



Employee Handbook

Little Hands Big Hearts Learning Center

Handbook Edition: 2026

Print-Friendly Format Employee Policies Reconstructed for 2026 Use

This handbook is a reconstructed HTML edition based on the center's prior employee handbook source document. It is intended to present the center's policies in a clean, readable format for staff review, printing, and PDF export.

Important Notice: This handbook summarizes employment practices, expectations, benefits, safety requirements, and classroom procedures. It is not intended to create a contract of employment. Employment remains at-will unless otherwise required by law.

The center may interpret, revise, suspend, cancel, or update policies and procedures as business, licensing, operational, or legal requirements change.

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1. General Information

Changes in Policy

This handbook supersedes prior employee handbook materials, policies, procedures, practices, and memos on the subjects covered here. The handbook should be reviewed at least annually, and employees will be informed when policy updates are made.

Operating Hours

Little Hands Big Hearts Learning Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, except on approved holidays or when emergency conditions require closure.

Mission, Philosophy, Principles, and Goals

The center is committed to providing a nurturing, loving, and developmentally appropriate environment where children can grow physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and academically. Programs are intended to support healthy development through attentive caregiving, meaningful relationships, healthy meals and snacks, and age-appropriate large motor opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

The center's mission is to provide exceptional child care services to the surrounding community through learning programs, physical activities, nutritious meal service, and safe, reliable transportation for school-related needs and field trips.

The educational program is based on sound child development principles. Children are supported at their own pace while building self-worth, confidence, security, school readiness, and respect for others. Staff development is treated as a continuous process supported through training, classes, workshops, observation, and supervision.

Core Values

- **Appreciation:** Showing gratitude to children, families, and one another for everyday contributions.
- **Honesty:** Acting with integrity and communicating transparently.
- **Growth:** Supporting developmental milestones and continuous personal and professional improvement.
- **Humor:** Valuing laughter, joy, and a positive atmosphere.
- **Teamwork:** Building strong partnerships among staff and with families.
- **Professionalism:** Demonstrating excellence, expertise, and high standards in all work.

Employment Applications

Employees are expected to provide accurate information throughout the application, hiring, and employment process. Misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions may result in rejection of an application, withdrawal of an offer, or termination of employment.

Immigration Law Compliance

The center complies with applicable employment eligibility laws. Each new employee must complete required verification forms and provide documentation establishing identity and authorization to work.

Employment Relationship

Employment is at-will. Employees are free to resign at any time, and the center may end employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, subject to applicable law.

2. Definitions of Employee Status

Categories of Employment

- **Probationary Employee:** All new hires begin with a 90-day introductory period. During this time, suitability for continued employment is evaluated. Benefits generally do not apply during probation unless required otherwise.
- **Exempt Employee:** Employees whose duties and authority place them outside overtime requirements under applicable law.
- **Non-Exempt Employee:** Employees who are eligible for overtime and must account for all hours worked.
- **Regular Full-Time Employee:** Employees who complete the introductory period and are regularly scheduled for a full-time workweek, generally 40 hours.
- **Regular Part-Time Employee:** Employees who complete the introductory period and work fewer than 40 hours each week.
- **Independent Contractor:** Individuals engaged by separate agreement to provide defined services and who are not employees.

All employees, regardless of classification, are expected to maintain company standards of job performance and behavior.

3. Employment and Hiring Policies

Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

Little Hands Big Hearts Learning Center is an equal opportunity employer. Employment decisions are based on merit, qualifications, abilities, and business needs. The center does not discriminate based on legally protected characteristics and will consider reasonable accommodation requests for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would create undue hardship.

Hiring Process

The hiring process may include job postings, interviews, required background checks, fingerprinting, health and physical screening, lift-and-carry testing, TB screening, and proof of required immunizations. New child care employees complete state-required forms and a structured onboarding process.

Orientation and training may include licensing rules, disaster response, first aid procedures, health and safety, child counts, schedules and payroll, language expectations, disease control, child abuse reporting, transportation safety, classroom management, nap policies, mandated reporter training, special health care needs, SIDS reduction practices, curriculum, continuing education, field trips, and job performance expectations.

