



# Employee Handbook

Revised September 2019

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## Disclaimer

This policy handbook is not intended to be a contract of employment and does not constitute one. This handbook is only a source of information and guidelines about GELC's policies, procedures, and work rules.

GELC reserves the right to change or eliminate any policy and to add new policies. Just as an employee has the right to terminate employment at any time without notice to GELC, GELC also reserves the right to terminate an employee at-will, at any time, without or without notice to the employee.

## Welcome

Welcome to the Staff of Grace Early Learning Center, GELC. To make your employment here satisfying, rewarding, and productive, GELC has developed this handbook of policies. This handbook will help answer questions you may have regarding GELC's policies and procedures.

Everyone benefits when these policies are followed. They are not intended to infringe arbitrarily on anyone's freedom. Read these policies carefully. Once you have read the handbook and had any questions answered, remove and sign the last page and return it to the Director. A copy will be made and given to you and the original, signed page will be filed in your personnel record as verification that you have received, read, and agree to abide by these policies. Retain this handbook for future reference. The policies are subject to change at the sole discretion of GELC. From time to time you may receive updated information concerning policy changes. If you have any questions regarding these policies, please ask the Director for assistance.

## At-Will Employer

Each employee of GELC is an at-will employee. This means that as an employee of GELC you may leave your employment at any time, with or without cause, although we do request adequate (two week) in notice when possible. Likewise, GELC may discharge you, without or without cause, and with or without prior notice at any time, but will try to provide advanced notice when possible.

Further, no representative of GELC, other than the Director, has the authority to enter into an agreement of employment for any specified period or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.

This employee policy handbook, and any other employment policies, is NOT intended to create a contractual relationship with you. This lack of guarantee and lack of employment contract also applies to other benefits, working conditions, and privileges of employment with GELC.

GELC reserves the right to alter or eliminate any of the policies or work rules, at any time at their discretion.

## Equal Employment Opportunities

GELC provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment, without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities, or any other basis protected by state or federal law.

In addition, this policy of equal opportunities applies to all terms and conditions of employment. This includes, but is not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absences, compensation and training.

## Christian Principles and Code of Ethics

GELC is an extension of Grace Christian Church. No matter where you attend church, your actions, words, and appearance in the community are a reflection on Grace and The Church, in general. It is the heart of this Center to love God and to love people. You may be the only example of Christ's love that these children and families see. Please remember that in all you do.

Each employee is expected to sign a Code of Ethics prior to their starting day of employment. Breach of this Code of Ethics is grounds for disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

## Philosophy

We believe children learn by doing and that development is a process. We assume children are active, competent, and curious. We assume children want to learn. We believe children learn best in a safe environment, which encourages their active involvement in the learning process, promotes home-school continuity and enhances individual child's areas of development (i.e., cognitive, emotional, physical, social and spiritual.) We believe children need a nurturing, safe environment to learn. As a result, GELC offers programs for young children based on simple routines, careful planning and developmental appropriateness. Children have opportunities for self-selected and small group activities.

## Goals

- To demonstrate the love of Christ in everything we do.
- To assist children in developing a Christian character and Biblical knowledge that will go with them throughout their lives.
- To create a safe and healthy environment for children.
- To promote active learning and participation of the children.
- To challenge children to ask questions and become lifelong learners.
- To help children become intrinsically controlled, considerate of others and responsible people within the community.
- To create a comfortable, safe environment which nurtures the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development of each child.
- To respond to individual differences among children to address individual needs.
- To foster creativity and appreciation of aesthetics in children and adults.
- To establish a working environment conducive to personal and professional growth.
- To facilitate a home-school relationship so that all participants (i.e., administrators, children, parents, staff and the community) communicate and are actively involved.
- To attract a diverse group of children and staff.

## Organization and Accountability

All employees report to the Director. The Director reports to the Boarding of the Learning Center and ultimately the Pastor of Grace Christian. The Director is responsible for the operation and financial management of the Center.

The Learning Center Board exists to assist in policy development and dispute resolution. Communication with the Board or with a member of the Board about any matter involving this organization or about your employment with this organization should only occur after a discussion with the Director or staff member designated by the Director.

Should you have a controversy or work-related problem, you should discuss the problem with your classroom head teacher. If you are unsatisfied with the answer you receive from the teacher, please refer the problem to the Director. Should you be dissatisfied with the results from the Director, you may appeal, in writing, to the Early Learning Center Board.

## Classification of Employment

### Full-Time Employee

A full-time employee is one who is routinely scheduled to work 40 or more hours per week on behalf of GELC. Full-time employees meeting length-of-service requirements are eligible for certain benefits.

### Part-Time Employee

A part-time employee is one who is routinely scheduled to work fewer than 40 hours per week on behalf of GELC. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits, except for those indicated in specific benefit descriptions.

### Temporary Employee

Temporary employees include those who are participating in a co-op/ work study for high school or college to work on a short-term basis to fulfill their school's requirements.

### Volunteer

A volunteer is not on staff at GELC, but who gives their time to enrich the lives of the children. Volunteers have been background tested, but unless they "work" 5 hours a week or more, they are not required to have attended Orientation 1 and 2, and therefore MAY NOT be left alone with the children. Volunteers who are age 18 or over may, however, count toward the teacher/child ratio when another adult is with the children.

