Wildcat Falls
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
Explore. Discover. Grow.

Employee Handbook

This handbook is a guide to our policies and procedures. This handbook should be read in its entirety. Failure to read this handbook may result in improper training and an inability to properly take on your role at Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. Along with the WF handbook, employees are required to read the NH DHHS rules and regulations as that is a mandatory requirement of working in childcare per the state of New Hampshire.

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Merrimack, NH 03054

603-275-1064

Each newly hired employee must complete Section 1 of Form I-9 no later than the first day of employment, after accepting an offer of employment. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will complete the employer review and verification within the time required by federal law. Employees may choose which acceptable documents to present from the current Form I-9 Lists of Acceptable Documents. The center will not request specific documents or more documents than required on the I-9. If timely verification cannot be completed, the center will act in accordance with federal law and any authorized receipt or reverification rules.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center

We're very happy to welcome you to our Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. Thanks for joining us! Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center would like you to feel that your employment with us will be mutually beneficial and enjoyable.
You are joining an organization that has established an outstanding reputation for the love and care we offer our students and staff. Credit for this goes to every one of our employees and we hope that you will find satisfaction and take pride in your work here.

Equal Employment

The Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center provides equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, genetic information or any other protected classification. Equal employment opportunities include, but are not limited to, hiring, training, promotion, demotion, transfer, leaves of absence, and termination. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center takes allegations of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation seriously, and will promptly investigate when such behavior is reported.

Immigration Law Compliance and Background Checks

Background Checks

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center conducts required background record checks through the New Hampshire Connections Information System in accordance with applicable law and licensing rules. This check includes fingerprint-based criminal history information, sex offender registry checks, and other required records. Background record checks will be renewed at the interval required by law or sooner if directed by the Department. Refusal or failure to complete a required background record check may affect an individual's eligibility to work in the program.

At-Will Notice

The employment relationship between Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center and employees is at-will. This means that employees are not hired for any specified period, and their employment may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice, by either Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center or the employee. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center policy requires that all employees are at will; any implied, or written agreements or promises to the contrary are void and unenforceable, unless approved by an owner with the power to create an employment contract. There is no implied employment contract created by this Handbook or any other Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center document or written or verbal statement or policy.

Mission and Vision

Nurturing curiosity, building confidence, and creating a love for learning through a calm, community-based environment.

Core Values

A Fresh Start for Early Learning

At Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, we believe childhood should be filled with wonder, exploration, and meaningful connections.

Our center is designed to feel calm, welcoming, and safe in a building that represents the community. Children are supported as individuals and encouraged to grow at their own pace through encouragement and support.

With a focus on hand-on learning, hands-on experiences, and strong community relationships, we are proud to offer a new beginning for families in our community

Handbook Purpose

This employee handbook provides information about Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center's philosophy, employment practices, policies, benefits, and expected conduct. While not a contract, it outlines important guidelines employees are expected to follow. As New Hampshire is an at-will employment state, policies may be amended, and employment may end at any time for any reason.

Employees are encouraged to ask questions and give feedback at any time; our open-door policy supports clear communication and positive relationships. We hope this handbook helps you feel comfortable at Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center and confident in your role.

Only the owner can modify handbook policies. Supervisors cannot change them or make agreements outside the handbook. The handbook also fulfills NH State Licensing requirements with DHHS.

If any part of this handbook is found invalid, the rest remains in effect. Nothing here restricts rights under Section 7 of the NLRA. Employees must read and refer to this guide as needed and comply with all DHHS regulations, which may not be altered by Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. Handbooks and personnel policies are kept in the director's office and available upon request. Feedback on policies can be communicated to the Director.

Employee Behavior

General Conduct Guidelines

Employees are expected to always demonstrate sound judgment and courtesy, ensuring the well-being of clients, colleagues, and Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center collectively. Professional conduct and respect for the safety and security of individuals and property are essential. Failure to uphold these standards may warrant disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The examples listed below illustrate unacceptable conduct, though they do not represent an exhaustive list.

- Noncompliance with policies outlined in this handbook.
- Negligent, careless, or inconsiderate handling of client matters or information.
- Theft, misappropriation, or unauthorized possession or use of property belonging to others.

- Unauthorized removal of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center property from the premises.
- Disclosure of trade secrets or confidential business information to unauthorized individuals.
- Unauthorized access to confidential information regarding clients or employees.
- Falsification or unauthorized alteration of any Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, client, or employee documents or records.
- Deliberate, negligent, or careless damage, defacement, or mishandling of property belonging to Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, clients, or employees.
- Engaging in bribery in any form.
- Unauthorized entry onto Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center premises.
- Violation of security, safety, or fire prevention regulations, or tampering with safety equipment.
- Unauthorized use of a personal vehicle for company business.
- Participation in illegal activities under federal, state, or local law.
- Creating disturbances on company premises.
- Use of abusive language.
- Any rude, discourteous, or unprofessional conduct, on or off company property, that is not protected by Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act and negatively impacts services, operations, reputation, or goodwill, or interferes with work.
- Insubordination, refusal to follow instructions from supervisors or managers, or unwillingness to accept assignments or perform job duties.
- Leaving the workplace during scheduled hours without authorization; absence from assigned areas during regular working hours without permission.
- Sleeping during scheduled work hours.
- Recording work time on behalf of another employee or permitting another employee to record time for them.
- Use or possession of illegal drugs on company premises at any time.
- Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours or reporting to work under the influence of intoxicants, unless medically directed.
- Unauthorized possession of weapons on company premises.
- Illegal gambling on company property.
- Soliciting, collecting money, vending, posting, or distributing materials during working hours in work areas. Such activities may be permitted during non-working hours, provided they do not disrupt business operations, are conducted lawfully and orderly, remain in good taste, and do not create safety hazards or litter.

Personal Appearance and Hygiene

Employees must maintain a professional image in behavior and appearance. Wear clean, neat, work-appropriate clothing—not expensive or fancy—and always have a spare outfit available, as going home to change may not be possible.

Acceptable attire includes:

- Bare feet or flip flops (at your own risk)
- Spandex, sweats, or workout clothes (not see-through, undergarments hidden)
- Appropriate T-shirts
- Shorts/skirts extending to wrists
- Tank tops with 1-inch straps
- Weather-appropriate outerwear

Unacceptable attire:

- Sagging pants, short shorts/skirts showing cheeks
- Sexually provocative clothing or exposed undergarments (bra straps must be covered)
- Clothing with offensive, sexually explicit, or drug/alcohol-related images or slogans
- Excessively worn clothing ("distressed" jeans acceptable unless excessive)
- Safety hazard accessories (e.g., large hoop earrings near children)
- Inappropriate visible tattoos

Maintain good hygiene; hair (including facials) should be clean and neat, and accessories shouldn't interfere with work. Avoid strong scents and disruptive odors. Any hair length or color is allowed to support individuality.

Managers will enforce these standards. Employees not complying may be counselled or sent home (unpaid) if appearance is distracting or unsafe. Reasonable accommodation for religious beliefs or disabilities is provided when feasible. For questions or accommodation requests, contact your supervisor.

Breaks/ Food and Drinks in the classroom

Employees who work more than five consecutive hours will receive a 30-minute meal period unless it is feasible for them to eat while performing their duties and they are permitted to do so. A meal period is unpaid only when the employee is completely relieved of duty. If an employee is required to supervise children, remain responsible for ratios, respond to work needs, or otherwise perform duties while eating, that time must be recorded and paid. Any minimum reporting-pay obligation will be administered in accordance with New Hampshire law. Break lengths may vary by schedule and staffing needs, subject to these requirements.

School snacks are for students only. Staff should bring their own and may eat with students. Hot drinks must be kept out of reach, in protective cups, and limited in the classroom due to burn risks.

Staff food should not be shared with students. Students may only share food when parents provide special snacks for the whole class.

Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center aims to maintain a workplace that is free from harassment, including inappropriate behavior, intimidation, and conduct directed at individuals based on protected characteristics. Federal and state laws define harassment as unwelcome actions related to someone's membership in a protected class. Language or actions that were not intended to be offensive may still be perceived as such. Employees are encouraged to be attentive to the perspectives of their colleagues.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Retaliation or threats after refusal of advances or requests
- Leering, sexual gestures, jokes, or comments on someone's appearance
- Displaying sexually suggestive materials
- Sharing derogatory posters, photographs, or drawings
- Use of epithets or slurs
- Repeated teasing about religious or cultural practices
- Repeated teasing about sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity
- Physical behavior such as touching, assault, or obstructing movement

Sexual harassment is prohibited regardless of whether it is committed by coworkers, managers, or third parties interacting with Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, such as clients, customers, or vendors.

Retaliation

Retaliation against anyone who reports or refuses harassment, files a complaint, or participates in an investigation is strictly forbidden. No disciplinary action will be taken against good faith complaints. False complaints may result in discipline, including termination.

Enforcement

Managers and supervisors must:

- Enforce Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center's harassment policy;
- Ensure employees know and understand the policy;
- Report misconduct complaints to the designated representative for investigation;
- Act promptly to correct issues and maintain compliance;
- Adhere to the policy in their own conduct.

Addressing Issues Informally

Employees who witness offensive workplace behavior are encouraged, but not required, to address it directly with the person involved. If told their conduct is offensive, employees must stop and avoid repeating it, regardless of personal opinions about the behavior.

Harassment Complaint Procedure

Employees are advised to report any behavior they consider to be harassment, whether it affects themselves or others. The complaint process ensures prompt, comprehensive, and unbiased investigation of reported harassment. Disciplinary measures will be applied to individuals who found to have engaged in harassing behavior.

Abusive Conduct

Abusive conduct is malicious, hostile, or offensive behavior at work that is not related to business needs. It includes repeated verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, humiliation, or attempts to undermine someone’s work. A single severe act may also qualify.

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center does not tolerate abusive conduct and requires all employees to report it to a manager. Managers must ensure a safe workplace and investigate reports as needed. Disciplinary action, including termination, may result for those found responsible. Retaliation against employees who report or confirm abusive conduct is strictly forbidden.

Complaint Procedure

Employees should report concerns promptly to a supervisor, the Director, an owner, or another designated contract. Employees may bypass any person involved in the concern. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will review complaints promptly, conduct an impartial investigation when appropriate, maintain confidentiality to the extent feasible, and communicate the outcome or status as appropriate. No internal deadline limits an employee’s right to report discrimination, harassment, wage concerns, safety concerns, protected concerted activity, or other legally protected complaints to a government agency.

Step 1

Submit your complaint orally or in writing to a supervisor or manager within three working days, or as soon as possible. A meeting is usually held within three business days, aiming to resolve the issue. You will receive a written summary within three business days, whether or not the issue is resolved. Further investigation may take longer. Unsatisfied with the outcome? Proceed to Step 2.

Step 2

Request a review by the Director or designated investigator orally or in writing within three working days of receiving the Step 1 resolution. They will review, investigate further if needed, and may meet again. A final decision and written summary will be provided within 10 working days of the request.

Corrective Action

Employees are expected to maintain high job performance and professionalism. If standards, policies, or acceptable behavior are not met, management may take corrective actions such as coaching, warnings, improvement plans, suspension, demotion, or termination. Management has full discretion in applying these actions and may terminate employment without prior disciplinary steps.

Workplace Violence and Security

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center requires employees to behave professionally and prohibits any threats, abuse, or violence toward others or company property. Violent acts or intimidation will result in disciplinary action, including possible termination.

Employees must help identify and report any threatening behavior. If you experience, witness, or learn of violent conduct, notify a manager immediately. All reports will be investigated and dealt with appropriately.

Staff Member Grievances

Employees with concerns about team members should speak privately with the director. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center supports an open-door policy, welcoming feedback and issues from staff.

If a staff member feels mistreated, they should contact the director. Employees are encouraged to respectfully share their opinions and suggestions regarding their classrooms or the center. A “Teacher Praise” and “Suggestions” box allows anonymous input. No employee will be disciplined to express their opinions calmly and respectfully.

Reporting Irregularities

Employees are required to promptly report any confirmed or suspected incidents of theft, fraud, embezzlement, or misuse of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center funds or property, as well as any suspicious conduct. Failure to report such activities when aware may result in disciplinary action and be regarded as complicity.

Inspections and Searches

All items brought to or removed from Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center premises, including personal and company property, may be searched unless state law prohibits it. Desks, lockers, workspaces, computers, and other company assets are also subject to inspection at any time, with or without notice. Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action.

The Guiding Rule

Actions that impact an employee's job performance, the work of other employees, or Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center's business interests, including its reputation and profitability—may result in disciplinary measures, which could include termination. This policy also applies to making threats toward others or speaking about self-harm.

Below are guidelines for social media usage. These rules are not intended to restrict Section 7 rights, and any actions taken according to this policy will consider whether employees were participating in protected concerted activity.

Employees are advised not to connect with parents on social media platforms. If an employee chooses to do so, there is a possibility of employment termination. For instance, if a parent questions an employee's ability to care for a child due to content posted online, such as posts related to drinking or partying, employment may end. It is recommended that employees do not add parents to their social media accounts. Any family members who are added as friends on social media must be documented and reported to management.

Avoiding Harassment

Employees must not post or share malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating content about customers, staff, or anyone affiliated with Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. Content that contributes to a hostile environment based on protected statuses is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action or termination.

Avoiding Defamation

Employees must not post false or suspected false information about Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, its associates, employees (current or former), or clients. Defamation can result in significant financial liability and may lead to disciplinary action, including termination.

Representation

Employees should not act as spokespersons for Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center unless authorized by management. When creating content about Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, employees are expected to disclose their employment and clarify that their opinions are personal and do not necessarily reflect those of the organization. This applies to interactions with news media and online communications involving Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center.

Personal Cell Phone Use

Cell phones are not to be used at any time during the day unless all children are napping and you are using it to look up work-related information. If you need to have your cell phone on you for any reason, please notify admin ASAP. Cell phone use is grounds for termination.

Personal Property

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Employees should secure personal items and avoid sending personal mail to the workplace, as it may be opened. Check with your manager before making large deliveries sent to work.

Parking

Parking is at your own risk. Lock your vehicle and remove valuables or take precautions as needed.

HEALTH and SAFETY

Non-Smoking

Smoking, vaping, and the use of smokeless tobacco are prohibited inside Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center buildings, work sites, and vehicles. Employees may participate in these activities during assigned breaks, outside the buildings, in designated areas, or off property if no such area exists, and must comply with local regulations.

Employees may not smoke, vape, or use tobacco while caring for children. After smoking or vaping during an authorized break, an employee must follow all required hygiene and clothing procedures before returning to childcare duties. Assignments will be made in accordance with current New Hampshire childcare licensing requirements and the center's health and safety procedures.

Drug and Alcohol

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center maintains a drug- and alcohol-free workplace. Employees may not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on premises, whether during work hours or breaks. Exceptions apply only to necessary prescription drugs that do not impair performance or safety, and moderate alcohol use at company-sponsored events.

Possession of illegal drugs or excessive prescription/OTC drugs is prohibited on site, during work duties, or when using company equipment. Suspected illegal drugs will be given to law enforcement.

Employees should consult healthcare providers about medications that may impact job safety or performance and inform managers of any limitations; reasonable accommodation will be provided where possible.

The company may test for drugs or alcohol as allowed by law, particularly for safety-sensitive roles, after certain incidents, or if impairment is suspected. Tests are conducted at company expense, and refusal is treated as a positive result.

Policy violations may lead to disciplinary action, up to termination. If legal restrictions limit any part of this policy, only that part is affected within the relevant jurisdiction.

Injury and Accident Response and Reporting

Employees must promptly report any workplace injury or accident to a manager and assist as requested. An injury report form should be completed and returned to the owner as soon as possible, without delaying medical care. The owner will handle follow-up, including decisions about returning to work.

When questioned by law enforcement or fire officials, provide only factual responses and avoid speculating or admitting liability.

