting the request in writing to the Senior Director. The accommodation request should include an explanation of the pregnancy-related limitations, the accommodation needed and any alternative accommodation(s) that might be reasonable. Depending on the nature of the accommodation, the individual may be requested to submit a statement from a health care provider substantiating the need for the accommodation.

Upon receipt of a request for accommodation, HR will contact the employee or applicant to discuss the request and determine if accommodation is reasonable and can be provided without significant difficulty or expense, i.e., undue hardship.

While the reasonableness of each accommodation request will be individually assessed, possible accommodation includes allowing the individual to:

- Sit while working.
- Drink water during the workday.
- Receive closer-in parking.
- Have flexible hours.
- Receive appropriately sized uniforms and safety apparel.
- Receive additional break time to use the bathroom, eat and rest.
- Take time off to recover from childbirth.
- Be excused from strenuous activities and/or activities that involve exposure to compounds deemed unsafe during pregnancy.

An employee may request paid or unpaid leave as a reasonable accommodation under this policy; however, **Moody Early Childhood Center** will not require an employee to take time off if another reasonable accommodation can be provided that will allow the employee to continue to work.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** prohibits any retaliation, harassment or adverse action due to an individual's request for an accommodation under this policy or for reporting or participating in an investigation of unlawful discrimination under this policy.

#### CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS

MECC administration values staff input and feedback and recognizes our staff as an important influence on children's lives. A professional and positive working relationship between all staff members is of primary importance and open communication is in which constructive feedback is encouraged. If at any time a staff member feels they have a concern or complaint they want to discuss, they should report it to their immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is the object of the concern, they should report to the next person on the staff hierarchy. (See *"Coaching and Progressive Discipline" for additional appeal conditions.*) If a grievance occurs that cannot be satisfied by discussion between staff members, concerns are then taken to the next person on the hierarchy. A grievance process will be followed whereas the next person on the hierarchy becoming the "hearing officer". After the hearing officer hears the appeal, the findings may determine the discipline action did not follow the progressive discipline steps, and the action could be dismissed, upheld at the current level, or elevated to meet the appropriate progressive disciplinary level. There are three appeal levels culminating with a meeting with the Chief Operations Officer and/or Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the person of concern, the MECC Board Chairperson will address the concern. Please note employees who are terminated during the first ninety (90) days of employment are ineligible to file an appeal.

#### IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT

In accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, **Moody Early Childhood Center** will only hire individuals who are authorized to work in the United States. All individuals will be required to submit proof of their identity and employment authorization. Employees will also be required to complete and sign, under oath, Form I-9. On Form I-9, you must attest that you are authorized to work in the United States and that the documents submitted as proof are genuine. **Moody Early Childhood Center** is required by law to check documents on every individual hired and to state under oath on the I-9 that **Moody Early Childhood Center** has done so.

If you are authorized to work in this country for a limited period of time, you must submit proof of your extended employment authorization and complete and sign another I-9 before the expiration of your current employment authorization. If you fail to do so, the law prohibits **Moody Early Childhood Center** from continuing your employment. **Moody Early Childhood Center** will not discriminate on the basis of national origin or citizenship status.

All offers of employment are contingent on verification of your right to work in the United States. On your first day of employment, you will be asked to provide original documents verifying your right to work and as required by federal law, to sign a Federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form. If you at any time cannot verify your right to work in the United States, MECC may be required to terminate your employment and take other actions as required by law.

## ADMINISTRATION AND STAFFING

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Karin Miller, Executive Director for **Moody Early Childhood Center**, is an education veteran with years of classroom and administrative experience. Inspired by her own kindergarten teacher, Ms. Miller began her career as a preschool and kindergarten teacher. After years in the classroom, she moved into program management. She was an early childhood specialist and federal programs coordinator for Brazosport Independent School District. There she managed district coordinators for all federal programs and established curriculum and staff development for early childhood, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and adult education programs. Ms. Miller has extensive experience in school administration, policies, and procedures through her years as assistant superintendents for special programs at Cleveland Independent School District and support services at Texas City ISD. She holds a Master of Science degree in educational management from the University of Houston Clear Lake and a Bachelor of Science degree in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University. Ms. Miller has continued her education with several special training programs, certifications, and professional affiliations.

### STAFF HIRING

When hiring teachers and administrators for our programs, we value diverse education and life experiences. We look for staff members who have a passion for working with young children and their families. All staff meets or exceeds the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requirements. The foundation of our teaching team is built upon staff members who:

- Are knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices for early childhood learners.
- Are prepared to share their life experiences, talents and interests.
- Enjoy the outdoors and have a personal connection to the environment.
- Professional, creative and passionate individuals experienced in fostering the whole child and developing a child-driven curriculum.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** relies on you to provide accurate information during your application for employment throughout all stages of the hiring process and the term of your employment. Pay is based on certifications, duties, education, experience, position, etc. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any information or data may result in **Moody Early Childhood Center** excluding you from further consideration and/or termination of your employment. If you have questions at any time regarding your compensation or benefits, please contact the Administrative Service Office for clarification.

### EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM)

Relatives may be employed if they meet employment standards. However, staff members may not participate in or otherwise influence MECC decisions which involve members of their own families. This includes hiring, promotion, retention, leaves, pay changes, etc. The policy on consensual sexual relations also requires that married couples do not work in positions where one has direct influence over the other.

### BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS AND DRUG TESTING

Background investigations help ensure **Moody Early Childhood Center** has adequate internal controls in place. **Moody Early Childhood Center** conducts drug screenings. All offers of employment are contingent upon the qualified candidate submitting and successfully passing a background investigation and post-offer drug screenings. **Moody Early Childhood Center** will conduct an individual assessment per EEO Guidelines and DFPS. Drug testing will be performed by an independent testing agency. Results will be given directly to the Chief Operations Officer and stored in a locked file cabinet. **Moody Early Childhood Center** will conduct drug screenings at random and for cause as a condition of your employment. Failure to participate in the testing or comply with the procedures for testing will be deemed a positive screening. A positive drug screening will automatically result in termination of employment.

There are four possible determinations regarding a background check:

| Determination                              | Description                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) Provisionally eligible with conditions | The subject of a background check may be present at an |



|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                              | operation, but with limited access to the operation or the children in care according to any specific conditions and restrictions. (Once the reason for the provisional status has concluded, the CBCU will make one of the other determinations described in this rule for the subject.) |
| (2) Eligible                 | The subject of a background check may be present at an operation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| (3) Eligible with conditions | The subject of a background check may be present at an operation, but with limited access to the operation or the children in care according to any specific conditions and restrictions.                                                                                                 |
| (4) Ineligible               | The subject of a background check may not be present at an operation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**Moody Early Childhood Center** will only allow employees and contractors who have no direct contact with children on a provisionally eligible with conditions.

#### REQUEST FOR REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** supports a diverse workforce. All positions at MECC are considered “safety-sensitive”. Employees making comments to administration or other employees regarding restrictions of their abilities that could potentially be related to a medical condition must provide a physician’s statement that the employee is clear to perform the assigned duties of their position. Any requests for reasonable accommodation due to a “disability” and/or other condition covered under the ADA and/or, but not limited to other applicable laws should be made in writing to the Administrative Services Office.

#### EXPECTATIONS

All staff are expected to follow the TRS and NAEYC GUIDELINES. All staff are expected to adhere to the NAEYC code of ethics at all times. The code is attached in appendices for review. Staff must provide warm, nurturing Interactions on each child’s level. Such interactions should be guidance and developmentally appropriate early education. Staff are expected to be actively engaged with the students at all times. Actively engaged means staff are interacting with the students in meaningful conversations and activities, building on the students’ prior knowledge, and striving to expand their understanding of the world around them. Our ongoing intent to education is crucial to the development of our students. Classroom staff are expected to follow the daily schedule, and teachers are expected to prepare all materials for the following day before they leave each evening. To maintain continuity and consistency, in the event that a teacher is out, the classroom instructional assistant will deliver the lesson and follow the daily schedule.

Direct supervision of every child is also expected at all times. This means that all staff must be able to see and hear all children, including infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, in their care at all times. Direct supervision includes during outside activities and nap times. During naptime, the staff is required to position themselves so someone can hear and see all students in their care at all times whether they are sleeping or awake. Failure to provide supervision will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

State ratios are important indicators of quality. The center strives to keep NAEYC and state ratios at all times. Please be sure that you always adhere to the ratios. Make sure that you receive additional help when the number of children approaches the limit. Ratio adherence is a dual responsibility between teachers and management. Never leave your group without any emergency assistance. Call the front desk for assistance when you need to leave the group and the total number of children in attendance exceeds the state ratio. You may call the front desk using the classroom intercom or by using the radio/walkie-talkie. If using the radio/walkie-talkie, you may only state you need assistance in the classroom. The radio channels are not secure; therefore, you may not mention students’ full names (first and last name), illnesses, confidential information, or any topics that may be considered a violation of Minimum Standards. (Please see “**RADIO PROCEDURES**” for further guidelines in Appendices.)

Infants who are not eating table food will have feeding and napping schedules provided by the parents and updated monthly. Staff are expected to follow the parents' recommendations.

Students will be checked and/or changed for wet or soiled diapers and training pants at least every two hours and when the child wakes up from a nap.

If an infant/toddler arrives at school asleep or falls asleep in equipment not specifically designed for infant sleep, the infant should be removed and placed in appropriate sleep equipment. Babies must be put to sleep resting on his or her back until they are able to roll over both ways without help. Cribs should be kept as bare as possible. A firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet are all that is allowed in a crib. No blankets or toys are allowed in cribs.

#### TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

MECC complies with best developmental practice and adheres to state regulations regarding the use of technology in each learning environment. Students under the age of 2 will not be exposed to screen time and media. Students older than 2 may receive technology and/or media less than 30 minutes each day. MECC staff have been trained to integrate technology into children's play. All use of technology in the classroom will be posted in the classroom lesson plans and preapproved by the administration.

#### STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Student educational confidentiality is protected under the federal law "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)" as well as their health records are protected under the federal law "Health Information Privacy Protection Act (HIPPA)". All MECC employees are required by law to follow these due to the sensitive nature of information that you will know as a teacher of young children. Any information about children or their families must be shared on a **"Need to Know"** basis only. Thus, be very sensitive about discussing children's developmental needs and family information in public places such as lounge or hallway. This does not exclude off-premises discussions and/or conversations. In addition, you must follow the Code of Ethical Conduct and questions of major concerns should be forwarded to the Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer.

Protection of the interests of each child and family is vital in maintaining a standard of professionalism and privacy. Photos or videos taken and shared with the family should only contain positive images of that family's student, and no other members of the class, not even if the parents' request or give permission. "Positive images" mean the student is happy and actively engaged in an activity. Photos that can be construed as negative, such as showing a child misbehaving, upset, or injuries, may not be shared electronically.

Also, strive to be supportive of center efforts by avoiding negative or malicious discussions about center issues. Together we can achieve great childcare and education for our parents and children. Stay positive and focus on the needs of the children in your care.

#### STATE LICENSING RULES AND REGULATIONS

**ALL** staff are expected to be knowledgeable in The Minimum Standards for Child Care. Failure to adhere to these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- Staff in our childcare center must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- MECC may hire students still in high school who meet all other requirements. These employees will not count in student ratio and may not be left alone with children. They will wear an apron or "smock" to designate they do not count in ratio.
- Each staff member must have current training in pediatric first aid with rescue breathing and choking, and CPR for infants and children.
- There must be at least one staff member in each classroom certified in first aid and pediatric CPR.
- Any staff member who lets their certification lapse will not be counted in student ratio and may not be left alone with children. They will wear an apron or "smock" to designate they do not count in ratio, will be subject to a reduction in pay to the same amount as a similar high school student, and must achieve their certification by due date or they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- Each staff member must provide a statement informing the facility about any of the offenses listed in Appendix II in the Minimum Standards Handbook or the Texas Controlled Substance Act.
- Each staff member in our facility must execute and submit a completed Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Affidavit for applicants for employment.

## ACCIDENTS

All accidents/incidents/illnesses must be reported immediately to the Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer or the Nurse. Accident(s) reports must be written, signed by an administrator, given to parents, and copied for the child and Nurse's files. Incidents must also be documented in the online notification system and some incidents, such as head injuries or biting should be immediately reported to parents. Close supervision of children is the best anecdote to accidents. Use risk management to keep the environment safe and hazard-free. **Moody Early Childhood Center** strives to provide the best in equipment, that is kept maintained, and in overall good working conditions, so all children will be safe in the classroom or playground areas. Safety is a joint effort of all staff and employees requiring all of us to become risk managers.

## PROHIBITED CONDUCT

It is the policy of **Moody Early Childhood Center** to maintain a working environment free from all forms of unlawful harassment, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, or retaliation of any employee by anyone including supervisors, managers, co-workers, temporary employees, contractors, consultants, vendors, and customers.

Unlawful harassment is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated. MECC management is committed to vigorously enforcing this policy against harassment, including, but not limited to sexual harassment, at all levels within MECC.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** has a zero-tolerance policy towards any forms of harassment or retaliation. Harassment, sexual harassment, retaliation and/or other forms of bullying and inappropriate conduct, which may interfere with an individual's work performance, and/or create an intimidating or offensive work environment, will not be tolerated in any way, shape or form. **Moody Early Childhood Center** may conduct annual EEO Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation training. **Moody Early Childhood Center** is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and is strictly prohibited.

### Prohibited Against Sexual Harassment

(The list below is not intended to be exhaustive but is included to provide examples of prohibited actions).

1. MECC strictly prohibits sexual harassment, including discrimination based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or other related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identify. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination, which is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. Sexual harassment is defined as sexual harassment or other harassment based on sex. It does not require the conduct to be sexual in nature. Examples such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where:
  - a. Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment.
  - b. Employment decisions are based on an employee's submission to or rejection of such conduct.
  - c. The conduct is so severe or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
2. Examples of Prohibited Conduct:
  - a. Unwanted touching, sexual advances, propositions, or other sexual comments, e.g., sexual jokes or vulgar language.
  - b. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
  - c. Insulting, objectionable, or obscene comments or gestures.
  - d. Display or circulation in the workplace of sexually suggestive pictures, text messages, e-mails, social



- media posting, or objects.
- e. Other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace and work-related settings.
- f. Sexually suggestive conduct directed toward a person or persons that is offensive or unwelcomed by a third party who is exposed to this conduct.
- g. Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, or threatening messages or images using MECC or personal equipment, such as cell phones, laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc.

#### **Prohibition Against Other Unlawful Harassment**

(The list below is not intended to be exhaustive but is included to provide examples of prohibited actions).

1. Other unlawful harassment prohibited by this policy includes harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older) disability, genetic information or veteran status (collectively referred to as "protected categories"). Harassment based on these protected categories is unlawful where:
  - a. It has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
  - b. It has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or
  - c. It otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.
2. Examples of Prohibited Conduct
  - a. Verbal conduct such as degrading comments, slurs or jokes, or negative stereotyping.
  - b. Physical conduct such as threatening or intimidating behavior or contact.
  - c. Display or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material that degrades or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on a protected category.
  - d. Use of any type of electronic media (MECC or personal), such as smartphones, cell phones, tablets or laptops, to transmit, retrieve, or store any communications which are abusive, offensive, insulting, humiliating, obscene, profane, pornographic, defamatory, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate.

#### **Prohibited Against Hostile Environment**

Hostile Work Environment occurs when the words or actions of a manager or coworker negatively or significantly impact an employee's ability to do their job. Employees subjected to this environment may feel uncomfortable, scared, intimidated, and apprehensive due to unwelcome conduct, which can include harassment, discrimination, bullying, violence, or other offensive behaviors.

Examples of hostile work environment behaviors can vary widely. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) outlines three criteria that must be met for behavior to legally qualify as a hostile work environment:

- a. The unwelcome conduct is based on race, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, age, disability or genetics
- b. The harassment is continued and long lasting
- c. The conduct is severe enough that the environment becomes intimidating, offensive or abusive, making it difficult or impossible for the affected employee to do their job.

Examples of hostile work environment include situations where derogatory comments, offensive jokes, or repeated intimidation tactics create a toxic atmosphere for employees. It's important to note that not every unpleasant situation at work qualifies as a hostile work environment. The behavior must be severe, pervasive, directly tied to a protected characteristic, and create an environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating or abusive.

#### **Prohibited Against Workplace Bullying/Intimidation**

Bullying behavior will not be tolerated in **Moody Early Childhood Center** workplace. Individuals who feel they have experienced bullying should report this to their supervisor or to the Director before the conduct becomes severe or pervasive. All employees are strongly encouraged to report any bullying conduct they experience or witness as soon as possible to allow Moody Early Childhood Center to take appropriate action. Retaliation against individuals who report bullying/intimidation also is prohibited. MECC will respond promptly and effectively to reports of bullying/intimidation and will take appropriate action to prevent, correct, and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

Bullying/Intimidation is a pattern of repeated behavior that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to MECC's legitimate business interests. Moody Early Childhood Center defines bullying as repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more people by one or more perpetrators. It is abusive conduct that includes:

- Threatening, humiliating or intimidating behaviors.
- Work interference/sabotage that prevents work from getting done.
- Verbal abuse.

Such behavior violates Moody Early Childhood Center's Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect. Moody Early Childhood Center considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying.** Slandering, ridiculing, or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name-calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical bullying.** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
- **Gesture bullying.** Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion.** Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

A single physical, verbal, or written act or behavior generally, will not constitute bullying/intimidation unless especially severe and egregious.

Examples of bullying/intimidation may include:

- Persistent singling out or excluding an individual or isolating him/her from work related activities;
- Persistent or egregious use of abusive, insulting, or offensive language or gestures directed at an individual;
- Spreading misinformation or malicious rumors;
- Not allowing the person to speak or express himself or herself (i.e., ignoring or interrupting);
- Physical violence or threats;
- Hostile physical posturing;
- Ridiculing, insulting, or using offensive nicknames;
- Spreading rumors and gossip regarding an individual;
- Finding fault with your work or assigning errors to you that are not your responsibility;
- Taking credit for your work;
- Sabotaging your work or setting you up to fail;
- Raising the bar for success or setting different standards for the targeted employee; interfering with ability to work;
- Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property)
- Making repeated inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, lifestyle, family, or culture;
- Regularly teasing or making someone the brunt of pranks or practical jokes;
- Interfering with a person's personal property or work equipment;
- Circulating inappropriate or embarrassing photos or videos via e-mail or social media; unwarranted physical contact;
- Or accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.

Bullying/Intimidation vs. Supervision

It is important to distinguish between bullying behavior and appropriate workplace supervision. Reasonable supervisory actions, when carried out in an appropriate manner, include:

- providing performance appraisals;
- coaching or providing constructive feedback;
- monitoring or restricting access to sensitive information for legitimate business reasons;
- scheduling ongoing meetings to address performance issues;
- setting aggressive performance goals to help meet departmental goals;
- counseling or disciplining an employee for misconduct; and
- investigating alleged misconduct.

Differences of opinion, interpersonal conflicts, and occasional problems in working relations are an inevitable part of working life and do not necessarily constitute workplace bullying/intimidation.

### **Retaliation is Prohibited**

This policy prohibits retaliation (e.g., threats, intimidation, reprisals, and adverse actions related to employment) against any person who reports prohibited conduct, assists someone with a report of prohibited conduct, or participates in an investigation or resolution of a complaint regarding prohibited conduct. MECC will not permit or condone any act of retaliation against anyone who files a bullying, discrimination, intimidation, or harassment complaint, cooperates in the investigation of a harassment complaint, or opposes any discriminatory practice. MECC prohibits retaliation against any individual who in good faith reports discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation or participates in any investigation of such reports. Such retaliation constitutes a serious violation of this policy, and, like harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination itself, will be fully investigated and resolved pursuant to this policy.

### **Reporting Prohibited Conduct**

All members of **Moody Early Childhood Center** (MECC) are strongly encouraged to report conduct believed to constitute prohibited conduct under this policy to a manager, supervisor, or Administrator. The administration must respond to any knowledge of conduct that constitutes sex discrimination promptly and effectively. Administrators, managers and supervisors who observe bullying behavior or receive a report of bullying are required to address such behavior immediately and notify the Chief Operations Officer. **Moody Early Childhood Center** (MECC) has distinct procedures for the investigation and resolution of complaints against staff, parents, vendors and contractors. MECC will refer reports of alleged bullying by Administrators to the appropriate office. Whether a complaint made is processed under this policy depends on whether the conduct at issue arises out of their employment status.

### **Internal Complaint Procedure- Reporting an Incident of Harassment Intimidation, Bullying, Discrimination or Retaliation**

MECC strongly urges the reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, regardless of the identity or position of the perceived offender. Individuals, who believe they have experienced, or who are aware of, conduct that they think violates this policy, or who have any concerns about such matters, should contact the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director who serves as the Title IX Coordinator, and who:

- will monitor the school's education program or activity for barriers to reporting sex discrimination,
- will initiate the school's Title IX grievance procedures or informal resolution process,
- in the absence of a complaint or the withdrawal of any of the allegations in the complaint, will initiate a Title IX complaint only if the conduct presents an imminent and serious threat to someone's health or safety or prevents the school from ensuring equal access based on sex to its programs or activities, and
- regardless of whether a complaint is initiated, will take appropriate, prompt, and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur, in addition to providing remedies to a complaint.

### **Anonymous Reporting Available**

To protect the identity of individuals, reports of perceived or actual incidents of bullying, intimidation, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation may also be made anonymously.

### **Prompt Investigation**

Any reported allegations pertaining to unlawful harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially. The investigation may include individuals who have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. The investigation will require limited disclosure of

pertinent information on a need-to-know basis as well; absolute confidentiality is not promised, nor can it be assured.

### **Facilitated Early Resolution**

The school administration has the flexibility to consolidate complaints arising out of the same facts or circumstances and may offer a voluntary informal resolution process unless the complaint includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of a student. The goal of early resolution is to resolve concerns at the earliest stage possible with the cooperation of all of the parties involved. MECC encourages early resolution and will assist the parties in reaching a mutually agreeable resolution when the parties wish to resolve the situation collaboratively. Early resolution may include a review of the facts, but typically does not include a formal investigation. Means for early resolution will be flexible and encompass a full range of possible appropriate outcomes. Options for early resolution may include:

- obtaining an agreement between the parties;
- physically separating the parties;
- changing reporting lines;
- referring the parties to counseling and coaching programs;
- negotiating an agreement for personnel action;
- conducting targeted educational and training programs; and/or
- following up with the parties after a period of time to assure that the resolution has been implemented effectively.

While MECC encourages early resolution, MECC does not require that parties participate in early resolution prior to MECC's decision to initiate a formal investigation. In some cases, it may be determined that early resolution is inappropriate and may initiate a formal investigation instead.

### **Formal Investigation**

In response to reports of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and retaliation where early resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, the complainant may request a formal investigation. MECC may initiate a formal investigation after a preliminary review of the facts even in cases where the complainant has not requested one.

Formal investigation of reports of bullying will incorporate the following procedures:

1. The respondent will be advised of the relevant allegations in the complaint.
2. The investigation generally will include interviews with the parties if available, interviews with other witnesses as needed, and a review of relevant documents or other evidence as appropriate.
3. Disclosure of facts to parties and witnesses will be limited to what is reasonably necessary to conduct a fair and thorough investigation. Participants in an investigation may be advised to maintain confidentiality when essential to protect the integrity of the investigation.
4. At any time during the investigation, the investigator may recommend that the MECC provides interim protection or remedies for the complainant or witnesses. These protections or remedies may include separating the parties, placing limitations on contact between the parties or making alternative work arrangements. Failure to comply with the terms of interim protections may be considered a separate violation of this policy.
5. MECC will make every effort to complete the investigation as quickly as possible. Generally, the investigation will be completed within 30 calendar days from the date the request for formal investigation was submitted.
6. Following the completion of the investigation, the investigator will prepare a written report that, at a minimum, includes a statement of the allegations and issues, the positions of the parties, a summary of the evidence, findings of fact, and a determination by the investigator as to whether the conduct at issue violated this policy.
7. The investigator will submit the report to the appropriate MECC official, and, in consultation with the appropriate manager or supervisor, determine

and implement the actions necessary to resolve the complaint.

8. The complainant and the respondent will be informed when the investigation is completed and whether the complaint was substantiated. Actions taken to resolve the complaint, if any, that are directly related to the complainant, such as an order that the respondent not contact the complainant will be shared with the complainant. In accordance with MECC policies protecting individuals' privacy, the complainant may be notified generally that the matter has been referred for disciplinary action but will not be informed of the details of the recommended disciplinary action without the respondent's consent.

Documents relating to an investigation under this policy will not be placed or retained in personnel files. A separate, confidential file on the investigation will be maintained by MECC Chief Operations Officer with limited access.

#### **Determination/Conclusion of Investigation**

Following investigation, when harassment, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, or retaliation is determined or suspected to have occurred, MECC will take prompt remedial action, such as training, written warnings, transfer, suspension, up to and including termination. Findings of violations of this policy may be considered in determining remedies for individuals harmed by the bullying and will be referred to the appropriate Administrator. Violations may include engaging in bullying, retaliating against a complainant reporting bullying, or violating interim protections. Investigative reports made pursuant to this policy may be used as evidence in subsequent complaint or grievance resolution processes or disciplinary proceedings.

#### **Responsibilities of Employees**

Early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment. All employees and other individuals as defined above shall adhere to this policy and are responsible for assuring that a workplace free from unlawful harassment is maintained. Any employee may file a complaint regarding incidents experienced personally or incidents observed in the workplace. No employee shall retaliate against another for complaining about or reporting unlawful harassing conduct, or for participating in any internal or external investigation of such conduct. Employees are encouraged to utilize MECC's internal complaint procedure, as described above, to resolve any possible issues regarding prohibited conduct. Employees are expected to cooperate in any investigation into allegations whether they are a witness or the subject of the investigation. All information obtained is administrative in nature and is used for employment purposes only. Failure or refusal to cooperate will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### **Responsibilities of Management**

All MECC management is expected to adhere to and support MECC's Anti-Harassment Policy and must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that MECC's workplace is free from unlawful harassment. All managers are responsible for doing all they can to prevent and discourage unlawful harassment from occurring. If such a complaint is raised, management must act promptly to notify MECC Chief Operations Officer, so that an investigation may proceed. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. A supervisor or manager who fails to comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

The mission of **Moody Early Childhood Center** is to nurture all children entrusted to our care in a warm and loving environment. In keeping with that purpose, this policy seeks to assure that our center is continually working toward providing an environment safe from physical and sexual abuse for those participating in receiving and providing childcare services. All employees shall seek to provide open lines of communication with parents. We will operate with an open-door policy allowing parent access to programs at any time. When those who are employed at **Moody Early Childhood Center** engage in any and all kind types of child abuse, sexual exploitation, or sexual harassment, they violate the terms of their employment.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

As required by Texas State Law, suspected child abuse and/or neglect will be reported to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Employees are responsible for submitting reports. Staff who report suspicions of child

abuse/neglect regarding a child at MECC are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless it is proven that the report was intended to do harm. MECC will protect the rights of staff accused of neglecting a child in the program, as well as the children in our care. Under law, employees do not notify parents when DFPS has been called about possible abuse, neglect or exploitation except on the recommendations of DFPS or police personnel.

All **Moody Early Childhood Center** staff will receive initial and recurring training on identifying the signs of child abuse and reporting procedures. Additionally, Family Advocates have ongoing relationships with the Department of Family and Protective Services as well as other agencies that assist families in crisis, including the Family Services Center.