## New Hire Orientation and Introductory Period

Each new employee will complete the New Hire Orientation before being placed in a classroom. This orientation includes training on our facility, policies, and the completion of the state mandated

requirements of a Pediatric Head Trauma class, as well as Orientation 1 & 2. The first 90 days of employment will serve as an introductory period. This period gives the employee time to determine if their position is the right fit for them and allows GELC to replace those who do not meet our performance standards. Each new employee will receive a written evaluation before the end of the 90-day introductory period. After successful completion of the introductory period and a complete personnel file, the employee will receive 20 hours of leave time to be used, at the employee's discretion, as sick, vacation, or personal time.

## Work Hours

GELC is open from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The Director will arrange a schedule for you during these hours of operation. Occasionally, the Director may ask you to work other hours, for long periods or from time-to-time, to meet the needs of GELC. It may be necessary, occasionally, for GELC to make a change in your usual work schedule to meet the needs of GELC. The Director will announce changes in work schedules as far in advance as possible.

## Emergency Closing

Occasionally GELC may have to shut down the workplace due to bad weather, a natural disaster, and interruption in power or water utilities, or some other event which makes it difficult or impossible to open the workplace. An emergency closing may be for an hour or two, for a day, or for several days, depending on the nature of the emergency.

Only the Director has the authority to order an emergency closing and to notify TV and radio stations of the closing.

When you are aware of bad weather conditions, a natural disaster, or other events that could require an emergency closing, listen to local TV and radio stations for an announcement of an emergency closing.

## Personnel Files

GELC maintains various personnel records for each employee. The records include such items as: application, performance reviews, disciplinary notices and memos, achievements and commendations, training certificates, and other information concerning the employer-employee relationship.

GELC maintains a policy that the file is the property of GELC and it is the responsibility of the employee to maintain copies of training certificates, letters of commendation and disciplinary notices themselves.

If you have changes in your marital status, telephone numbers, or address, provide this information to the administrative staff as soon as possible.

All employment records are kept confidential by the Administrative staff.

## Workplace Atmosphere

GELC is a Christian child care facility dedicated to the safety, learning, and happiness of our children. It is necessary that our workplace maintain a professional, Christian atmosphere, as well as one of warmth and friendliness. All employees are expected to contribute to promoting a congenial and cooperative atmosphere in which to work.

## Meetings and Trainings

GELC will schedule several meetings and training programs during the year at which your attendance is required. You will be paid for all time you spend in meetings.

From time to time you may wish to, or GELC may request you to, attend a training or educational program, or another business-related program, away from the Center.

If the program is one you wish to attend, but is not required by GELC, you must request an approved leave of absence at least two weeks prior to the start of the program. Make your request to the Director. If the program is directly related to your employment responsibilities, and if the Director approves the leave, GELC may choose to pay you for your time away from work and for fees and expenses directly related to the program.

## Continued Professional Education (CPE) Training

Each employee is required to complete CPE training during their employment year (date of employment plus 365 days). It is the responsibility of the employee to keep up with their training and have it completed on time. Failure to do so can result in termination.

## CPR & First Aid Training

All employees are required to pass a CPR and First Aid class and maintain current certification every two years. GELC will schedule these classes periodically and post availability to each employee.

## Child Development Associates Credential (CDA) & STARS Education Assistance

Any employee who does not have a CDA is recommended to attain the credential within 18 months of their employment start date.

When one of our employees chooses to get their CDA credential, there is a scholarship offered by the STARS program to defray the tuition costs. Please see the Director for more information on this program.

## Recording Work Hours

GELC complies with applicable laws that require the employer to maintain records of the hours worked by employees.

To ensure that accurate records are kept and that you are paid in a timely manner, you will be responsible for clocking in and out using the time clock software. You are responsible for viewing your time card and ensuring its accuracy daily. Falsification of your time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. No employee will clock in or out for another employee.

Your time card will be presented to you on the Monday before payday at which time you will review the sign in sheet. You are responsible for turning your time sheet into the Director. Failure to do so may result in your being paid with the next pay cycle instead of the current one.

## Overtime

You generally are not expected to work more than 40 hours in a workweek. If, occasionally, your work requires working more than 40 hours in a workweek, overtime will be paid at the rate of one and one-half times your regular hourly rate of pay.

Overtime must be authorized by the Director. Except under unusual circumstances, overtime will not be authorized to enable you to clean up work areas or complete other duties which you normally are expected to complete within normal work hours.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Tardiness

Excessive tardiness will result in your suspension from employment and, if not corrected, it will result in your termination. Tardiness of 10 minutes or more, twice in one pay period constitutes an offense. The first tardiness offense will result in a one-day suspension without pay. The second tardiness offense will result in two days suspension without pay. The third tardiness offense will result in termination.

## Absences

GELC expects employees to respect their co-workers by coming to work whenever their health permits. Please notify the Director by telephone call, as soon as possible, of any absence you may foresee. Each full-time employee is given paid leave time (PTO) after the satisfactory completion of their New Hire Orientation and 90-day introductory period. An "Employee Leave Request" form must be filled out using the time clock system and approved by the Director prior to any PTO being paid. Leave requests must be submitted by the 15th of each month for the following month to be considered. Any Leave Request that is submitted after the 15th of each month will be denied.

Any employee who does not have available PTO to cover an absence (with or without a doctor's excuse) will receive an offense. After two occurrences you will be given a formal write up. After two write ups you will be suspended for a day without pay. After three write ups you will be suspended for a week without pay. Upon your fourth write up your employment will be terminated.

