

Staff handbook

BackPR

Replace everything in [brackets], delete what doesn't apply and add your own policies. Employment rules vary by state and city, so have a lawyer or HR advisor review your final handbook.

Welcome and mission

Welcome to [Program name]. Our mission is [mission]. This handbook explains what we expect of you and what you can expect from us. It isn't a contract, and we may update it.

Employment basics

- Employment type: [seasonal, part-time or full-time, and at-will if that applies in your state]
- Before you start: background check, [required health forms] and training
- Introductory period: [length]
- Equal opportunity: We hire and treat staff without regard to [race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation and gender identity), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, military service or any other status protected by law].

Schedule, time and pay

- Payday: [schedule]
- Clocking in and out: [method]. Record all time worked, including training and meetings.
- Breaks and meals: [policy]
- Overtime: [policy]
- Calling out: Tell [name] by [method] at least [number] hours before your shift. Ratios depend on you.

Code of conduct

- Be on time, prepared and focused on the children.
- Use positive language. Never yell at, shame or physically punish a child.
- No alcohol, drugs, smoking or vaping at work or around children.
- Dress code: [dress code]
- Personal phones: [rule]
- Treat coworkers and families with respect. Harassment of any kind isn't allowed.

Child protection

- Never be alone with a child out of sight of other adults. [Your rule, such as keeping doors open or staying in groups of three or more.]
- Supervise bathrooms, changing and transitions as you were trained.
- No private messages, social media connections, gifts or rides with children outside the program.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect as you were trained and as [state] rules require, and tell [director] right away.
- Report any staff behavior that worries you. You won't be punished for reporting in good faith.

Supervision and safety

- Know where every child is. Do a headcount at every move.
- Keep ratios: [ratio for each age group].
- Follow the emergency action plan and know the meeting spots.

- Release children only to authorized adults, and check photo ID.
- Fill out incident reports the same day.

Health and medication

Only trained staff give medicine, following the medication policy and log. Stay home if you're sick with [symptoms]. Tell the director about any injury at work right away.

Confidentiality and social media

Keep information about children and families private. Don't post photos, names or stories about children on your personal accounts. Use program photos only as the photo release list allows.

Working with families

Be friendly and professional. Talk to [the director] before you raise a serious concern about a child with a family. Never discuss other children with a family.

Concerns and complaints

If you have a concern about your job, talk to [supervisor]. If it's about your supervisor, go to [next person]. [Steps and timeline for a formal complaint.]

Discipline and leaving the job

We usually address problems with [a conversation, then a written warning, then termination]. Serious issues, such as harming a child, using drugs or alcohol at work or leaving children unsupervised, can lead to immediate termination. If you plan to leave, please give [notice period] notice.

Acknowledgment

I have received and read the staff handbook, and I'll follow its policies. I understand it may change and isn't a contract of employment.

Printed name _____

Staff signature _____

Date _____

Free to use and change, but not legal or medical advice. Check your state's licensing rules and your insurer's requirements, and have a lawyer review any consent or waiver language.

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