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center prioritizes safety beyond legal requirements and encourages employees to immediately report hazardous conditions or non-working equipment to a manager. Remedial action will be taken when appropriate, and employees are protected from retaliation for reporting accidents, filing safety complaints, or requesting access to safety logs.

Health / Immunizations

Staff must have a doctor's authorization confirming their last exam date and current immunizations. A physical examination is required within the past year, with follow-up exams every three years to remain employed. We will provide the necessary form for your doctor.

Workers' Compensation

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center provides workers' compensation insurance for job-related injuries and illnesses, as determined by the insurance carrier. Benefits are governed solely by the carrier's documents; any conflicting statements or documents from Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center do not affect coverage.

Payroll and Time off and Center Closers

Introductory Period

The first 90 days of employment at Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center serve as an introductory period. During this time, employees get acquainted with colleagues, managers, job tasks, and company operations, while supervisors support their adjustment.

This period acts as a trial for both the employee and Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. The company assesses each employee's suitability, and employees decide if the organization is right for them. Employees may resign at any point, and Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may end employment if performance or conduct does not meet expectations.

At the end of 90 days, the director will review job performance with employees and welcome feedback. Completing this period does not guarantee future employment or change the at-will nature of employment. Rehired employees separated for more than one year are also subject to a new 90-day introductory period.

Anniversary Date and Seniority

The employee's date of hire is their official employment anniversary date. Seniority is the length of continuous service starting on that date. Should an employee leave Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center and then be rehired, previously accrued seniority will be lost, and seniority will begin to accrue again on the date of rehire. Except for certain protected leaves and paid time off, seniority does not accrue during leaves of absence that exceed 30 calendar days.

Employment Classifications

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center has established the following employee classifications for compensation and to maintain state regulations. The director will inform the employee of their classification, status, and responsibilities at the time of hire, re-hire, promotion or at any time a change in status occurs. These classifications do not alter the employment at-will status.

Regular Full-Time Employee

An employee who is hired/scheduled to work over 32 hours is considered full-time. The employee may be exempt or non-exempt and is generally eligible for all employment benefits offered by Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center.

Regular Part-Time Employee

An employee who is scheduled to work less than 31 hours in a workweek may be eligible for some benefits.

Temporary Employee

An employee who is scheduled to work on a specific need of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center. The employee will not receive any benefits unless specifically authorized in writing.

Paid Time off (PTO)

- Full-time exempt

Unused PTO does not carry over from year to year unless otherwise required by a written policy or applicable law. Treatment of unused PTO at separation will be governed by the written PTO policy in effect when the PTO was earned and by New Hampshire wage-payment law. Employees will receive written notice of the applicable accrual, use, carryover, and separation rules.

- Full-time non-exempt
- Part-time exempt
- Part-time non-exempt

The amount of PTO an employee is eligible for is determined by their employee status. Full-time employees (scheduled for 32+ hours per week) will receive 2 weeks of PTO annually. Part-time employees (scheduled for 21-31 hours per week) will receive 1.5 weeks of PTO annually. Super part-time employees (scheduled for under 20 hours per week) will receive 1 week of PTO annually. PTO will start accruing after the 90-day waiting period. Employees may take unpaid time off during the 90-day waiting period if needed, with approval from management. All employees must request their PTO at least two weeks in advance, and the time is not guaranteed if the center cannot accommodate the employees' absence. PTO may be added to timecards to accommodate sick days, if the employee wishes to do so. Using PTO for days out sick will need to be requested on Monday of the week that payroll will be processed.

Hours of Work

Employees must be in their work area and ready to begin on time. Work hours are provided at hiring and upon any position change. Staff will be notified of adjustments to operating or working hours, but schedule changes may occur without notice if needed for staffing or state ratios, including working beyond your shift. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center operates Monday–Friday, 6:30am–6:00pm; staff typically work 9-hour days with a 1-hour lunch break unless otherwise arranged.

Off-the-Clock Work

Non-exempt employees must record all hours worked, wherever and whenever work occurs. Off-the-clock work is not allowed. Management cannot approve or request uncompensated work from non-exempt staff. Report any violations to management immediately. Employees should only work during scheduled hours and are never required to answer parent messages on Brightwheel after hours. Management will reach out if there is an emergency.

Attendance and Tardiness

Employees are required to be present and prepared to begin work at the start of their scheduled shifts. If an employee anticipates being late or unable to attend work, they must notify their manager no less than 30 minutes prior to the commencement of their shift. Should the manager be unavailable, the employee is expected to inform another member of management. In instances where direct communication is not possible due to physical incapacity, employees should arrange for someone else to make contact on their behalf. Text messages are also considered an acceptable form of notification. Repeated tardiness or absenteeism constitutes unsatisfactory performance and may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including termination.

When reporting an absence, employees should communicate their anticipated return date or time. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center reserves the right to request documentation supporting the necessity of the absence, in accordance with applicable laws. Absence without appropriate notification for three consecutive days will be regarded as voluntary resignation, and the termination process will be initiated. Employees scheduled to start before 7:30am are asked to secure coverage for their morning shift in advance.

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may request documentation that describes an employee's functional limitations, expected duration, and need for leave or accommodation when permitted by law. Employees should not provide diagnoses or unrelated medical information unless specifically required by applicable law. Medical information will be maintained confidentially and separately from general personnel records. Before returning from leave, an employee may be asked for a fitness-for-duty statement addressing the essential functions or restrictions identified by the center, when lawful and job-related.

Should an employee become ill during their shift and need to leave early, they must promptly inform their manager. If illness impairs their ability to perform duties satisfactorily, they may be sent home until fit to return.

Absences should be planned as far as possible. Employees are encouraged to schedule appointments or obligations in such a way that minimizes disruption to business operations.

Inclement Weather and Outages Encounters

When the center closes or reduces operations because of weather, utility failure, or another emergency, employees will be notified through the designated communication system. Non-exempt employees will be paid for hours worked and may use available paid time off for missed scheduled hours, subject to the PTO policy. Exempt employees will be paid in accordance with salary-basis requirements. Any additional closure pay offered by the center will be described in the current written wage and fringe-benefit policy and applied consistently.

Emergency Closing

Only designated managers can authorize closures. During working hours, management may release staff early if conditions worsen, but employees are generally expected to stay until closing. Decisions on closures typically follow Merrimack School District, unless management decides otherwise.

Closing Procedures

Employees who are delayed or unable to work due to weather must notify their supervisor promptly by phone or text. If direct contact isn't possible, voicemail or a message with another employee is acceptable. Staff unable to work may use accrued time off or take unpaid leave.

Temporary Disability Leave

Military Leave

Employees on extended military leave are entitled to reinstatement in their previous or a similar position, if they meet USERRA requirements, without losing any rights or benefits. Reservists or members of the National Guard/Navy Militia may receive unpaid temporary leave for military duty under state law, with duty dates confirmed by a letter from their commanding officer.

Jury Service Leave

Employees are permitted to take time off for jury duty. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may ask employees to request an excuse from service, or a postponement, if their absence would cause significant operational difficulty.

A copy of the original jury summons should be submitted to the employee's manager upon receipt. For service periods exceeding two days, Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may require documentation confirming

attendance at jury duty. Employees are expected to report to work on any day, or part of a day, not actually spent at jury duty.

Employees may retain fees paid for jury duty. Jury duty leave is unpaid; however, available accrued paid time off may be used. Exempt employees will receive compensation as outlined by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Witness Leave

Employees required to attend court as a witness, accompany a minor, or participate as a victim in a criminal case will be granted leave for this purpose. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may request documentation verifying the necessity of such leave. The leave provided is unpaid; however, employees may utilize any available accrued paid time off. Exempt employees will receive compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Leave Entitlements

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave within a 12-month period. To qualify for FMLA leave, an employee must satisfy the following criteria:

- Employment with Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center for at least 12 months;
- Completion of at least 1,250 hours of service during the preceding 12 months; and
- Work at a location where Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center employs a minimum of 50 individuals within a 75-mile radius of the employee's website.