## Payday

Paychecks will be issued on Friday. The pay period is for the two weeks commencing on Monday and ending on Friday. Whenever the pay day occurs on a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the last day before the holiday break.

Terminated employees will not be paid in advance of the pay day on which they otherwise would receive their pay for the pay period worked. The final paycheck will be mailed to the terminating employee, to the most recent address given to GELC, unless the terminating employee has made arrangements to pick up the final paycheck at GELC.

## Behavior and Guidelines for Conduct

Employees will behave in a courteous and respectful manner with co-workers, administration, children, parents and the public.

GELC will not tolerate employee conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. An employee who intimidates, is hostile to, or is offensive to another employee, an administrator, a child, a parent, or the public with whom GELC deals, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Conflict of Interest

GELC expects the primary interest of employees is the best interests of the parents and children we serve. A conflict of interest occurs when the interest of an employee or an outside party actually or potentially affects the interests of GELC and the interests of the parents and children.

## Outside Business Interest

Employees may have outside business interests and employment so long as these do not interfere with job performance.

## Gifts and Gratuities

Employees have the responsibility to serve all children and their families equally. Employees are not to solicit gifts and gratuities from children and their families as an inducement to provide services.

## Confidentiality

Your work here may bring you into contact with certain information of a confidential nature. This confidential information includes: personal or medical information about a child or their family, and proprietary information regarding the operation of the facility that is not generally known or disclosed to the public.

You will discuss confidential information with only those staff members and employees who have a work-related need to know. You will not discuss confidential information with any persons outside the Center.



Failure to protect confidential information is a serious offense. An employee who violate this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Personal Appearance and Demeanor

An employee's use of discretion in style of dress and behavior is essential to the productive and efficient operation of GELC. Therefore, while performing duties for GELC, you will dress in attire appropriate to the childcare environment, and you will behave in a professional manner. It is important to remember that you are a representation of GELC, as well as Grace Christian Church. The manner in which you dress should positively reflect this.

Clothing must be clean, neat and in good repair. Employees are permitted to wear pants, skirts, or long shorts that are khaki, black, navy or blue jean material. GELC will provide employees with two GELC t-shirts. Additional shirts will be available for purchase.

Scrub pants are permitted in the aforementioned colors. Leggings may not be worn, unless accompanied by a properly covering tunic-length shirt. You may not wear sweatpants, yoga pants, or any other style of athletic pants. Jeans are to be in good shape and may not have rips in them. Shorts must be at or below the knee length. Shoes are to be worn at all times, with the exception of those working in the Koala and Frog classrooms.

If your personal appearance is found to be inappropriate you will be asked to change before returning to regular work duties. Employees failing to comply with these standards of dress and appearance are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Employee Parking

GELC employees are to park behind the building or in the far north lot. The parking spaces in front of the building and in the row closest to the building are reserved for families who are dropping off and picking up their children. Exceptions will be made for employees who may have a temporary or permanent handicapped permit issued by the County Clerk. Employees with a permit may park in the row closest to the building.

## Visitors

For the security of our children and staff, visitors are generally not permitted at the Center. Exceptions can be made at the sole discretion of the Director. If/when an exception is made, all visitors must check in at the front desk and must wear a "Visitor" badge at all times while inside the Center.

## Personal Telephone Use

Personal cell phone usage is prohibited in the classroom. You may only have your phone accessible during your breaks and lunch. If you need to contact the Director or other administrative staff during your shift, you must use your classroom telephone to contact them via a phone call.

## Social Media Policy

The following policy is designed to clarify how best to protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media. The goal is to establish practical and enforceable guidelines by which we can conduct ourselves in a constructive, positive and official capacity.

Social media are defined as media designed to be circulated through social interaction, using accessible online forums. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Snapchat.

The same policies, professional expectations, and guidelines for interacting with families, co-workers and the community apply online as they do while on the job. Employees are liable for anything they post to social media sites.

Be aware that a presence in the social media world is public. This includes prospective and current families, co-workers and colleagues in the child care community. Consider this before posting to ensure the post will not alienate, harm or provoke any of these groups.

You are not permitted to post pictures of the children or discuss the happenings of your classroom on your personal social media. Each classroom has a Facebook page set up to be used to communicate with the parents in that classroom only. If you choose to post photos on the classroom Facebook page, you should not name individual children by name.

## Alcohol and Drugs

GELC, and all employees working here, must cooperate to maintain a safe, healthy and productive work environment. One important element for such an environment is a workplace free of alcohol and drug abuse. GELC MAINTAINS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUG USE.

Employees will not use or consume alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or on GELC premises. You will not work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. You will not possess, sell or attempt to sell alcohol or illegal drugs while performing work for GELC or while on GELC premises.

Employees failing to comply with these standards are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Please see additional documentation on the GELC Substance Abuse Policy that is attached to this handbook.

## Smoking and Tobacco

GELC and the property of Grace Christian Church is a smoke-free campus. Any employee that chooses to partake in tobacco use during break times must clock out using the time clock and exit the campus. Any employee that fails to comply with these standards are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Harassment

GELC expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment of employees and coworkers based on race, color, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities.

## Sexual Harassment

GELC prohibits employees from doing anything that intimidates, insults, coerces or harasses another employee, visitor, venter, parent or any person on the property. This policy specifically prohibits an employee from engaging in any intimidating, insulting, harassing or coercive behavior that is sexual in nature.