Abuse can take many forms including:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglectful Supervision
- Medical Neglect
- Physical Neglect
- Abandonment and refusal to accept parental responsibility
- Failing to protect a child
- Corporal Punishment is the infliction of physical pain on a child as a means of controlling behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, slapping, thumping, or pinching a child. (This will **not** be tolerated at all).

If you notice anything suspicious or hear a child relate any fears, you must file a report within 24 hours of the incident with the Department of Family and Protective Services. You may not delegate your responsibility to make a report. To file a report:

- By phone: 1-800-252-5400 (for immediate safety concerns)
- Online: <https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>

We ask that you report this to your supervisor or the Moody Early Childhood Center Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer in order for us to be prepared to intervene with parents.

### GROSS MISCONDUCT

Some offenses are so serious that they can result in termination without previous warnings. The following examples are listed for the guidance of all. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all prohibited activities. The following actions will result in placing the employee on a step 3-step 5 disciplinary action (see “Coaching and Progressive Discipline” for detailed descriptions):

- Inappropriate behavior toward parents. (All staff are expected to be professional and courteous at all times. If a parent is rude to you, please allow your Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer to handle the situation)
- Neglect or physical abuse of a child
- Withholding of food, naps or other comfort from a child
- Failure to comply with the *Moody Early Childhood Center Guidance and Discipline Policy*
- Failure to comply with Texas Department of Family and Protective Services *Minimum Standards* designated as a Medium-High or High violation.
- Failure to report to work without proper notification
- Falsification of center records or reports (i.e., employment application, time clock, personnel records, student records, student data, etc.)
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Smoking in prohibited areas

- Not reporting an arrest (Class B or above) for any offense while employed by the center
- Conviction of a felony for any offense committed while employed by the center
- Fighting, threatening violence or boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Leaving a child unattended (inside or outside)
- Allowing a child to leave the center with an unauthorized person
- Sleeping while supervising children
- Habitual absenteeism or tardiness without notice or unauthorized absences from workstation during the workday
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property
- Deliberate indifference
- Insubordination or flouting authority
- Individual incidents that show gross disrespect such as threatening, profanity, or yelling at the administration or supervisors, or places students at risk for harm.
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Using personal electronic devices while on duty and caring for children
- Using unauthorized audio/visual recording devices in administrative meetings without prior approval
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Engaged in activities or employment that would cause disgrace or embarrassment to the organization
- Sharing confidential information about the center or any of its employees, students, or families
- Promoting and sharing rumors or negative information about **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

As a Center licensed by TDFPS, **Moody Early Childhood Center** must assure that all employees have Pediatric First Aid, CPR and Safety Training. **It is the employee's responsibility to remain current with certifications and trainings.**

In general, **Moody Early Childhood Center** believes injuries, illness and accidents are preventable through the establishment of and compliance with safe work practices. It is the policy of **Moody Early Childhood Center** to maintain safe working and student conditions, and to establish and insist upon safe methods and work practices.

All employees have a responsibility to themselves and to **Moody Early Childhood Center** for their own safety, their coworkers, and the students we serve. Employees are required to follow **Moody Early Childhood Center's** Health & Safety policies and to work in a safe manner at all times, and, in addition, all employees are required to:

- Comply with all federal, state, local rules, regulations, laws and acceptable health & safety standards.
- Observe all **Moody Early Childhood Center** rules, regulations, and procedures related to the efficient and safe performance of their work.
- Integrate safety into each job function and live by this philosophy in the performance of job duties.
- All staff members are responsible for immediately informing their supervisor of any unsafe or unhealthy situation or condition.
- Staff repeatedly lifting heavy objects or performing repetitive pushing/pulling with their lower back may check out back braces from the Nurse's office to help prevent injury.
- All staff members are responsible for keeping door alarms on and report any door alarms that are not working.
- Be informed that our school is a "Drug Free Zone" – Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminals related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties. It is our intent and obligation to provide a drug-free, healthful, safe and secure work environment. The unlawful manufacturing on or off **Moody Early Childhood Center** premises while conducting **Moody Early Childhood Center** business is absolutely prohibited.
- Be aware of our **No Smoking Policy** – Tobacco use, including simulated tobacco use, is prohibited on property, interior and exterior, owned or managed by **Moody Early Childhood Center**. No tobacco use will be permitted in

the facilities, common or private work areas, hallways, restrooms, dining areas, employee lounges, conference and meeting rooms, and all other enclosed or semi-enclosed areas. Additionally, no tobacco use will be permitted in outdoor areas including parking lots, grounds, rooftops, playgrounds, courtyards, entrance/exit ways, MECC-owned or -leased vehicles, and any other indoor or outdoor areas owned or managed by **Moody Early Childhood Center**. This policy applies to all MECC, employees, consultants, contractors, visitors and external individuals, companies renting MECC owned space, and property owned or managed by MECC.

- Be aware of our Policy Against Retaliation-It is illegal and against the policies of **Moody Early Childhood Center** for any employee to attempt to retaliate against an employee, student or parent.
- Be aware of our No Weapons Policy

## REPORTING INCIDENTS AND ILLNESSES FOR CHILDREN IN OUR CARE

Accident/Incident Report Recording any incident or accident is done on the accident/incident form. The accident/incident form is to be completed on any child who is injured. If another child was involved in the injury or accident the accident/incident form is completed for the second child as well. This form is NOT to be used to communicate any concerns about a child's behavior, only information about injuries or accidents. This form must be signed by the Nurse, Executive Director, or Chief Operations Officer before being given to a parent/guardian.

These reports are for the protection of teacher, child and school. Always ask for help if you think you need assistance to fill out the report or think you might not have adequate time to do it right.

When should an accident report be filled out?

- Illness that requires children to leave the school.
- 'Incidents' such as leaving a child outside or inside for any period of time.
- A cut, bruise, scratch, scrape, bump, splinter or any other type of mark on the body.
- Injuries, such as a fall, that may not have left a mark on the body, but you saw it.
- Bites, insect or human
- Sand in the eye
- Any situation where first aid was administered
- Any injury to the head, even a seemingly minor one.

Coordinate with the Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer or Nurse to take a picture of any injury occurring at school that requires parent notification

## SICKNESS

Teachers are asked to check each child when he or she comes in and again in the afternoon. If this 'health check' gives you suspicion that the child has an injury or is not well, send the child to the school nurse or the front office for further checking. If a child has symptoms of a communicable disease, a...

- \*Fever of 101(temporal/oral/ear), or 100 axillary (under the arm)
- \*Cannot participate in normal school activities comfortably or
- \*Has uncontrolled vomiting (2 or more times during the day) or
- \*Diarrhea (2 or more stools that differ from normal bm in one-hour time period), please notify the front office to call parents and bring child to the front office.
- \*Draining rash anywhere on the body
- \*Eye discharge
- \*Lice or nits
- \*Any color of nasal discharge
- \*Severe coughing

## MEDICATION

Medication may be administered ONLY if a Medication Authorization Form is on file in the front office, completed and signed by the child's parent or doctor. Except those medications which need to be readily available for emergency use, all medication is to be stored in locked/child proof containers in the nurse's office in the original container with the following information on the label:



- \*Child's name,
- \*Prescription name,
- \*Doctors name and dosage
- \*Pharmacy name and phone number,
- \*Instructions for administering,
- \*Dates the medication is to be used for.

Emergency use medication are not required to be locked, but must be inaccessible to children. Staff must update the Medication Log when Medication is Administered to a child.

## LICE

Check hair if the child is scratching. Look for nits or lice near the scalp. If nits or insects are present, bring the child to the office so parents can be notified. Wash any bedding and send home all clothing, coats, hats, and other washable items. Children must have lice treatment and be free of nits to be able to return to school.

## CURRICULUM

At **Moody Early Childhood Center**, we are deliberate in choosing activities and educational settings that give all of our children the opportunity to soar. **Moody Early Childhood Center** is a fun, safe, creative learning center for Galveston children from newborn through age PK. We want to give every child a strong foundation to do his or her best in school and in life. We give every Galveston child the opportunity to soar!

At **Moody Early Childhood Center** we will:

- Be a fun, safe, creative learning center for Galveston children from newborn through PreK
- Prepare children academically, emotionally and socially for kindergarten
- Have a highly qualified staff experienced in and committed to the very best early childhood education
- Welcome families and community partners into the life of the center

Give every child a strong foundation to do his or her best in school and in life. We have chosen Frog Street curriculum for every age group. If you need supplies for a teaching activity, talk with your lead teacher to submit the list to order.

## INFANT

Designed around the latest scientific early brain development research, Frog Street Infant curriculum is designed to build strong foundations for little ones ages 0-18 months. This child-centered program includes activities that:

- Equip caregivers to nurture the little ones in their care.
- Optimize key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Are designed with intention and purpose and organized around developmental learning domains.
- Feature Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® strategies to enhance social and emotional development.

## TODDLER

Designed around the latest scientific early brain development research, this program focuses on enhancing the simple joy of childhood while equipping caregivers to nurture curiosity through exploration. Frog Street Toddler, created by Dr. Pam Schiller, incorporates Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® and includes activity choices specifically created for children ages 18-36 months. Activity choices:

- Are organized around five developmental domains.
- Offer differentiated instruction options to meet the needs of all learners.
- Can be infused into daily routines, such as diaper changing, transitions, and outdoor play.
- Are designed with intention and purpose to move children forward in their development.

## PRE-K

Frog Street Pre-K is a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines. The program is engaging for both teachers and children!

The cornerstones of the program are:

- An extensive integration of theme, disciplines, and domains
- Social and Emotional development includes Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline ®
- Differentiated instruction
- Joyful approach to learning

To ensure vertical and horizontal alignment, differentiated activities to meet individual students' needs, as well as increased rigor in the material presented, staff are given planning times to work with the Lead Teacher and/or the Education Department team on a weekly basis.

## LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

### HOURS OF OPERATION

**Moody Early Childhood Center** is open from 6:30 am until 6:30 pm, Monday through Friday, year-round with the exception of observed holidays and professional development days. A special note for our PreK teachers – class begins at 8:15 am and is released at 3:55 pm.

- Children participating in **Moody Early Childhood Center** traditional childcare hours are from 6:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m.
- Children participating in **Moody Early Childhood Center** after school program remain on campus after 3:55 pm and can stay until 6:30 pm.

Staff needing access to the building after center hours and on weekends should contact their supervisor in writing prior to entering the building. Entering the building without prior authorization may be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

## EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

**Moody Early Childhood Center** of Galveston, Texas (MECC) also referred to in this document as the “Authority,” has adapted a Zero Tolerance Guideline for workplace violence. MECC recognizes that workplace violence is a growing national problem and needs to be addressed by all employers. Consistent with this guideline, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion that involve or affect MECC or its employees or which occur on MECC property will not be tolerated. Employees shall refer any questions regarding his/her rights and obligations under this guideline to MECC’s Chief Operations Officer.

**Moody Early Childhood Center** is concerned about society’s increased violence, which has filtered into many workplaces throughout the United States. To help prevent incidents of violence from occurring, MECC is implementing this guideline on workplace violence. It is the guideline of MECC to expressly prohibit any acts or threats of violence by any employee or former employee against another employee in or about its facilities or elsewhere at any time. MECC will not condone any acts or threats of violence against its employees, customers, or visitors by any individual on MECC’s premises at any time or while such individual is engaged in business with or on behalf of MECC, on or off MECC’s premises.

Specific examples of conduct that may be considered “threats or acts of violence” prohibited under this guideline include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Hitting or shoving an individual in a threatening manner.
2. Threatening to harm an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property.
3. Making harassing or threatening telephone calls, sending letters or other forms of written or electronic communications that a reasonable person would not make.
4. Intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to do illegal acts that would affect the business interest of the Authority.
5. Harassing surveillance, also known as (stalking), the willful, malicious and repeated following of another person and making a threat that places a reasonable person in fear of his/her safety.

Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms, weapons, or any other dangerous devices on MECC property unless the person in possession is a certified peace officer or licensed security office pursuant to the Texas Private Investigators and Private Security Agencies Act. “Reasonable” is defined as what an ordinary, prudent person would believe or do in the same circumstances as the actor.

**Moody Early Childhood Center's** prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in MECC's operations, including but not limited to MECC personnel, contract and temporary workers, and anyone else on MECC property. Violations of this guideline by any individual on MECC's property, by any individual acting as a representative of MECC while on MECC property where their actions affect the public interest or MECC's business interest will be followed by legal action, as appropriate. Violations by any employee of any provision of this guideline may lead to disciplinary actions up to and including termination. This guideline and any sanctions related thereto are to be deemed supplemental to MECC's Personnel Rules and Regulations, any MECC department guidelines and/or operating procedure and any provisions related thereto, and bargaining units Employee Performance Code and Work Rules, or related to applicable local, state, and federal laws.

#### **A. Employee Obligations**

Each MECC employee and every person on MECC property is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware. *(See reporting form in Appendix)*

In all cases, whether the reporting individual is or is not a MECC employee, the report should be made to MECC Chief Operations Officer. If the Chief Operations Officer is not available, the report shall be made to the next level of management. Prior to proceeding with any formal investigation, the management level supervisor shall report the incidents of threats or acts of physical violence to MECC's Chief Operations Officer. If the incident is found to be criminal in nature, the incident will be investigated concurrently by the Chief Operations Officer. If the incident is determined to be non-criminal in nature, the Chief Operations Officer shall take corrective action in accordance with MECC's Personnel Rules and Regulations and any other applicable guideline.

Once the investigation is complete a final disposition report of the incident will also be forwarded to the Executive Director.

Nothing in this guideline alters any other reporting obligation established in MECC policies or in local, state, federal, or other applicable law.

#### **B. Training**

**Moody Early Childhood Center** will provide training for employees in the risk factors associated with workplace violence and proper handling of emergency situations in order to minimize the risks of violent incidents occurring in the workplace.

#### **C. Dissemination of Guideline**

All employees will be given copies of this guideline. All new employees will be given a copy of this guideline as part of their orientation by MECC's Administrative Service Department.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Our Center values the safety of every child.

- We follow all state-required drills (fire, severe weather, lockdown) and ensure safe participation for all children.
- If a child has an IEP or Section 504 plan, the plan will include any accommodation needed for drills or emergencies.
- Discuss any accommodation needed during a child's IEP/504 team and provide this information to school safety staff.
- Please review your child's plan with their teachers and campus lead to stay informed.

All employees are expected to know the emergency plans for evacuations and types of situations that require them. All classes should have a copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan posted in the room. Center staff will receive training annually on:

- The legal requirements of SB 57 and Education Code §29.0052 and §37.1086.
- How to collaboratively evaluate and document accommodations in IEP or §504 processes.
- Procedures for integrating accommodation plans into the EOP.
- Trauma-informed emergency response strategies and inclusive evacuation procedures.

All new staff must complete this training as part of onboarding. MECC shall ensure all students, including those with disabilities or impairments, are safely included in all required drills or emergency responses. In accordance with SB 57, our committees will assess, document, and implement individualized accommodations in students' IEPs or Section 504 plans, and integrate relevant protocols into our overarching Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

### SCHOOL EVACUATION AND ALERTS

Monthly fire drills practice one type of evacuation. Students exit the building and go to the designated gathering spot. Staff is to be familiar with egress routes on the map located inside each classroom door.

Lockdown, Lockout, and Hold drills will also be practiced as required by GISD and/or licensure. Staff is to be familiar with the procedures for each drill. Training and information are provided to each employee regarding this information.

### SHELTER IN PLACE

Students and teachers will Shelter in Place in the event of a tornado, nearby chemical spill or other events that require staying indoors. The ventilation system will be shut down in the event of a chemical spill. If the school is Sheltering in Place, teachers, staff and children will stay at the school for as long as the students need to be there.

### PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Applications are thoroughly reviewed, and professional references are required. Interviews with the Executive Director and/or designated staff members will be conducted. All State requirements for individual's working in the Childcare business will be followed, including but not limited to a comprehensive Background Check, Fingerprinting, CPR and Pediatric First Aid certification, and knowledge of the State's Minimum Standards.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND TESTING POLICY

You must arrive at work on time and in an appropriate mental and physical condition to work. It is our intent and obligation to provide a drug-free, healthy, safe and secure environment for staff and children. The use, possession, or sale of drugs or any drug related paraphernalia or controlled substances by **Moody Early Childhood Center** Employees during shifts or while on **Moody Early Childhood Center** property is strictly prohibited. **Moody Early Childhood Center** recognizes substance abuse as a potential health, safety and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to seek proper counseling. You must agree to the drug testing consent attached to this manual. Failure to participate in the testing or comply with the procedures for testing will be deemed a positive screening. A positive drug screening may automatically result in termination of employment.

If you test positive and are allowed to continue your employment, you will be subject to additional random drug screenings. If you are taking any medication, you will be required to provide a record of any prescription medication you are currently taking. This record must include a prescription dated no longer than the last 30 days prior to the date requested. If these screenings prove inconclusive or positive, you will be directed to a facility for a hair follicle drug assessment. You must appear at the facility on the date and time assigned by MECC. Failure to appear at the date and time assigned or declining such assessment is grounds for automatic termination.

### ONBOARDING OF NEW EMPLOYEES

Classroom observations and training are standard before an offer of employment is made. Individuals accepting a position will continue training with the Education Department team, be assigned a mentor, and begin a classroom assignment in a room with experienced team members. Please refer to the earlier section regarding the various categories of employees at **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

### ORIENTATION

All new employees are oriented to **Moody Early Childhood Center** policies and procedures. Such an orientation should begin on the first day of employment and continue throughout his/hers **first 60 days**. Each staff member will be assigned a mentor to make sure that all procedures are explained and demonstrated. The **60-day** review will evaluate an employee's performance of all expectations explained during orientation. Any staff member may ask the mentor or for further explanation or clarification of policies at any time. It is each staff member's responsibility to uphold center expectations at all times.

The orientation program covers all of the following:

- Review of Center policies and procedures
- Training in first aid and emergency procedures, including the operation of fire extinguishers.
- ProCare, child and family information
- Job responsibilities and any other duties as assigned (such as assessment, daily schedules, activities, etc.)
- Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control, including hand- washing procedures and universal precautions for handling body fluids
- Schedule of **Moody Early Childhood Center**
- Review of child abuse and neglect laws and reporting procedures
- The procedure for ensuring that all **Moody Early Childhood Center** employees know the children assigned to their care and their whereabouts
- Child guidance and classroom management techniques
- The integrity of children with disabilities into the program
- Confidentiality policies

## INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. **Moody Early Childhood Center** uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or **Moody Early Childhood Center** may end the employment relationship at will and at any time during or after the introductory period with just cause to be documented and explained in a written notice to be signed by both parties.

All new and rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first sixty (60) calendar days after their date of hire. Any absences or tardies may automatically extend an introductory period or terminate employment. If **Moody Early Childhood Center** determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended for a special period.

Upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period, employees enter the established employment classification for their position.

## TRAINING

Eight hours of pre-service training must be completed by new staff without previous experience in a regulated childcare facility before they can begin working with the children. Staff who have not completed their CPR/First aide, pre-service training, and/or orientation period will be made to wear an apron or "smock" to denote they can not count in student ratio. Texas Minimum Standards states:

### **§746.1305. What must be covered in pre-service training for caregivers?**

#### *Subchapter D, Personnel*

#### *Division 4, Professional Development*

(no weight) (a) Pre-service training for caregivers must cover the following areas:

- Medium (1) Developmental stages of children;
- Medium (2) Age-appropriate activities for children;
- Medium (3) Positive guidance and discipline of children;
- Medium (4) Fostering children's self-esteem;
- Medium (5) Supervision and safety practices in the care of children;
- Medium (6) Positive interaction with children; and
- Medium (7) Preventing and controlling the spread of communicable diseases, including immunizations.

Medium-High (b) If a caregiver provides care for children younger than 24 months of age, one hour of that caregiver's pre-service training must cover the following topics:

- (1) Recognizing and preventing shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma;
- (2) Understanding and using safe sleep practices and preventing sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS); and
- (3) Understanding early childhood brain development.

### **§746.1303. What must orientation for employees at my child-care center include?**

#### *Subchapter D, Personnel*

## Division 4, Professional Development

(a) Your orientation for employees must include at least the following:

- (1) An overview of the minimum standards found in this chapter;
- (2) An overview of your operational policies including discipline and guidance practices, and procedures for the release of children;
- (3) An overview of your policy on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including:
  - (A) Factors indicating a child is at risk of abuse or neglect;
  - (B) Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
  - (C) Procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and
  - (D) Community organizations that have training programs available to child-care center staff members, children, and parents;
- (4) An overview of the procedures to follow in handling emergencies, which includes sharing the emergency preparedness plan with all employees. Emergencies may include, but are not limited to, fire, explosion, tornado, toxic fumes, volatile persons, and severe injury or illness of a child or adult; and
- (5) The location and use of fire extinguishers and first-aid equipment.

(b) For employees you hire on or after September 1, 2016, your orientation must also cover the following areas:

- (1) Administering medication, if applicable, including compliance with §746.3803 of this title (relating to what authorization must I obtain before administering a medication to a child in my care?);
- (2) Preventing and responding to emergencies due to food or an allergic reaction;
- (3) Understanding building and physical premises safety, including identification and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electric hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- (4) Handling, storing, and disposing of hazardous materials including compliance with §746.3425 of this title (relating to Must caregivers wear gloves when handling blood or bodily fluids containing blood?); and
- (5) Precautions in transporting children if your children if your center transports a child who's chronological or developmental age is younger than nine years old.

All staff must obtain at least **24 clock hours** of training annually, exclusive of CPR and First Aid, selected from the following areas:

- Child Development
- Care of Children with Special Needs
- Adult and Child Health
- Nutrition and Safety
- Curriculum-Planning
- Risk Management
- Identification and Care of ill Children
- Supervision
- Recognition of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Abuse and the Responsibility of reporting any incidents
- Cultural Diversity
- Professional Development
- **Note:** It is the responsibility of each employee to **pay** for **any costs that may result from these trainings (full or part-time)**.

All new staff must be oriented in the requirements in the Minimum Standards Handbook and the Employee Handbook. In addition, all new staff must be oriented to Texas Rising Star (TRS) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) requirements.

In addition, MECC staff will comply with required trainings as stated by Texas Education Agency. Center staff will receive training annually on:

- The legal requirements of SB 57 and Education Code §29.0052 and §37.1086.
- How to collaboratively evaluate and document accommodations in IEP or §504 processes.
- Procedures for integrating accommodation plans into the EOP.
- Trauma-informed emergency response strategies and inclusive evacuation procedures.

All new professional staff must complete this training as part of onboarding.

## EMPLOYEE STATUS

**Introductory Period**-New employees with less than sixty (60) days of service.

**Full-time** employees have a standard schedule between thirty (30) to forty (40) hours per week, have successfully completed the 60-day introductory period, and occupy a permanent position. Full-time status will be evaluated twice a year, in August and January.

**Part-time** employees have a basic schedule between ten (10) and thirty (30) hours per week and have successfully completed the 60-day introductory period.

**Substitute or Flex** employees both short term and long term are employed on an at-will basis and are not considered full-time, part-time, nor contractual employees.



## ASSIGNMENT AND REASSIGNMENT

**Moody Early Childhood Center** strives to match individual's strengths and skills to positions. Upon accepting a position at MECC, staff acknowledges they are willing to work in any position in the center. The Executive Director and/or the Chief Operations Officer may reassign staff as needed in the best interest of the organization and to ensure high quality standards are continuously upheld.

Staff desiring a schedule, assignment change, or a modification of assignment must complete the appropriate paperwork. The form must be approved through the chain of command up to the Executive Director prior to any changes being made. Submission of the paperwork does not guarantee approval. All employee status change requests will be reviewed and approved in July to take effect August 1st, December to take effect January 1st, and in April to take effect June 1st, and will be in effect for the following semester.

## PERSONNEL FILE

For licensing and accreditation purposes, all personnel files must be up-to-date and accurate for inspections by appropriate licensing and accreditation representatives. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that personal information is kept current, and all required training is started and completed in the mandated time allotted.

## STAFF SCHEDULES

Full-time staff schedules are available at the front desk. As substitute hours are available, part-time staff are rotated to fill vacancies. Hours of work and assigned duties are subject to change by administration to meet the needs of our families and Center. Any requests for days off must be given in writing at least **one week** in advance and submitted in Gusto for approval if you have time off available. Any requests for special days for consideration at the last minute will be honored whenever possible and when coverage is available. In addition, if no PTO time is available, time off must be requested 30 days in advance. (See section below regarding greater detail on "Time Off/Absences.")

## EMPLOYEE CALENDAR

| Moody<br>Early Childhood<br>Center                                                       |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|                                                                                          | Employee Groups |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| New Teaching Staff July 21-31, 2026                                                      |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher Planning Aug 2-7, 2025                                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Labor Day Sept 7, 2026                                                                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher Work Day Sept 25, 2026                                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Holiday Oct 12, 2026                                                                     |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Holiday Nov 6, 2026                                                                      |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thanksgiving Break Nov 23-27, 2026                                                       |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thanksgiving Break Nov 28-29, 2026                                                       |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Winter Break Dec 15, 2026 - Jan 6, 2027                                                  |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Winter Break Dec 24-25, 2026                                                             |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Winter Break Dec                                                                         |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| New Year's Day Jan 1, 2027                                                               |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher Work Day Jan 11, 2027                                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| MLK Holiday Jan 18, 2027                                                                 |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher Work Day Feb 12, 2027                                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Holiday Feb 15, 2027                                                                     |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Spring Break Mar 8-12, 2027                                                              |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Spring Break Mar 12, 2027                                                                |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Good Friday March 26, 2027                                                               |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Holiday March 28, 2027                                                                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Holiday May 3, 2027                                                                      |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher Work Day May 29, 2027                                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Memorial Day May 31, 2027                                                                |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Summer Break Starts June 1, 2026                                                         |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Summer Break (TBD)                                                                       |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| June/Early June 21, 2027                                                                 |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total Days Worked                                                                        |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Possible PTO accrued                                                                    |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Possible PTO Utilized                                                                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unlabeled PTO                                                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education                                                                                |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional Aide<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education - IT (IT)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education - IT (IT)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education - IT (IT)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education - PK (CT) - NEW<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                     |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education - PK (CT) - Returning<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                               |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coordinator (PK & IT)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                         |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Director of Education (DE)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                    |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Administration                                                                  |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Front Desk<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Social Media<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                         |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Inventory Control Specialist (ICR) Asst<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027              |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Inventory Control Specialist (ICR)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Building Engineer - Custodial/Maintenance<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                     |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Registrar<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Attendance Coordinator<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                               |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Training Coordinator<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                 |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Executive Assistant<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                  |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Nurse Asst<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Nurse<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                                                |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Office - Director of Admin Operations (DAO)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family and Community Services                                                            |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family Engagement - IT Family Advocate (FA)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family Engagement - PK Family Advocate (FA)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                   |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family Engagement - Social Worker (SW)<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                        |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family Engagement - Director of Family and Community Services<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027 |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration                                                                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration - Senior Director<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                              |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration - Chief Operations Officer<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                     |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration - Executive Director<br>08/01/2026 - 07/31/2027                           |                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## TIME OFF/ABSENCES

The center cannot operate effectively or efficiently unless its employees can be dependent upon to show up for work on a timely and consistent basis. **Moody Early Childhood Center** depends upon each employee, and when one person is absent, a replacement must be hired for the day. Thus, absenteeism has a particularly disruptive effect on both the Center and the Children. Employees who take excessive time off, or abuse the benefits of sick, personal, and vacation provided are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

Employees requesting leave related to any medical condition concerning the employee or family members (FMLA) **will be required to complete the FMLA application from U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division, which must include a physician's statement** verifying the condition, its beginning and expected ending dates, the need for the employee to be given or to provide care, and the estimated time required. You will be required to provide a return-to-work authorization signed by your physician, releasing you to return to work WITHOUT restrictions.