FMLA leave may be taken for the following purposes:

- Birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
- Bonding with a child, provided the leave is taken within one year of birth or placement.
- Caring for a spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition.
- Addressing the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that impedes their ability to perform job duties.
- Managing qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

Additionally, an eligible employee who is a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered servicemember may take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

Upon conclusion of FMLA leave, most employees must be reinstated to their original position or to an equivalent role with similar pay, benefits, and employment terms and conditions.

Using Leave

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule when medically necessary for serious health condition, for military caregiver leave, or for a qualifying exigency. Intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for bonding with a healthy newborn or newly placed child requires employer approval. Employees may be required to provide periodic status and intent-to-return updates consistent with the FMLA. Failure to return after leave without an approved extension may be treated as resignation only after all applicable leave and accommodation obligations have been evaluated.

If the leave reason matches a previous FMLA-certified leave, employees must notify Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center.

Accrued paid leave can be used during FMLA leave, subject to regular paid leave policies.

Employees should give 30 days' notice for FMLA leave or inform their manager as soon as possible if that's not feasible.

Documentation

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center requires certification from a health care provider for leave, with periodic updates as needed. Employees have 15 days to submit requested certification, and incomplete forms will be clarified in writing.

No medical diagnosis is needed, but employees must give enough information for Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center to determine FMLA eligibility, such as a doctor's note stating inability to work or need for treatment.

If a leave may qualify for FMLA, Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will inform employees about their eligibility and rights. If not eligible, a reason will be provided. Employees will be notified if leave is designated as FMLA leave and how much leave is covered.

Lactation Accommodation

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center provides reasonable break time each time an eligible employee needs to express breast milk for up to one year after childbirth. The center will provide a functional space, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view, free from intrusion, and available when needed. Employees will not be observed by security cameras or other monitoring systems while using the space. Pump-break time will be paid when required by law, including when the employee is not completely relieved of duty or when other comparable breaks are paid.

Personal Leave of Absence

Regular full-time employees at Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center with over six months' service may request unpaid personal leave in writing, specifying start date, return date, and reason. Approval is at the company's discretion based on operational needs.

If granted, leave must be used as approved. No sick leave, vacation, seniority, or benefits accrued during unpaid leave, and holidays are not paid. Failure to return on the scheduled date will be treated as resignation.

Benefits

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center respects employee FMLA rights and will not retaliate against anyone for taking leave, opposing unlawful practices, or participating in FMLA proceedings.

If employees feel they have not received proper FMLA benefits, they should speak to management first. If unresolved, they can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or pursue legal action. The FMLA does not override other federal, state, or local laws or agreements that offer greater family or medical leave protections.

Bereavement Leave

A regular employee of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center may request a leave of absence with pay (if they have PTO) for a maximum of three working day(s) upon the death of a member of their family.

All employees must follow safety standards. If an employee may pose a direct threat, Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will conduct an individualized assessment based on objective evidence and will determine whether a reasonable accommodation can eliminate or reduce the risk. Potential accommodation may include temporary changes to nonessential duties, modified schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, leave, or other effective measures, unless the accommodation imposes an undue hardship. No accommodation is categorically excluded without an individualized review.

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will provide reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions unless doing so would impose an undue hardship and will engage in a timely interactive process with the employee. Employees will not be required to take leave if another reasonable accommodation permits them to continue working. Medical documentation will be requested only when permitted by law. Employees may request schedule changes, additional breaks, modified duties, seating, leave, or other effective accommodations. Pregnancy-related appointments and leave will be administered consistently with applicable federal and New Hampshire law and the center's generally applicable paid-leave policies.

Reasonable Accommodations

If Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center learns that an employee needs accommodation due to a disability, the owner or manager will work with the employee to decide what accommodations are necessary and reasonable. Factors include effectiveness, cost, and impact on operations. Employees usually must provide documentation from a healthcare provider; Human Resources will supply the required form.

Additional NH Rules and Regulations

Pregnancy Laws and Parental Leave in New Hampshire

Employers must allow female employees leave for temporary disabilities caused by pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions. Upon return, the employee should be reinstated to her original or comparable position unless business necessity prevents it. Pregnancy and related conditions are treated as temporary disabilities for benefits and other employment matters.

NH State laws regarding pregnancy can be found at: https://www.nh.gov/hrc/pregnancy/common.html

Pay and Leave Practices

If Management authorizes a partial or full-day closure:

- Non-exempt hourly employees may use paid time off for missed hours; if unavailable, unpaid leave will be granted without penalty.
- Exempt employees are expected to work remotely if possible and will receive their normal salary as per Payroll Deductions policy.
- Employees already scheduled off during closures will use their previously approved leave.

Benefits

Childcare

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center provides full-time employees with a 75% childcare discount, based on their child's age and the standard tuition schedule. There is no waiting period, but employees who leave without two weeks' notice must pay two weeks' tuition at full price. Tuition is deducted from weekly paychecks.

Other

Employees here for 2 years or longer can join the company 401k with owner contributions. We also offer Aflac at the employees pre-taxed payment.

Holidays

Regular full-time employees are entitled to the following paid holidays observed by Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- The week of July 4th
- One Friday in Aug/Sep for fall setup
- Labor Day
- Closing at 12 the day before Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- The week of Christmas
- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day

Additional paid holidays may be designated. Full-time staff receive 50% pay for snow days. Holiday pay is not given to employees on unpaid status, leave, or workers' compensation. Holidays falling on weekends may be observed on Friday or Monday. Staff are eligible for holiday/snow day pay immediately. Employees who call out the day before or after a holiday or snow day lose their holiday pay.

Job descriptions and qualifications under current He-C 4002 requirements

Director Responsibilities

Qualifications are outlined in the NH DHHS Childcare rules and regulations He-C 4002.34.

- Oversee the day-to-day operations of the center which includes maintaining paperwork for staff, children, licensing, and labor, as well as monitoring ratios, classrooms, and health and center maintenance.
- Involved in policy making, staffing, financial matters, educational curriculum, public relations, marketing, and state licensing regulations.
- Oversees personnel and payroll procedures.
- Oversees accounts payables and receivables.
- Communicate effectively with staff, families, children, public, community leaders, and others both verbally and written.
- Serves as role model for staff and offers support for staff, families, and children.
- Continually strive to develop skills and training.
- Schedules training for staff, meetings with parents and other community members as warranted.
- Continues to further their own learning and self-assessment. Participate in local, state, and federal outreach and childcare advocacy programs and/or committees.

Lead Teacher Responsibilities

Qualifications are outlined in the NH DHHS Childcare rules and regulations He-C 4002.34.

- Care for children, provide snacks, lunch, and rest times in accordance with classroom routines and state regulations.
- Plan, implement and supervise curriculum.
- Supervise children at play, while setting limits, resolving conflicts, and expressing needs in appropriate ways. Staying calm and role modeling appropriate behavior.
- Keep up with the latest Early Childhood Educational practices and regulations.
- Observe and document children's work & developmental milestones.
- Assist with arrangements, décor, appearance and learning environment of the classroom.
- Participate in all staff training and parent/staff meetings.
- Act as teacher role model to student teachers, associate teachers, and assistant teachers
- Serve as mentor to unfamiliar staff.
- Assume an equal share of general clean up responsibilities, beginning and end of day classroom set up, and creating a safe environment by looking over all inside and outside equipment.
- Support our parent-friendly environment by helping with check-in, greeting all parents in the morning and the afternoon, providing feedback on each child, and creating ways for parent involvement
- Make accommodations or modifications for children with special needs when necessary
- Show you can multi-task, think quickly and demonstrate independent decision-making processes when it comes to their own classroom.
- Seek advice as needed from directors and assistant directors when needed in a professional manner.

Associate Teacher Responsibilities

Qualifications are outlined in the NH DHHS Childcare rules and regulations He-C 4002.34.