## Violence Prevention

Your employer prohibits any language or actions on the part of the employees which would create an unfriendly, intimidating or threatening effect on another employee, visitor, venter, parent or person on the property. Likewise, no visitor, venter, parent or person on the property is permitted to create an unfriendly, intimidating or threatening effect against an employee of GELC.

GELC prohibits unauthorized possession of firearms or other weapons on premises.

## Safety and Accident Prevention

Our number one rule in regards to safety is to use common sense.

You must report, in writing, all injuries or illnesses which occur to you, no matter how slight, which occur or originate while on the job. Please turn in a completed Employee Injury Report to the Director. A copy will be given to you for your records and the original will be filed in your personnel record.

If you are aware of any unsafe conditions in the workplace, you are to notify the Director immediately.

## Voluntary Discipline Procedure

There is no effective method of pre-determining the seriousness or effect of any one violation of GELC policy or of making an exhaustive list of all possible violations of policy.

Although some violations may be more severe than other violations, repeated violations, or a combination of violations, may result in termination of employment.

GELC reserves the right to take any disciplinary action, including suspension or termination, in all cases it deems appropriate.

## Possible Disciplinary Actions

Possible Disciplinary Actions include, but are not limited to:

### Verbal Warning

When an infraction of a work policy occurs, the Director may discuss the incident with the employee. A verbal warning alerts the employee that the behavior in question is unacceptable, and gives the employee an opportunity to show improvement. However, GELC may consider the infraction to be of such severity that immediate termination will occur.

### Written Warning

A written warning may occur when administration considers the infraction too severe for a verbal warning. A written warning may also occur when an employee has already been verbally warned for an offense, but has failed to show acceptable improvement.

### Corrective Course Agreement

Following a written warning or suspension without pay, GELC may require the employee to enter into a Corrective Course Agreement to work to correct his or her behavior or performance. This agreement will include:

- A brief statement of the wrong behavior or cause of poor performance
- A specific, limited time frame for the employee to comply or change
- The consequences to the employee if the correction does not occur
- An acknowledgment that the employee understands
- The employee's signature and the date signed

### Suspension Without Pay

In cases where an employee has already received one written warning or where a violation of work rule is severe, the employee may be given a disciplinary suspension, without pay, ranging from one day to two weeks.

In instances where immediate action is necessary to deal with a severe disciplinary problem (such as fighting, intoxication on the job, or gross insubordination) the Director may have the employee leave the premises for a specified period of time.

### Discharge

GELC may discharge an employee for any reason, including unacceptable work performance or misconduct.

If the discharge is due to poor work performance problems, the employee will be notified of such problems prior to the discharge. An attempt will be made to give the employee advance written notice of work

problems so that the employee might improve performance. If the services of an employee remain unsatisfactory, the employee will be given termination notice.

Nothing in this policy or in the employee handbook is intended to limit, in any way, GELC's right to terminate an employee at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advanced notice.

## Misconduct Examples

The following examples of misconduct are listed for guidance of all employees. This list is not a comprehensive list of all prohibited activity, nor is it all-inclusive. It is only a list of examples of conduct that may result in discipline.

- Willfully breaking a known policy of GELC.
- Falsifying your employment application or other employment records such as time sheets or expense reimbursement forms.
- Excessive or habitual absenteeism or tardiness.
- Using obscene, abusive or threatening language or gestures while on GELC premises.
- Failure to maintain the confidentiality of GELC, a family, or fellow employee.
- Possession or consumption of any alcoholic beverage or illegal drug on GELC property.
- Insubordination.
- Carrying weapons of any kind on GELC premises.
- Sleeping while on duty.
- Willful disregard or violation of a GELC safety rule or procedure including those who affect the safety of children.
- Sexual, racial, or general harassment of a fellow employee, vendor, parent or anyone associated with the Center or the Church.
- Loitering or loafing during work hours.
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Taking more than the specified time for break periods and meals.
- Clocking another employee in or permitting another employee to clock you in to the time clock.
- Smoking or using tobacco while performing duties for or representing GELC.
- Excessive use of GELC telephones for personal matters or using a personal cell phone other than during authorized breaks and lunch periods.
- Repeated failure to be in classroom ready to begin work at the appointed starting time.
- Performing personal work, including homework, on GELC time.
- Unauthorized possession or removal of, or cooperation in the unauthorized possession or removal of, property or possessions belonging to co-workers, customers, children, families, the Church or GELC, or applying to your own use any property, record or document of GELC or of others.
- Failure to maintain generally accepted standards of hygiene or cleanliness.
- Leaving the work area without permission from administration.

- Failure to comply with specific orders, instructions or posted notices.
- Sitting on the playground or trike area while your children are playing.

## Termination

### Voluntary Termination

Employees who voluntarily terminate their employment with GELC are urged to give the Director no less than two weeks written notice prior to the termination date. Terminating employees will be entitled to payment of accrued benefits if they have given a two-week notice and completed those two weeks of work. Employees who are terminated because of misconduct are not entitled to payment of any accrued benefits.

### Self-Termination

When you do not report to work for two consecutive days without notifying the Director, you are self-terminated.

### Release

When GELC initiates your termination due to lack of work, a change in the workforce, for unsatisfactory performance of the duties of the positions, or for any other reason other than misconduct.