Foreseeable absences must be requested at least **7 days** in advance. Requests for leave must be made in writing on the Employee Time-Off Request Form as well as on Gusto. Requests will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations, and hardship to **Moody Early Childhood Center** operations during the proposed period of absence. All requests must be signed by the employee's direct supervisor. Requests that cannot be accommodated may be denied. Completing a request form does not guarantee time off. Staff members who request time off but do not have PTO available to cover the absence are in violation of attendance policy and may be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

You are prone to become ill when working with small children. MECC follows the same procedures for staff as it does for our students. Staff are required to stay home if they exhibit any symptoms of illness as listed below in order to maintain a healthy environment for everyone. Staff are asked not to take medicine to lower their fever prior to coming to school. Staff are required to report any communicable disease or condition (i.e., conjunctivitis, head lice, chicken pox, etc.) to the office so that we can alert other staff as soon as possible, in order to prevent spread of symptoms. Staff who miss 2 or more days of work due to illness will need a doctor's note to return.

As required by the Texas Department of State Health Services, staff will need to be excluded from working at the program if he/she have any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100+: (Must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning)
- Diarrhea: More than three loose stool within a 24-hour period
- Vomiting: More than twice in 24-hour period
- Severe coughing with runny nose and colored mucus
- Rashes : un-identifiable or non-typical rash
- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis): Redness of eyelid, swelling and/or discharge
- Change of color of skin or eyes (may be signs of hepatitis)
- Lice or scabies: For head lice, children and staff may return after treatment and no nits; for scabies, return after treatment.
- Ringworm: (May return 24 hours after treatment was begun)

If your child becomes ill while at the Center, you must notify your supervisor and the office as soon as possible. You may be seen at the Teen Health Pediatric Clinic to be seen by the Physician's Assistant at MECC if you would like. You will be responsible for making alternative arrangements for your child if sent home sick. If you are not able to make suitable arrangements, please inform the Senior Director. Situations will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Staff may not return to school the following day unless a doctor's note is provided. Staff must be fever, or diarrhea free, or on medication for 24 hours (1 calendar day) before returning to work.

- Absences due to illness, children's illness, or family emergencies must be called in AT LEAST two hours before an employee is scheduled to work. The time will be deducted from your PTO balance. If PTO time is not available to cover the absence, disciplinary procedures up to and including termination will be taken.
- If you are aware that you will be absent prior to the day of absence, please notify your direct supervisor **via**



**email** as far in advance as possible, but within a reasonable time during the day/night.

- Car trouble is not considered an emergency. Please arrange for a ride with a friend or family member if the problem arises.
- Employees are required to notify their supervisor and the main office of **Moody Early Childhood Center** at (409) 761-6930 at 6:30 a.m. or at least two hours before their scheduled start time on the day of their absence. The following are not acceptable and could be cause for immediate termination:
  - ✓ Leaving a message on the answering machine at **Moody Early Childhood Center**.
  - ✓ **Texting** or leaving a **voicemail message** without talking to the main office.
  - ✓ Please note, a lack of phone service is not a valid excuse for failure to contact the office of tardiness or absence.
- **If an employee must report an absence after business hours, they must email their supervisor and call the main office as soon as it opens the following business day to confirm their notification was received.**
- **A "closed day off" means an excessive number of staff are out and there may not be enough people to maintain appropriate coverage in classrooms. If you are too sick to attend and the day is deemed a "closed day", you must provide a doctor's note upon your return to work and have PTO available. Please note, calling in on a "closed day" without providing a note and having PTO available will result in progressive disciplinary actions up to and including termination.**
- It is your responsibility to notify the main office **BEFORE** your starting time of any tardy or absence. If you are going to be late, state the reason for your tardiness and when you expect to arrive at work. Failure to call in personally to report absence or lateness is a violation of Center rules, and the absence or lateness will be considered unauthorized. Calls from friends or relatives on your behalf will not be accepted as an authorized notice of absence or tardiness; you may be required to submit evidence verifying the reason for your absence or tardiness. Failure to provide the requested substantiation will result in discharge.

All tardies and absences will be monitored. Excessive tardies and absences, or a pattern that begins to occur, will be addressed by the administration and could possibly be grounds for termination. It is important to understand that when we are short of staff, it is not only stressful for the other staff members but affects the children as well.

- Without a doubt, working in a childcare environment can sometimes be very stressful. Please let the Chief Operations Officer know if a situation arises where resources are needed to support you in stress management, prevention and treatment of depression, and/or general wellness, or if time is needed to regroup or even a "*stress free*" day off needs to be taken from your accrued PTO balance. **Moody Early Childhood Center** strives to be sensitive to the needs of its employees and will try to make arrangements to accommodate an over stressed staff member. Simply walking out or not returning from break leaves co-workers in a bind, but even more important, the children who are left are the ones who suffer.
- Job abandonment: If the employee does not call or report to work, chooses to walk off the job, or simply does not return after leaving for break and/or lunch will be considered in violation of job abandonment and thus **the employee will be terminated** from employment.
- An employee's last paycheck will be processed within six business days after their termination. This also applies to employees who simply do not show up for work and do not call or give notice of their decision to quit.
- If any employee plans to terminate employment with **Moody Early Childhood Center**, a **two week** notice in writing is requested.

## TIME KEEPING

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every full-time and part-time employee. Federal and state laws require **Moody Early Childhood Center** to keep accurate records of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. "Time worked" is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Time records are considered official **Moody Early Childhood Center** documentation and should be certified by you as accurately reflecting all hours worked. The falsification of time records is an infraction of **Moody Early Childhood Center** policy and will result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

All staff members are expected to arrive at their assigned workplace or classroom on time and ready to work their scheduled work period. Punctuality and adherence to the work schedule ensures that the ratio of teacher to children is maintained at all times and we are available for parents and others to conduct program business. If you are unable to work or will be late, you must call and speak to the main office as soon as possible.

The employer will determine the hourly schedule for each employee. Employees should be sure to review any schedule changes noted on the office calendar. All employees, other than executive staff (directors) should record the beginning and ending time of all work shifts, and any split shifts or other departure from work for personal reasons. All staff must report for work at their scheduled time and are allowed to clock only at their scheduled start time, not before. You must call and report your tardiness if you will be clocking in more than 5 minutes after your scheduled time.

**Note: Altering**, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Misappropriation of Company time, such as not working in an effective manner will not be tolerated. "Buddy punching" or "moving" an employee in Procure other than yourself is not permissible and may not be accomplished using any of the work reporting systems. Tampering with time clocks is considered a serious offense and will be grounds for immediate termination.

#### UNSCHEDULED WORK

Unscheduled work is work done before, or after a non-exempt employee's regularly scheduled work times or before or after the employee clocks in/out. A non-exempt employee should not work unscheduled time unless his or her supervisor authorizes the non-exempt employee to perform unscheduled work AND the time is recorded on the employee's timesheet.

#### OVERTIME/CLOCK IN AND OUT

Overtime is paid to non-exempt employees for all hours worked in excess of **40 hours** per Monday through Sunday work week. Overtime pay is one and one-half times your regular hourly rate of pay and must be substantiated by an 'Overtime Authorization Form'. Unauthorized overtime will not be paid. It is the employee's responsibility to clock in and out properly. Any failure to clock in or out properly may result in a **delay** in payment of wages due.

#### MISSED PUNCHES/TIMESHEETS

Timesheets will be distributed to all employees at the beginning of each new pay period and are to be reviewed, signed and returned to the front office no more than 24 hours after being received. If there are any missed punches or times to be corrected, a "Missed Punch" form should be completed and returned with the signed timesheet. Excessive "Missed-Punch" forms for the same issues will result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

#### WORK SCHEDULE

**Moody Early Childhood Center** is open for business Monday through Friday and as otherwise communicated. All staff should be present and ready to work from the beginning to the end of each of your scheduled workdays and for mandatory training time. Failure to attend can result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination. Work schedules and duty assignments may be altered to best meet the needs of the organization. Please check with your supervisor for your specific daily/week work schedule. (*See "Staff Schedule" for calendar schedules.*)

#### REPORTING ARRESTS

Employees must, as a condition of continued employment, abide by terms of **Moody Early Childhood Center's** policy. {\*Note: Employees must report all arrests to the Executive Director of **Moody Early Childhood Center** within five (5) calendar days of the arrest. Arrest does not automatically result in termination from employment. All facts will be considered including the nature of the arrest and requirements of the job position.}

#### OFF THE CLOCK WORK

**Moody Early Childhood Center** is committed to compensating every employee for the work they perform. **Moody Early Childhood Center** does not ask any hourly (non-exempt) employee to work off the clock.

## PAYROLL

### PAY SCHEDULE

#### **2026-2027 Pay Schedule**

|    |                       |            |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| 1  | 08/03/2026-08/16/2026 | 08/21/2026 |
| 2  | 08/17/2026-08/30/2026 | 09/04/2026 |
| 3  | 08/31/2026-09/13/2026 | 09/18/2026 |
| 4  | 09/14/2026-09/27/2026 | 10/02/2026 |
| 5  | 09/28/2026-10/11/2026 | 10/16/2026 |
| 6  | 10/12/2026-10/25/2026 | 10/30/2026 |
| 7  | 10/26/2026-11/08/2026 | 11/13/2026 |
| 8  | 11/09/2026-11/22/2026 | 11/27/2026 |
| 9  | 11/23/2026-12/06/2026 | 12/11/2026 |
| 10 | 12/07/2026-12/20/2026 | 12/25/2026 |
| 11 | 12/21/2026-01/03/2027 | 01/08/2027 |
| 12 | 01/04/2027-01/17/2027 | 01/22/2027 |
| 13 | 01/18/2027-01/31/2027 | 02/05/2027 |
| 14 | 02/01/2027-02/14/2027 | 02/19/2027 |
| 15 | 02/15/2027-02/28/2027 | 03/05/2027 |
| 16 | 03/01/2027-03/14/2027 | 03/19/2027 |
| 17 | 03/15/2027-03/28/2027 | 04/02/2027 |
| 18 | 03/29/2027-04/11/2027 | 04/16/2027 |
| 19 | 04/12/2027-04/25/2027 | 04/30/2027 |
| 20 | 04/26/2027-05/09/2027 | 05/14/2027 |
| 21 | 05/10/2027-05/23/2027 | 05/28/2027 |
| 22 | 05/24/2027-06/06/2027 | 06/11/2027 |
| 23 | 06/07/2027-06/20/2027 | 06/25/2027 |
| 24 | 06/21/2027-07/04/2027 | 07/09/2027 |
| 25 | 07/05/2027-07/18/2027 | 07/23/2027 |
| 26 | 07/19/2027-08/01/2027 | 08/06/2027 |

## PAY DATE

In order to conserve funds and increase productivity, the electronic transfer of funds (Direct Deposit) has been determined to be the most efficient system of paying employees. Payroll payments are made via direct deposit for all **Moody Early Childhood Center** staff on a biweekly basis into the designated financial institution account of the employee. You must have direct deposit. \*\*\* (Pay dates may be subject to change depending on needs of **Moody Early Childhood Center**) \*\*\*

## COMP TIME

**Moody Early Childhood Center** does not grant “comp” time to employees.

## OVERTIME PAY

The Federal Wage and Hour laws group employees into two classifications regarding eligibility to receive overtime payments: non-exempt and exempt.

## NON-EXEMPT STATUS

Employees not employed in executive, corporate administrative, professional sales or certain computer capacities are paid one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for **Moody Early Childhood Center** hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a regular workweek. Overtime pay is not paid when a non-exempt employee works less than 40 hours in a week because of a holiday, vacation day or sick day. **Moody Early Childhood Center** hourly staff is non-exempt and therefore qualify for overtime pay. (See “Staff Schedule” for calendar schedules.)

\*Note: Overtime must be approved in writing in advance by your immediate supervisor and will be calculated by **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

## EXEMPT STATUS

Certain office and professional program staff (for example teachers, family advocates, and Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director) meeting federal eligibility do not receive overtime pay. These positions will receive pay for a 40-hour work week. If they fail to acquire the 40 hours in a work week, the additional amount of time will be deducted from their paid time off (PTO) allotment for the year. (See “Staff Schedule” for calendar schedules.)

## ADVANCES AND LOANS

It is against company policy to give personal advances or make loans to employees or families.

## BREAK PERIODS: LUNCH AND BREAKS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** wants to ensure all employees have a scheduled lunch break and are relieved of their job duties. The office will provide all staff with their lunch schedule. Staff may not leave the room for lunch or a break if the room is not in ratio or the children are not properly engaged in their scheduled activity. All employees are given at least a ½ hour lunch break. All employees must clock out and clock in for lunch and move themselves in the online reporting system to reflect breaks to maintain ratios. The system will not automatically deduct the lunch break based on the employee’s schedule. In the event an employee is unable to perform their duties for a short period of time, the employee may request one 15-minute break per day and must remain on the premises during the break. It is the employee’s duty to make sure all children under his/her care are supervised and the class is in ratio during his/her absence.

## MEALS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** wants to ensure employees who have a scheduled lunch break clock out and are relieved of their job duties. Staff may not leave the room for lunch or a break if the room is not in ratio or the children are not properly engaged in their scheduled activity. Staff are required to clock in /out for breaks and for lunch. Meals and drinks are to be consumed in the lounge or in other areas where no children are present. Occasionally, **Moody Early Childhood Center** will serve family style meals, in order to model appropriate behavior, nutritional choices and manners; staff is expected to participate by eating food that is offered to all children in your care during family style mealtime. Always avoid drinking hot beverages around the children to avoid possible burns. Any beverages other than those being

offered to children must be consumed from a closed container and kept away from the children. (Please remember to be respectful of all of the children in your care by not flaunting food and drinks in front of them while they are unable to have snacks.)

## PAY DEDUCTIONS

The law requires that **Moody Early Childhood Center** make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal taxes. **Moody Early Childhood Center** does not deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "Wage Base" because we participate in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS).

### Medicare

All employees are required to pay the required percentage of their gross pay to Medicare.

### Teachers' Retirement System

**Moody Early Childhood** staff will participate in the Teachers' Retirement System. No FICA will be deducted.

### Child Support

Child support payments are processed by Payroll only when court orders are properly received from a county child support office, from the Child Support Services Division of the Attorney General's Office or from an appropriate court of jurisdiction. It is the employee's responsibility to file a change of employment request with the state Child Support Office.

### Levies

Tax levies from the Internal Revenue Service or payment orders from a Guaranteed Student Loan Fund for repayment of student loans are also processed by Payroll and are mandatory employee deductions when jurisdictional orders are properly received by **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

### Other Deductions

Staff may elect to participate in other employee benefit programs once they complete their introductory period. Health insurance, vision, dental, cancer, additional life, short-term disability and other health-related coverages may also be deducted from an employee's paycheck.

### Final Paycheck Deductions

To the extent permitted by applicable federal and Texas Law, and with any written authorization required by law, **Moody Early Childhood Center** reserves the right to deduct from an employee's final paycheck the cost of the following:

- Unreturned, lost, or damaged MECC property, including but not limited to keys, key cards, electronic devices, equipment, materials, uniforms, instructional materials, or other property issued by MECC.
- The cost of a MECC-paid CPR and First Aid certification course if the employee voluntarily separates from employment or is terminated for cause within one year of completing the course.
- The cost of MECC-paid administrative credentials, certifications, professional development courses, or similar training if the employee voluntarily separates from employment or is terminated for cause within one year of receiving the credential, certification, or completing the training.

Employees may be required to sign separate payroll deduction authorizations or training reimbursement agreements as a condition of receiving employer-paid equipment, certifications, or other training when required by applicable law.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday at the end of each individual employee's workday.

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of HR for further review of the matter. Employees should refer to the pay stub itself before calling. So that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

### Overpayments

As noted in the signed Pay Sheet Agreement, an employee agrees that Moody Early Childhood Center may deduct any wage overpayments from one or more of the employee's paychecks. Employees are not entitled to any funds Moody Childhood Center overpays.

#### WAGE AND SALARY POLICY

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a federal law requiring "non-exempt" employees to be paid at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked and overtime pay at time and one-half the regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in a work week. The work week is defined as Saturday at 12:00 a.m. – Friday at 11:59 p.m.

Non – Exempt Employees are all employees except professional teachers and School Management. Non- Exempt Employees are paid hourly wages. Exempt Employees include Lead Credentialed Teachers who receive regular compensation each pay period, based on their teaching agreement.

Salary is based on education, experience, and fair market rate of pay. In addition, stipends are dictated for duties or skills for specified positions and are determined by the Executive Director.

Pay increases are contingent on availability of funds, maximum amounts allowed in each job category according to the MECC pay scale, as well as staff evaluations, attendance, on-the-job performance, and professional growth. There is no guarantee of an increase, or across the board raises. If annual raises are given incrementally, an employee has to have been employed during the prior school year and has not have received any written disciplinary action in the prior preceding months. Staff must not be placed on suspension or probation for the prior calendar year to receive an annual pay increase or bonus.

#### ON THE JOB INJURIES

In the event of employee injury, even a slight injury, while performing job duties for **Moody Early Childhood Center**, an incident report must be completed with the main office. The incident report should immediately be delivered to the Executive Director or his or her designee to allow the school to stay in compliance with workers' compensation laws. **Moody Early Childhood Center** provides workers' compensation coverage for all employees. If an injury at work causes an employee to be absent, it is his or her responsibility to inform **Moody Early Childhood Center** whether he or she wishes to use accumulated leave, or whether he or she wishes to save accumulated leave and receive only the temporary income benefits that are available under the workers' compensation laws. If you do not inform the school administration of your choice, absences will NOT be charged to accumulative leave and the employee will receive only temporary income benefits from workers' compensation. Moody Early Childhood Center provides workers' compensation coverage for all eligible employees.

If an employee is unable to work due to a work-related injury or illness, MECC will continue paying the employee's regular salary for up to **three (3) calendar days** from the first day of the work-related absence, provided the employee remains eligible for salary continuation under this policy.

Any temporary income benefits (TIBs) received through workers' compensation during the salary continuation period shall be assigned to MECC or coordinated with the salary continuation benefit so that the employee does not receive duplicate wage replacement benefits.

If the employee's work-related absence extends beyond the salary continuation period, the employee may elect to receive the temporary income benefits available under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, subject to the eligibility requirements and provisions established by the workers' compensation insurance carrier and applicable law.

Salary continuation under this policy will cease upon the earliest of:

- The employee's return to work;
- The expiration of the salary continuation period;
- Separation of employment; or
- Any other circumstance that disqualifies the employee from receiving salary continuation under applicable law or MECC policy.

Employees are expected to cooperate fully with MECC and its workers' compensation insurance carrier, including attending required medical appointments, providing requested documentation, and complying with all return-to-work requirements and work restrictions issued by the treating medical provider.



## GENERAL CONDUCT

### VISITORS

A variety of visitors enter our building each day. All visitors must sign in at the front desk and wear an **Identification Badge** at all times. It is important for all employees to present a warm, welcoming, and professional impression at all times. To ensure a safe environment for the children, employees should notice that all visitors have an identification badge. If a visitor is not wearing an identification badge, employees should politely inquire into the purpose of the visit and redirect the visitor to the front desk. Visitors and Volunteers in classrooms, including support staff, may not work alone with children. They must be supervised by regularly scheduled staff in the room at all times. Suspicious persons or activities should immediately be brought to the attention of the Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer.

### STAFF GUESTS

ALL personal visitors should be scheduled during the employee's break time and restricted to the lobby area until a staff member is available. Food or drinks should be brought to the office and dropped off for the employee. If an employee's child (who is enrolled in another classroom in the Center) wishes to visit the parent, the needs of the parent's classroom take precedence.

### STAFF UNENROLLED CHILDREN

**ALL** employees should make appropriate advance arrangements for their child (ren) care during their scheduled work hours. Children who are not enrolled in the program may **not** stay in any classroom or remain unsupervised at the Center. On planned school vacations, school age children (up to Pre-K-4) may attend **Moody Early Childhood Center** after school program, for a nominal fee, provided space is available and arrangements have been made.

### AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE A CHILD

Children can only be released to parents and persons over 18 years old who are named in their student file in ProCare for infant/toddler students or Skyward for PK students. Any changes must be submitted by a parent in person or in writing to the front office. Never accept a phone call or a note brought by a person coming to pick up a child. Do not release a child to an unfamiliar face. The front office will check the driver's license and student file for students. PK staff should politely direct the person to the main office for verification.

### MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

**Moody Early Childhood Center** has the right to and will ask for periodic information from an employee's treating doctor to verify the need for medical absences and/or accommodations, and to give an indication of when an employee will be able to return to duty in their full capacity. Employees may be asked for a note from their doctor for absences that occur the day before or following a weekend, on a date deemed "closed" due to excessive requests off, as well as the day before or after a holiday. Failure to provide the necessary information can affect employee eligibility for leave and will be treated as a failure to follow MECC policy and procedures.

### MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** has the right to, and will ask for a medical or psychological examination, paid for by **Moody Early Childhood Center**, if we believe an employee's condition is interfering with the performance of their regular duties. Failure to cooperate will be treated as a failure to follow **Moody Early Childhood Center** policy and comply with directives.

## CLASSROOM PRACTICES

### COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We are in the education business and all communications and daily business are cordial and helpful. Parent messages and phone calls should be responded to by MECC staff within one business day. With regard to specific questions about student progress, there is a SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT for parents to talk with and that is the Teacher. Instructional Aides working in the classroom are encouraged to briefly share positive information with parents on a routine basis. However, information pertaining to the child's specific development will be addressed through the Teacher. The majority of communication with parents should be positive. Of course, there will be times that difficulties arise that



need to be discussed with parents. When that happens, it should be done with professionalism and respect. Employees shall not use personal electronic devices, personal telephone numbers, personal email addresses, or personal social media accounts to communicate with families regarding MECC business without prior authorization MECC Administration. MECC provides designated electronic devices, email accounts, telephones, and approved family engagement platforms for communication with families. All program-related communication with families must occur through these approved communication methods. Employees who receive program-related communications from a parent or guardian through a personal electronic device or personal account should immediately notify their direct supervisor and should redirect the family to an approved MECC communication method. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

Moody Early Childhood Center understands that guidance and discipline techniques must be consistent and individualized for different developmental stages as well as for individual students. At no time may staff use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child.

Discipline must be:

- 1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- 2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- 3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- 1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- 2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- 3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- 4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of this child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- 1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- 2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- 3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- 4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- 5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- 6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- 7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- 8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed or open; and
- 9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Additional Discipline and Guidance Measures Applying to Before or After School Program (BAP)/School Age Program (SAP) that Operates under 26 TAC Chapter 744

A program must take the following steps if it uses disciplinary measures for teaching a skill, talent, ability, expertise, or proficiency:

- Ensure that the measures are considered commonly accepted teaching or training techniques;
- Describe the training and disciplinary measures in writing to parents and employees and include the following information:
  - (A) The disciplinary measures that may be used, such as physical exercise or sparring used in martial arts programs;
  - (B) What behaviors would warrant the use of these measures; and
  - (C) The maximum amount of time the measures would be imposed;
- Inform parents that they have the right to ask for additional information; and
- Ensure that the disciplinary measures used are not considered abuse, neglect, or exploitation as

specified in Texas Family Code §261.001 and TAC Chapter 745, Subchapter K, Division 5, of this title (relating to Abuse and Neglect).

Violation of the *Moody Early Childhood Guidance and Discipline Policy* or Texas Department of Family Protective Services *Minimum Standards* for student discipline and guidance is considered “Gross Misconduct” and may result in immediate termination. (See signature page in Appendices)

## USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

*Moody Early Childhood Center is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. To ensure the well-being of our students and staff, the following guidelines regarding the use of restraint and seclusion are established.*

### RESTRAINT

Non-leadership staff members are not permitted to restrain students under any circumstances. Only Crisis Prevention trained administrative staff may use physical restraint on students as a means of intervention, and only as a last resort in situations where a student's behavior poses an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others. Physical restraint must be employed in a manner that is safe, respectful, and in compliance with all applicable regulations.

Examples of Appropriate Use of Restraint:

Imminent Risk of Harm:

- A student is physically attacking another student or staff member, and verbal interventions have failed to stop the behavior.
- A student is attempting to run into a dangerous area, such as a busy street, and verbal commands are not being followed.

Severe Self-Harm:

- A student is engaging in self-injurious behavior, such as head-banging or cutting, that poses a significant risk of injury, and other interventions have not been effective.

Attempt Least Restrictive Interventions:

- Use verbal de-escalation techniques, such as calm communication and redirection.
- Provide the student with a quiet space to calm down if they are agitated.

Contact Leadership:

- If least restrictive interventions are not effective, immediately contact a member of Administration.
- Use the school's internal communication system or send another staff member to get help.

Leadership Response:

- A trained leadership staff member will assess the situation and determine if physical restraint is necessary.
- The leadership team members will take over the situation, using physical restraint only if absolutely required for safety.

Physical Escorts

In situations where it is necessary to safely guide a student to another location, physical escorts are allowed. Physical escorts involve gently guiding or carrying a student to ensure their safety or the safety of others. All staff members are trained to perform physical escorts, and the following guidelines must be followed:

Guidelines for Physical Escorts:

- Use the minimum force necessary to safely guide or carry the student.
- Maintain a calm and reassuring demeanor to help de-escalate the situation.
- Ensure the student's dignity and respect are maintained throughout the process.

Examples of When Physical Escorts May Be Used:

- A student is refusing to leave a potentially dangerous area, such as a playground during a storm.
- A student is too overwhelmed to walk independently to a safe space and needs assistance.

## TRAINING AND COMPLIANCE

All staff members will receive training on the appropriate use of restraint and crisis intervention, emphasizing de-escalation techniques and alternative strategies for managing challenging behaviors. Regular reviews and updates to this policy will be conducted to ensure compliance with state regulations and best practices in early childhood education.

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Infants and toddlers grow and change rapidly during the first three years. **Moody Early Childhood Center** uses data-driven decision making by utilizing assessment results to create intentional learning activities to target all students' academic growth. Students are assessed individually, and the results are broken down and the data is examined to create activities that meet students at their current developmental levels and scaffold their skills to accelerate learning.

Learning about developmental milestones helps parents and caregivers understand what young children typically know and are able to do at different ages. While every child is an individual, milestones checklists show a child's skills compared to typical growth and development and help to become aware of possible delays. A more formal way to track your child's development is through developmental screeners. MECC staff are provided initial and ongoing training on the assessment tools utilized at the facility. The results are disaggregated to ensure quality instruction is provided at all levels.

Students in the infant and toddler program are assessed monthly utilizing the Developmental Checklists created by the Children's Learning Institute. Monthly assessments are used to target students' development at the varying age levels, and the results are shared with the parents, and utilized by the teachers to create activities tailored for each child. In addition, toddlers are assessed every 9 weeks to see their academic growth obtained using the FrogStreet curriculum.