- Care for the children, provide snacks, lunch, and rest times in accordance with the classroom routines and state regulations.
- Plan, implement and supervise curriculum.
- Supervise children at play, while setting limits, resolving conflicts and expressing needs in appropriate ways.
- Keep up with the latest Early Childhood Educational practices.
- Observe and document children's work & developmental milestones.
- Assist with arrangements, décor, appearance and learning environment of the classroom.
- Participate in all staff training and parent/staff meetings.
- Act as teacher role model to student teachers and assistant teachers
- Serve as mentor to unfamiliar staff.
- Assume an equal share of general clean up responsibilities, beginning and end of day classroom set up, and creating a safe environment by looking over all inside and outside equipment.
- Support our parent-friendly environment by helping with check-in, greeting all parents in the morning and the afternoon, providing feedback on each child, and creating ways for parent involvement.
- Make accommodation or modifications for children with special needs when necessary
- Show they can multi-task, think quickly and demonstrate independent decision-making processes when it comes to their own classroom.

Assistant Teacher Responsibilities

Qualifications are outlined in the NH DHHS Childcare rules and regulations He-C 4002.34.

- Help care for children, provide snacks, lunch, and rest times in accordance with classroom routines and state regulations.
- Assist lead or associate teacher with planning, implementing and supervising curriculum.
- Supervise children at play, while helping to set limits, resolve conflicts and express needs in appropriate ways.
- Assist with observing and documenting children's work and development.
- Assist with arrangements, décor, appearance and learning environment of the classroom.
- Participate in some staff training, all staff meetings and attend parent meetings if needed.
- Assume an equal share of general and closing clean-up responsibilities and help to keep the environment both inside and outside safe. Assistant teachers may be asked to do the end of day cleaning when ratios are low.
- Assist with meeting the accommodations or modifications of children with special needs per discussion with your lead/associate teacher.
- Show a willingness to learn and grow as a teacher and employee.

Federal Government Paperwork: Form I-9 and Form W-4. Employees completing Form I-9 may choose from the documents listed on the current Lists of Acceptable Documents; Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center will not require a Social Security card unless a separate lawful requirement applies.

Employees must complete all orientation, health and safety, position-specific, and annual professional development requirements within the timeframes established by the current He-C 4002 rules. The program will maintain documentation of completed training and will schedule staff so that all required certifications and trained coverage are continuously maintained. Training time will be paid when required by applicable wage-and-hour law.

Staff Record Requirements per He-C 4002.09

Personnel Records

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center is required by NH DHHS to maintain a staff file. File items are made up of items required by us, NH DHHS, and by the federal government.

Employee Training

Employees are required to complete the state-mandated orientation and health and safety training within the timeframes established by New Hampshire childcare licensing rules. Training time will be recorded and paid when required by applicable wage-and-hour law.

WF Required Paperwork:

- Divers License/ Student ID/ Passport
- Staff information form
- Handbook agreement
- Direct Deposit form

DHHS Required Paperwork:

- Qualification/ ECE college credit
- Background record check certification (to be completed every 5 years)
- Physical with date and cleared to work with children letter
- Licensing Orientation
- Infectious Disease
- SIDS/ Shaken Baby syndrome
- Medication administration training
- Allergies
- Building Safety/Hazard Materials
- Transportation
- First Aid/ CPR
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Development

If a child is seriously injured or ill, staff must immediately obtain appropriate assistance, including calling 911 when required by first aid and CPR training, and promptly notify the program manager or designee. The child's parent or guardian must be notified immediately. If emergency transportation occurs, an authorized staff member should accompany the child when feasible and remain until a parent, guardian, or authorized person assumes care. The program manager or designee must report a serious injury or emergency to the Department through NHCIS within 48 hours and provide the required written report to the parent or guardian by the next business day.

Emergency Operations

Fire Drills

Emergency drills—such as fire, evacuation, reverse evacuation, drop & cover, shelter in place, lockdown, reunification, and recovery—occur frequently during the year. Each classroom displays emergency procedures; read and understand them, and ask your lead teacher, co-teacher, or director if you have questions. Follow posted evacuation plans, and bring the emergency binder, tablet, first aid backpack, and your car keys (preferably with the red emergency bags). Non-walking infants must be placed in an emergency crib (max 4 per crib); use extra cribs if needed. After evacuating, account for and report all children to the director on duty. The director will confirm headcounts with each teacher, and a name-to-face check will be recorded in Brightwheel.

Child Emergency

Prevention and Management of Injury according to He-C 4002.19

(a) Child care staff shall supervise every child in care at all times.

(b) In center-based programs, staff shall:

(1) Know the number and identity of children in their care; and

(2) Position themselves to:

a. Be able to always hear all children younger than school age, continuously scan the entire environment to know where children are and what they are doing, and be able to physically respond immediately;
b. Always know the whereabouts and activities of all school age children in their care when children are briefly out of sight, such as when transitioning from one area to another or using the bathroom, and shall be able to physically respond immediately; and
c. Allow for visual supervision of all children while children are eating and shall be able to physically respond immediately to any child.

(c) The only exception to (b)(2)a. above shall be children 4 years and older may leave the classroom to use a bathroom located on the same level as the classroom, provided that child care staff are aware of each child leaving the classroom to use the bathroom and the level of the building that the bathroom is located on is used exclusively by the child care program.

(f) Childcare staff shall not carry a child while stepping over a low wall, gate, or other similar barrier.

(g) Childcare staff shall protect younger or less mobile children from accidents or injury which could be caused by older or more physically active children.

(h) The program shall obtain the following documents from the parents or guardians of each child with a food allergy or other allergy, which results in a serious reaction:

(1) A written care plan that includes instructions regarding food(s) or other allergens to which the child is allergic and steps for childcare staff to take to avoid the allergens; and

(2) A written treatment plan, detailing the treatment to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, which should include:

a. The names, doses, and methods of prompt administration of any medications, where the medication needs to be stored in relation to the child, taking into consideration the storage requirements in He-C 4002.20(j)(2), and instructions on how to administer the prescribed medication; and
b. Specific symptoms that indicate the need to administer one or more medications.

(i) At all times, at least one childcare staff supervising a child with an allergy care plan shall have completed the training specified in He-C 4002.32(b)(5).

(j) The program manager or their designee shall notify a child's parent or guardian when the program deviates from the planned menu as indicated on children's allergy care plans, as applicable.

(k) With permission of the parent or guardian, the program shall post each child's allergy care plan and treatment plan in the kitchen or food preparation area, the child's classroom, and wherever the child might have contact with the allergen(s).

(l) In the event a parent or guardian does not authorize posting of their child's allergy care plan or treatment plan as required in (k) above, the program shall not post the plans, but ensure the plans are available in the locations in (k) above, and all staff working in those locations know where the plans are and review the plans upon entering those locations.

(m) All childcare staff responsible for food preparation and food service, and all childcare staff responsible for supervising children with an allergy, including staff covering breaks, should read and familiarize themselves with the allergy care plans and treatment plans, to ensure that no child is accidentally exposed to an allergen.

(n) The program manager or their designee shall immediately notify a child's parent or guardian in the event of a suspected allergic reaction or ingestion of or contact with a known allergen, even if a reaction did not occur.

(o) Program staff shall notify emergency services immediately whenever staff administer epinephrine (Epi-pen) to a child.

(p) Programs shall be equipped with a telephone that is operable and accessible to all childcare staff during all operating hours for incoming and outgoing calls. The phone may be a cellular phone or a landline.

(q) Childcare staff shall report any occurrence of a missing child to emergency services, as soon as childcare staff have determined that the child cannot be promptly located on the premises of the childcare program.

(r) There shall be at least one staff person present with all children during all operating hours, both on and off premises, who is trained and currently certified in pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid, which shall be obtained by the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, Emergency Care and Safety

Institute, National Safety Council, American Trauma Event Management, or other nationally recognized organization.

(s) CPR and first aid training as specified in (r) above may be received via correspondence or online, provided a skill test is required to be performed prior to becoming certified.

(t) Programs shall maintain on file, available for review by the department, copies of current CPR and first aid certificates and licenses.

(u) Programs shall have on the premises and on all field trips, a selection of non-expired first aid supplies adequate to meet the needs of the children.

(v) Programs shall store the first aid supplies required under (u) above in a portable container, in a location that is accessible by staff.