In the case of a release, GELC will try to give you a two-week notice, unless circumstances require less time or no notice.

### Discharge

When GELC terminates an employee for misconduct, this is deemed a discharge.

In the case of discharge, GELC may discharge you immediately following an incident of misconduct.

### Staff Reduction

Conditions causing lack of work may result in the reduction of current staff. Should such an event occur, it is unlikely that the exact duration of such an action would be known. Employees separated from employment due to staff reduction should consider their employee status terminated.

Our administrative staff will determine the employees to be terminated. These decisions are made without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. As in all terms and conditions of employment with GELC, this decision is made according to everyone's qualifications and capabilities for the existing work to be performed.

The administrative staff reserves the right to make employment decisions based on their judgment of the employee best qualified to perform the job duties, and whose capabilities will best serve the needs of GELC.

Alternative cost reduction measures may be taken before resorting to staff reduction. Some alternatives may include: pay reduction, reduced hours, and reassignment.

GELC does not promise or suggest that terminated employees hold any expectation of returning to their previous employment. Employees who were released or voluntarily terminated may periodically inquire at the office about possible employment opportunities and apply.

## Benefits

### Introduction to Benefits

GELC has established time off benefits to allow employees time off for relaxation, to perform civic duties, or to care for their own health needs or the needs of a family member. In addition, GELC offers eligible employees the opportunity for educational growth and advancement.

GELC reserves the right to amend or terminate any of these benefits, or to require/alter employee contributions toward any benefits, at GELC's discretion.

### Vacation/PTO

At the end of an employee's 90-day probationary period, each employee will be evaluated. After a favorable evaluation, all full-time employees will earn 20 hours of paid leave time to be used, at the employee's discretion, as sick, vacation, or personal time. Each full-time employee will continue to accrue 20 hours of paid leave time for every 3 months of completed full time employment.

While the time is to be used at the discretion of the employee, vacation time must be requested at least two weeks in advance. The Director will either approve or deny requested time based on the needs of the Center. To assist in scheduling, please request scheduled leave time with as much advanced notice as possible, but no sooner than 60 days prior to the requested off date. Requests from employees with seniority will be given priority.

During times of illness or extended absence, employees must exhaust their paid leave time before continuing onto unpaid leave status.

- Paid time may be used in ½ day increments only.
- One day of vacation will be made up of 8 hours regardless of the number of hours in your normal workday.
- Vacation time is NOT included when calculating overtime. Employees will only be paid overtime for approved worked hours over 40.
- GELC will try to grant employees their vacation time as requested. However, understand that all vacation approvals will be subject to the needs to GELC at that time.
- GELC does not grant pay in lieu of time off unless:
- GELC has earlier denied your request for vacation due to the needs of GELC.

- You have unused vacation time remaining at the time of termination. Employees terminating employment for any reason are entitled to payment for all unused vacation time which they are eligible to take in that calendar year so long as a two-week notice was given and completed prior to separation.

## Holidays

Full-time employees will receive holiday pay for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Holiday pay will never exceed an 8-hour day regardless of your normal work day hours. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Friday before will be used to observe the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be used to observe the holiday.

To receive holiday pay you must work your regular hours the day before the holiday and the day after the holiday, unless your absence is with prior approval or you have a doctor's excuse and the PTO to cover it.

An employee on leave of absence is not eligible for holiday pay.

Holiday pay is not included when calculating overtime.

## Tuition Discount for Children of Employees

A tuition discount of 40% per child is available to employees that work an average of 20 hours per week or more. This discount applies for any child for whom the employee has custody. Tuition will be automatically deducted from the employee's paycheck.

## Unemployment and Workers Compensation

GELC purchases worker's compensation insurance to protect employees who are injured or become ill because of their employment.

GELC is NOT required to pay or offer unemployment insurance. Therefore, employees who separate from GELC and file for unemployment will receive a letter from the state denying their claim.

## Unpaid Medical Leave of Absence

Employees who need time away from work due to an illness or disability may apply to GELC for an Unpaid Medical Leave of Absence if they wish to continue their employment status with GELC.



An Unpaid Medical Leave of Absence will extend for the length of the illness or disability or for a period of eight weeks, whichever is less. You will be required to use your accrued paid leave time under this policy. Benefits will not accrue or be paid for by GELC during periods of approved unpaid leave of absence. The employee may continue to participate in GELC's benefits plan during such approved leave, by advance payment of benefit premiums to GELC.

Except in cases of emergency, requests for leave must be made in writing, at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the requested leave period. The request will be accompanied by a full written report from the employee's personal physician detailing the employee's illness or disability and the projected length of recovery.

If possible, an employee returning from an approved medical leave of absence will give GELC at least one week's notice of his or her intent to return to active employment prior to the termination of approved leave.

An employee returning to work will be assigned to his or her former position if the position has not been eliminated, or if it has not been filled because of the critical nature of the work. Otherwise, the employee will be assigned to a similar position, if a similar position is available.

GELC does not guarantee the availability of such positions. The employee should not accept other employment during medical leave of absence without written notification to GELC.

Employees who are able to work but fail to return on the agreed expiration of a medical leave, or who have not requested or do not have an approved extension for additional medical leave, are self-terminated.