PK students are also assessed as needed utilizing the Developmental Skills Checklists and every nine weeks using a report card for academic growth. Additional assessments including CPALLS, SLO, and Vocabulary are conducted in Fall, Winter, and Spring to show progress towards kindergarten readiness skills.

All assessment results are shared with parents and caregivers to ensure all students are meeting their full potential. Parents are encouraged to meet with their student's teachers to ask questions or raise concerns about their child's progress, and how the results will be utilized to improve instruction to meet their child's needs.

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Staff must comply with all DFPS standards and are required to be knowledgeable of all Minimum Standards for the age group they are working with. Staff are trained in the DFPS and NAEYC standards for childcare and education. To ensure staff remember the proper procedures, "How-To" Posters are posted in all the classrooms. (*See copies in Addendum*) In order to ensure safety, staff must maintain classroom ratios. If the ratio exceeds standards, or at any time staff do not feel comfortable with the ratio in the room, they are required to immediately contact the front office for assistance. In addition, staff must know the number of students in their care, and the oldest and youngest students.

To maintain safety, you must verify your class number regularly by performing "counts". "Counts" are defined as a quick overview of counting students in the area. Staff must also perform Name to Face on the online reporting system every hour on the hour, and at all transitions. If you leave with some of the students from a group, move yourself and the children out of the room, then announce "I have #, you have #". When you return, repeat the procedure and make sure to move you and the students back with the group and do Name to Face.

At MECC, we take student safety seriously.

1. Each morning upon arrival or at the change of class, perform a daily health check, documenting any injuries on a documentation sheet.
2. If a child is suspected of being sick, an Injury/Illness Report must be completed, and the child should be taken to the nurse. If the nurse is not available, the child should be taken to the office to be checked.
3. If a child is injured, an Injury/Illness Report must be completed, and the child should be taken to the nurse. If the nurse is not available, the child should be taken to the office to be checked.
4. Nurse or Office staff will send text and email to the parents/guardians through the online student system and denote the day and time sent.

5. Staff should communicate all injuries and illnesses to parents and should ensure parents have the opportunity to sign Injury/Illness Report.

An Emergency Operations Plan is posted in each classroom. Staff must be knowledgeable of all procedures listed in this plan. To assist with safety, staff are given a radio/walkie-talkie in each room to call for assistance if necessary. You are not allowed to leave your area unattended or out of ratio.

All classroom doors must be closed and locked at all times and all exterior doors must remain closed. Staff must monitor all open exterior doors when greeting parents at drop-off and pick-up times, and ensure doors are securely closed whenever entering/exiting the building. Failure to monitor or ensure doors are closed places our children, staff, and families at risk and is grounds for immediate termination.

In addition, staff are required to be knowledgeable, comply with, and exceed all laws listed in the DFPS Minimum Standards, NAEYC, as well as charter school and licensing requirements. A copy of Minimum Standards is located in each classroom for staff review. How-To posters and class ratios are also posted in the classrooms to assist staff in learning and reviewing the required procedures listed. To ensure high quality education, lesson plans are expected to be turned in every Thursday by 7 a.m. for the upcoming week. Videos or Movies are not allowed unless they are tied to the theme being taught, documented in the lesson plans, comply with Minimum Standards, and are pre-approved by the Education Department supervisor.

### PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image **Moody Early Childhood Center** presents to parents and their children, visitors and guests. A professional appearance is required at all times while on the premises of the centers or in the performance of duty. Our philosophy is to provide a culture that allows staff to dress in a style which presents a neat, business-like appearance and that promotes confidence and professionalism in the public. We expect you to accept the responsibility of dressing appropriately for your position or situation. With that in mind, the following dress code will be implemented and enforced at all times. If you are inappropriately dressed or your appearance does not meet the appearance standards listed, the school reserves the right to ask that you take appropriate steps to remedy before allowing you to start work.

MECC staff members are required to wear uniforms. To ensure professionalism throughout **Moody Early Childhood Center**, the following uniform will be enforced for all employees:

#### **MECC Instructional Staff (Classroom & Enrichment Teachers and Assistants)**

**Monday-Thursday:** Khaki bottoms and collared Moody polo style shirt

**(Plain, collared Polo style shirts without MECC logo are not permitted)**

**Friday:** Blue denim jeans and collared Moody polo style shirt or Moody t-shirt

#### **MECC P.E. Staff**

**Monday-Thursday:** Khaki bottoms or athletic pants of any color and collared Moody polo style shirt

May wear Bermuda shorts at finger-tip length and collared Moody polo style shirt with outside activity

**(Plain, collared Polo style shirts without MECC logo are not permitted)**

**Friday:** Blue denim jeans or athletic pants of any color and collared Moody polo style shirt or Moody t-shirt

#### **MECC Facilities**

**Monday-Thursday:** Any bottoms and collared Moody polo style shirt

May wear Bermuda shorts at finger-tip length and collared Moody polo style shirt with outside assignment

**(Plain, collared Polo style shirts without MECC logo are not permitted)**

**Friday:** Blue denim jeans and collared Moody polo style shirt or Moody t-shirt

#### **MECC Nurse and Nurse Assistant**

**Monday-Friday:** Scrubs (top and bottom) or Scrubs Bottom and Moody polo style shirt

**Friday:** Blue denim jeans and collared Moody Polo style shirt or Moody t-shirt

#### **MECC Advocates, Coordinators and Office Staff**

**Monday-Thursday:** Black or Khaki bottoms and collared Moody polo style shirt

**Friday:** Blue denim jeans and collared Moody polo style shirt or Moody t-shirt

**MECC Directors (Administrative Team), and  
Senior Director, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director (Executive Team)**

**Monday-Friday:** Professional attire

**All employees** should wear appropriate tops, appropriate pants, and comfortable closed-toed shoes, such as tennis shoes.

Jewelry should be conservative. Long chain necklaces or pendants should not be worn as they can present a safety hazard to small children. Earrings should also be small, conservative, and secure, to prevent children from grabbing and pulling loose.

- Males' hair will be neatly groomed, and professional in appearance. Facial hair will not exceed 1 inch and must be groomed at all times (Prohibited hair includes but not limited to: Porkchop sideburns, handlebar mustaches, dreadlocks, uncut hair, and unkempt facial beards)
- Females' hair must be neatly groomed at all times, and professional in appearance. Hair should be styled in a way that it does not interfere with job performance or present a safety issue when working with students.
- Shoes must be neat and in good repair at all times. Tennis shoes or flats are best. Since you are expected to engage the children in activities on the playground the shoes should be appropriate for the situation. **(No house shoes, shoes that resemble house shoes, or slide-ins with an open back. Shoes must cover your entire foot.)**
- No open toe shoes such as sandals or high heels, and no shoes with holes are allowed for health and safety reasons. **(No Crocs or Flip-Flops)**
- No shorts. All bottoms should fall at or below the mid-calf line.
- No clothing with advertisements showing.
- No head coverings are allowed in the building. **(No head scarfs, hats, or durags) Turbans are allowed for religious purposes ONLY.**
- Open-front sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets may be worn in the building as long as the Moody Early Childhood insignia can be seen on the shirt. Pull over sweatshirts, sweaters, or hoodies are not allowed.
- Clothing should be clean and in good repair at all times, no stains, frays, holes, or tears. You are hired to work with children and being down on the floor frequently is part of the job's responsibility. Clothing must be appropriate to engage children in all types of activities throughout the day. Khakis or Capri's, below the knee, are allowed: however, they must have no holes, frays, or lavish accessories. Use a conservative outlook when deciding upon apparel.
- Pants and MECC Shirts must appropriately cover the torso at all times without allowing skin to show.
- Fingernails should be of a "workable length" such that they do not pose a safety hazard. "Workable length" is defined as extending no longer than 1/4 inch beyond the flesh line, no sharp tips, must be professional colors, and no jewels.
- Fake/false eyelashes must look natural in length and volume and have no decorations like jewels or glitter. They must not pose safety or choking hazard.
- Facial piercing, excessive ear piercing, and body piercing may be deemed inappropriate as it could be deemed a safety or choking hazard. If this is the case, you will be asked to remove this type of jewelry during business hours.
- No perfume is allowed, as some children are sensitive
- Cutoffs, frayed jeans/clothing with holes are not prohibited
- Permanent tattoos must be concealed all times

We may request that you wear professional business attire for business meetings with parents and other official functions and/or events. As we serve a diverse group of families and at the same time serve as role models for the

children in our care, we must be respectful of cultural views and the professional standard expected of all employees. If you have any doubt about the appropriateness of your professional presentation, ask your supervisor or a director for guidance. If they feel your appearance is not professional, they will ask you to sign out and leave the center. The staff members may return and sign in when appropriately dressed. The Senior Director is the final arbiter about the appropriateness of appearance.

## PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR

Demeanor involves your manner and your non-verbal tone and gestures. At **Moody Early Childhood Center** every employee must be conscious of their emotional undertone that they are exuding. You are responsible for reviewing and responding to your work email. Emails should be checked daily and any communication, whether it is through the student portal, email, or phone call should be answered within one business day.

### Characteristics to Maintaining Professional Demeanor

- Keep a Pleasant Smile
- Introduce yourself
- Remain Integral
- Show Respect for Others
- Apply a Gentle Approach
- Use a Friendly Greeting/Conversation
- Maintaining Professionalism

**Note:** All employees at **Moody Early Childhood Center** will greet every parent and family with a smile; to let them know that you are truly happy to care for their child.

## SOCIALIZING OR “CLUSTERING”

While on duty, teachers must be focused on interacting with and supervising the children in their care. Socializing or “clustering” with fellow teachers/other adults while on duty is an inappropriate practice and not permissible, compromises the safety and security of the children and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## BABYSITTING, STUDENT TRANSPORTATION AND PARTY ATTENDANCE

It is against MECC policy for staff to babysit, provide transportation, attend parties, social dinners or other social engagements with our families, MECC Board members, or another clientele. This detracts from the professional status of the center and gives the impression of favoritism.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MECC believes professional development not only increases staff efficiency and expands knowledge base, but it also builds confidence, credibility, and increases staff retention. The Executive Director, with approval of the President and Board, will develop a plan for continuing professional development and training for teachers and exempt employees. The plan will contain provisions for a limited number of paid days for professional development and training.

MECC believes continuous professional development is important for staff to encourage creative thinking, maintain and advance skills that are relevant to their current positions, and increase their motivation. In addition to the mandatory state training hours, MECC offers additional training opportunities for all staff members that aligns to the Professional Development Plan, Campus Improvement Plan, and the Center’s long-term Strategic Plan. Mandatory weekend training dates, online courses, and local training are available for all staff members. Additionally, MECC offers tenured staff, those who have worked for MECC for over a year, opportunities to participate in advanced learning opportunities such as multi-day and in-state conferences. Staff interested in attending a professional development opportunity paid for by MECC, must submit a “Training Request Form” including all the required information to their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will review the packet for relevance/need to their current position, staff tenure, and packet completion. The information will then be sent to the Senior Director of Administrative Services to ensure coverage and funds are available. Additional approval by the Chief Operations Officer and Executive Director are also required before registration.







submission, Ongoing review of teacher and student data, and GSPD plan, Ongoing collection of data, Informal observations and walkthroughs with ongoing feedback, Formal Observation, and End-of-Year Conference.

The Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director will be responsible for coordinating evaluations with employees and for providing support when necessary. All other staff will participate in the following.

**INTRODUCTORY/PROBATIONARY PERIOD EVALUATIONS-** Performance evaluations may be conducted to provide the employee and their supervisor with the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage, and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. A formal performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of the employee's initial period of hire, known as the introductory period **(60 Days)**.

**FORMATIVE REVIEW-** Performance evaluations will be conducted at the mid-year interval to provide the employee and their supervisor with the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage, and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals for review at the summative evaluation.

**SUMMATIVE EVALUATION-** Additional formal performance evaluations may be conducted to provide the employee and their supervisor the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage, and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. A mid-year review will be performed to measure individual performance of established objectives and personal growth goals for the coming six months. At the end of year, summative review will be performed to determine if mid-year goals were met for any performance concerns.

#### COACHING AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

You are expected to follow all policies and procedures for smooth operation and safety of the children in your care. However, everyone occasionally makes mistakes or needs guidance, for optimal performance of teaching duties, when an employee needs guidance, progressive disciplinary procedures will be followed. Progressive discipline is a method of discipline that uses graduated steps for dealing with problems related to an employee's conduct or performance that do not meet clearly defined standards and policies. The ultimate objective of progressive discipline is to help employees correct conduct problems and resolve performance issues in the earliest stages. Using a progressive discipline system:

- Provides a consistent, objective and fair process for disciplining.
- Promotes open communication between a supervisor and his or her employee.
- Improves employee productivity.
- Potentially increases employee retention by resolving issues.
- Provides important documentation should a termination become necessary.

The ultimate objective of progressive discipline is to **help employees correct conduct problems and resolve performance issues in the earliest stages**. Using a progressive discipline system: Provides a consistent, objective and fair process for disciplining. Please note: Some offenses are so serious that they can result in skipping some steps or immediate termination without previous warnings. These are defined as "Gross Misconduct".

Our disciplinary process has five steps of increasing strictness. These steps are:

1. Counseling or Verbal warning
2. Formal reprimand: write-up
3. Formal disciplinary meeting, suspension, and performance improvement plan
4. Penalties (transfer, demotion, suspension)
5. Termination

#### Explanation of the steps

**Step 1:** For a first offense where the infraction is minor, an oral discussion characterized as "counseling" is usually appropriate. The employee's supervisor should inform the employee of the infraction and clearly advise the employee both of the conduct expected and that future infractions may result in more severe discipline. Counseling sessions are different from verbal warnings because counseling sessions are used as a pre-emptive measure before the problem becomes too serious. A verbal warning may be appropriate for a more serious offense where counseling is inadequate. It could also be a step following counseling. When issuing an oral warning, the employer should clearly advise the employee as to what is needed to remedy the employee's infraction and advise the employee that more severe disciplinary consequences will follow if the infraction is repeated. The supervisor should nevertheless maintain a written record of the counseling or verbal warning in order to prove that it used progressive discipline in the event that the problem continues. When a supervisor issues a verbal warning to an employee, they should do so privately. When appropriate, they should provide that employee with a copy of the company policy they violated and explain our progressive discipline steps. Supervisors should provide employees with any coaching or advice they need. There is no appeal for Step 1 actions.

**Step 2:** Employees receive a formal written reprimand. The next step in a progressive discipline system is the written warning. A written warning usually follows an unsuccessful verbal warning, or new problems that have arisen. This document should clearly state the infraction and the consequences for a repeat offense. The written warning should be addressed to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file. Please note: An employee who has a pattern of misconduct may be denied a compensation increase.

**Step 3:** Employees will be called in for a formal disciplinary meeting with the Department Director, their Department Head and/or their supervisor. The supervisor may issue a performance improvement plan and clarify that this is the final step before an employee is penalized further. Failure to comply with the terms of the issued performance improvement plan will result in immediate termination and no appeal will be granted. Please note: An employee who has a pattern of misconduct may be denied a compensation increase.

**Step 4:** This step encompasses any penalties that employees will receive. This usually includes the deduction of certain perks and benefits (as long as they are not mandatory by law.) It may also include probation, suspension without pay, or demotion for serious offenses. We will still provide counseling in this stage if appropriate. Some employees may receive a "Last Chance Agreement" at this step. Failure to comply with the terms of the said agreement will result in immediate termination and no appeal will be granted. We will apply this step uniformly and fairly. It will not result in adverse impact for protected groups. Depending on the nature or repetition of the offense, one or more of the following actions may be appropriate. Please note: An employee who has a pattern of misconduct may be denied a compensation increase.

- **Transfer.** Employers may consider a transfer in lieu of termination or other severe discipline.
- **Demotion.** It may be appropriate to demote an employee, perhaps to a level where the employee may better perform.
- **Suspension.** Another possible course of action would be a suspension without pay. The length of the suspension may vary from a day or two to a week or more, depending on the seriousness of the infraction.

**Step 5:** Employees who continue to violate our policies, either voluntarily or involuntarily, by this stage will be terminated. This step may be followed by an investigation of the facts by the Chief Operations Officer to ensure that terminating an employee is fair. A termination for cause will refer to employees who were guilty of repeated and/or severe violations.

*Please note, if an employee is on a Step 2 or higher, they are not eligible for shift/assignment changes, promotions, raises, or bonuses for a minimum of 6 months.*

## **How to Invoke Progressive Discipline**

The progressive discipline process may begin from a different step, according to the severity of an employee's misconduct. Examples listed are not meant to be a complete list. Other violations may fit in the categories below as appropriate.

**Performance issues.** Procedure starts at Step 1. Examples are:

- Absenteeism
- Disregarding deadlines
- Failure to comply with standardized MECC procedures/policies (ex: name to face, lesson plans, daily schedule, student engagement)
- On-the-job minor mistakes that would result in a "Low" level Minimum Standard Violation (one time)
- Breach of dress code (one time)

**Serious misconduct and Repetition of an offense for which a progressive discipline procedure already took place.**

Procedure starts at stage 3. Examples are:

- On-the-job major mistakes that would result in a "Medium-High" level Minimum Standard Violation
- Rudeness to customers, staff, or partners
- Unwillingness or failure to follow Health & Safety Standards

**Severe violations.** Procedure starts at stage 4. Examples are:

- On-the-job major mistakes that would result in a "High" level Minimum Standard Violation
- Insubordination/Flouting authority
- Offensive behavior

**Gross Misconduct and Illegal behavior.** Procedure starts at step 5. Examples are:

- Penal Code Violations
- Sexual Harassment and other Prohibited Behavior
- Workplace Violence
- Breach of Confidentiality (student, family, or employee)

Department Heads/ Chief Operations Officer can skip any of the steps if they believe they are obsolete. For example, if an employee has received repeated written reprimands, it may be determined necessary to terminate an employee immediately. Or an employee may be directly suspended for a short period as a punishment.

This policy is meant to provide general guidelines. MECC reserves the right to treat circumstances in a different way from that described in this policy. But we are always obliged to act fairly and lawfully and document every stage of the progressive discipline process.

### **Right to appeal**

Employees who are not within the probationary period, were not terminated for cause, or were not found guilty of illegal behavior may file an appeal within 10 days of their termination/discipline. All other employees may file an appeal for Step 2 and higher progressive discipline actions. For example, if an employee thinks they were demoted unfairly, they can bring this issue to the attention of the Chief Operations Officer, who will evaluate the situation to determine the correct parties to hear the concern. Please note employees who are terminated during the first ninety (90) days of employment are ineligible to file an appeal. After the hearing officer hears the appeal, the findings may determine the discipline action did not follow the progressive discipline steps, and the action could be dismissed, upheld at the current level, or elevated to meet the appropriate progressive disciplinary level.

### **Preventing progressive discipline**

Disciplining an employee is never a pleasant task. For the sake of everyone involved, we will take actions to prevent the need for disciplinary action. We will:

- Communicate our policies and Code of Conduct clearly to all new hires.

- Announce any revisions or changes in our policies to all our employees in a formal manner (e.g., bulletins, newsletters.)
- Use frequent employee performance meetings to address issues before they become problems.
- Train managers to communicate, enforce and abide by policies.
- Train employees in certain policies and procedures.
- Establish a culture of respect and collaboration.

Please note, nothing in this policy or in the handbook is intended to limit in any way the center's right to terminate at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice. Some offenses are so serious that progressive discipline may be bypassed and administrative leave with or without pay or termination of employment may result in the first offense.

## JOINING A TEAM

**Moody Early Childhood Center** Faculty and Staff are here to encourage and support each other. Whether you are new or a current employee, all are expected to model behaviors we expect of our students. A willingness to solve problems, working with a positive attitude, cooperating with team members, having a sense of humor and being able to follow a professional protocol for addressing concerns or problems are essential.

## BENEFITS

### CHILDCARE BENEFITS

Enrollment will be offered as space allows within state ratio and group size. All staff parents must adhere to the same enrollment and attendance policies that regular customers observe, and the child or children must be the natural/adopted child or children of the employee or must have legal guardianship to qualify. Students of MECC and GISD employees may live off of the island and can receive a discount (unless other discounts apply).

MECC employees who successfully complete their first year of employment will be eligible for childcare:

Tiered Pricing Structure:

- Half-price childcare for the first child (oldest child if more than one).
- Full-price childcare for the additional children.

Application and Monthly Reporting:

- Employees are required to complete a workforce application.
- Monthly status reporting is necessary for ongoing eligibility or monitoring of benefit utilization.

Parent Fee for Approved Applications:

- If approved by the workforce, employees must pay a parent fee, indicating that the benefit is contingent on approval.

Volunteer Requirement:

- There is a mandatory volunteer component, with employees expected to contribute 8 hours per month.

Free Diapers/Wipes:

- The policy specifies that employees will not receive free diapers and/or wipes as part of the childcare benefits.

Adherence to Child Care Procedures:

- Employees using the childcare benefit are required to follow specified childcare procedures, likely aimed at ensuring the safety and well-being of the children.

## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Ongoing and targeted professional development is necessary for the growth of all employees. Staff members are encouraged to continue their education. MECC will work with staff members attending college to allow them to continue to work for the organization as much as feasible. MECC will assist staff members to obtain their CDA.

Reimbursement of program costs for observation and assessment will be given once all requirements are complete. Raises for CDA, Associate degrees, Bachelor's degrees and higher are given upon completion of a program. Moody Early Childhood Center offers ongoing coaching and mentoring for all of our staff members. MECC will pay staff for attending MECC training and may assist in registration fees for additional professional development opportunities and conferences.

### **FAMILY and MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

The wellbeing of **Moody Early Childhood Center** employees is important to us. While each employee's contribution to the job is important, we understand that certain family situations may require temporary absences. Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

Benefits will remain the same for up to twelve weeks. Requests for FMLA should be made by using the 'Request for FMLA form' and submitting it to **Moody Early Childhood Center** Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director as soon as the need is confirmed.

Eligibility requirements are as follows:

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

### **MEDICAL**

Employees must be considered full-time employees and have successfully completed their introductory period to be enrolled in medical benefits. All full-time employees will be enrolled in life insurance and long-term disability at no charge to the employee. Additionally, after their successful completion, employees who are hired into full-time positions will be eligible to enroll in medical, vision, and dental insurance. These additional programs will be available at the employee's expense. If staff fail to acquire enough hours during a pay period to pay for the benefits they have selected, they will be issued an invoice for the balance owed.

### **STIPENDS AND ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION**

A stipend is a regular fixed amount of money paid periodically for services or to defray expenses. MECC offers stipends to team members who regularly use personal time, equipment, or vehicles to provide services for the company or fill a hard-to-fill position. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cell phone stipend - given to staff members for communication on days when they are not in the office.
- Travel stipend - an employee must regularly travel outside of Galveston County to pick up supplies, to attend meetings or to make home visits. Employees receiving travel stipends must maintain a current insurance card with the HR Coordinator.
- LPAC, Translation, Leads/Trainer, Fish/Animal, TECH, Coordinator, Director – staff members provide extra services for additional compensation in lieu of pay increase.

- Bilingual, Special Education, ESL – staff members work in “hard-to-fill teaching positions”. This staff must provide services to students to acquire additional compensation.

## PAID TIME OFF

Paid time off is paid to employees, and may be used for illness, personal, or vacation time with proper notice. PTO will not be approved for staff in increments of time greater than 3 days without a doctor’s note during the school year (August 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>). Paid time off (PTO) is accrued for each 80 hours of work per pay period in which the employee meets 40 hours/week without absences. Overtime generated in a week does not count towards 80 hours worked. (See “Employee Calendar”)

An employee may earn/accrue paid time off hours after they are placed in a full-time position and have successfully completed 60 consecutive days. Part-time staff may earn PTO at half-rate if they have completed a full calendar year employment for MECC. Staff acquiring a position after August 1<sup>st</sup>, PTO given will be based on the percentage of time remaining in the program year. No time off will be given or accrued if a full-time position is acquired between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>.

181 - 187 and some administrative staff do not accrue PTO. Staff acquiring a position after August 1<sup>st</sup>, PTO given will be based on the percentage of time remaining in the program year. No time off will be given or accrued if a full-time position is acquired between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Staff are responsible for monitoring their PTO balances. Any time an employee is not at work including approved days off, doctor appointments, tardies, early releases, etc. are deducted from PTO balances. If an employee fails to acquire the 40 hours each week, the additional amount of time will be deducted from their paid time off (PTO) balance at the end of the pay period. If there is no PTO available, the remaining will be deducted from the employee’s paycheck. No PTO will be accrued if the employee does not fulfill working 40 hours each week if PTO time is not available. **Negative PTO balances are considered excessive and disciplinary actions up to and including termination will be taken.** If all PTO time has been exhausted, an employee may not request time off.

**Note:** “MECC Days” are provided by the employer as part of the benefit packet for Full Time employees. Any employee who leaves in good standing and with a minimum of a two (2) week notification, can have pay in lieu of taking accrued paid time off (PTO), for up to 80 hours. Administrative staff leaving in good standing with a minimum of a two (2) week notification and who do not accrue PTO but are given the time “up-front,” will be paid their remaining PTO for the current year at the percentage of time worked (example: days worked/days employed x number of PTO given).

Staff members' PTO balances may be rolled on August 1 of each program year, or the employee may request payment for the balance of PTO at their regular hourly rate to be provided at the employer’s discretion, not to exceed 5 days annually. Executive Team members (Senior Directors, and Executive Directors) may roll their PTO balance at their discretion.

## PAID HOLIDAYS

**Moody Early Childhood Center** will pay holidays each calendar year. Regular full-time employees will be paid for eight (8) hours for each of these days and part-time employees will be paid for four (4) hours for each holiday after one full calendar year of employment. The Executive Director will communicate any variations, additions, or special notices to you. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the following Monday.

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| New Years              | January 1 <sup>st</sup>  |
| Martin Luther King Day | January 18 <sup>th</sup> |
| Spring Break           | March 12 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Good Friday            | March 26 <sup>th</sup>   |



|              |                                                |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Memorial Day | May 31 <sup>st</sup>                           |
| Juneteenth   | June 21 <sup>st</sup>                          |
| Labor Day    | September 7 <sup>th</sup>                      |
| Thanksgiving | November 26 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> |
| Christmas    | December 24 <sup>th</sup> and 25 <sup>th</sup> |

Holiday pay is calculated based on your regular rate of pay and normal work schedule. You will receive full credit for the above holidays if you are at work on the last working day before and the first working day after the holiday. Time off will be granted the day before or after a holiday if the employee has PTO available and the day was pre-approved. Employees calling in the day before or after a holiday will not be paid for the holiday, be required to present a doctor's note upon return and will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination. Holidays are subject to change by the Board at any time.

#### REQUESTS FOR TIME OFF

Staff members are responsible for monitoring their own PTO banks. Time off requests are approved based on coverage. Staff members who request time off but have no PTO available are in violation of attendance policy and may be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Time Employees who need time off due to illness should contact the main office as soon as possible or at least 2 hours before their shift in order for sufficient time to find coverage. A time off request must be submitted via Gusto.

For personal days and vacation time, employees should complete a request for time off at least 1 week in advance. If time off is denied due to lack of coverage, and staff call in ill, a doctor's note will be required before returning and will result in progressive discipline actions up to and including termination.

#### COURT ORDERS/SUBPOENAS/JURY DUTY

MECC staff will immediately comply with all court orders detailing student release information. Any staff member called for federal, or state jury duty or court ordered appearance (with a subpoena) may be absent without loss of pay or deduction of their personal time. Jury Duty is considered part of your civic duty, and Moody Early Childhood Center will pay your regular pay, subject to verification of actual days of court or jury time served, such as by providing a jury certificate. If a jury certificate or other verification is not provided, the employee will be required to use their personal leave for the absence.

Absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business with no subpoena shall be deducted from the employee's leave or, at the option of the employee, shall be taken as leave without pay.

Please refer to the Employee Handbook for more detailed explanations regarding attendance, leaves and absences.

***Proof of Attendance and wage earned*** for jury duty attendance must be submitted for the pay subsidy.

#### REQUEST FOR EXTENDED ABSENCE

Paid time off (PTO) is limited to what is granted per employee's time with the school. The school cannot accommodate extended absences beyond the maximum PTO allowed or hold employment positions for such. The school depends on the consistency of staff to maintain excellence in our program. Without a policy exception approved by **Moody Early Childhood Center** Board, extended absence would have to be accomplished by resignation. Reinstating your employment would require applying as a new employee with a new hire date.

#### RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES TIME OFF

**Moody Early Childhood Center** supports a diverse workplace and recognizes the importance of religious observances. If time off is desired for a religious observation, you may, with the Executive Director or Chief Operations Officer's approval, use available paid time off or take unpaid leave. The Chief Operations Officer will review all requests and determine if they may be reasonably accommodated based on the needs of the school and safety of the children.



### NO SOLICITATION/ NO DISTRIBUTION

No solicitation of any kind by staff or others may be conducted. In order to avoid annoyance to our employees and interference with our operations, no employee is permitted to distribute literature or solicit other employees for any purpose on Center premises during working time. The Center premises include all areas where employees perform their assigned work tasks. Working time includes the time during which you are scheduled to work, and does not include scheduled rest periods, meal breaks and other specified times when you are not expected to be working.

Non-employees may not solicit for any purpose or engage in the distribution of literature of any kind while on Center premises.

### BEREAVEMENT LEAVE FUNERAL LEAVE

Bereavement time will be paid to all full-time employees for up to five **(5)** continuous days for an immediate family member (spouse, child, sibling, parent), three **(3)** continuous days for scheduled time lost due to death of a close family member (aunts/uncles, grandparents, nieces/nephews). This applies to full-time employees who have completed their introductory period. Pay will be calculated based on your regular rate of pay and normal work schedule. If additional time off is necessary and/or you are ineligible for paid bereavement leave, you may, with the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director's approval, use any available paid time off or take time off as unpaid leave.

### TIME OFF WITHOUT PTO

Employees who do not have the amount of PTO time available to cover an absence are not eligible to request time off. Extenuating circumstances will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Chief Operations Officer or Executive Director. Individuals who take time off but have or will exceed their accrued time off are not eligible to earn paid time off (PTO), will not be compensated for their off, and are subject to progressive discipline actions up to and including termination.

### OTHER LEAVE

If in an emergency situation, you are unable to come to work, you are expected to immediately contact the man office to arrange for proper coverage in the school. In most instances, 24 hours' notice is expected. If your emergency is more immediate, you are expected to help as much as humanly possible to find a suitable replacement. Appointments and other non-emergency absences are to be managed outside of scheduled hours, to minimize classroom inconsistencies which can be detrimental to the classroom or to your teammates.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER/OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Active play time is absolutely vital: it is recommended that children get a minimum 60 minutes a day of rigorous physical activity to stay strong, promote muscle development, and maintain a healthy weight.

Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) focus is on the safety of our students and staff. There is an unsafe threshold for outdoor activities. Decisions to cancel outside activities for our students are not exclusively based on temperature; heat index and wind chill factor can be a driving force which can create unsafe temperatures for sustained outside activities. The totalities of all environmental factors are considered in making the determination to allow for outside activities.

### SUMMER/HOT WEATHER

| Classification  | Heat Index      | Effect on the body                                                                                               |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Caution         | 80°F - 90°F     | Fatigue possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity                                                |
| Extreme Caution | 90°F - 103°F    | Heat stroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity           |
| Danger          | 103°F - 124°F   | Heat cramps or heat exhaustion likely, and heat stroke possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity |
| Extreme Danger  | 125°F or higher | Heat stroke highly likely                                                                                        |

MECC wants to keep all staff members and students in our care safe and review multiple resources for determining environmental hazards such as extreme heat and cold. Caring For Our Children, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education is a collection of national standards that represent the best practices, based on evidence, expertise, and experience, for quality health and safety policies and practices for today's early care and education settings. <https://nrckids.org/CFOC> In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers recommendations such as avoiding taking children outside for long periods of time if the heat index is greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Prolonged outdoor exposure on extremely hot days can cause children to overheat quickly. Heat stroke in children can occur without proper hydration or rest.

- If temperatures exceed 90 degrees, stay in the shade and keep an extra eye on the children.
- If the heat index reaches 100-degree, **it's best to stay inside.**

| HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WHAT TO LOOK FOR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | WHAT TO DO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>HEAT STROKE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High body temperature (103°F or higher)</li> <li>• Hot, red, dry, or damp skin</li> <li>• Fast, strong pulse</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Losing consciousness (passing out)</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 911 right away-heat stroke is a medical emergency</li> <li>• Move the person to a cooler place</li> <li>• Help lower the person's temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath</li> <li>• Do not give the person anything to drink</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>HEAT EXHAUSTION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• Cold, pale, and clammy skin</li> <li>• Fast, weak pulse</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Muscle cramps</li> <li>• Tiredness or weakness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fainting (passing out)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cool place</li> <li>• Loosen your clothes</li> <li>• Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath</li> <li>• Sip water</li> </ul> <p><b>Get medical help right away if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are throwing up</li> <li>• Your symptoms get worse</li> <li>• Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>HEAT CRAMPS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating during intense exercise</li> <li>• Muscle pain or spasms</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop physical activity and move to a cool place</li> <li>• Drink water or a sports drink</li> <li>• Wait for cramps to go away before you do any more physical activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Get medical help right away if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cramps last longer than 1 hour</li> <li>• You're on a low-sodium diet</li> <li>• You have heart problems</li> </ul> |
| <b>SUNBURN</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful, red, and warm skin</li> <li>• Blisters on the skin</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay out of the sun until your sunburn heals</li> <li>• Put cool cloths on sunburned areas or take a cool bath</li> <li>• Put moisturizing lotion on sunburned areas</li> <li>• Do not break blisters</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>HEAT RASH</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples on the skin (usually on the neck, chest, groin, or in elbow creases)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay in a cool, dry place</li> <li>• Keep the rash dry</li> <li>• Use powder (like baby powder) to soothe the rash</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## WINTER/COLD WEATHER

Children are more at risk from the cold than adults. Because their bodies are smaller, they lose heat more quickly. Outside activities in temperatures or wind chills below 32° Fahrenheit should be avoided. At these temperatures, exposed skin begins to freeze within minutes.

- Outside activities will be canceled if there is any precipitation and the temperatures or wind chills below 60° Fahrenheit.
- Outside activities will be canceled if the temperatures or wind chills below 50° Fahrenheit.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSURES

It is the policy of Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) to remain open during most periods of inclement weather or other emergency situations; however, the company reserves the right to close the facility in the event of an emergency for certain circumstances. Moody Early Childhood Center follows Galveston ISD for most school closures. Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) will make a decision prior to the start of school during periods of such inclement weather. Announcements will be communicated through Procure, phone calls, email, text messages, as well as local media outlets.

On days when weather conditions worsen as the day progresses, Moody Early Childhood Center may decide to close the center early. Employees will be expected to remain at work until the appointed closing time, unless their scheduled workday ends prior to that time, or unless they receive permission from their department head to do otherwise.

If the facility remains open on an adverse weather day, employees who report to work will receive their normal pay for the day. If an employee does not report to work on an open day, the employee will...

- 1) use any accrued paid time off for the missed day; or
- 2) the employee will not be paid for the day.

Regardless of whether the facility remains open or closed on an inclement day, it is each employee's decision to determine if they can safely arrive at work under the conditions. Time absent from work due to inclement weather will not count towards the disciplinary attendance process. If an employee elects not to work on a given day, MECC requires you follow the established time off notification procedures established in this employee manual prior to the beginning of the workday. Staff who are scheduled to work on the days the center is closed may be eligible for compensation if compensation is approved by the Board of Directors.

## SCHOOL PRACTICES

### "HOW-TO'S"

These guides are posted in each classroom that describe MECC procedures for maintaining a safe and healthy environment (located in Addendums). Staff are required to follow these procedures when working in the classrooms.

### EXPECTATIONS DURING TRAINING AND OTHER MEETING

In the modern competitive environment, employees need to replenish their knowledge and acquire new skills to do their jobs better. This will benefit both them and the company. We want them to feel confident about improving efficiency and productivity, as well as finding new ways towards personal development and success.

### USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONE SMART DEVICES AND MAIL SYSTEM

If, as a staff member, you answer the center's telephone, please say the name of the center, your name and ask how you might be of help. It is expected that any telephone usage will follow the highest professional phone etiquette. To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller and hang up only after the caller has done so. Any failure to follow these requirements will result in a performance conference with the center director. Long distance telephone calls may NOT be placed on MECC telephones unless approved by the management.

Calls for or by you should be conducted either before or after a shift, or on a lunch break. All personal electronics must be stored in a locker while on duty. When off duty, cell phones and other electronic devices such as Smart Watches may not be used while in the classroom, in the hallways, in the offices, or on the playgrounds. Personal cell phone use or using other technology such as Smart Watches (even if they are not linked) in the presence of children is strictly prohibited and grounds for immediate termination. Remember: Personal electronic devices may be used to place and receive information ONLY when an employee is clocked out and not in classrooms, hallways, or offices.

In emergency situations, please advise the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director and they will be happy to make other arrangements.

**Note:** This includes **NO** texting, messaging, or other types of social media on a cell phone, smart watch, Chromebook, or iPad while in the classroom or while children are in your care.

Access to the internet or to the center technology is to be used ONLY for professional purposes. Any use of center technology, including internet access for personal reasons, is not permitted. This includes e-mails, instant messaging via computer, tablets, ipads, smart phones, cell phones, or watches. You may also only use devices checked out to you or your classroom if you are logged into your own student information system (such as ProCare or Skyward) or email

account. At no time are employees allowed to access another employee's computer or accounts. If you have any questions about the appropriate use of computer technology or other electronic devices, discuss them with your director. No MECC-owned electronic equipment may be removed from the center.

Personal use of telephone for long-distance and toll-free calls is **Not** permitted. There will be no personal phone calls while on duty at the Center. **Moody Early Childhood Center** phone is for **business purpose only**. Our children should have your full attention at all times.

If available, the use of postage paid by **Moody Early Childhood Center** for personal correspondence is **not** permitted.

## USE OF MATERIAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. MECC electronic devices are to be used for the exclusive purposes of documenting classroom activities, student attendance, transitions activities, meals, diapering/bathroom, etc. Any use other than that specified are grounds for disciplinary action up to termination. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. If damage occurs to any MECC owned property, it is the employee's responsibility to notify the office immediately.

## GENERAL SAFETY

Safety is an ongoing effort at **Moody Early Childhood Center**. Developing a habit of checking your assigned area as the first thing you do on your schedule each day, will build a culture of safety in **Moody Early Childhood Center** and in the lives of the students. Daily refrigerator logs, student daily health checks, and physical environment check sheets must be performed at the start of each day.

## VIDEO MONITORING OF SCHOOL

Video surveillance will be utilized in and around MECC. Cameras may be equipped with audio recording capabilities as well. Video surveillance is for safety and security purposes only and shall be used in accordance with applicable laws. Video and Audio monitoring is not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

## PARENT RIGHTS

A parent of a child in care has the right to:

- (1) Enter and examine your center during its hours of operation without advance notice [Medium-High];
- (2) File a complaint against your center [Medium];
- (3) Review your center's publicly accessible records [Medium-Low];
- (4) Review your center's written records concerning the parent's child, as outlined in §746.601 of this chapter (relating to Who has the right to access children's records?);
- (5) Receive from your center:
  - (A) HHSC's inspection reports for your center [Medium-Low]; and
  - (B) Information regarding how to access your center's compliance history online [Medium-Low];
- (6) Have your center comply with a valid court order signed by a judge that prevents another parent from visiting or removing the parent's child from your center, as outlined in §746.4101 of this chapter (relating to To whom may I release a child?);
- (7) Be provided with contact information for Child Care Regulation, including the department's name, address, and telephone number [Medium-Low];
- (8) View any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's child maintained by your center as long as: [Medium]
  - (A) Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
  - (B) The parent is not allowed to retain any portion of the video depicting a child who is not the parent's child; and
  - (C) Your center notifies in writing the parent of any other child captured in the video recording, before allowing the parent to inspect the video recording;
- (9) Obtain a copy of your center's policies and procedures, as outlined in §746.503 of this subchapter (relating to Must I provide parents with a copy of my operational policies?);
- (10) Review, upon request of the parent, your: [Medium-Low]
  - (A) Staff training records; and
  - (B) In-house training curriculum, if any; and
- (11) Be free from any retaliatory action by your center for exercising any of the parent's rights. [Medium-High]

## EMPLOYEE SAFETY

If you are involved in or if you are a witness to an accident in the workplace, you are required to report it immediately and to fill out an Incident Report. **Moody Early Childhood Center** provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any illness or injury arising out of, an in the course of employment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance may provide partial compensation of lost work hours.

Note: Even if there is no medical attention required, a job-related injury, accident or illness must be reported to **Moody Early Childhood Center** Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director. In all instances, you will be required to submit to a drug test.

## VEHICLE SAFETY

As a general rule, employees of **Moody Early Childhood Center** are not expected to use their personal vehicles in the completion of job duties and under no circumstance in the transportation of students or parents. Authorized employees will use the MECC van for work-related trips. Before operating the van, employees must submit proof of valid personal auto insurance to the Director of Administrative Services for verification and approval. Employees who receive stipends for travel outside of Galveston County while on company time must provide verification of insurance prior to receiving payments.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

All personal property must be stored in a secure locker that is out of the reach of children. Ask your director or lead teacher to determine the area designated for personal belongings. Under no circumstances will **Moody Early Childhood Center** be responsible for personal property on **Moody Early Childhood Center** property.

## COMPUTER AND IPAD USE

**Moody Early Childhood Center** provides electronic devices to accommodate teacher record keeping. Any use outside of the teacher's needs, and the curriculum needs of the classroom should be by exception and with permission. No software should be brought in from outside the school. The school is on a network overseen by an IT provider, who controls all software installations. All data on school computers and servers are property of **Moody Early Childhood Center** and subject to inspection and review of anything. There is no privacy expectation regarding the use of any such equipment.

## EMAIL USE

Staff will be given a dedicated email through **Moody Early Childhood Center** and are required to check it daily, and respond to correspondences, email, message, or phone, within twenty-four (24) hours of when it was sent. MECC frequently disseminates important information through email, and it is necessary that all employees are informed. It is the employee's responsibility to immediately notify their supervisor if they are unable to access their email account. Failure to adhere to directives or information that has been disseminated due to employee's failure to check their email, does not preclude them from disciplinary actions.

Teachers may list the MECC e-mail address as a way for parents to ask questions. If this is done, the teacher is to use their dedicated email through **Moody Early Childhood Center** that is separate from their personal email.

## CODE OF BUSINESS CONDUCT AND ETHICS

Operating with a strong sense of integrity is critical to maintaining trust and credibility. Our Code embodies such rules regarding individual and peer responsibilities, as well as responsibilities to our students, parents, employees, stakeholders and the public. This includes:

- Prohibiting conflicts of interest (including protecting **Moody Early Childhood Center** opportunities).
- Protecting **Moody Early Childhood Center's** confidential and proprietary information and that of our customers.
- Treating **Moody Early Childhood Center's** clients, employees, stakeholders and competitors fairly.



- Protection and proper use of **Moody Early Childhood Center** assets.
- Compliance with laws, rules and regulations.
- Encouraging the reporting of any unlawful or unethical behavior.

It is not possible to formulate in advance an all-inclusive set of guidelines regarding appropriate business conduct. The examples shown below provide guidelines for certain types of situations. Specific questions regarding situations which are not covered by this Code of Business Conduct and Ethics (Code) will be answered on a case-by case basis with Moody **Early Childhood Center** as they arise and may be addressed in other publications provided by **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

## OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS ETHICS

This Code outlines the broad principles of legal and ethical business conduct embraced by **Moody Early Childhood Center**. It is not a complete list of legal or ethical questions an Employee might face in the course of business and, therefore, this Code must be applied using common sense and good judgment. Additionally, under certain circumstances, the law may establish requirements that differ from this Code. **Moody Early Childhood Center's** employees are expected to comply with laws and **Moody Early Childhood Center** policies.

It is essential that we all be aware of possible violations of **Moody Early Childhood Center's** business ethics - whether these violations occur in dealings with the government or the private sector, and whether they occur because of oversight or intention. Employees should discuss any concerns about this Code with their immediate supervisor.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees are expected to make or participate in business decisions and to take action in the course of their service to **Moody Early Childhood Center** based on the best interests of **Moody Early Childhood Center** as a whole, and not based on personal relationships or benefits for themselves. Staff must complete a conflict of interest form prior to accepting additional employment opportunities and update the form as new opportunities arise. Engaging in activities or employment that would cause disgrace or embarrassment to the organization is strictly prohibited and will result in termination. If an Employee's personal affairs create a conflict of interest, a potential conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, **Moody Early Childhood Center** requires a full and timely disclosure of the facts and circumstances. School policy does not allow teachers to attend birthday parties, transport or babysit children, as this creates favoritism and diminishes the professional boundaries that exist between teacher and family. Teachers and staff are to refrain from giving gifts directly from teacher to child.

Any Employee who has a question as to whether an existing or potential conflict of interest exists should immediately contact the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director to report all the pertinent facts and to request an opinion with respect to the question. Set forth below is specific guidance for some areas of potential conflict of interest that require special attention.

## PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

In their relationships, MECC employees are expected to be aware of their professional responsibilities and avoid apparent or actual conflict of interest, favoritism, or bias. The relationships may constitute sexual harassment when one of the individuals is in a position to evaluate or otherwise influence the education, employment, or participation in an activity. The subtle yet powerful element of coercion that may exist in such relationships is a legitimate concern for MECC. Such relationships give rise to a conflict of interest and are potentially exploitative. Moreover, such relationships may affect the environment for other employees, administrators, or the manner in which they are treated.

An administrator, faculty or staff member should not make sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other communications of a sexual nature to a person if he or she exercises direct influence over a person's activities within the organization. If a sexual relationship develops, the administrator, faculty or staff member must take steps to eliminate any current or potential conflict of interest and distance himself or herself from decisions involving the other person. Failure to eliminate a conflict will constitute misconduct.

Further, administrators, faculty and staff should be aware that any romantic involvement with subordinates may require formal action against them if a complaint is filed. Because of the asymmetrical nature of such relationships, an administrator, faculty or staff member's assertion that a relationship was consensual in defense of a complaint of sexual harassment is subject to doubt and will be thoroughly investigated. **Moody Early Childhood Center** reserves the right to take prompt and immediate action if an actual or potential conflict of interest arises due to employees allowing personal relationships with each other, our families, Board members or our partners to create a disruption.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMPETITORS

An Employee should not have any significant financial interests in a competitor of **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

**Note:** Furthermore, you cannot be employed by a competitor, as this will cause a conflict of Interest in your employment at **Moody Early Childhood Center**.

## PERSONAL USE OF INFORMATION

An Employee shall not

- Use or divert any **Moody Early Childhood Center** property, including the service of other employees, for his or her own advantage or benefit or to compete with **Moody Early Childhood Center**. All **Moody Early Childhood Center** assets should be used for legitimate business purposes.
- Use **Moody Early Childhood Center** letterhead paper when writing letters on personal or other matters not directly related to **Moody Early Childhood Center's** business, except for use of **Moody Early Childhood Center** letterhead for civic and charitable causes that enhance **Moody Early Childhood Center's** reputation in the community.

## PROFESSIONALISM AMONG STAFF

Staff members are expected to maintain the highest level of professionalism in their communications inside of **Moody Early Childhood Center** and outside of **Moody Early Childhood Center**. Personal information about faculty is to be kept strictly confidential. While on the job relationships among staff are critical to a positive working environment. Staff should refrain from gossip and refrain from unprofessional conduct. Unprofessional conduct will be grounds for disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees must respect the privacy of students and parents when using social media. Employee social media sites or postings to social media sites may not contain any content that:

- Violates any laws including laws pertaining to intellectual property, copyright or any laws regarding the use of illegal photographic, video or printed material; or
- Infringes on any third-party rights (including intellectual property rights); or
- Reveals any employee or **Moody Early Childhood Center** information; or
- Violates any policy rules, standards or requirements applicable to **Moody Early Childhood Center** or its related entities; or
- Depicts photographs or images of any student or teacher; or
- Depicts staff doing offensive or exhibiting questionable behavior; or
- Contains personal information or data on any student

Staff may not include on any personal web site or any other social networks site pictures of children, staff or any other information about the program or centers. Any discussion or exchange of information about the program or centers, the staff, children or families is strictly prohibited.

To maintain the professional relationship and to avoid the appearance of impropriety between parent and teacher and student, employees are strongly discouraged to "friend" or "follow" parents or students, current or former. Staff is also strongly encouraged to place their social media accounts to a private mode where only those the employee chooses to view can see their information.

It is not the intent of **Moody Early Childhood Center** to restrict the rights of employees under NLRB Act



and/or, but not limited to any other applicable laws. It is not the intent of **Moody Early Childhood Center** to unnecessarily monitor, participate in unlawful “surveillance” and/or, but not limited to restricting an employee’s right to address employment concerns and/or other Protected Concerted Activity. However, if accusations of violation with the above policies are brought to the attention of administration, MECC will do its due diligence to investigate. If at any time you feel your rights are being violated, you should contact the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director immediately.

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT**

Violations of governing laws and regulations are unethical and subject to **Moody Early Childhood Center** to significant risk in the form of fines, penalties and damage to reputation. It is expected that each employee will comply with applicable laws, regulations and **Moody Early Childhood Center** policies.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

### **OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE**

Due to the nature of our business, it is essential that all of our employees fully understand how to treat confidential information. Accordingly, this employee confidentiality policy has been crafted and implemented to ensure that everyone who works for us knows and complies with our expectations regarding sensitive information

We want to make sure that any relevant information pertaining to our company, clients, and partners is properly secured because it may be:

- Legally binding (such as contractual material)
- Essential to our successful business operations (such as proprietary information pertaining to our goods/services/production/methods and methodology)

### **SCOPE**

This is a blanket policy. As such, this confidentiality policy applies to anyone who works for us in any capacity that actually has or could potentially have access to confidential and/or sensitive information.

### **CONFIDENTIAL AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION — DEFINED**

For the purposes of this policy, confidential and/or sensitive information is defined as:

- Uncirculated financial information
- Records pertaining to students/families/partners/employees
- Patents, formulas or new methods/methodologies
- Student, Family, or Employee lists (existing and prospective)
- Written/electronic documents or similar material entrusted to our company by outside parties
- Pricing/marketing and other unrevealed strategies
- Any material explicitly marked as confidential
- Uncirculated material pertaining to goals, predictions and proposals marked as confidential

### **PRIVACY OF STUDENT INFORMATION**

One of our most important assets is our students’ and parents’ trust. Keeping student and parent information secure and using it appropriately is therefore a top priority for all of us at **Moody Early Childhood Center**. Employees must safeguard any confidential information our parents and students share with us. Employees must also ensure that they use student and parent information only for the reasons for which the information was gathered unless further use is allowed by law. (See page 14 for additional information)

### **PRIVACY OF EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

**Moody Early Childhood Center** recognizes and protects the privacy and confidentiality of employee medical and personal records. Such records must not be shared or discussed outside of **Moody Early Childhood Center**, except as authorized by the employee or as required by law, rule, regulations or a subpoena or order issued by a court of

competent jurisdiction or requested by a judicial or administrative or legislative body.

### PRIVACY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

Administrators, directors, and other supervisory staff are actively involved in the management process and have access to information and discussions regarding strategies, employee information/concerns, processes, layoffs or closings, proprietary workforce data, and major expansions or restructuring that affect the workforce. All of this information is typically considered confidential and therefore all recording devices (including all audio and video recording devices) are strictly prohibited during any or all management meetings, whether group or singular unless written permission from the meeting host is obtained in advance and an announcement is made prior to recording. Any violation to this will be grounds for immediate termination.

### EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS UNDER THIS POLICY

In accordance with this policy all employees must:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure that confidential material is never left in plain view or otherwise unsecured
- Shred confidential material when it is no longer needed
- Ensure that any confidential information in a digital format is only viewed on secure devices
- Refrain from making authorized disclosures to co-workers unless absolutely necessary
- Refrain from taking confidential documents off of company property unless requested by authorities
- Surrender all confidential documents and material to the company upon resignation, termination or at any time upon the request of their supervisor
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not mistakenly disclose any confidential information to any unauthorized persons in or outside the company
- Report any inadvertent disclosures of confidential information to their direct supervisor as soon as possible

### PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND ACTIVITIES

Employees are prohibited from doing the following:

- Using confidential information for financial or personal gain
- Removing or making copies of confidential material; or facilitating the reproduction of confidential material relating to the company in any manner

### HOW WE SAFEGUARD CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

We take the following steps to safeguard confidential information:

- Store hard copies in secured filing cabinets
- Ask anyone who works for us to sign non-compete and/or non-disclosure agreements (NDAs)
- Require management to authorize access to confidential information

### EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY

From time to time, some circumstances may warrant disclosure of confidential or sensitive information. We reserve the right to disclose said information when:

- A regulatory/law enforcement/or other government agency requests it as part of an investigation or audit
- If we consider a venture or partnership requiring the disclosure some information (within legal parameters)

When this happens, employees who receive such requests or are privy to such considerations should carefully document their disclosure procedure and gather required authorizations. We're legally obligated not to disclose more information than absolutely necessary to accommodate such requests or make relevant business decisions.

### CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

All information pertaining to **Moody Early Childhood Center's** business is confidential, proprietary and a protectable trade secret, except to the extent that **Moody Early Childhood Center** has made such information public, such as through advertising, a press release or a publicly filled report. Information about the children, families and staff in our program is confidential; therefore, staff must not talk about children, families or other staff members while in the center or in public places. Only children's first names are used on any artwork or public display of any work. Since our center is a laboratory school there are specific contexts when information may be shared for educational purposes, pseudonyms are used to guard confidentiality. Documents should be properly safeguarded at all times. No employee should attempt

to obtain confidential information which does not relate to his or her employment duties. Employees should treat all nonpublic **Moody Early Childhood Center** information as confidential both during and after their employment. All staff must sign a Confidentiality Agreement Form.

#### REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Employees are encouraged to talk to the Chief Operations Officer/Executive Director when in doubt about the best course of action in a situation. The making of a report does not mean a violation has occurred. **Moody Early Childhood Center** will investigate each complaint, and the subject person will be presumed not to have violated this Code unless the investigation reveals that a violation has occurred.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

Any employee or other such person obligated to comply with this policy who deliberately or unintentionally fails to do so will be disciplined. The type of discipline will depend on the severity and frequency of the violation(s). Anyone found to be using confidential/sensitive information for personal gain in violation of this policy will be terminated.

This policy is binding even after an employee resigns or is fired.