Criminal History Background Checks

Background checks are required for individuals seeking employment in accordance with licensing and regulatory requirements. Fitness for duty includes evaluation of health, ability to work effectively with children, and eligibility to work in child care.

New Hire Orientation

New employees receive a center tour, classroom observation time, an explanation of the chain of command, benefit and policy information, and access to licensing standards. Employees acknowledge orientation content and are encouraged to use the center's open-door approach to ask questions and seek support throughout the first 90 days.

Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

Employees may learn confidential information about the center, children, families, finances, operations, employees, and business plans. Confidential information may not be shared with unauthorized individuals or used for personal purposes. All employees are expected to protect sensitive information and may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Personnel Files and Job Descriptions

Personnel records are company property and access is restricted. Employees are responsible for keeping addresses, phone numbers, emergency contacts, dependent

information, and other personnel records current. Supervisors provide written job descriptions and expectations for the employee's role.

Performance Reviews

Supervisors provide ongoing feedback and formal performance reviews at least annually. Reviews are intended to recognize strengths, discuss goals, improve performance, and support professional growth.

Disciplinary Action

Discipline is generally progressive and may include verbal warning, written warning with performance improvement plan, final written warning, probation, suspension without pay, or termination. Depending on severity, the center may bypass steps.

Examples of serious misconduct include theft, insubordination, vandalism, unauthorized use of equipment or vehicles, falsification of records, timekeeping fraud, substance abuse on duty, harassment, violence, unsafe conduct, sleeping on duty, unauthorized weapons, unauthorized absence or tardiness, and failure to report accidents.

Employment Termination, Rehire, and Return of Property

Employees are asked to provide at least two weeks' written notice of resignation when possible. Final pay is issued on the next regular payday unless state law requires otherwise. Employees must return all company property upon separation, and lawful deductions may apply for unreturned items or other outstanding obligations.

Protective Orders and Health-Related Issues

Employees with protective orders are encouraged to notify management so appropriate safety measures can be considered. Employees who become aware of health-related concerns that affect work, including pregnancy or medical restrictions, should notify their supervisor and may be required to provide physician documentation.

Employee Requiring Medical Attention

If an employee becomes ill or injured at work, management should be notified immediately. Emergency contacts or family members may be called for transportation if needed. A return-to-work release may be required.

Building Security, Personal Effects, Purchasing, and Visitors

Employees issued keys are responsible for safekeeping. Doors must remain secure, visitors must be monitored, and unauthorized people should not remain in staff areas or hallways. The center does not assume risk for employees' personal property. Only authorized personnel may make purchases or obligate the company financially. Visitor access is limited and must be controlled for safety and confidentiality.

4. Standards of Conduct

Hours of Work Schedule

Schedules can vary based on enrollment and operational needs. Staff may work anywhere within the center's operating hours and are expected to attend scheduled meetings, conferences, and assigned work activities.

Attendance and Punctuality

Employees must report to work on time and be ready to work at the scheduled start time. If an absence is unavoidable, the employee must notify the supervisor before the shift begins and speak directly with management whenever possible.

Absence Without Notice

Failure to report to work without proper notice may be treated as a resignation and removal from payroll. Employees who need to leave early due to illness or another reason must notify a supervisor.

Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment

The center prohibits discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment by employees, supervisors, managers, vendors, contractors, parents, and other third parties. Employees should clearly object when safe to do so and must promptly report harassment. Reports made in good faith will be taken seriously and retaliation is prohibited.

Workplace Threats and Violence

Threats, intimidation, violent acts, or weapon possession on company property or during company business are prohibited. Employees should immediately report or seek emergency assistance for threats of violence.

Telephone Use and Cell Phone Expectations

Company telephones are primarily for business use. Personal calls should be limited to emergencies. Personal cellular phones must be silenced and kept out of sight while on duty and may not be used while supervising children. Texting while driving a company vehicle is prohibited.