## Maternity, Paternity, and Pregnancy Leave

Our state law permits female employees to take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave (1) when health conditions caused by the pregnancy or birth of the child do not permit the employee to perform her job duties, and (2) care for a newborn or newly adopted child immediately following the arrival of the child in the home.

GELC requires the employee to use any accrued paid leave time to substitute for unpaid leave under this policy.

In addition, male employees may take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or newly adopted child immediately following the arrival of the child in the home.

An employee returning to work will be assigned to his or her former position if the position has not been eliminated, or if it has not been filled because of the critical nature of the work. Otherwise, the employee will be assigned to a similar position, if a similar position is available.

GELC does not guarantee the availability of such positions. The employee should not accept other employment during maternity leave of absence without written notification to GELC.

## Absence for Death in the Family

During time of bereavement or during time of family crisis, we understand your need to spend time away from work to attend to family matters. As such, we provide three days of paid leave to employees who have worked at least 90 days for GELC. This leave applies only in deaths and crisis within your immediate family. For purposes of this policy, and immediate family member includes a spouse, child, parent, sibling, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law, step parent, step sibling, or step child.

## Rest Periods

You are required to take a 15-minute break from your work during each four hours of work. You will take breaks at times that do not interfere with the work in your room or the needs of GELC.

Rest periods are scheduled according to the needs and schedules of each room. As such, you will receive information concerning your rest periods once you are assigned a room.

## Witness and Jury Duty

We grant unpaid leave to any employee summoned for service as a juror or as a court witness. If you serve as a juror, you will be able to keep the jury pay you receive from the court.

## Voting Leave

Pursuant to KRS 118.035, all employees shall be entitled to take four hours to vote in any election in which the employee is eligible to participate. Time taken off for voting is unpaid.

## Procedures Regarding Children

### Admission and Enrollment

Children are accepted from ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Additionally, elementary school age children are accepted for the summer program. Admission and enrollment is subject to openings available. Waiting lists for each age group are maintained and parents are informed when openings are available.

### Records

A developmental file is kept on each child. This includes: (1) immunization certificate, (2) information form, (3) emergency notification form, (4) medical record, (5) release form, and (6) parent handbook acknowledgement form. This paperwork is necessary for emergency situations and the safety of the child. Under the Family Right to Privacy Act, this information is available for review by GELC administrative and classroom staff and the individual family. Staff must be present to interpret. Access to such information by others is available only after such permission is granted by the family. Teachers are responsible for the upkeep of records.

## Parent Communication

Each classroom is responsible for keeping parents updated about the children and classroom events. The following means of communication are encouraged:

- Daily activity sheets: required for every child under the age of 3. Use the form that is appropriate for your classroom and provide as much detail for the family as possible.
- Praise notes: short notes for each child regarding a special event or activity of the day.
- Monthly class newsletter: detailing upcoming events and activities in the classroom.
- Lesson plans & activity calendars: required for all rooms. Nursery can be specific to each child. The curriculum will detail what is expected from lesson plans.
- Bulletin board: with notes and information regarding the classroom. You must be familiar with the STARS and Department of Regulated Childcare requirements for postings and maintain those items at all times.

A teacher may not call a parent unless approved by the Director. Teachers are permitted to update parents via e-mail. These updates should be generic to the classroom such as upcoming events, supplies or special items needed, etc.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

The Department of Regulated Childcare requires all GELC staff to report any child suspected of being a victim of child abuse or neglect within twenty-four hours after the time of discovery. This includes other abuse by people inside and outside of the Center. Your classroom binder has specific instructions on how to handle suspected abuse and neglect.

Any employee who is, by law, required to report suspected child abuse or neglect is not required to notify the Director and may report such suspicions directly.

## Pediatric Abusive Head Trauma

It is the responsibility of every paid employee to complete the Pediatric Abusive Head Trauma class during their New Hire Orientation. This is a requirement by the Division of Regulated Childcare and must be retaken every five years. This class will earn 1 clock hour that can be used towards the required CEU credits.

## Orientation 1 & 2

It is the responsibility of every paid employee to complete Orientation 1 & 2 during their New Hire Orientation. It is also the responsibility of every paid employee to implement the practices you learned during Orientation 1 & 2. This is a continual process and is your sole responsibility.

## Sign In- Sign Out

Upon daily arrival and departure, all students must be signed in and out of the classroom daily. This is the responsibility of the teacher and all attendance records will be submitted to the Director at the conclusion of each month.

For security reasons, all volunteers or visitors must sign in at the front desk.

## Drop Off Policy

Children must be released to a teacher and may not be dropped off without an escort. All students are required to be dropped off no later than 10 A.M., unless the Director or teacher has been notified of a later drop off time due to an appointment or other extenuating circumstance.

## Identification or Persons Picking Up Children

Any person other than a parent or guardian of the child must show their ID to the teacher before a child may be released. The teacher then **MUST** confirm that the person who is picking up the child is on the approved list for that child. If the person does not appear on the list, the child **MAY NOT** be released to them and the Director must be notified immediately. Care must be taken to ensure every person picking up a child has written permission on file.

## Hand Washing

All staff must wash their hands after using the bathroom, diapering, nose wiping, before serving food, after any contact with saliva, and upon entering the classroom. Hands must be washed thoroughly with soap and faucets should be turned on and off with a paper towel so as to not contaminate.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands with soap, after using the bathroom or diapering, and before all snacks or meals. Proper hand washing techniques should be modeled and explained to children.