#### CONCLUSION

Every employee is responsible for assisting **Moody Early Childhood Center** in the implementation of these policies and it's expected to adhere to these policies, not only in practice, but also in spirit. Employees violating these policies, or any other policies of **Moody Early Childhood Center** are subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

# **ADDENDUM**

# “How To…” Procedures

## HOW TO HANDLE BOTTLES AND FOOD

When children arrive, all bottles, training cups, and food should be labeled with the child’s first name, initial of their last name, and the date. Bottles, cups and food should be placed on the section in the refrigerator labeled with the child’s name.



## HOW TO FEED AN INFANT

- Bottles should be labeled with the time they are heated for feeding.
  - Breast milk should be labeled with the infant’s full name and the dates the milk was expressed.
  - Bottles must be labeled with the child’s first name, initial of their last name, and the date
  - Bottles must be labeled with the time it was heated and may be used for up to 2 hours after heated. After 2 hours, all unfinished and unrefrigerated formula or breast milk will be discarded.
- For an infant who is not ready for table food, you **MUST** obtain and follow written feeding instructions that are signed and dated by the infant’s parent or health-care professional.
- You must review and update the feeding instructions with the parent every 30 days until the infant is able to eat table food.
- Wash your hands and child’s hands before feeding.
- Hold all infants ages birth through 6 months while feeding them. Do not lean the chair back.
- Hold infants over six months who are unable to sit unassisted in a highchair or other seating equipment while feeding them.
- NEVER prop or support bottles with some object. The infant or an adult must hold the bottle.
- Provide regular snack and mealtimes for infants who eat table food.
- Ensure infants no longer being held are fed in a safe manner.
- Log the item and amount the child ate into Procare
- Never allow infants to walk around with or sleep with a bottle or training cup.
- NEVER use the hand-washing sink or diaper-changing surface for feed preparation, or for washing food service/preparation equipment, bottles pacifiers, or toys.
- Sanitize highchair trays, arms and legs or tabletop and allow to air dry before each use.
- Wash your hands and child’s hands after feeding.



## HOW TO SERVE FOOD

1. Sanitize the area and air dry prior to feeding
2. Wash your hands and put on serving gloves
3. Cut food into bite size pieces
4. Have students wash their hands with soap and water
5. Give students individual servings, napkins, and utensils
6. When students are finished, pick up food off the floor as it is dropped and throw it into trash
7. Wash the student’s hands and face (before they lay down for nap)
8. Disinfect area (table and chairs) with 10% bleach water solution
9. Clean the floor with a broom and dustpan. Scrub any major spills with scrub brush and carpet solution
10. Wash your hands.
11. Log the item and amount the child ate into Procare
12. Allow any students who bring a toothbrush the opportunity to brush their teeth after a meal.



## HOW TO CHANGE A DIAPER

1. Diapers should be checked at least every 2 hours and when a child wakes up from a nap. Diapers should be changed immediately when soiled.
2. When you begin, wash your hands and the child’s hands
3. Put on new gloves for each diaper change
4. Place a disposable changing pad on the changing table.
5. Lay out the child’s diaper, wipes, and any ointment if needed
6. Clean the child thoroughly using baby wipes
7. Use diaper cream if parent has signed form
8. Throw away the old diaper, wipes, changing pad, and gloves after each diaper change
9. Wash the child’s hands and wash your hands after each diaper change
  - **For infants, you must wipe their hands with a paper towel containing soap and water, then wipe their hands with another paper towel that is wet with just water**
10. Clean the changing surface with 10% bleach water solution (spray thoroughly and wipe down) and allow to air dry after each diaper change
11. Log the diaper change into Procare
12. Start again on step 1 for each diaper change



## HOW TO WIPE A NOSE

1. Put on gloves
2. Grab a fresh tissue
3. Wipe the child's nose
4. Throw away the tissue
5. Wash the child's hands and wash your hands
  - a. Place hands under running water and apply soap
  - b. Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub them well. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
  - c. Continue rubbing your hands under running water.
  - d. Dry with a paper towel and use the paper towel to turn off the water.
  - e. Throw away the paper towel



#### WHEN TO WASH AND SANITIZE YOUR HANDS

- Before and after eating, handling food, garbage, or medication,;
- Before and after feeding a child;
- After arriving at the child-care center;
- Before and after diapering.
- Before and after assisting a child with toileting.
- After personal toileting;
- After handling or cleaning bodily fluids, such as after wiping noses, mouth, or bottoms, and tending sores;
- After handling or feeding animals;
- After outdoor activities;
- After handling raw food products;
- After eating, drinking, or smoking;
- After cleaning, using any cleaners or toxic chemicals; **and**
- After removing gloves



#### HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS

1. Place hands under running water and apply soap
2. Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub them well. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails
3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 secs (tip: hum "Happy Birthday" song 2 times)
4. Rinse the soap off of your hands under running water
5. Dry with a paper towel and use the paper towel to turn off the water
6. Throw away the paper towel

#### WHEN TO WASH CHILDREN'S HANDS

- Before and after eating
- Before playing in a water play table
- Before and after toileting or having a diaper changed
- After outdoor activities
- After playing in sand
- After feeding or touching animals; and
- Any other time that the caregiver has reason to believe the child has come in contact with substances that could be harmful to the child.



#### HOW TO WASH AN INFANT'S HANDS

Until the infant is old enough to be raised to the faucet and reach for the water, you must wash the infant's hands using an individual cloth or disposable towel with soap (or a baby wipe with soap), followed by a cloth or disposable towel used to rinse with clear water and dry.

#### HOW TO WASH A TODDLER'S HANDS

1. Place hands under running water and apply soap
2. Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub them well. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails
3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 secs (tip: hum "Happy Birthday" song 2 times)
4. Rinse the soap off of your hands under running water
5. Dry with a paper towel and use the paper towel to turn off the water
6. Throw away the paper towel



### HOW TO DISINFECT CLASSROOM



1. WASH ALL STUDENTS' AND STAFF HANDS, WIPE DOWN HIGH TOUCH SURFACES, AND PERFORM NAME TO FACE **EVERY** HOUR ON THE HALF HOUR AND AT ALL TRANSITIONS.
2. Take off all the bedding and place in laundry bag outside of door to be washed or to large laundry room when you leave
  - a. 3:30 for Toddler rooms
  - b. 4:30 for Infant rooms
3. Use 10% bleach water solution to spray on all mattresses and wipe off
4. Use 10% bleach water solution to spray and wipe off the changing table and refrigerator (inside and out)
5. Use Windex to clean all glass/clear plastic around play area and cribs
6. Toys should be removed from play (placed in "Yuck Bucket" and cleaned throughout the day as well as in the evening before closing
  - a. How to clean all hard toys
    - i. Wash with soap and hot water
    - ii. Spray with 10% bleach water solution and rinse off
    - iii. Lay out to air dry
  - b. How to clean all soft surfaces (NO SOFT TOYS IN ROOMS AT THIS TIME)
7. All hard surfaces (including floor & Tummy Time mats) should be wiped with 10% bleach solution and allowed to air dry after students have been on the mat
  - a. All soft surfaces should be sprayed with Lysol (NO SOFT TOYS IN ROOMS AT THIS TIME)
8. Floors should be swept and mopped after meals, and during naptime.



### BIG WASH DAY

**Monday:** Caterpillar, Fish, Starfish, Toucans, Gorillas, Seals  
**Tuesday:** Ladybug, Seahorse, Dolphins, Eagles, Tigers, Cheetahs  
**Wednesday:** Bee, Whales, Giraffes, Lions, Narwhals, Penguins  
**Thursday:** Frogs, Bears, Tiger, Cheetah, Hippos, Elephants  
**Friday:** Turtles, Owls, Koalas, Zebras, Walrus, Pandas

### HOW TO REPORT AN INJURY OR ILLNESS

1. **EVERY** morning upon arrival perform a daily health check, documenting any injuries on documentation sheet.
2. If child is suspected to be sick, an Injury/Illness Report must be completed, and child should be taken to the nurse. If the nurse is not available, child should be taken to the office to be checked.
3. If a child is injured, an Injury/Illness Report must be completed, and child should be taken to the nurse. If the nurse is not available, child should be taken to the office to be checked.
4. Nurse or Office staff will send text and email to the parents/guardians through the online student system and denote the day and time sent.
5. Staff should ensure Injury/Illness report is completed and signed prior to student leaving.



# **APPENDIX**

## Employee Acknowledgement Form

I have received information, have knowledge where to locate, and know who to ask questions regarding the **Moody Early Childhood Center** Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook. I expect to be guided by the rules and policies contained therein. I further understand and agree that my employment with **Moody Early Childhood Center** is at will and may be terminated by the Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer of **Moody Early Childhood Center** at any time for any reason or without reason. I understand that nothing in the Personnel Policies and Procedures handbook or in any oral statement or representation by any employee or representative of **Moody Early Childhood Center** shall be deemed to create a contract of employment or any other modification of the at-will employment relationship. I also understand that any or all of the provisions contained in the Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook may be modified, amended, or eliminated by **Moody Early Childhood Center** at any time with or without notice.

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EMPLOYEE NAME PRINT

DATE

---

EMPLOYEE NAME SIGNATURE

DATE

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MECC MANAGEMENT SIGNATURE

DATE

# Employee Consent And Agreement To Drug And Alcohol Screening

I hereby agree, upon a request made under the drug/alcohol testing policy of **Moody Early Childhood Center** ("MECC"), to submit to a drug or alcohol test and to finish a sample of my urine, breath, and/or blood for analysis. I understand and agree that if I at any time refuse to submit to a drug or alcohol test under **Moody Early Childhood Center** policy, or if I otherwise fail authorize and give full permission to have **Moody Early Childhood Center** and/or its **Moody Early Childhood Center** physician send the specimen or specimens so collected to a laboratory for a screening test for the presence of any prohibited substances under the policy, and for the laboratory or other testing facility involved in a legal proceeding or investigation connected with the test. Finally, I authorized **Moody Early Childhood Center** to disclose any documentation relating to such test to any governmental entity involved in a legal proceeding or investigation connected with the test.

I understand that only duly authorized **Moody Early Childhood Center** officers, employees, and agents will have access to information furnished or obtained in connection with the test; that they will maintain and protect the confidentiality of such information to the greatest extent possible; and that they will share such information only to the extent necessary to make employment decisions and to respond to inquiries or notices from government entities.

I will hold harmless **Moody Early Childhood Center**, its **Moody Early Childhood Center** physician, and any testing laboratory **Moody Early Childhood Center** might use meaning that I will not sue or hold responsible such parties for any alleged harm to me that might result from such testing, including loss of employment or any other kind of adverse job action that might arise as a result of the drug or alcohol test or even the reporting of the results. I will further hold harmless **Moody Early Childhood Center** it is **Moody Early Childhood Center** physician, and any testing of laboratory **Moody Early Childhood Center** might use for any alleged harm to me that might result from the release or use of information or documentation relating to the drug or alcohol test, as long as the release or use of the information is within the scope of this policy and the procedures and explained in the paragraph above.

This policy and authorization have been explained to me in a language I understand, I have been told that if I have any questions about the test or the policy they will be answered.

I UNDERSTAND THAT **MOODY EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER** WILL REQUIRE A DRUG SCREEN AND/OR ALCOHOL TEST UNDER THIS POLICY WHENEVER I AM INVOLVED IN AN ON-THE-JOB ACCIDENT OR INJURY UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES THAT SUGGEST POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OR INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL IN THE ACCIDENT OR INJURY EVENT AND I AGREE TO SUBMIT TO ANY SUCH TEST.

EMPLOYEE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## Workplace Violence Notification Form

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ AM PM Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Reporter's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility Assignment (Room): \_\_\_\_\_

Incident Type: (Circle) Physical Threat Verbal Threat Written Threat Physical Contact

Property Damage Body Language Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Victim's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Employees Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Offender (Name, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Summary of Incident:

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Reportee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Code Of Ethics

## **TEXAS EDUCATORS CODE OF ETHICS**

[https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2016\\_10\\_ch247-two.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2016_10_ch247-two.pdf)

## **NAEYC CODE OF ETHICS**

<https://moodychildhoodcenter.org/images/docs/Code-of-Ethics-English.pdf>

# Professional Development Plan



## Moody Early Childhood Professional Development Plan 2025-2028

| Center Name                  | Executive Director | Plan Begin/End Dates  |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Moody Early Childhood Center | Karin Miller       | August 2025-July 2028 |

### 1: Professional Learning (PL) Goals

| PL Goal No. | Goals                                                                                                                                                | Identified Group                | Rationale/Sources of Evidence                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1           | Increase student access to a high-quality early childhood education in order to enter kindergarten prepared to succeed and become lifelong learners. | Infant, Toddler and PK teachers | TPEIR and KEA Report for Kindergarten Readiness<br>Early Childhood Education Report<br>State of Galveston Report (Part I and Part II)<br>Student assessment results |

### 2: Professional Learning Activities

| PL Goal No 1 | Initial Activities                                                                                                                                        | Follow-up Activities                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1            | Develop and implement a program of targeted Professional Learning (PL) to develop thorough understanding of small group instructional model               | Contract to provide professional development of small group instruction and other differentiated learning techniques in Early Childhood                                                                      |
| 2            | Deliver Professional Learning (PL) on differentiating curriculum to meet the needs of diversified student body                                            | Contract with Frog Street trainer to provide professional development of using the curriculum to enhance its effectiveness                                                                                   |
| 3            | Provide professional learning on purpose of proper implementation of assessments and implications for differentiated learning                             | Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers will work with Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director to review student assessment data                                                                          |
| 4            | Provide professional learning on types of data and how to interpret it; whole school cohort, class, groups and individual                                 | Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers will work with Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director to utilize and review student assessment data                                                              |
| 5            | Increase opportunities for planning both horizontally and vertically                                                                                      | Schedule times with Director of Admin Services to provide staff to relieve others for training and planning                                                                                                  |
| 6            | Continue annual professional development for trauma informed care (ACES), working with students with disabilities, and ethical issues in early childhood. | Contract with educational consultant to provide presenters to complete training on Early Literacy, Special Needs, Social Emotional Learning and Trauma, Classroom Management, Safety, and Music & Transition |
| 7            | Develop individualized professional development plans to target needs of staff members.                                                                   | Work with staff members to target their PL needs to address the educational needs of the students in their classrooms                                                                                        |
| 8            | Provide professional learning in the area of diversity and equity with regards to professionalism between coworkers and parents.                          | All staff will attend mandatory training in this area and Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers will follow up with staff in evaluations and daily interactions.                                             |



|   |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 | Provide information in the area of school safety with regards to protocols for active shooter situations as well as other emergency situations. | All staff will attend mandatory training in this area and the Director of Administrative Services and School Safety Team will follow up/answer questions to ensure everyone understands protocol. Monthly drills will be scheduled to ensure staff can perform drills as trained. |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 3: PD Required by Statute or Regulation

| State-mandated PD Activities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Pre-Service Training</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Developmental stages of children;</li> <li>(2) Age-appropriate activities for children;</li> <li>(3) Guidance and Discipline Policy             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Positive guidance and discipline of children as well as classroom management techniques;</li> </ol> </li> <li>(4) Fostering children's self-esteem;</li> <li>(5) Supervision and safety practices in the care of children;</li> <li>(6) Positive interaction with children; and</li> <li>(7) Preventing and controlling the spread of communicable diseases, including immunizations.</li> <li>(8) Recognizing and preventing shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma;</li> <li>(9) Understanding and using safe sleep practices and preventing sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS); and</li> <li>(10) Understanding early childhood brain development; and</li> <li>(11) CPR/Pediatric First Aid; and</li> <li>(12) NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct</li> </ol> <p><b>Orientation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) An overview of the minimum standards;</li> <li>(2) An overview of operational policies including discipline and guidance practices, and procedures for the release of children;</li> <li>(3) An overview of your policy on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Factors indicating a child is at risk of abuse or neglect;</li> <li>(B) Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;</li> <li>(C) Procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and</li> <li>(D) Community organizations that have training programs available to child-care center staff members, children, and parents;</li> </ol> </li> <li>(4) An overview of the procedures to follow in handling emergencies, which includes sharing the emergency preparedness plan with all employees. Emergencies may include, but are not limited to, fire, explosion, tornado, toxic fumes, volatile persons, and severe injury or illness of a child or adult; and</li> <li>(5) The location and use of fire extinguishers and first-aid equipment.</li> <li>(6) Administering medication, if applicable, including compliance with §746.3803 of Minimum Standards (relating to what authorization must I obtain before administering a medication to a child in my care);</li> <li>(7) Preventing and responding to emergencies due to food or an allergic reaction;</li> <li>(8) Understanding building and physical premises safety, including identification and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electric hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;</li> <li>(9) Handling, storing, and disposing of hazardous materials including compliance with §746.3425 of Minimum Standards (relating to Must caregivers wear gloves when handling blood or bodily fluids containing blood); and</li> <li>(10) Precautions in transporting children if your children if your center transports a child who's chronological or developmental age is younger than nine years old.</li> <li>(11) NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct</li> <li>(12) Confidentiality</li> <li>(13) Effective Communication with staff and parents</li> <li>(14) Working with MECC students and students with disabilities</li> <li>(15) Curriculum (FrogStreet) and online student management system</li> <li>(16) Scheduling and Time Clock</li> <li>(17) Social Emotional and Trauma in Early Childhood Education</li> <li>(18) Cultural Competence and Reducing Implicit and Explicit Bias</li> </ol> |

#### Annual (24 hours of training)

- Child Development in the developmental stages of the children in the classrooms you work with
- Care of Children with Special Needs
- Adult and Child Health
- Nutrition and Safety
- Curriculum-Planning
- Risk Management
- Identification and Care of Ill Children
- Supervision
- Recognition of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Abuse and the Responsibility of reporting any incidents
- Cultural Diversity
- Texas Rising Star (additional)

#### Administration/Board of Directors

##### DFPS Directors' Training 30 clock hours

(Six hours)

- Child Growth and Development
- Guidance and Discipline
- Age-Appropriate Curriculum
- Teacher-Child Interactions; and
- Serving children with Special Needs

(One hour)

- Factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect;
- Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
- Procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and
- Community organizations that have training programs available to employees, children, and parents
- Recognizing and preventing shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma;
- Understanding and using safe sleep practices and preventing Sudden Infant death Syndrome (SIDS); and
- Understanding early childhood brain development

(No hour requirement)

- An overview of the procedures to follow in handling emergencies, which includes sharing the emergency preparedness plan with all employees. Emergencies may include, but are not limited to, fire, explosion, tornado, toxic fumes, volatile persons, and severe injury or illness of a child or adult; and
- The location and use of fire extinguishers and first-aid equipment.
- Administering medication, if applicable, including compliance with §746.3803 of Minimum Standards (relating to what authorization must I obtain before administering a medication to a child in my care);
- Preventing and responding to emergencies due to food or an allergic reaction;
- Understanding building and physical premises safety, including identification and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electric hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- Handling, storing, and disposing of hazardous materials including compliance with §746.3425 of Minimum Standards (relating to Must caregivers wear gloves when handling blood or bodily fluids containing blood); and
- Management techniques, leadership or staff supervision

#### Charter School Annual Training

Training Requirements for CEOs (Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director) (19 TAC 100.1103)

30 Hours initially with 21 hours as mandated in modules 1-7 and 9 hours from any of the modules

**15 hours annually thereafter**

- (1) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in school law, with special emphasis on Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 12, Subchapter D, and this subchapter;
- (2) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in school finance, with special emphasis on accounting for public funds and property, student attendance accounting, fiduciary duties related to state and federal funding, federal funds and property management, grant administration, audit requirements, and capital financing;
- (3) a module consisting of at least 120 minutes of instruction in health and safety issues, with special emphasis on health and safety codes, ordinances, and other laws applicable to operating a Texas public school; student discipline; safe schools; required reporting of child abuse; and criminal background checks;
- (4) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in accountability requirements related to the use of public funds, with special emphasis on the duties and liabilities of a trustee under Texas law, the shared use of real property for charter and non-charter business, bank depository contracts, capital financing, incidental use of public property by charter holder personnel, and recovery by the commissioner of education of the public property held by a former charter holder;
- (5) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in other requirements relating to accountability to the public, with special emphasis on the administration of statewide assessments; student, staff, financial, and organizational data reporting; dropout reporting; statewide standards for acceptable student performance; charter-specific standards for acceptable student performance; accountability ratings and sanctions under TEC, Chapter 39; and the role of student performance in actions under TEC, §12.116 and §12.1162;
- (6) a module consisting of at least 60 minutes of instruction in open meetings requirements under Government Code, Chapter 551, with special emphasis on posting the agenda, executive sessions, accessibility of the meeting location to the public, employee board members, and civil and criminal sanctions; and
- (7) a module consisting of at least 120 minutes of instruction in requirements relating to public records, with special emphasis on the Public Information Act, the Records Retention Act, confidential student records, records in the possession of a management company, and other duties respecting public records.

**School Law – 240 Minutes**

Conflicted by Conflicts? What conflict of interest laws apply to charter schools and what you need to know to comply (On Demand)

Handling Challenging Employee Situations

Governance 101

Working with Special Student Populations

**School Finance – 240 Minutes**

How to Avoid Buyer's Remorse: Legal Requirements for Charter School Procurement of Goods and Services

Financial Accountability for School Administrators

A Standardized Approach to Budgeting

Charter School Finance 2019-2020

**Accountability for Public Funds – 240 Minutes**

Fiduciary Duties and Immunities

Financial Duties of Charter Officials

Proposed Changes to Charter FIRST

Accountability for Public Funds

**Accountability Other – 240 Minutes**

Academic Accountability 2020

Crisis Communication

Performance Framework 2020

Academic Accountability: What is your data telling you?

**Health and Safety – 120 Minutes**

Charter School Safety and Security

Beating Bullying: Best Practices and Do's and Don'ts to Protect Students and Comply with Law

**Open Meetings – 60 Minutes**

Texas Open Meetings Act

**Public Records – 120 Minutes**

Public Records

Human Resource Law: How to store, keep and protect confidential employee data and information

**Training for Business Managers – Initial Training 30 Hours; Annual Update 15 Hours**

(1) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in school law, with special emphasis on Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 12, Subchapter D; this subchapter; and the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, as adopted by reference in §109.41 of this title (relating to Financial Accountability System Resource Guide);

(2) a module consisting of at least 480 minutes of instruction in school finance, with special emphasis on the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, generally accepted accounting principles, student attendance accounting, federal funds and property management, purchasing, grant administration, audit requirements, and capital financing;

(3) a module consisting of at least 20 minutes of instruction in health and safety issues, with special emphasis on health and safety codes, ordinances, and other laws applicable to operating a Texas public school;

(4) a module consisting of at least 240 minutes of instruction in accountability requirements related to the use of public funds, with special emphasis on the fiduciary responsibility of duties and liabilities of a trustee

under Texas law, the shared use of real property for charter and non-charter business, bank depository contracts, capital financing, incidental use of public property by charter holder personnel, and recovery by the commissioner of education of the public property held by a former charter holder;

(5) a module consisting of at least 160 minutes of instruction in other requirements relating to accountability to the public, with special emphasis on PEIMS reporting, internal management controls, and audit requirements.

(6) a module consisting of at least 20 minutes of instruction in open meetings requirements under Government Code, Chapter 551, with special emphasis on adopting and amending the budget; and

(7) a module consisting of at least 40 minutes of instruction in requirements relating to public records, with special emphasis on recordkeeping required by generally accepted accounting principles and applicable law.

**Training Requirements for Board Members (19 TAC 100.1102)**

**12 Hours initially with 9 hours as mandated in modules 1-7 and 3 hours from any of the modules**

**6 Hours annually thereafter from any of the modules**

(1) a module consisting of at least 150 minutes of instruction in basic school law, with special emphasis on corporate director duties and liabilities, non-delegable duties, nepotism, conflicts of interest, management companies, appropriate roles concerning internal and external audits, and the legal requirements specific to members of the governing body of a charter holder;

(2) a module consisting of at least 60 minutes of instruction in basic school finance, with special emphasis on accounting for public funds and property, student attendance accounting, fiduciary duties related to state and federal funding, federal funds and property management, grant administration, audit requirements, and the financial duties specific to the members of the governing body of a charter holder;

(3) a module consisting of at least 30 minutes of instruction in health and safety issues, with special emphasis on health and safety codes, ordinances, and other laws applicable to operating a Texas public school; student discipline; safe schools; required reporting of child abuse; and criminal background checks;

(4) a module consisting of at least 120 minutes of instruction in accountability requirements related to the use of public funds, with special emphasis on the duties and liabilities of a trustee under Texas law, the shared use of real property for charter and non-charter business, bank depository contracts, capital financing, incidental use of public property by charter holder personnel, and recovery by the commissioner of education of the public property held by a former charter holder;

(5) a module consisting of at least 60 minutes of instruction in other requirements relating to accountability to the public, with special emphasis on the administration of statewide assessments; student, staff, financial, and organizational data reporting; dropout reporting; statewide standards for acceptable student performance; charter-specific standards for acceptable student performance; accountability ratings and sanctions under Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39; and the role of student performance in actions under TEC, §12.116 and §12.1162;

(6) a module consisting of at least 60 minutes of instruction in open meetings requirements under Government Code, Chapter 551, with special emphasis on posting the agenda, executive sessions, accessibility of the meeting location to the public, employee board members, and civil and criminal sanctions; and

(7) a module consisting of at least 60 minutes of instruction in requirements relating to public records, with special emphasis on the Public Information Act, the Records Retention Act, confidential student records, records in the possession of a management company, and other duties respecting public records.

# Plan for Compliance Monitoring

## Objective

To ensure a significant decline in prohibited punishment through structured, ongoing monitoring and support by supervisors, lead teachers, and administrative staff. This plan will emphasize compliance with appropriate behavior management practices and offer continuous coaching and oversight.

---

### Section 1: Establishment of Mobile Monitoring by the Director of Education and Administration

To enhance monitoring capabilities and ensure a visible administrative presence across the school, workstations will be strategically placed in different areas to allow mobile monitoring. These stations will serve as both workspaces and observation points.

#### 1. Monitoring Workstations

- Workstations will be placed in key areas such as hallways, common areas, and nearby classrooms.
- Admin staff will be stationed in one area or may rotate between these stations, conducting both routine work and monitoring of staff behavior management practices.
- These workstations will ensure ongoing compliance and provide real-time intervention if any improper disciplinary action is observed or suspected.

#### 2. Active Monitoring Schedule

- The members of the administration may have designated times to circulate through these stations.
- Monitoring shifts will be staggered to ensure that there is always an administrator available to observe interactions between staff and students.

|           | Station 1 | Station 2 | Station 3 | Station 4 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Monday    | Admin 1   | Admin 5   | Admin 4   | Admin 3   |
| Tuesday   | Admin 2   | Admin 1   | Admin 5   | Admin 4   |
| Wednesday | Admin 3   | Admin 2   | Admin 1   | Admin 5   |
| Thursday  | Admin 4   | Admin 3   | Admin 2   | Admin 1   |
| Friday    | Admin 5   | Admin 4   | Admin 3   | Admin 2   |

Must be working at their assigned station for a minimum of one hour to the maximum of half of day.

#### 3. Immediate Feedback

- Administrators will provide immediate feedback when they observe non-compliance with behavior policies or other policy/procedure infractions.
- Positive reinforcement will be offered to staff who exhibit exemplary adherence to behavior management guidelines.

---

### Section 2: Utilizing Lead Teachers for Coaching and Monitoring

Lead teachers will play a critical role in coaching their peers and ensuring consistent implementation of appropriate behavior management strategies.