Minor injury or accidents according to He-C 4002.12

(a) If any child while in the care of the program sustains a serious injury, as defined in He-C 4002.01(bk), or otherwise requires emergency services as prescribed in first aid and CPR training, the program manager or designee shall: Return to Table of Contents He-C 4002 Adopted Rule 8/26/25 23

1. Immediately notify emergency personnel and the child's parents or guardians; and
2. Notify the department within 48 hours via NHCIS.

(b) The program manager or designee shall provide a written report by the next business day to the parents or guardians of the child or children that sustained a serious injury to fully inform them of the details of the incident reported in (a) above, including, if known:

1. The name of individuals involved in, and who witnessed, the incident, while keeping the identities of other children confidential;
2. What occurred prior to and following the incident;
3. When and where the incident occurred; and
4. Any action taken, or that will be taken by the program in response to the incident.

(c) The program manager or designer shall immediately notify a child's parent or guardian if their child sustains a bump or injury to their head or face that is more than a minor injury such as a scrape or scratch, resulting in any one of the following:

1. Excessive bruising or swelling;
2. An increase in fussiness or sleepiness;
3. Dizziness, clumsiness, or trouble with coordination;
4. Nausea or vomiting;
5. Loss of consciousness;
6. Headache;
7. Speech, vision, or hearing impairment; or
8. Discharge or blood from the bump.

(d) Except as required in (b) above, when a child sustains an injury pursuant to (c) above, the program manager or designee shall provide written notification to the child's parent or guardian as soon as possible on the date of the injury, detailing how the injury occurred, the date, time, and location of the injury, a description of the first aid treatment given to the child, and the name of the staff who administered first aid.

(e) First aid beyond cleaning a minor scrape or applying a cold cloth or an adhesive bandage, shall only be administered by staff currently certified in first aid.

Classroom Management/ Day to Day

Staff and Child Attendance Records in accordance with He-C 4002.08

(a) The program shall have a record of each child's attendance in each room that:

(1) Documents each child's daily arrival at and departure from the program, in real time; and

(2) Is recorded all in one place, in a manner that reflects the number of children present in each room throughout the day.

(b) In addition to the requirements in (a) above, the program shall include or have the date of birth immediately available for each child listed on the child attendance record.

(c) The program shall have a record of daily staff attendance, including the staff's full name, scheduled work hours, their position as identified under He-C 4002.34, and their arrival and departure times at the program and in each room or group throughout the day, as applicable, recorded in real time by the staff.

(d) The staff attendance record shall be recorded all in one place, in a manner that reflects the staff present in each room throughout the day.

(e) The only exception to (c) above is staff shall not be required to sign in and out for breaks lasting fewer than 15 minutes when the staff remain in the building, or to conduct necessary tasks on the premises.

Interactions between and Among Adults and Children according to He-C 4002.17

(a) Childcare staff shall regularly interact with children at their level, maintain eye contact, and, whenever appropriate, sit on the floor with them.

(b) When a child is engaging in unacceptable behavior, childcare staff shall:

1. Redirect a child's attention to a desirable activity by providing positive guidance, positively worded directions, and developmentally appropriate explanations for limits and rules;
2. Establish developmentally appropriate rules or limits for acceptable behavior, which are equitable, consistently applied, and developmentally appropriate;
3. Demonstrate desired behavior and problem-solving skills and then redirect children to acceptable behavior;
4. Arrange equipment, materials, activities, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior; and
5. Implement safe, logical, and natural consequences related to misbehavior and enforce those consequences as soon as possible after the misbehavior has occurred.

(c) Childcare staff shall use separation from the group only as a method to enable a child to regain control of themselves, and not as a punitive disciplinary technique. Childcare staff shall check in with children to determine when they are ready to rejoin the group.

(d) When a child is separated from the group, they shall be able to see and hear the other children and be within hearing and vision of child care staff, except when child care staff remove a child from the classroom to a quieter area which is visible by other child care staff, to provide one-on-one attention.

(e) Childcare staff and household members shall not:

1. Abuse or neglect children;
2. Use rough handling on children;
3. Shake children;
4. Use corporal punishment on children;
5. Require children to stand or sit facing walls or corners;
6. Shame, humiliate, threaten, or frighten children;
7. Confine infants or toddlers in highchairs or other seating devices or equipment, which restricts their movement, as a disciplinary technique;
8. Place or confine children in equipment that is not appropriate for their age, including but not limited to cribs, playpens, or highchairs;
9. Withhold food from children, forcibly feed children, or discipline children for not eating;
10. Discipline any child for toileting accidents, lapses in toileting habits, or prohibiting children from using the toilet as a form of discipline;
11. Isolate a child as a form of discipline;
12. Require children to rest, sleep, or go to their mat, crib, or rest area as a means of discipline, or discipline children for not sleeping or resting during naptime;
13. Yell in anger or frustration at or in the presence of children;
14. Use profanity or obscene language with children or among themselves where children can hear them; or
15. Endanger a child as per RSA 170-E:4, II.

(f) The applicant, licensee, and all childcare staff shall take prompt action to protect children from abuse, neglect, rough handling, and corporal punishment, including but not limited to actions in (e) above.

(g) The program manager or their designee shall immediately notify the child's parent or guardian:

1. After calling emergency services to report that their child died while under the care of the program;
2. After calling the police when the program determines that their child is missing; Re
3. To report any allegation of abuse or neglect involving their child while in the care and custody of the licensee;
4. To report that their child was the victim of corporal punishment, rough handling, or other harsh treatment by childcare staff;
5. To report that their child was physically injured because they were not supervised; or
6. To report that their child's health, safety, or well-being was otherwise jeopardized due to a program's non-compliance with licensing rules.

(h) The department shall notify the child's parent or guardian if it determines that the program manager or their designee did not notify a child's parent or guardian in accordance with the requirements in (g) above.

(i) If a child's actions pose an imminent serious safety risk to the child or others that could result in serious bodily harm, childcare staff may move the child to another area, holding the child as gently as possible and as briefly as necessary to protect the child and others.

(j) If a child has multiple incidents as described in (i) above and does not respond to techniques described in (b) above, the program manager shall, in consultation with parents or guardians, create and implement a behavior management plan which supports the retention policy pursuant to He-C 4002.15(a)(1).

Any employee who has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected must immediately make a report directly to the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families in accordance with applicable law and center procedures. Reporting is the employee's individual legal responsibility and may not be delayed while seeking supervisory approval. Employees should notify the Director after making the report unless doing so would compromise the child's safety or an investigation. The center prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith report or participates in an investigation.

(k) The program should ensure that parents or guardians have access to the program and to their children, at any time children are in attendance and without prior notification. This requirement shall not prohibit the program from locking the doors for security purposes or checking parent's or guardian's identification.

(l) The only exceptions to (k) above shall be if there is a court order or other legal documentation limiting parental or guardian access.

(m) Childcare staff shall not:

1. Be impaired while on the job by any substances including, but not limited to, legally prescribed medication, alcohol, or illegal substances; and
2. Use alcohol or illegal substances while caring for children.

Behaviors

Staff must complete a behavior log for any child having trouble at school, noting the time, duration, location, and corrective actions. Use Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center's observation form as needed; it must be signed by both the reporting staff and the child's parent at pickup and will be kept in the child's record.

Abuse/Neglect

Releasing Children

Only authorized parents, those identified by parents, or individuals listed on the pick-up list, are permitted to pick up a child from the center. Staff should check the child's emergency file to confirm authorization and request a photo ID if they do not recognize the person picking up the child. It is not acceptable to identify someone based on a child's statement. Parents are required to inform the center in advance if someone else will be picking up their child, either through a written note or a message via Brightwheel specifying the date, time, and designated person. Teachers will keep the note until the child has been picked up, after which it will be submitted to the director for filing.

Security

Employees must secure center and family information by locking doors, desks, files, and media, and keeping passwords safe. The building has over 16 security cameras with audio for staff and student protection.