## Diapering & Soiled Clothing

When diapering a child, all materials are to be out and ready before beginning. Hands are to be clean and area must be sanitized. Gloves must be worn. Remove clothing if soiled, and seal in a plastic bag. Keep one hand on child always. Clean the child with wipes and dispose of diaper and dirty wipes appropriately. Use a wipe on your hands. Dress the child and wash their hands. Disinfect the diaper area and anything you touched. Wash your hands thoroughly.

## Toileting

Care must be taken to ensure each child's privacy and protection. Children **MUST** be supervised in bathrooms and **MUST** remain separated by gender while using the toilets. A teacher **MUST** be at the door to the bathroom.

## Language

Children should be spoken to calmly and reassuringly. Direction should be given in a positive manner and no harsh tones or words may be used. Inappropriate language may not be used on GELC property. Caring for the spirits and self-esteem of our children is every bit as important as caring for their bodies. Positive language and discipline must be used always.

## Parent Concerns

Teacher must direct parent concerns to the Director. While you are encouraged to answer questions, and offer parents explanations when a question arises, it is important to note the parent concerns can quickly escalate. Whenever you may be in doubt about a situation or are seeking to help a parent feel at ease about a policy or action taken, please refer them to the Director. This procedure helps protect you, as the teacher.

## Discipline

Preventative discipline is the first step towards creating a safe and productive learning environment. You can create a safe and productive learning environment by:

- Recognizing age-level characteristics and needs of children. Plan programs to meet children's needs.
- Giving children a choice when you intend to leave a situation up to a child.
- Arranging the classroom to promote protected space and cooperative play, as well as privacy.
- Clearly defining limits and consistently and fairly maintain them.
- Ensuring that the health and safety of children are primary concerns.
- Giving children problem-solving time.
- Speaking positively when telling children what they can do.
- Using a tone of voice and words that help children feel confident and reserved.

When a negative behavior does occur, the following steps should be taken:

- The behavior is stopped.
- The desired behavior will be explained and modeled.
- An explanation will be given concerning the consequences of the behavior. The child is encouraged to problem-solve the situation (i.e., possible solutions or alternatives, logical consequences, etc.)

The child may be redirected to an alternative activity. If necessary, the child will be isolated in a quiet place to gain control of him/herself. This isolation will be brief (1-minute times the age of the child), and the child may choose when he/she is ready to return to the group.

Physical punishment, spanking, or verbal abuse is not used as a means of guidance or control at GELC, and is against the law.

## Aggressive Behavior

Aggression is defined as the habit or practice of exhibiting hostile actions or behavior.

If a child exhibits aggressive behavior:

- The teacher will try the above discipline steps.
- If time out does not work or if the child is a threat to the classroom, the child will be immediately removed from the classroom and allowed time to calm down with a member of the administrative staff.
- The teacher will notify the child's parents in writing. All notes will include a member of the administrative staff's signature.
- After three notes to the parents in one week, a conference will be arranged between the teachers and parents to discuss the preventative measures taken and to discuss the next steps. A member of the administrative staff shall be made available at the teacher's discretion. Written documentation of the conference shall be signed by the teacher and the parents.
- If the child continues to display aggressive behavior, the parent will be called, by the Director, to pick up their child. Parents will have one hour to arrive and discipline their child. If the parent fails to respond, the child will be suspended for one day the following day.
- If the aggressive behavior cannot be brought under control after employing the above methods, the child will be dismissed from the Center.

GELC is responsible for the safety and well-being of all children who attend the Center. All decisions will be based on what is best for the majority.

## Transitioning

When a child reaches an appropriate age and developmental level, the process of transitioning from one class to the next will begin. All efforts are to be made to make a smooth and comforting transition for the child. Parents are to be notified at least one week before transitioning shall begin. Transitioning should be completed in one week. Individual exceptions are at the discretion of the Director. Parents will drop their child off in their normal room throughout the transition week. Teachers will allow the child to adjust to the environment before the child is moved to the new class. The first two days consist of 1-3 hours in the new classroom. By the third day, meals should be eaten in the new classroom. By the fifth day, the child may spend the entire day in the new classroom. The following week the child should be dropped off in the new classroom.

## Accidents and Emergencies

All accidents and emergencies that occur during the day involving staff or children are noted immediately. Records shall include date, time, and person(s) involved. Accident forms are available in each room. These forms must have the teacher's, Director's, and parent's signature before being filed in the child's file.

Accidents and emergencies needing treatment beyond soap and water shall adhere to the following:

The parent or guardian is to be notified immediately.

The parent or guardian, if available, shall take the child for medical treatment.

If the parent or guardian is unavailable, the staff shall assume responsibility for treatment. Call 9-1-1 and remain with the child until the parent or guardian can be in attendance. If the child is transported, staff must have available to medical personnel the signed release form so that medical treatment can be given in the absence of the parent or guardian.

If a child has to be transported, use a member of the administrative staff's car.

Incident Report Forms are available in the Director's office, and shall be completed so that accurate record of such incidents is available to the insurance company.

## Bloodborne Pathogens- Universal Precautions Procedures

All first aid trained employees will routinely use appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids of any child is anticipated. Gloves shall be worn for touching blood and body fluids, or non-intact skin of all children, for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids. Gloves shall be changed after contact with each child. Gloves are available throughout the Center.