#### 1. Lead Teacher Responsibilities

- Lead teachers will be assigned monitoring duties for their developmental-level teams or classroom clusters.
  - They will observe classroom management practices and support teachers in implementing positive behavior interventions.
  - 2. **Coaching and Peer Support**
    - Lead teachers will provide real-time coaching, helping their peers adjust strategies to avoid prohibited punishments.
    - Weekly coaching sessions will be held with teachers who require additional support to improve their classroom management practices.
  - 3. **Collaborative Feedback Loops**
    - Lead teachers will collaborate with the Director of Education and admin staff to report on trends in behavior management and flag any emerging concerns.
    - These reports will inform ongoing training and professional development, ensuring that teachers continue to refine their practices.
  - 4. **Accountability and Recognition**
    - Lead teachers will document and share positive examples of behavior management to encourage compliance.
    - Teachers demonstrating consistent adherence to policies will be recognized and celebrated during staff meetings to reinforce a culture of compliance and positive discipline.
- 

## **Conclusion:**

Through mobile monitoring stations, the involvement of lead teachers in coaching and peer support, and the active presence of administrative staff, we will create a school environment that prioritizes safe, appropriate behavior management. This comprehensive approach will ensure a measurable decline in prohibited punishments and foster a positive, supportive culture for both staff and students.

# Monitoring Focus: Ensuring Compliance and Supporting Positive Behavior Management

To ensure the decline in prohibited punishment and promote a culture of positive behavior management, supervisors, lead teachers, and administrative staff will be monitoring specific areas of teacher-student interactions, environmental factors, and classroom management practices. This section outlines what will be monitored, examples of ideal interactions, and indicators of positive compliance.

---

## Section 1: What Will Be Monitored

The monitoring process will focus on key areas of teacher-student interactions and behavior management strategies to ensure that prohibited punishments are not used and that positive behavior support is consistently implemented.

### 1. Use of Prohibited Punishments

The primary focus will be to ensure that no prohibited punishments (e.g., physical force, arm pulling, yelling, or any punitive measures not aligned with school policies) are being used.

- Observers will look for any signs of physical handling or aggressive behavior from staff when addressing students.
- Verbal interactions that include yelling, shaming, or inappropriate language will be closely monitored.

### 2. Response to Challenging Behaviors

Staff responses to challenging behaviors will be observed to ensure they align with school policies on positive behavior support.

- Monitoring will focus on how teachers handle situations where students exhibit defiance, aggression, or disruption.
- Observers will track whether teachers use approved de-escalation techniques, verbal prompts, and reinforcement of positive behaviors.

### 3. Classroom Management Practices

Classroom organization, routines, and how teachers implement behavior management plans will be examined.

- Observers will look for consistent enforcement of classroom rules and routines that create a structured environment.
- Teachers will be observed for how they encourage student participation, engagement, and self-regulation.

### 4. Emotional Climate and Teacher-Student Relationships

The overall emotional tone of the classroom will be monitored to ensure a positive and supportive learning environment.

- Interactions between teachers and students should reflect respect, empathy, and encouragement.
- Teachers will be observed for their ability to build rapport with students and handle conflicts in a calm, constructive manner.

### 5. Use of Reinforcements and Incentives

Observers will monitor how teachers use positive reinforcements (such as praise, rewards, or token systems) to encourage appropriate behavior.

- Ideal scenarios involve teachers giving clear, immediate praise for positive actions and using appropriate incentives to reinforce expected behaviors.
- Teachers should avoid excessive reliance on extrinsic motivators and focus on helping students develop intrinsic motivation through positive reinforcement.

---

## Section 2: Ideal Interactions and Positive Compliance

To create an environment where prohibited punishments are eliminated, and positive discipline prevails, certain ideal behaviors and interactions will be expected from staff. These represent the standards of positive compliance.

1. **Calm, Supportive Responses to Misbehavior**

Teachers will remain calm when students exhibit challenging behaviors, using appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues to de-escalate the situation.

**Ideal Interaction Example:**

- A student throws toys in frustration. The teacher calmly approaches, crouching to the student's level, and says, "I see you're upset. Can you show me how we can play safely with the toys?" This helps the student reframe their behavior and feel heard.

2. **Consistent Implementation of Behavior Plans**

Teachers will adhere to individualized behavior intervention plans (BIPs) for students, following strategies outlined for managing specific behaviors.

**Ideal Interaction Example:**

- A student who often struggles with transitions receives a visual cue five minutes before the activity ends, in line with their BIP. The teacher offers a choice: "Do you want to put away two toys or help clean the art table before we line up?" This gives the child autonomy while guiding them toward appropriate behavior.

3. **Clear, Positive Reinforcement**

Positive behaviors will be immediately acknowledged through verbal praise or reward systems that highlight the specific actions that meet expectations.

**Ideal Interaction Example:**

- A student quietly follows directions during group time. The teacher says, "Thank you for sitting so nicely and listening. You're doing a great job being respectful!" This reinforces the expected behavior and provides specific feedback.

4. **Restorative Approaches to Discipline**

When conflicts arise, teachers will guide students through problem-solving discussions rather than using punitive actions.

**Ideal Interaction Example:**

- After an argument between two students, the teacher brings them together for a restorative conversation, asking, "How did that make you feel? What can we do to make it better next time?" This approach helps students reflect on their behavior and learn social-emotional skills.

5. **Maintaining a Positive Classroom Environment**

Teachers will create an inviting and nurturing classroom environment where students feel safe and supported to explore and learn.

**Ideal Interaction Example:**

- During circle time, the teacher engages all students with an enthusiastic tone, using positive affirmations like, "I love how everyone is sitting ready to listen! Let's have fun together while we learn!" This reinforces participation and cooperation.

---

### Section 3: Indicators of Positive Compliance

In order to confirm that staff members are adhering to school policies and using positive behavior strategies, the following indicators of compliance will be tracked:

1. **Reduction in Behavioral Incidents**

- A decrease in the number of reported behavioral incidents, especially those involving prohibited punishments or negative disciplinary actions.

2. **Positive Student Feedback and Engagement**

- Evidence of higher student engagement and participation in class, with students demonstrating increased self-regulation and cooperation.

3. **Teacher Adherence to Policies**

- Regular classroom observations will show teachers consistently using positive reinforcement, de-escalation techniques, and restorative practices.

4. **Improved Teacher-Student Relationships**

- Increased positive interactions between teachers and students, fostering an emotionally safe and supportive learning environment.
5. **Regular Coaching and Professional Development Participation**
- Teachers actively seeking and participating in ongoing coaching, showing improvements in classroom management and behavior support strategies.

---

**Conclusion:**

The success of this monitoring plan relies on consistent oversight, timely coaching, and reinforcing the use of positive discipline techniques. By focusing on these key areas and supporting teachers through ongoing feedback, we will create conversation and an environment where prohibited punishment is eliminated, and students thrive in a positive, nurturing atmosphere.



# Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy



## Operational Discipline and Guidance Policy

Form 1099  
November 2025

This form provides the required information per 26 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) minimum standards Sections 744.501(7), 746.501(a)(7), and 747.501(5).

**Directions:** Parents will review this policy when enrolling their child. Employees, household members and volunteers will review this policy at orientation. A copy of the policy is provided in the operational policies.

### Section 1 – Discipline and Guidance Policy

**Discipline must be:**

- 1) individualized and consistent for each child;
- 2) appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- 3) directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

**A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:**

- 1) using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior;
- 2) reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- 3) redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- 4) using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

**There must be no harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:**

- 1) corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- 2) punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training;
- 3) grabbing or pulling a child;
- 4) putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- 5) humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child;
- 6) subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language;
- 7) placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet;
- 8) placing a child in a restrictive device for time out;
- 9) withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with 746.2803(4)(D); and
- 10) requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

### Section 2 – Additional Discipline and Guidance Measures

Only applies to Before or After School Program (BAP) or School Age Program (SAP) that operates under 26 TAC Chapter 744.

**A program must take the following steps if it uses disciplinary measures for teaching a skill, talent, ability, expertise or proficiency:**

- make sure the measures are considered commonly accepted teaching or training techniques;
- describe the training and disciplinary measures in writing to parents and employees and include the following information:
  - (A) the disciplinary measures that may be used, such as physical exercise or sparring used in martial arts programs;
  - (B) what behaviors would warrant the use of these measures; and
  - (C) the maximum amount of time the measures would be imposed;
- inform parents that they have the right to ask for more information; and
- make sure that the disciplinary measures used are not considered abuse, neglect or exploitation as specified in Texas Family Code Section 261.001.

### Section 3 – Effective Date, Signature and Role

**This policy is effective on the following date**

8/1/2026

**Signed by**

**Role:** ☐ Parent ☒ Caregiver or Employee ☐ Household Member, Chapter 747 only

### Section 4 – Minimum Standards Related to Discipline

- [Title 26, Chapter 744 Subchapter G](#)
- [Title 26, Chapter 746 Subchapter L](#)
- [Title 26, Chapter 747 Subchapter L](#)

# RADIO PROCEDURES

## **PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the communications guidelines and requirements for radio use.

## **APPLICABILITY.**

These procedures apply to all MECC personnel.

## **RADIO ACTIVITY LOG**

- A. All radio operations will be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.
- B. The radio activity log is maintained to record information for administrative, supervisory, and referral purposes. Logs should be maintained in a neat, orderly manner, with all entries legible. The log and the operator making the entries concerning a specific incident are subject to being subpoenaed into court, therefore, entries should be as complete as practical.
- C. Office personnel will record each transmitted call via radio or intercom, including time, location, person calling, needs/incident, person responding, and time incident was closed.

## **USE OF RADIOS**

- A. Operators should speak in a normal voice with the mouth close to and positioned directly in front of the microphone. The word delivery is positioned directly in front of the microphone. Word delivery is slightly slower than normal conversational speed. Maintain the same level of modulation so that each syllable will be clearly reproduced and easily understood. Speaking loudly distorts the voice and does not increase the signal strength of the equipment.
- B. Before transmitting, listen that the channel is not being used. To prevent loss of part of the initial transition, key the transmitter a second or two before voice transmission. If there is no answer to the first call, repeat the call after a few seconds. The call may be repeated at reasonable interval until answered, depending upon the urgency of the message.
- C. Never acknowledge receipt of any transmission unless you are sure the message is clear and understandable.

## **I. COMPLIANCE WITH FCC RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- A. Employees will comply with FCC regulations relating to the use of radio communications systems.
- B. Employees will follow established guidelines and procedures as outlined below:
  - 1. Communications involving the protection of life and property shall be afforded priority.
  - 2. False calls, false or fraudulent distress signals, unnecessary and unidentified communications, and the transmission of unassigned call signals are specifically prohibited.
  - 3. Employees shall monitor the frequency on which they intend to transmit for a sufficient period to ensure that their transmissions will not cause interference to others.
  - 4. Duration of radio transmissions must be restricted to the minimum practical transmission time.

## **II. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Only English will be spoken. Clear, concise, and controlled language will be used. Obscene, indecent, profane or slang language, horseplay and joking are not permitted.
- B. Personnel when identify by classroom mascot or by name if not a classroom employee
- C. Personnel should not continue a transmission until acknowledged by the intended recipient
- D. Specifically called for personnel will advise the Office of their arrival to the class, scene, or area they were requested using proper radio etiquette.
- E. Upon arrival at a location, requested personnel will notify the Office if no other Personnel are needed.
- F. If an incident is found to have occurred somewhere other than at the stated location, the responding individual will update their location by radio.
- G. Lengthy transmissions should not be made on the radio system.

- H. Employees will not become engaged in an argument on the radio. Conflict between an employee and an office assistant should be referred to the employees' immediate supervisors for resolution.
- I. Employees shall refrain from seeking advice from an office assistant regarding a point of law, minimum standards, licensing rules, or Department policy. Employees should consult their immediate supervisor on these matters or obtain the information from provided sources of information online.
- J. Communicating specific information relating to class ratio is strictly prohibited.

### **III. MONITORING RADIO CHANNELS FOR SUPERVISORS**

- A. Directors, support, and other staff will monitor the classroom radio transmissions when they are in the building, including offices and hallways
- B. Supervisors are responsible for the radio conduct of their subordinates and should immediately correct improper radio procedures.
- C. Office personnel will monitor the intercom and radio, will maintain documentation regarding calls, and will dispatch personnel to assist when needed.
- D. Supervisors will advise the Office of their arrival where requested.

### **IV. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

- A. Transmissions regarding emergencies (e.g., student behavior issues, intruders, safety concerns, etc.) will be given priority over all other transmissions. Personnel not involved in the emergency will stay off the air until the situation has been resolved.

# Safe Sleep Policy

## Safe Sleep Policy

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at **Moody Early Childhood Center** will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

- Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non full-size cribs [Sections 746.2409 and 747.2309].
- For infants who are younger than 12 months old, cribs play yards should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib or play yard include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys and animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)]. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing [Sections 746.2429 and 747.2329].
- Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)].
- Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult [Sections 746.3407(10) and 747.3203(10)].
- If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing **such as footed sleepers** (insert type of sleep clothing that will be used, such as sleepers or footed pajamas) as an alternative to blankets [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)].
- Place only one infant in a crib to sleep [Sections 746.2405 and 747.2305].
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)] or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk [Sections 746.2401(6) and 747.2315(b)].
- If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2426 and 747.2326].
- Our child care program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers) [Sections 746.3703(d) and 747.3503(d)].
- Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [Sections 746.2403 and 747.2303].
- If an infant can roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2428 and 747.2328].

## Privacy Statement

HHSC values your privacy. For more information, read our privacy policy online at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/policies-practices-privacy#security>.



## Whistleblower Policy

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is an employee of Moody Early Childhood Center who reports an activity that the employee considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact his/her immediate supervisor or the human resources director. The employee must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and against retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense. Moody Early Childhood Center will not retaliate against a whistleblower. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes they are being retaliated against must contact the human resources director immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

Defend Trade Secrets Act (DTSA) Compliance: “Immunity from Liability for Confidential Disclosure of a Trade Secret to the Government or in a Court Filing:

(1) Immunity—An individual shall not be held criminally or civilly liable under any federal or state trade secret law for the disclosure of a trade secret that—(A) is made—(i) in confidence to a federal, state or local government official, either directly or indirectly, or to an attorney; and (ii) solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law; or (B) is made in a complaint or other document filed in a lawsuit or other proceeding, if such filing is made under seal.

(2) Use of Trade Secret Information in Anti-Retaliation Lawsuit—An individual who files a lawsuit for retaliation by an employer for reporting a suspected violation of law may disclose the trade secret to the attorney of the individual and use the trade secret information in the court proceeding, if the individual—(A) files any document containing the trade secret under seal; and (B) does not disclose the trade secret, except pursuant to court order.”

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to the vice president of human resources who is responsible for investigating and coordinating corrective action.

Employees with any questions regarding this policy should contact the director of human resources.

# Resiliency Plan for Hurricane Recovery

**1. Introduction** This resiliency plan outlines the steps to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a hurricane to ensure the safety of children, staff, and families while maintaining continuity of operations.

## 2. Pre-Hurricane Preparedness

- Establish a Hurricane Preparedness Team responsible for planning and communication.
- Maintain an updated emergency contact list for staff, families, and key community partners.
- Ensure all critical documents (e.g., enrollment records, health records, insurance policies) are backed up digitally and stored securely.
- Stock emergency supplies, including food, water, first aid kits, flashlights, and batteries.
- Develop a communication plan with multiple channels (email, phone, social media, website updates) for notifying staff and families about closures and reopening plans.
- Identify alternative locations for temporary operations if the facility is damaged.
- Conduct annual hurricane drills and review emergency procedures with staff.

## 3. Immediate Response During a Hurricane

- Monitor weather updates and adhere to local emergency management directives.
- Secure the facility by closing shutters, unplugging electronics, and relocating valuable equipment to safe areas.
- Activate emergency communication to inform families and staff of safety measures and closures.
- Ensure all children and staff are in a designated safe area if sheltering in place.
- Maintain emergency supplies in easily accessible locations.

## 4. Post-Hurricane Recovery and Reopening

- Conduct a damage assessment of the facility and document any necessary repairs.
- Communicate with staff and families regarding the status of reopening and available support services.
- Coordinate with local agencies, insurance providers, and contractors for repairs and assistance.
- Provide counseling or emotional support resources for children, families, and staff affected by the hurricane.
- Adjust operations as needed, including temporary relocation if required.
- Review and update the resiliency plan based on lessons learned from the hurricane event.

## 5. Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Strengthening

- Apply for disaster relief funding if available.
- Strengthen partnerships with emergency management agencies and community organizations.
- Improve infrastructure resilience by considering flood-resistant materials, backup power sources, and reinforced structures.
- Conduct post-event evaluations and refine protocols to enhance preparedness for future hurricanes.

By following this plan, we aim to minimize disruption and ensure a safe and swift recovery process for our organization, staff, and the families we serve.

# Vaccine-Preventable Disease Policy

## Purpose:

To ensure the health and safety of all children and staff at Moody Early Childhood Center this policy outlines the requirements for immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases as mandated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and the Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

## Policy Statement:

Moody Early Childhood Center is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children and staff. As part of this commitment, all employees must comply with the immunization requirements against vaccine-preventable diseases, as per Texas Minimum Standards 746.3611 and other relevant sections.

## Definitions:

- **Vaccine-Preventable Diseases:** Diseases for which vaccines are available and are recommended by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Students/Children:** All children enrolled in the facility, including those enrolled in the infant, toddler, and prekindergarten program.
- **Staff/Employees:** All individuals working in the facility, including caregivers, teachers, and administrative personnel.
- **Exempt Students/Employees:** Individuals who have received a medical exemption from one or more required vaccines.

## Immunization Requirements:

1. **Required Immunizations:**
  - Due to the exposure risks children enrolled and an employee working with children, it is recommended that all MECC personnel comply and be up to date with DSHS immunization recommendations for vaccine-preventable diseases prior to entering employment.
  - Additional vaccines may be required based on updates from the DSHS or CDC.
2. **Documentation:**
  - When a new mandated vaccine is released, employees are required to submit proof of immunization or immunity before starting work and must update their records as new vaccines or boosters become necessary.
  - Records will be maintained confidentially in the employees' file.
3. **Exemptions:**
  - A written statement from a licensed healthcare provider is required, indicating the reason and duration of the exemption.
  - Documented reasons of conscience objection, including a religious belief filed with the State

## Procedures for Exempt Students:

1. **Exclusion:**
  - Families will be promptly notified and a child who is under immunized may be temporarily excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease to which the child is susceptible occurs in the program.



## **Procedures for Exempt Employees:**

### **1. Use of Protective Medical Equipment:**

- Exempt employees must use appropriate protective medical equipment, including masks and gloves, to reduce the risk of disease transmission to children in care.
- Masks must be worn at all times when interacting with children, parents, or other staff members, particularly in situations where social distancing is not feasible.
- Gloves must be worn during activities that involve direct contact with bodily fluids, such as diapering, feeding, or administering first aid.
- Exempt employees are required to follow enhanced hygiene practices, including frequent handwashing and the use of hand sanitizers.

### **2. Hygiene and Sanitation:**

- Exempt employees must adhere to strict hygiene protocols, including washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after interacting with children, after removing gloves, and after touching any shared surfaces or materials.
- Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol should be used when handwashing is not immediately available.

### **3. Monitoring and Reporting:**

- Exempt employees should monitor themselves for any symptoms of illness. If symptoms develop, they must notify the center's management immediately and refrain from coming to work until cleared by a healthcare provider.
- Exempt employees must report any exposure to infectious diseases, both within and outside the workplace, to ensure appropriate measures are taken to protect the health of children and staff.

## **Non-Discrimination and Non-Retaliation:**

### **1. Non-Discrimination:**

- No employee will be discriminated against based on their medical exemption from vaccines. Exempt employees will be treated with the same respect and given the same opportunities as all other employees.
- Reasonable accommodations, such as the use of protective medical equipment, will be provided to exempt employees to ensure their ability to perform their job duties safely.

### **2. Non-Retaliation:**

- Moody Early Childhood Center prohibits any form of retaliation against employees who have a valid medical exemption from vaccines. Exempt employees will not be subjected to punitive actions, reduced work hours, or unfavorable job assignments due to their exemption.
- The required use of protective medical equipment as outlined in this policy does not constitute discrimination or retaliation but is a necessary measure to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

## **Employee Responsibilities:**

- Stay informed about the vaccination requirements and any updates.
- Submit timely documentation of vaccinations or immunity to the designated personnel when required.

**Center Responsibilities:**

- Maintain updated records of all students' and employees' immunization status when required vaccines are released.
- Ensure compliance with the Texas Minimum Standards.
- Provide information on where and how employees can obtain required vaccines.

**Non-Compliance:**

- Employees who fail to provide proof of required vaccinations or immunity may be subject to reassignment, suspension, or termination, in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards 746.3611.

**Review and Updates:**

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in the Texas Minimum Standards or recommendations from the DSHS and CDC.

# Procedures for Supporting Inclusive Services for Children with Special Care Needs

## 1. Enrollment and Individualized Care Planning

- During enrollment, families are asked to share any medical, developmental, or behavioral care needs of their child.
- Staff will review information provided by the parent/guardian and consult with the child's healthcare provider (with written consent) if needed.
- An Individualized Care Plan (ICP) for students enrolling in the infant/toddler program or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for prekindergarten students will be developed in collaboration with the parent/guardian, licensed health professionals, and teachers to ensure appropriate accommodations and supports.
- For students with no pre-qualifying conditions, parents will be asked to participate in a meeting to develop an ICP after any significant incident occurs, or three (3) behavior reports have been completed. If behavioral interventions need to be addressed, function of the behavior and positive behavior support strategies will be included in the plan.
- The ICP will include:
  - Description of the child's special care needs.
  - Required accommodations, equipment, or adaptive devices.
  - Medication or treatment schedules.
  - Emergency response procedures (allergies, seizures, asthma, severe behavior, etc.).
  - Communication methods to support language, sensory, or developmental needs.

## 2. Staff Training and Responsibilities

- All staff working directly with the child will receive training on the child's ICP before the child begins attendance.
- Training will include:
  - Safe and respectful handling techniques.
  - Medication administration and health-related tasks (per physician's instructions).
  - Use of adaptive equipment or assistive technology.
  - Strategies to support inclusion in daily routines, play, and learning.
- Substitute staff will be briefed on essential procedures prior to being left alone with the child.

## 3. Inclusive Daily Practices

- Children with special care needs will participate in activities alongside their peers to the fullest extent possible.
- Teachers will provide modifications such as:
  - Visual supports, simplified directions, or alternative communication systems.
  - Adaptive seating, utensils, or mobility supports.
  - Additional time and assistance for transitions and activities.
- Classrooms will maintain accessible and safe environments, ensuring pathways are clear and materials are adapted when necessary.

## 4. Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures

- Emergency plans for each child with special care needs will be posted discreetly in the classroom and included in staff binders.
- Staff will conduct regular practice drills to ensure readiness for emergencies such as evacuation, shelter-in-place, or medical events.

- Medication and medical supplies will be stored securely, easily accessible to trained staff, and administered only by designated personnel.
- MECC does not believe in suspension, expulsion or other exclusionary measures (seclusion). Ongoing behavioral incidents that present disruptive or unsafe behavior that interferes with a child's cognitive, social, or emotional development; are harmful to the child, other children, or adults, and all documented modifications and strategies have been implemented, parent meetings will be called for immediate interventions to be initiated.
- Parents will be notified immediately of any health or behavioral incidents, and reports will be completed per Texas Minimum Standards.

#### 5. Collaboration with Families and Professionals

- Families are recognized as partners and will be included in decision-making related to their child's care.
- Regular communication will be maintained through daily reports, meetings, or conferences.
- When appropriate, staff will collaborate with outside professionals (therapists, early interventionists, school district representatives) to support consistent strategies across settings.

#### 6. Review and Updates

- The ICP will be reviewed at least every six months, and the IEP will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:
  - The child's needs change.
  - Parent/guardian requests modifications.
  - Healthcare professionals provide updated instructions.
- Staff will document observations, progress, and any modifications to ensure continuous improvement in services.

# Individualized Care Plan (ICP)

*(Sample)*

Child's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom/Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent/Guardian Information

- Parent/Guardian Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Preferred Method of Contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ In-person

## Special Care Needs Description

- Primary Diagnosis / Condition (if applicable):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Description of Child's Needs (medical, developmental, behavioral, or sensory):  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Daily Care Requirements

- Medications (name, dosage, schedule):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Medical Procedures or Treatments Required:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Adaptive Equipment / Assistive Technology Used (wheelchair, hearing aids, communication devices, etc.):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Feeding or Dietary Needs (allergies, modified textures, restrictions):  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 
- Toileting / Hygiene Needs:
- 

- Rest / Nap Needs:
- 

## Emergency Procedures

- Signs of Distress or Warning Signals:
- 

- Step-by-Step Emergency Response Plan:
- 

- Emergency Medication (e.g., EpiPen, inhaler):

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Trained Staff Responsible: \_\_\_\_\_

- Hospital Preference: \_\_\_\_\_
- Physician Name & Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Inclusion & Support Strategies

- Classroom Accommodations (visual aids, seating, additional staff support):
- 

- Activity Modifications (outdoor play, art, group activities):
- 

- Communication Supports (sign language, PECS, AAC device, simplified instructions):
- 

- Positive Behavior Support Strategies (clear expectations & routines, positive reinforcement, proactive language, limited choices, first...then, etc.)
- 

## Collaboration & Review

- External Service Providers (therapists, specialists, interventionists):

- 
- Parent/Guardian Input or Additional Notes:
- 

## Signatures

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director/Administrator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Review & Update Log (Review at least every 6 months or sooner if changes occur)

| Review Date | Changes/Updates | Staff Initials | Parent Initials |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
|             |                 |                |                 |
|             |                 |                |                 |
|             |                 |                |                 |
|             |                 |                |                 |
|             |                 |                |                 |



# Environmental Health & Safety Policy

MECC is committed to providing a healthy environment for every child, family member, and staff member. We actively work to prevent exposure to harmful chemicals and other environmental hazards inside and outside of our facility.

Environmental hazards include, but are not limited to:

- Harmful chemicals and strong fragrances
- Mold and mildew
- Unsafe drinking water
- Excessive noise, heat, or cold
- Radon or radiation
- Friable materials such as asbestos, fiberglass, silica, or lead paint

Our commitment is to protect the children and adults in our building, we will:

- Use only non-toxic and fragrance-free cleaning and classroom products.
- Prevent exposure to hazardous building materials, fumes, and unsafe air quality.
- Monitor and fix moisture problems, mold, or mildew immediately.
- Maintain safe indoor temperatures and noise levels.
- Provide safe drinking water at all times.
- Only perform building repairs, painting, and maintenance when children are not present, unless approved as safe by licensed professionals.

To reduce allergic reactions, asthma, headaches, and chemical exposure, we:

- Use unscented, non-toxic cleaning supplies and soaps.
- Do not allow perfumes, scented lotions, body sprays, or essential oils inside the facility.
- Do not use aerosols or air fresheners.
- Use non-toxic, certified-safe art supplies only.

We use products that are:

- EPA Safer Choice cleaning products
- Unscented hand soap and sanitizer
- Non-toxic art materials labeled AP Certified Non-Toxic

We protect indoor air quality by:

- Running ventilation systems during the day.
- Maintaining clean air filters.
- Not allowing idling vehicles near entrances or playgrounds.
- Immediately responding to strong odors, fumes, or respiratory irritants.