Parents and staff enter the office using a key phone; all other doors are off-limits. Visitors must check in at the office. If someone unfamiliar arrives for pickup, verify their ID. Only release children to those listed on the emergency contact form; otherwise, contact the parent. If permission isn't granted, ask the person to leave—if they refuse, relocate students and call 911.

Confidentiality according to He-C 4002.42

(d) Applicants, licensees, and all childcare staff shall keep confidential all records required by the department pertaining to the admission, progress, health, and discharge of children under their care and all information learned about children and their families.

(e) Childcare staff shall:

a. Allow the department to access all records that programs are required by department rules or state statute to keep, and to such records as necessary for the department to determine staffing patterns and staff attendance; and
b. Release information regarding a specific child only as directed by a parent or guardian of that child, or upon receipt of written authorization to release such information, signed by that child's parent or guardian.

(f) In addition to the confidentiality requirements in (d) above, child care staff shall discuss or share information regarding the admission, progress, behavior, health, or discharge of a child with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in a manner that protects and maintains confidentiality for both the child and the child's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Out of School Childcare

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center is committed to fostering strong, trusting relationships with the families we serve. To maintain professional boundaries, dual employment arrangements between center staff and client families are strictly prohibited. Employees must refrain from entering into private employment agreements (such as babysitting) with Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center families during their tenure at the center and for twelve (12) months following the end of their employment. If an employee wishes to provide babysitting services for a family associated with Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, they are required to submit a written request to the Director, which may involve a formal meeting with both the family and the employee. At no time should a child be withdrawn from the center solely for the purpose of enabling a staff member to provide babysitting services, as this constitutes removal of business from the center and may lead to legal consequences.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's actions could harm Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center, including using their position for personal or related gain. This covers illegal, unethical, or questionable behavior both on and off site. Educators must set a positive example for students.

Examples include:

- Requesting gifts or discounts in exchange for business relationships
- Working for competitors and sharing confidential information
- Taking a second job that affects performance at Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center
- Posting inappropriate or threatening content on social media visible to staff or families

Posting self-harming or threatening messages may lead to termination; employees needing mental health support should contact management for assistance.

Employees must also avoid actions that might appear as conflicts of interest, which can affect the organization's reputation. If unsure about any activity, employees should consult with their manager or owner, including when leaving to become a nanny for families associated with the center.

Handwashing according to He-C 4002.29

(a) Childcare staff shall wash their hands with liquid soap and running water as needed and:

1. After each diaper change or toileting;
2. After handling any bodily fluid;
3. After cleaning up or handling the garbage;
4. After playing outdoors;
5. Before and after eating;
6. Before and after administering medication; and
7. Before and during any food preparation or service as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and prevent cross contamination when changing tasks or from raw to ready to eat foods.

(b) Childcare staff shall:

1. Teach children the importance of hand washing with liquid soap and running water; and
2. Instruct, encourage, remind, or assist infants and children as needed throughout each day to wash their hands as necessary to comply with (a)(1) through (5) above.

(c) Sinks that are used for food preparation or clean up, including sinks used for getting water for baby bottles, rinsing bottles, or dishes, and washing toys, shall not be used for brushing teeth, hand washing after toileting, or diaper changing

Child Nutrition and Eating

Staff must be trained in USDA nutrition standards and choking hazards and stay informed about allergies and parent food requests. Do not serve expired food. PM Snack menu is posted in the kitchen as well as the parent wall. Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center supplies only PM Snack and Friday pizza; parents provide other meals. Be aware of foods restricted by New Hampshire for children under three.

Document infant feeding schedules. Engage with children during meals and encourage appropriate conversation. Children may leave the table when they have finished and the group is ready. Staff may eat snacks with children to model healthy choices and table manners but should not bring candy or other treats that children are not permitted to have. Treat all children fairly.

Medication

Medication may be given by a director or qualified teacher with a parent's request and a doctor's note. All medication must be in its original, clearly labeled container with the child's name, type, and instructions for use. We do not administer expired medication, or medicine inappropriate for a child's age (e.g., cough medicine to a newborn). Each administration requires completion of a medication form signed by the parent, and teachers must record and initial each dose.

Teachers must record every diaper change in Brightwheel or the program's approved recordkeeping system. Diapers must be checked and changed as required by the child's needs and the current licensing rules, including promptly after soiling. Missing entries must be reported and corrected as soon as discovered. Staffing and routines must be organized so that required care and documentation are completed consistently.

Toilet learning will be individualized, developmentally appropriate, and coordinated with each child's parent or guardian. Staff will support a child when the child shows readiness and the family wishes to begin, without imposing a fixed minimum age. Children will never be ashamed, punished, denied toileting, or required to remain in soiled clothing. Any accommodation needed for disability or developmental needs will be provided in accordance with the child's individual plan and applicable law.

Exclusions and Illness Policy

Children will be excluded from care when their symptoms meet the criteria in the current New Hampshire childcare licensing rules, public-health guidance, or the child's individualized health plan. Return-to-care decisions will be based on the child's condition, ability to participate, risk to others, and any documentation required by applicable rules or health authorities. Medication may not be used solely to mask symptoms for attendance.

Staff must wear gloves whenever handling sick children, changing diapers, assisting with toileting, cleaning up bodily fluids, or treating injuries. Hands should be washed with soap and water afterward.

Children's Meals

Teachers will prepare meals/snacks and help children with their lunches. Lunches should not be heated for more than 10-15 seconds. Child's lunches are to be kept in their lunch boxes. Classroom fridges are for teachers' lunches, school snacks and for milk only. We do not allow Easy Mac to be made. For older children, encourage them to try to open their lunches and to ask a friend if they can help before helping them open their lunches, this encourages independence. When using sharp utensils, always keep them out of the reach of children (scissors, knives, staplers, etc.). Hands need to be washed before any food preparations are made and gloves are to be used while preparing snacks and lunches. Please check the food allergy list when preparing food for your classroom.

Changing Diapers

- They can stay dry for long periods of time
- They can pull up/down pants
- Can help/ understand how to wipe
- Waking up dry from naps
- Showing interest in the potty.
- Can follow simple direction
- Knowing when they need to go
- Can communication between their wants and needs
- Is physically able to get to the bathroom (no more than 2 accidents in 1 week)
- Pooping regularly (even when hiding to poop)
- Not having toilet terrors

If a parent is thinking of training their child to use the potty, they must speak with the teacher first. Students will be required to stay in a resealable pull-up when training. We are happy to have the child move to underwear after they have demonstrated the skills above and have been able to stay dry for 2 weeks. Should the child have an accident, they will never be ashamed. They will be cleaned up right away! More than 2 accidents in a day will result in a diaper.

If a potty-trained child has an accident, the child will be cleaned immediately and will NEVER be ashamed. The child will be changed into clean clothing. The child's clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and then placed in the child's cubby. The spot where the child had their accident will be cleared of students and then cleaned. If a child has an accident on their blanket, it will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home for cleaning. If a child does not have a change of clothing, you will be called to pick your child up or to bring your child a change of clothing.

Rest and sleep according to He-C 4002.25

Childcare staff shall arrange cribs, cots, beds, mats, or playpens in a manner that ensures that:

  - They do not block passageways and exit routes, to allow for emergency evacuation and access to each child by staff;
  - They are spaced at least 2 feet apart while in use or separated by a solid divider on one side only, allowing for adequate supervision by staff and air circulation; and
  - Children are placed head to toe.
- Programs shall ensure that each child requiring rest or sleep is provided with a sleeping bag, crib, cot, bed, or mat.
- Each infant 12 months of age and younger shall be placed on their back to sleep in an individual crib or play pen, unless they have demonstrated the ability to climb out.
- Childcare staff shall discontinue using cribs or play pens with children who have demonstrated the ability to climb out of them.
- Cribs and play pens required under (c) above shall:
  - Not be stacked;
  - Be in good repair;
  - Not having holes or tears in the mesh walls or in the material that connects the walls to the bottom of the crib or play pen;
  - Have tight fitted sheets designed for the size mattress that do not compress the mattress;
  - Be free of bumper pads, blankets, flat sheets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioners, toys, and other items when used by infants up to 12 months old; and
  - Have mattresses which are in good repair, free of rips or tears, and fit the crib or playpen so that the space between the mattress and crib or playpen is not more than 1 inch wide and does not create a suffocation hazard.
- If an infant up to 12 months falls asleep outside of their crib or play pen, including entering the program asleep in a car safety seat, staff should immediately move the infant and place them on their back in a crib or play pen.
- When childcare staff place infants in their crib or play pen for sleep, they shall check the infants to ensure that they are comfortably clothed and not overheated or sweaty, and that bibs and garments with ties or hoods are removed.