Hands and other skin surfaces will be washed thoroughly with soap and water following contact. Hands shall be washed immediately after gloves or other personal protective equipment are removed, and upon leaving the work area.

Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices shall be available for use in all areas.

All personal protective equipment shall be removed immediately upon leaving the work area and placed in an appropriate designated area or container for storage, washing, decontamination, or disposal.

## Equipment and Environmental Decontamination

All equipment and environmental working surface shall be properly cleaned and disinfected after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Equipment and work surfaces shall be thoroughly cleaned before being exposed to the germicides; a solution of 10 % sodium hypochlorite (household bleach) is prepared daily to be used in the classrooms.

## Receptacles

All bins, pails, and similar receptacles intended for reuse which have the potential for being contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be inspected, cleaned and decontaminated on a regularly scheduled basis and cleaned and decontaminated immediately upon visible contamination.

Broken glassware, which may be contaminated, shall not be picked up directly with the hands. It shall be cleaned up using a broom and dustpan, vacuum cleaner, tongs, cotton swabs, or forceps.

Reusable items contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious material shall be decontaminated prior to washing and/or reprocessing.

## Health and Illness of Children

GELC requires families to adhere to several health regulations while children attend the Center. These regulations include”

Each child must have a current immunization certificate, signed by their physician, on file at GELC. Each child must have the following immunizations (age appropriate) in order to attend: Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis Vaccines, Oral Polio Vaccine, MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), and Hib (Haempophilus b)

Children are not permitted to enter with any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea- stool frequency exceeds 2 stools above normal during the day or if causing accidents
- Persistent cough- interrupting or interfering with their participation
- Fever- 100.4 degrees or higher (must be fever free WITHOUT medication for 24 hours before returning)
- Vomiting- more than twice in 24 hours (child must have gone 24 hours since last time they vomited)
- Unexplained rash
- Chronic earache- this does not include ear infection currently under treatment
- Scabies, head lice, and other insect infestation- child must be knit-free before returning
- Step Throat (24 hours on medication before returning)
- Pinkeye/conjunctivitis (24 hours on medication before returning)
- Any contagious diseases (TB, impetigo, chicken pox, whooping cough, mumps, hepatitis A, measles, rubella, shingles, herpetic gingivostomatitis, etc.) unless otherwise directed by a doctor
- Any general symptoms that keep them from participating in regular activities

Children developing any of the above symptoms or injured during the day will be picked up by a parent or guardian. GELC does not have adequate isolation facilities for children with such symptoms.

To return to GELC, a child must be free of illness for 24 hours. If questionable symptoms are still present, verification from a doctor stating the child is free to return to the Center is needed.

When the child is ready to return, and medication is required, a “Medication Authorization” form must be signed by the parent so that medication can be administered by the teacher.

Parents are asked to notify the teacher when their child has been exposed to any communicable disease. This allows for staff and other parents to be informed of the symptoms to look for, also.

Parents must notify the teacher of a child’s allergies- especially food allergies- so that arrangements can be made.

It is our assumption that if the child is well enough to come to the Center, he/she is well enough to participate in all daily activities, including ones both indoor and outdoor.

## Medication Authorization Forms

Medication, whether prescription or over the counter, must have a daily signed release from the parent. Teachers may fill out the details, but parents must sign the form each day. Medication shall not be



administered without a prescription. Over the counter medication may only be administered with specific dosage information on the original container and must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

## Child Information

Any information relevant to a child must be placed in the child's file, as well as written documentation to each teacher responsible for the child (e.g. food allergies, medication, etc.).

## Teacher Food and Drinks

Teachers should not eat food in front of children unless they are participating in snack or lunch. Beverages should be kept in non-descript, lidded cups and out of children's reach.

## Children's Food and Drinks

Special care should be made so that food is presented in small pieces that does not present a choking hazard. Drinks should be in clearly labeled or discernible cups or bottles. Bottles are not allowed to be propped.

## Television, Electronic Device Viewing, and Music

Television and electronic device viewing is to be limited to 30 minutes per week for children over the age of 2 years old. Television and electronic device viewing is not permitted for any child under the age of 2 years old. All electronic viewing must contain educational material that is appropriately noted in your daily lesson plan, pertains to the current curriculum being used, or is faith-based. All viewing must also be rated "G" or lower.

All musical devices used, including radio, CD, DVD, and iPad should contain material that is faith-based and age-appropriate for children under 6 years of age. No other music should be played in the classroom, including, but not limited to country, pop, rock, rap, alternative, etc.

## Fire Drills

Fire drills will be scheduled monthly. Each classroom shall post an "Emergency Route" and procedures to be followed for the safe exit of all children and adults. All classrooms are to evacuate the building according to the emergency exit procedure posted in each classroom. Teachers are required to take the emergency binder/folder with them when exiting the building with their classroom. Each fall, the Fire Marshall or his/her representative shall inspect the facilities to ensure safety.

## Tornadoes

Teachers will conduct evacuation of the children to the appropriate location in the center of the building. Each classroom has a posted "Emergency Plan" and procedures to be followed for the safety of all children and adults. Children should face the wall, sit in the "tailor" fashion, and bend toward the wall while clasping their hands over their neck. All GELC staff will participate in citywide tornado drills when notified.

## Earthquakes

GELC does not have specific policies applying to earthquakes. In the event of an earthquake, teachers should evacuate children to large outdoor open space. Indoors, children should be kept away from windows and large pieces of furniture.