To keep children safe, we:

- Do not use hazardous chemicals or materials when children are present.
- Test and remediate potential hazards (like asbestos, lead paint, or mold) using licensed professionals.
- Block off areas under repair until they are safe and cleared for use.

- Only approved potable water sources are used for drinking and food service.
- Water fixtures are cleaned daily and sanitized regularly.
- If a water safety concern arises, we will switch to alternative sources until cleared as safe.
- Classrooms are kept between 68°F and 82°F.
- Loud machines and noise sources are avoided near classrooms.
- Outdoor play is adjusted during extreme weather based on child safety guidelines.

We will notify parents and staff if:

- A potential environmental hazard is identified.
- A room or area must be closed for safety.
- Remediation or cleaning work needs to take place.

All safety records and product lists are available upon request.

Families and staff can support this policy by:

- Avoiding scented personal care products when entering the building.
- Reporting unusual odors, leaks, or health concerns right away.
- Not bringing cleaning chemicals from home.

# SERVICE OF FOOD PROVIDED BY A THIRD-PARTY VENDOR

## Purpose

To ensure that all meals and snacks received from an approved third-party food vendor are stored, handled, and served safely to children enrolled at MECC in compliance with Texas Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards, USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements, and local health regulations.

## Policy

MECC may contract with approved third-party vendors to provide meals and snacks for children. MECC staff are responsible for receiving, storing, handling, and serving vendor-provided food in a manner that protects the health and safety of children.

## Procedures

### Receiving Food

- a. Staff receiving food for students shall verify that:
  - Food arrives from an approved vendor.
  - Food is properly packaged and protected from contamination.
  - Hot foods are delivered hot and cold foods are delivered cold.
  - Delivery containers are clean and in good condition.
- b. Any food that appears spoiled, damaged, contaminated, or outside safe temperature ranges shall be rejected and reported to administration immediately.

### Storage of Food

- a. Food shall be stored promptly upon delivery.
- b. Refrigerated foods shall be maintained at 41°F or below.
- c. Frozen foods shall remain frozen until use.
- d. Dry goods shall be stored in a clean, dry area protected from pests and contamination.

### Food Safety and Hygiene

- a. Staff shall wash hands before handling food and after any activity that may contaminate hands.
- b. Gloves or utensils shall be used when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- c. Food preparation and serving surfaces shall be cleaned and sanitized before and after use.
- d. Cross-contamination between foods shall be prevented at all times.

### Serving Meals

- a. Staff shall serve meals and snacks according to the vendor menu and CACFP meal pattern requirements.
- b. Portion sizes shall be age appropriate.
- c. Drinking water shall be available during meals, snacks, and throughout the day.
- d. Staff shall encourage healthy eating habits and positive mealtime interactions.

#### Food Allergies and Special Diets

- a. Staff shall review allergy and dietary restriction information before serving food.
- b. No child shall be served a food identified on the child's allergy action plan, or medical/dietary restriction statement.
- c. Approved substitutions shall be provided when required.

#### Leftovers and Food Disposal

- a. Food that has been served to children shall not be re-served.
- b. Any food determined to be unsafe or unfit for consumption shall be discarded immediately.
- c. Disposal shall occur in a sanitary manner.

#### Documentation

- a. Menus, delivery records, and any food safety concerns shall be maintained according to MECC record retention procedures.
- b. Staff shall immediately report food safety concerns to the Director.

#### **Compliance**

Failure to follow this policy may result in corrective action and retraining. All staff involved in meal service shall receive annual training on food safety, allergy awareness, and meal service procedures.

# PREPARATION AND SERVICE OF AFTERNOON SNACKS

## Purpose

To establish safe and consistent procedures for MECC staff who prepare and serve afternoon snacks, including pouring beverages, portioning food items, and distributing prepackaged snacks.

## Policy

MECC staff may prepare and serve simple afternoon snacks that require minimal handling, such as pouring juice or milk, portioning approved snack items, and distributing prepackaged foods. All snack service activities shall comply with Texas Child Care Licensing standards, CACFP meal pattern requirements, food safety regulations, and allergy management procedures.

## Procedures

### Approved Snack Activities

Staff may:

- Pour juice, milk, or water into individual serving cups.
- Portion approved snack items into individual servings.
- Open and distribute commercially prepackaged snack items.
- Prepare simple snack combinations approved on the MECC menu.

Staff may not:

- a. Prepare complex meals requiring cooking unless specifically trained and authorized.
- b. Serve foods not approved by administration.
- c. Substitute menu items without authorization.

### Handwashing and Hygiene

- a. Staff shall wash hands before snack preparation and service.
- b. Gloves, utensils, deli paper, or serving tools shall be used when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- c. Staff who are ill shall not prepare or serve food.

### Beverage Service

- a. Staff shall wear gloves when pouring.
- b. Juice shall be 100% fruit or vegetable juice when served.
- c. Beverages shall be served in age-appropriate portions according to CACFP requirements.
- d. Drinking water shall always be available to children.

### Portioning Snacks

- a. Staff shall wear gloves, use measuring tools, scoops, or approved serving utensils to provide consistent portions.
- b. Portions shall meet CACFP meal pattern requirements for the age group served.
- c. Staff shall ensure enough food is available for additional servings when required by licensing standards.

### Distribution of Prepackaged Snacks

- a. Staff shall verify product labels and expiration dates before distribution.
- b. Packaging shall remain intact until served.
- c. Snacks shall be distributed individually to prevent contamination.

### Allergy and Dietary Safety

- a. Staff shall review classroom allergy information before serving snacks.
- b. Food labels shall be checked for allergens when applicable.
- c. Children shall receive approved substitutions when required by allergy plans, medical statements, or dietary restrictions.

#### **Sanitation**

- a. Tables shall be cleaned and sanitized before and after snack service.
- b. Food-contact surfaces and serving utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized after use.
- c. Trash shall be removed promptly following snack service.

#### **Supervision During Snack Time**

- a. Children shall remain supervised at all times during snack service.
- b. Staff shall monitor children for choking hazards and allergic reactions.
- c. Positive mealtime practices shall be used, and food shall never be used as a reward or punishment.

#### **Compliance**

All staff assigned to snack service shall receive training on food safety, CACFP requirements, allergy awareness, and sanitation procedures. Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective action.

# FOOD SAFETY POLICY

## General Food Safety Requirements

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before handling food and ensure children wash hands before eating.
- Use gloves when serving food or drinks and change gloves between tasks.
- Sanitize tables, chairs, countertops, and food-contact surfaces before and after meals.
- Prevent cross-contamination by using separate utensils and keeping food off un-sanitized surfaces.

## Safe Food Handling and Serving

- Serve foods at safe temperatures (cold below 41°F; hot above 135°F).
- Dispose of perishable food left out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if hotter than 90°F) or with expired dates.
- Portion meals using clean utensils. Do not allow children to share food, bottles, or cups.
- Label bottles and infant food with name and date; follow each infant's Feeding Plan.
- Never microwave bottles; use approved bottle warming methods.
- Discard any unfinished formula or breast milk after one hour of feeding.
- Training cups should be labeled and washed/sanitized after use.

## Storage and Expiration Requirements

- Refrigerate perishable items immediately and store dry goods properly.
- Label open boxes/bottles with time and date.
- Check all food items for expiration dates daily.
- Discard any expired food immediately and notify administration if replacements are needed.

## Documentation of Meals and Intake

- Record types and quantities of food and drink consumed by each child at all meals and snacks.
- Document special feeding needs, modifications, allergies, or adaptive feeding supports used.
- Enter all required feeding information into ProCare before the end of each day.

## Additional Requirements

- Verify that any food brought from home is labeled, safely packaged, and stored properly.
- Follow allergy lists and individualized care plans; do not serve allergen-containing food to affected children.
- Supervise children closely during meals to prevent choking and ensure safe eating practices.

## Compliance

- Failure to follow this policy may result in retraining or disciplinary action. Consistent adherence is required to protect children and uphold program safety standards.



# ALLERGY RESPONSE AND ANAPHYLAXIS EMERGENCY CARE PLAN

## Purpose

MECC is committed to protecting the health and safety of children with known allergies and responding appropriately to any suspected allergic reaction. This policy establishes procedures for prevention, recognition, and emergency response to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis for both children with documented allergies and children experiencing a first-time allergic reaction.

## Definitions

**Allergic Reaction:** An immune system response to an allergen that may include skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, or neurological symptoms.

**Anaphylaxis:** A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate emergency intervention.

**Known Allergy:** An allergy documented by a healthcare provider and supported by a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (FARE Form), physician orders, or other medical documentation maintained in the child's file.

**Unknown Allergy:** A suspected allergic reaction in a child without a documented allergy history.

## Prevention Procedures

1. For Children with Documented Allergies
  - a. MECC shall maintain:
    - A completed FARE Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan.
    - Physician-signed medication authorization and treatment orders.
    - Current parent/guardian emergency contact information.
    - Prescribed emergency medications on site, if ordered.
  - b. Allergy information shall be shared with staff responsible for the child's care while maintaining confidentiality.
  - c. Allergy alerts shall be posted in approved staff-accessible locations.
  - d. Staff shall review allergy information before serving meals, snacks, or participating in special events involving food.
  - e. Substitute staff shall be informed of allergies before assuming classroom responsibilities.
2. Staff Training
  - a. All staff shall receive annual training on:
    - Recognition of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
    - Emergency response procedures.
    - Use of epinephrine auto-injectors.
    - Emergency communication procedures.
  - b. Training documentation shall be maintained by administration.

## Recognizing Allergic Reactions

Mild to Moderate Symptoms May Include:

- Itching
- Hives or rash
- Redness or swelling of the skin

- Runny nose
- Mild stomach discomfort
- Mild nausea

Severe Symptoms (Anaphylaxis) May Include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Repetitive coughing
- Swelling of lips, tongue, mouth, or throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Hoarse voice
- Pale or bluish skin color
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Loss of consciousness
- Repeated vomiting
- Severe abdominal pain
- Rapid progression of symptoms involving multiple body systems

## **Emergency Response Procedures for Children with Known Allergies**

### **Step 1: Assess Symptoms**

- Remain with the child.
- Have another staff member notify the school nurse immediately.
- Follow the child's physician-authorized Allergy Emergency Care Plan.

### **Step 2: Administer Emergency Medication**

- If the child's care plan directs epinephrine administration, administer immediately.
- When symptoms suggest anaphylaxis, epinephrine shall be administered without delay according to physician orders and staff training.

### **Step 3: Activate Emergency Medical Services**

- Call 911 immediately after administering epinephrine or whenever anaphylaxis is suspected.
- Notify administration.
- Notify the school nurse and pediatric clinic if available.
- The pediatric clinic and school nurse may assist with care but shall not delay activation of EMS.

### **Step 4: Monitor the Child**

- Keep the child under constant supervision.
- Monitor breathing and responsiveness.
- Position the child according to symptoms:
  - Lying flat with legs elevated when possible.
  - On side if vomiting.
  - Seated only if breathing difficulties require it.
- Do not allow the child to walk unassisted.

### **Step 5: Parent Notification**

- Contact parent/guardian immediately after emergency measures are initiated.
- Continue attempts until contact is made.

## **Emergency Response Procedures for Children Without Known Allergies**

If a child with no documented allergy develops symptoms consistent with an allergic reaction:

1. Immediately notify the classroom supervisor and school nurse.
2. Assess severity of symptoms.
3. For mild symptoms:
  - Remove suspected allergen exposure.
  - Observe continuously.
  - Contact parent/guardian.
  - Refer to the school nurse for assessment.
4. For severe symptoms or suspected anaphylaxis:
  - Call 911 immediately.
  - Notify the school nurse and administration.
  - Follow standing medical orders, nursing protocols, or applicable Texas law regarding emergency stock epinephrine, if available and authorized.
  - Notify parents immediately.
5. The pediatric clinic may assist in evaluation and treatment when available; however, emergency medical services shall not be delayed while waiting for clinic staff.

## **Post-Incident Procedures**

Following any allergic reaction:

1. The responding staff member shall complete an Incident Report before the end of the workday.
2. Administration shall review:
  - Cause of exposure, if known.
  - Response actions taken.
  - Need for corrective measures.
3. Parents shall receive written documentation of the incident both via ProCare and Incident Report.
4. For newly identified allergies:
  - Parents shall be encouraged to seek medical evaluation.
  - A physician-completed Allergy Care Plan shall be obtained before the child's return when appropriate.

## **Medication Storage**

1. Emergency allergy medications shall:
  - Be readily accessible.
  - Be stored according to manufacturer instructions.
  - Remain unlocked or immediately accessible during emergencies as permitted by law and licensing requirements.
2. Expiration dates shall be monitored regularly by the school nurse or designated administrator.

## **Annual Review**

This policy shall be reviewed annually by administration and the school nurse and updated as needed to reflect current medical guidance, licensing standards, and best practices.

# ANIMAL CARE, HOUSING, AND CHILD SAFETY POLICY

## 1. Purpose

Moody Early Childhood Center permits animals on the premises only when they can be housed and cared for without creating an unsafe, unsanitary, or unhealthy condition for children, employees, visitors, or the animals. This policy establishes requirements for animal approval, no-contact controls, enclosures, signage, daily care, sanitation, veterinary oversight, emergencies, and records.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to every animal located at or brought to the Center, temporarily or permanently, including animals housed in cages, aquariums, terrariums, hutches, coops, outdoor pens, or other enclosures. It also applies to visiting-animal programs, animal-related field trips, and animal-care supplies or waste on Center property.

No employee, family member, contractor, visitor, or outside organization may bring an animal onto Center property without the Center Director's prior written approval.

### 2.1 Service Animals and Disability-Related Accommodations

Requests involving a service animal or another disability-related accommodation will be evaluated individually under applicable law and a written safety and accommodation plan. This program-animal policy will not be used automatically to deny lawful access or an individualized accommodation. The Center will coordinate with the family, appropriate professionals, licensing representatives, and legal counsel as needed while protecting children from avoidable contact and maintaining sanitation and supervision.

## No-Child-Contact Rule

**Children may observe animals only. Children may not touch, hold, handle, carry, feed, groom, pet, or otherwise have direct contact with any animal.**

Children also may not:

- Open, unlatch, reach into, climb on, lean over, or place objects into an enclosure.
- Touch animal food, water, bedding, waste, toys, bowls, cages, tanks, pens, cleaning equipment, or other animal-care supplies.
- Assist with feeding, cleaning, water changes, grooming, transportation, medication, or any other animal-care activity.
- Enter a staff-only animal area or cross a protective barrier.

This Center-wide no-contact rule is stricter than the Texas minimum standard and applies to every species. Texas rules specifically prohibit children from having contact with chickens, ducks, reptiles, and amphibians. The Center's rule also covers those animals, their enclosures, and all items used in their care.

## Approval and Parent Notification

Before an animal is placed at the Center or participates in a temporary or visiting program, the Director or designee must:

1. Identify the species, number of animals, proposed location, enclosure, care requirements, and responsible employee.

2. Determine whether the animal can be safely housed without child contact.
3. Review allergy, asthma, infection-control, bite, escape, ventilation, sanitation, and emergency risks.
4. Confirm that appropriate barriers, latches, protective netting or mesh, signage, and cleaning procedures are in place.
5. Provide written parent notice that identifies the types of animals located at the center and states that children may observe but may not touch or handle it.

Parent notice may be provided through the parent handbook, enrollment materials, written electronic communication, or a separate animal notice. The Center will retain a copy of the notice. Temporary or visiting animals require notice before the activity unless emergency circumstances make advance notice impossible and the Director documents the reason.

## **Enclosures, Barriers, and Signage**

### **5.1 Enclosure Requirements**

All animals must remain in a secure, clean, species-appropriate enclosure unless a trained and designated adult is moving the animal for veterinary care, emergency relocation, or enclosure maintenance. Each cage, aquarium, terrarium, hutch, coop, pen, or other enclosure must:

- Be structurally sound, escape-resistant, and appropriate for the species.
- Have a secure lid, gate, door, or other closure with a lockable or child-resistant safety latch when appropriate.
- Be positioned or anchored to prevent tipping, falling, shifting, rolling, or being pulled over.
- Prevent children from reaching through, under, over, or around the enclosure.
- Include protective netting, mesh, covers, guards, or a secondary perimeter barrier when needed.
- Protect children from bites, scratches, pinching, pecking, stings, allergens, waste, contaminated water, and animal-care equipment.
- Permit safe access by authorized employees without requiring the animal to be moved through an occupied child-care area whenever reasonably possible.

Aquariums must have fitted lids and be placed on stable, load-rated stands. Electrical cords, pumps, heaters, filters, lights, and water-treatment supplies must be secured and inaccessible to children. Outdoor pens must have secure gates and fencing, protective netting or covers when needed, and adequate separation or a secondary barrier where children could otherwise reach the enclosure.

### **5.2 Signage**

Every animal enclosure and animal-care area must display clear, age-appropriate signage. Signs must remain visible, legible, securely attached, and appropriate to the animal and hazard.

**ANIMAL AREA - STAFF ONLY**  
**DO NOT TOUCH, FEED, OR OPEN**  
**WASH HANDS AFTER ANY CONTACT**

Additional warnings must be posted when appropriate, including “NO CHILD CONTACT - POULTRY, REPTILE, OR AMPHIBIAN AREA.” Signage does not replace secure latches, barriers, protective netting, adequate separation, active supervision, or placement beyond children’s reach.

## Location and Separation

Animal enclosures, food, bedding, medication, cleaning supplies, and waste may not be located in or directly adjacent to:

- Food, bottles, or formula preparation areas.
- Food storage, meal service, or dining areas.
- Diaper-changing areas, toilets, or children's handwashing sinks.
- Infant floor-play, sleeping, or napping areas.
- Emergency exits, evacuation routes, doorways, or required clear paths.
- Areas where an enclosure could create a climbing, tripping, electrical, water, or falling-object hazard.
- Locations where odor, dander, feathers, bedding, waste, or contaminated water could enter ventilation systems or contaminate children's materials.

Animal food, medication, bedding, waste supplies, and cleaning products must be labeled, closed, stored separately from human food and children's supplies, and inaccessible to children.

## Daily Inspection, Care, and Maintenance

**Animals and their enclosures must be checked and maintained every day, including weekends and holidays when animals remain on the property.**

A trained and designated employee must complete a daily inspection that includes:

1. The animal's appearance, behavior, activity, appetite, and signs of illness, injury, stress, or aggression.
2. Availability and cleanliness of species-appropriate food and water.
3. Appropriate temperature, ventilation, lighting, filtration, bedding, shelter, and other environmental conditions.
4. Cleanliness of the enclosure and prompt removal of waste, uneaten food, standing water, excessive algae, soiled bedding, and contamination.
5. Evidence of insects, rodents, wild animals, parasites, mold, objectionable odors, or other unsanitary conditions.
6. The condition of the cage, tank, pen, fencing, lid, door, latch, lock, netting, guard, and secondary barrier.
7. The stability of aquariums, stands, electrical equipment, cords, and water systems.
8. The presence and condition of required signs.
9. Confirmation that the animal and all animal-care items remain inaccessible to children.
10. Any corrective action, veterinary consultation, repair, cleaning, or relocation that is needed.

The employee must record the date, time, initials, findings, and corrective action on the daily animal-care log. Any broken latch, damaged enclosure, torn netting, water leak, electrical hazard, escape opening, or other safety defects must be corrected immediately. Children must be removed from or denied access to the affected area until the hazard is corrected.

## Cleaning, Waste Disposal, and Hand Hygiene

Only trained and designated adults may clean an enclosure or handle animal food, water, bedding, waste, equipment, or supplies. Whenever practical, cleaning and maintenance will occur when children are not present in the immediate area.

- Children must remain behind the established barrier and may not participate.
- Disposable gloves and any other appropriate protective equipment must be used.
- Waste must be placed directly into a closed, leak-resistant container.
- Cleaning must avoid splashing, spraying, or spreading contaminated water, bedding, feces, feathers, dander, or other material.
- Enclosures and equipment must be cleaned and disinfected with a product appropriate for the species and used according to its label and veterinary guidance.
- Animal equipment may not be washed in food preparation, bottle-preparation, classroom, or children's handwashing sinks.
- Aquarium or enclosure water may not be emptied into a food-preparation or children's sink.
- Dedicated animal-care equipment must be cleaned, labeled, and stored separately.
- Cleaning chemicals must be secured and inaccessible to children.

Employees must wash their hands with soap and running water immediately after touching an animal, enclosure, bowl, cage, tank, pen, bedding, food, waste, water, cleaning equipment, or other animal-related item. Gloves and hand sanitizer do not replace required handwashing.

If a child has accidental contact with an animal or animal-related item, staff must prevent further contact, wash the child's hands and any affected skin immediately with soap and running water, notify the Director, and complete any required parent notification or incident report.

## **Veterinary Care and Records**

**Moody Early Childhood Center contracts with a local Texas-licensed veterinarian to provide annual wellness examinations or health visits appropriate to the animals and species maintained by the Center.**

Veterinary care must also be obtained whenever an animal shows illness, injury, abnormal behavior, parasite infestation, or another health concern. The annual veterinary review should address, as applicable:

- General health and fitness for continued placement in a child-care environment.
- Required and recommended vaccinations.
- Parasite prevention, testing, and treatment.
- Nutrition, housing, and environmental conditions.
- Zoonotic-disease risks and infection-control measures.
- Behavioral, bite, scratch, or escape risks.
- Sanitation and cleaning procedures.
- Any species-specific care, permit, testing, or handling recommendations.

The Center must maintain the veterinary annual wellness or health documentation; required statements of health; current vaccination records; applicable registrations, licenses, or permits; treatment and medication records; and/or written veterinary restrictions, recommendations, or return-to-placement clearances.

## **Illness, Injury, and Abnormal Behavior**

An animal must be immediately removed from children's areas or isolated behind a secure barrier when it displays:

- Lethargy, diarrhea, vomiting, loss of appetite, or abnormal behavior.



- Unexplained aggression, fear, or repeated attempts to bite, scratch, peck, or escape.
- Coughing, sneezing, nasal or eye discharge.
- Open sores, skin lesions, feather or hair loss, or visible parasites.
- Difficulty walking, swimming, breathing, eating, or drinking.
- Sudden or unexplained weight loss.
- Signs of pain, injury, neurological symptoms, or severe stress.
- Unexplained death of another animal in the same enclosure.
- Any condition identified by the veterinarian as a possible health or zoonotic-disease risk.

The Director or Animal Care Coordinator must promptly contact the Center's veterinarian. The animal may not return to its usual location until the veterinarian determines that it is safe. When a reportable or suspected zoonotic illness is identified, the Center will follow veterinary instructions and make any required report to public health, animal-control, licensing, or other regulatory authorities.

### **Unfamiliar, Stray, Wild or Dangerous Animals**

The Center will keep its building, grounds, entrances, and playgrounds free of unfamiliar, stray, wild, and potentially dangerous animals. Before children enter an outdoor play area, an employee must visually inspect the area for:

- Stray or unfamiliar animals.
- Snakes, bats, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, alligators, or other wildlife.
- Animal waste, dead or injured animals, nests, burrows, hives, or evidence of intrusion.
- Damage to fencing, gates, protective netting, or other barriers.

Children must be moved away from the area and may not approach, chase, capture, feed, or touch the animal. Employees should not attempt to capture a wild or potentially dangerous animal unless specifically trained and equipped. City of Galveston Animal Services or emergency services must be contacted as appropriate.

### **Escape and Enclosure Failure**

If an animal escapes or an enclosure is breached:

1. Move children immediately to another secured area and verify attendance.
2. Close the affected room or area and prevent entry.
3. Do not allow any child to assist with recapture.
4. Permit only a trained adult to attempt recapture when it can be done safely.
5. Contact Animal Services, the veterinarian, or emergency services when assistance is needed.
6. Inspect and repair the enclosure and barriers before returning the animal.
7. Document the incident and determine whether parent, licensing, veterinary, or public-health notification is required.

### **Bite, Scratch, Saliva, or Other Exposure**

The Center will treat any accidental bite, scratch, peck, sting, or contact between animal saliva and a person's eyes, mouth, broken skin, or open wound as a health and safety incident. Staff must:

1. Separate the person from the animal without creating additional risk.
2. Wash the affected area promptly with soap and running water and provide appropriate first aid.
3. Call 911 when the injury or medical condition is serious or urgent.

4. Notify the child’s parent or guardian immediately and obtain medical evaluation as appropriate.
5. Complete the Center’s incident documentation.
6. Secure and isolate the animal without releasing, moving, euthanizing, or disposing of it contrary to veterinary or animal-control instructions.
7. Promptly report a potentially rabies-transmitting bite or scratch to the City of Galveston Animal Services Unit and make any other required report.
8. Follow all quarantine, testing, medical, veterinary, public-health, and licensing instructions.

### **Staff Training and Assignment of Responsibility**

The Center Director will designate an Animal Care Coordinator and at least one alternate. Only trained and authorized employees may provide animal care. Training must cover:

- The Center’s no-child-contact rule.
- Enclosure, anchoring, latch, barrier, netting, and signage requirements.
- Daily inspection, care, cleaning, and documentation.
- Species-specific feeding and environmental needs.
- Waste disposal, disinfection, protective equipment, and handwashing.
- Recognition of illness, stress, abnormal behavior, aggression, and zoonotic-disease risks.
- Allergy and asthma precautions.
- Bite, scratch, exposure, escape, enclosure failure, evacuation, and emergency procedures.
- Veterinary, Animal Services, emergency, licensing, and public-health contact procedures.

Employees must immediately report a damaged enclosure, missing sign, illness, behavioral concern, sanitation problem, escape risk, or policy violation to the Director.

### **Local and Emergency Contacts**

|                                                     |                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Immediate medical or public-safety emergency</b> | 911                                         |
| <b>City of Galveston Animal Services Unit</b>       | 409-765-3702                                |
| <b>Contracted veterinarian</b>                      | Name: Dr. Jason Suazo Phone: (979) 266-7080 |

The City of Galveston Animal Services Unit responds to animal-bite cases, dangerous or injured animals, animal welfare complaints, and violations of municipal animal rules. After-hours assistance is limited; call 911 for an immediate threat to human life or safety.

### **Recordkeeping**

The Center will keep an animal compliance file readily available for administrative and licensing review. The file will include:

- Current animal inventory and enclosure locations.
- Names of responsible employees and training records.
- Parent notices.
- Veterinary contract, wellness records, health statements, vaccination records, and treatment records.

- Applicable registrations, licenses, and permits if needed.
- Enclosure and barrier assessments and repair records.
- Illness, escape, bite, scratch, exposure, and corrective-action reports.
- Communications with the veterinarian, Animal Services, public health, or Child Care Regulation.

### **Compliance, Removal, and Annual Review**

An animal must be removed temporarily or permanently when required records are missing or expired; safe barriers cannot be maintained; the animal presents an allergy, infection, sanitation, behavioral, bite, or escape risk; daily care cannot be reliably provided; the veterinarian recommends removal; or continued presence conflicts with this policy or applicable law.

Human life and child safety take priority during every emergency. Children will never be assigned responsibility for feeding, evacuating, transporting, capturing, or rescuing animals.

The Director will review this policy and the animal inventory at least annually and whenever a new animal or species is proposed, the enclosure or location changes, a bite or escape occurs, the veterinarian recommends a change, or applicable law or agency guidance changes.