

# Family Handbooks

## Tips for Writing your Policies and Procedures

---

### **Which are important to your program?**

Your Family Handbook includes everything you want your families to know about your program. Putting your policies in writing spell out your expectations and can help when problems arise. This is how you do things and how you will handle day to day activities.

*These may not apply to all programs. Add to your handbook as applicable*

### **Provider or center information**

#### **Contact information**

Include your program name, address, phone number and website if you have one. If you have other staff include who is in charge in your absence.

#### **Your mission statement or philosophy\***

Your mission statement/philosophy should be clearly stated

#### **Certification or license information**

Include a statement that says ELD does not intervene in financial matters.

#### **Staff qualifications**

Tell about your staff requirements and training including safety set requirements

#### **Your hours of operation and days of the week**

Hours and days of the week you are open

#### **Program closures-holidays**

List all days you are closed and your payment policy on closed days

#### **Closures due to bad weather**

How you determine when you will be closed, how parents can find out and what your payment policy is for that

#### **Vacation or sick time policy for children**

When a family is granted vacation days (after 6 months, etc) and how they can use them

#### **Tuition policy**-when tuition is due, how you can be paid, late fees and return check policies.

Explain when and how payments should be made. Have policy on late fees, return checks, and your collection policy

DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR ACTUAL RATES in your handbook since they may change each year. Your rates can be listed in your contract

#### **Definition of what full time and part time means**

Be clear about what you consider a part day or full day and if you charge extra for going over these hours

Do you allow for changing schedules?

Do not include actual rates-that will be in your contract.

#### **Arrival and departure procedures**

Include what time you open, that parents should remain with child until a staff member accepts them

Your policy on how they sign their child in and out-where the forms are kept

#### **How you handle other authorized persons picking up child**

Include children are only released to person on the authorized list with picture identification and how to make changes to that list.

Include the procedure you will follow if someone picks up a child under the influence

Same for arriving without a proper car seat

# Family Handbooks

## Tips for Writing your Policies and Procedures

---

### **Mandated reporters/child abuse**

Statement regarding being a mandated reporter and what that means

### **Confidentiality**

Your policy on written records, who they are shared with and the need for parent permission for others to have access

Include a statement about your commitment to maintaining confidentiality and extends to parents also

### **Open door policy**

ELD requires that Parents have access at any time without advance notice

### **Non-discrimination statement** (Required if you participate in the USDA food program)

Use the statement provided by USDA

### **Termination/Withdrawal policy**

Explain your policy if a parent decides to withdraw. How much advance notice and will you charge if they do not give it?

Explain your termination policy. You may want to reserve the right to withdraw a child if you feel that you cannot meet the needs of the child or it is not a good fit. Will you give them 2 weeks notice?

### **Procedure for complaints**

Tell the procedure you want families to follow if they have a complaint. Encourage them to contact you first as soon as possible and give contact information for your licensor if they have a ELD licensing concern.

### **(Family care) Rules in my house**

Be clear what areas of house are not part of program and private. Here is where you define the business/personal boundaries

### **Substitute Caregivers (family child care)**

Inform parents that when you use substitutes they have met all background **requirements**

### **Staff babysitting policy-if it applies**

If you do not want your staff to babysit for your families you need to set a policy about this before it happens

### **Family responsibilities-** Your expectations of parents

### **Enrollment/registration info-**records we keep on your child/updating

List the required forms that need to be completed and a note that parents will need to update them annually (see Put it in Writing Forms pkt)

Include Immunizations record requirement that children be up to date and records be provided

List any authorization/consent forms you will require

### **Supplies**

Parents provision of diapers, wipes baby food, etc.

Any other supplies you require from parents

### **Back up care in event of closure** (Family care)

What you need the parents to do in the event you are sick or have to close-do they need to find their own back up care?

### **What you will require in the event parents' divorce/custody issues**

What paperwork the parents will need to provide you with in the event of a divorce

# Family Handbooks

## Tips for Writing your Policies and Procedures

---

### **Your Program**

#### **Your basic schedule or routines\***

Explain how your day is set up and where they can find your schedule

#### **Curriculum or activities you will provide\***

Briefly describe your curriculum

Describe any specials activities you provide

#### **Group sizes and ratios\***

Explain how you staff your program-ratios maintained, group sizes)

#### **Toys from home**

Do you allow them? When? Explain why you have this policy

Explain how you handle this if a child shows up with toys

#### **Clothing requirements**

Explain what you need to for each child and why this is important

#### **Nap policy**

Explain ELD requirements for resting and what your options are for non-nappers

Include parent's responsibility to wash nap items each week

#### **How you promote health and safety**

Explain how you handle toileting,

What is your hand washing policy -when children are expected to wash their hands\*

#### **Screen time policy\***

Explain your policy on how much screen time children get and when you will allow it

#### **Meal program and special diets**

Give your approximate times meals are served

Explain how allergies or special diets will be handled

Explain you policy on food from home

#### **Your guidance and discipline policy**

Your policy should focus on positive guidance and what you do if a problem occurs

This is required to be posted.

#### **How we celebrate birthdays/holidays**

Explain health regulation about homemade goodies

Do you allow parents to bring in invitations for parties if the entire class is not invited?

#### **Field trips**

Do you do field trips?

Your requirement for permission

#### **Outdoor policy**

Explain the importance of outdoor play on a daily basis.

Spell out your policy about when they will go out and what clothing will be required

### **Family Partnerships**

#### **Involvement ideas**

Give families ideas on how they can be involved in your program

#### **Plans for parent meetings\***

Purpose of these meetings and when they are held

#### **Conferences\***

When these take place and how you will keep them informed about their child's progress

#### **How you will communicate and keep them up to date**

Newsletter, boards, texts, Facebook, tweets, emails\*

#### **Input and Yearly surveys\***

# Family Handbooks

## Tips for Writing your Policies and Procedures

---

When you will do surveys and how you will use the information

### Health and /Safety

#### Required emergency plan+ alternate safe location

ELD requires you have a written plan of the procedure you will follow in an emergency

Tell your alternate safe location

#### Fire drills

Explain how and when you do fire drills and other drills

#### How you handle accidents-accident reports

Explain what you do when an accident occurs

Accident reports are filled out and given to parents the same day

Parents need to sign a copy for your records

#### Illness policy on when children must be excluded

Explain health dept policy on when children must stay home

When children can return after an illness

How you notify parents when a child in your program has a communicable disease

#### Administering medicine policy

Explain this policy thoroughly. Including the need for written permission and how you document medication received

Emphasize all medication must be in original container and cannot be left in diaper bags or backpacks.

#### Information on transportation if you provide it

Explain what permissions are required, your use of car seats, how children will use your vehicle (ELD requirements)

#### Pets or animals in your program

ELD requires that parents be made aware of any animals in your program

#### Infant sleep policy/SIDS

Explain the policy for infants sleeping on their back and why is the recommended practice

\*These link to Oregon's Quality Rating System called Spark. For more details see:

<https://oregonspark.org/>

CCR&R Connecting your Parent Handbook to Oregon's QRIS

CCR&R SPARK Quality Checklist

### Additional policies that link to Oregon's Spark standards\*

- Encouraging participation\*
- Screening and assessment you do\*
- Adult staff interactions\*
- Program evaluation\*
- Willingness to include children with special needs\*