    - Children older than 3 months shall not be swaddled or placed in restrictive or weighted sleep suits or devices unless there are written medical orders from the child's primary licensed practitioner.
- Blankets, sleeping bags, bedding, cots, and mats shall be stored in a manner that ensures that sleeping surfaces are not touching, or the items shall be washed and sanitized before re-used if stored in a way that sleeping surfaces are touching.
- All bedding shall be cleaned at least once a week and more frequently if soiled, and between uses by different children
- Programs shall provide children who attend for more than 5 hours with an opportunity for at least one hour of quiet activities, rest, or sleep, in any combination to equal one hour, depending on the needs of each child.
- Programs allow children to fall asleep and awake at their own pace within a block of time set aside as nap or rest time.
- Programs shall provide children who do not fall asleep after 30 minutes with an opportunity to do a quiet activity.
- Childcare staff shall not:
    - Require that children who are awake stay on mats, sleeping bags, coats, or beds for more than 60 minutes; or
    - Require children to sleep.
- No child shall wear a necklace during nap time or during sleep, unless the necklace is fused or has a fixed knot such that it cannot be removed.

Pictures

Staff may only take children's photos on Brightwheel with parent consent. Photos are for school use only and must stay in the building. Parents can opt-out, which is noted on the child's Brightwheel profile, and those children cannot be photographed alone or in groups.

Walks/ Outside Time

Take first aid bags, tablets, emergency binders, and cellphones when going outside with children. Verify all children are present using verbal name-to-face checks; Brightwheel is optional. Inspect outdoor equipment for safety hazards before play. Staff should supervise closely, avoid socializing, and remain standing. For slides and swings, a staff member must be nearby to prevent injuries. If multiple staff are present, each should monitor a designated playground area. Repeat name-to-face checks after returning indoors. At day's end, clean the playground, bring in water bottles (rinse, refill, and close umbrellas in summer), and check for children's belongings.

When walking with children, ensure they are securely strapped into seats. Buggies and strollers must stay on Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center property unless a director approves a field trip—then parents must complete field trip forms.

Transitions in the Classroom

Transitions between actives and within the classroom should be:

- Safe
- Predictable (must give a 5-minute countdown)
- Unhurried

- Flexible

Outside Activities

Employees are permitted to engage in outside employment during non-working hours, provided such activities do not compromise job performance or present a conflict of interest. Before accepting any external employment, employees must notify their manager in writing. The notification should include the company name, position title, a description of duties, anticipated weekly working hours, and the schedule of work hours. Should any outside position interfere with the employee's responsibilities or represent a conflict of interest at any time, the employee may be asked to modify or discontinue the external employment.

Transitioning to a New Classroom

Throughout a child's time with us, they will transition from one classroom to the next. We used to have children spend time in their new classroom to get used to it and their friends. However, due to team teaching, we can have students move to their next room much more quickly and effectively. However, if the child does struggle, we will take our time and help them adjust at a slower pace. Parents will get up to a one-week notice of transitions when appropriate. Please note, sometimes children may need to be moved more quickly due to behavior issues or developmental issues. It is our responsibility to ensure child's belongings make it to their new classroom and that they have a supply list should it be different to their current classroom. The classroom teacher will send a welcome message introducing themselves and what to expect when entering the classroom. Please note, a child will be held back or moved up at parents' request.

Cleaning of Your Classroom

Maintaining a safe and clean environment throughout the school—both indoors and outdoors—is essential. Ensuring that children are properly supervised at all times is paramount. Please observe the following guidelines:

- All cleaning solutions and equipment must always be stored securely out of reach of children. These items should only be accessed when cleaning is underway. Placing them on counters, microwaves, or diaper-changing stations does not constitute adequate safety. Instead, ensure they are placed on high shelves or within locked cabinets. If the tallest child in the center can access them, they must be moved to a more secure location.
- Untidy classrooms pose safety risks. While prioritizing engagement with children is crucial, maintaining a clean space supports their wellbeing. Even children as young as one can be encouraged to assist with tidying up toys and clearing their table spots. After meals, it is necessary to sweep floors and clean tables, as young children may pick up and eat leftover food. Nap time provides an optimal opportunity for completing cleaning tasks. Each classroom, common area, and bathroom is equipped with a cleaning checklist, which must be marked with your initials upon completion. Taking pride in our center is a collective responsibility; cleaning duties apply to everyone. By marking a task as complete, you accept responsibility for its proper execution.
- Cleaning checklists are available in every classroom. Adhering to these lists is not optional, it is an integral component of your role. Ensure that all listed cleaning tasks are performed daily. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

If an employee who receives a childcare discount ends employment, any outstanding tuition obligation will be handled under the enrollment agreement and applicable wage-payment law. No deduction will be made from wages unless it is lawful and supported by any written authorization required by New Hampshire law.

Costs

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center provides classroom supplies and reimburses up to $25.00/month for reasonable business-related expenses. All supplied equipment must be used only for work purposes and kept in good condition.

Any personal items brought from home that students use regularly become property of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center; this ensures consistent access for students. Items used occasionally and not left at school may be taken back. Clearly label your belongings with your first and last name.

EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

Resignation

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center requests that employees provide at least two weeks' written notice of their intent to resign. This notice should be submitted to an employee's manager. Depending upon the circumstances, an employee may be asked not to work any or all their notice period, in which case they will be allowed to use up any vacation time, if available, from the time notice is given. An exit interview may be requested. Management will inform parents of employees leaving – please refrain from sharing this information directly with parents, prior to management informing them. This can be a sensitive time for parents, and it is imperative that this conversation is handled by management.

Termination

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center is an at-will employer. This means that either Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center or the employee can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and for any reason allowed by law, or for no reason at all.

Personal Possessions and Return of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center Property

Return all Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center property (computer equipment, keys, tools, credit cards) immediately upon termination. Employees are responsible for lost or damaged items. Take personal belongings when leaving; you may be asked to return after hours to avoid disturbing students. Do not ask others to retrieve your or your child's belongings.

Where to locate the Following

Each classroom should note where a sub or other staff member can find the following:

- First aid kit (on a hook, in red bag, by an exit door)
- Allergy information (posted by sink or microwave, in kitchen/eating area)
- Emergency Binders (in red bags)
- Cleaning Chart (by kitchen sinks, in office & in bathrooms)
- Lesson Plans and classroom routines (curriculum binder)
- Fire Drill and other emergency procedures (by an exit door and hang in classrooms)
- Curriculum materials (paper, markers, paint, etc.)

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center

I acknowledge receipt of Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center's Employee Handbook and agree to follow the guidelines within it. I also acknowledge the following:

1. Receipt of this handbook does not create a contract of employment or in any way alter my at-will employment status; Wildcat Falls Early Learning Center or I can end the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause.
2. I am not entitled to any sequence of disciplinary measures prior to termination.
3. Except for the at-will employment policy, this handbook may be modified at any time.
4. Violation of any policy in this handbook, or any policy included as an addendum, may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.
5. This handbook does not include every process, policy, and expectation applicable to employees, or my position specifically; I may be counseled, disciplined, or terminated for poor behavior or performance even if the behavior or performance issue is not addressed in the handbook.
6. Should any provision in this handbook conflict with federal, state, or local law, that provision only will be considered ineffective, while the rest of the handbook remains effective.
7. If I have questions regarding any policy in this handbook, or other expectations related to my behavior or performance, it is my responsibility to speak with my manager or Human Resources.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Printed Name