Public Image and Professionalism

Employees are expected to maintain a neat, professional appearance and demonstrate courtesy, responsibility, honesty, and respect in all interactions. The original handbook

described a uniform expectation of scrub tops or center shirts with appropriate pants and closed-toe shoes.

Social Networking

Employees are expected to maintain professional boundaries with families. Social networking interactions with parents of enrolled children are not permitted unless explicitly authorized for official center business.

Substance Abuse

The center prohibits the manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transfer, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol on company property or during work. Employees may not work while impaired by illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription medications that affect safe performance.

Tobacco and Nicotine Products

Tobacco, nicotine products, and vaping products are not permitted on company premises or in company vehicles.

Internet Use

Internet and email use must support company business, remain lawful and ethical, and must not disrupt operations or productivity. The center reserves the right to monitor use on company systems. Social media access on company equipment is restricted to authorized business purposes.

Use of Company Vehicles

Only authorized employees with valid licenses and acceptable driving records may operate company vehicles. Vehicles must be used safely, maintained responsibly, and kept free from prohibited items and conduct. Transportation logs, licensing expectations, and safety rules must be followed at all times.

5. Communication

Staff Meetings

Attendance and participation in monthly staff meetings are mandatory unless excused for an emergency. Employees who miss a meeting are responsible for obtaining the meeting content and completing any follow-up work.

Parent and Guardian Communication

Staff are expected to communicate with parents or guardians daily at drop-off and pick-up. Communication should be warm, respectful, and specific to the child's day. In infant and toddler classrooms, daily sheets are an essential part of family communication and must be completed accurately.

When discussing concerns, staff should use a constructive, balanced approach that begins with a positive observation, addresses the issue clearly, and concludes with another encouraging point.

Parent and Guardian Conferences

Conferences are offered at least once per year, or more often as needed, and focus on assessments, progress, developmental goals, and classroom transitions. Signed conference or waiver documentation is retained in the child's file or portfolio.

Transitioning Between Staff

Teachers must give complete handoff information whenever another staff member takes over the classroom. This includes child counts, routines, unusual behaviors, health concerns, pick-up changes, and any information needed for safe supervision and parent communication.

6. Wage and Salary Policies

Wage or Salary Increases

The center does not promise automatic cost-of-living increases. Compensation decisions are based on performance, responsibility, attendance, punctuality, attitude, the financial condition of the center, and where the employee's pay falls within the range for the position.

Timekeeping

Employees are responsible for accurately recording all time worked. The source handbook references use of Procure for clocking in, clocking out, and tracking meal periods. Falsifying time records or recording time for another employee may lead to termination.

Break Periods

Non-exempt employees scheduled for more than six hours in a day receive an unpaid meal period, generally one hour, unless business needs require a shorter approved meal break. Personal business should be conducted on personal time.

Overtime

Non-exempt employees are paid overtime in accordance with applicable law for hours worked over 40 in a workweek. Overtime must be authorized in advance. Employees may not work off the clock, at home, or outside their normal schedule without approval and accurate time recording.

Paydays and Deductions

The source handbook states that employees are paid every other Wednesday. Mandatory payroll deductions include taxes and required withholdings, and optional deductions may include approved retirement plan contributions or extra withholding.

Garnishment and Child Support

The center complies with lawful garnishment and child support orders while following applicable federal and state protections.

Cash Shortages and Losses

Employees entrusted with funds are responsible for proper accounting. Losses caused by intentional misconduct, including theft, may be recovered as permitted by law.

7. Benefits and Services

Holidays

The source handbook lists paid holidays for eligible full-time, non-probationary employees including New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Employees generally must work the scheduled day before and after the holiday to qualify for holiday pay.

Vacation

Vacation eligibility and accrual are based on length of service. The original handbook described a tiered structure in which one to two years of employment earned one week of vacation, three to five years earned two weeks, and five or more years earned two weeks of vacation plus additional paid sick leave. Requests must be approved in advance.

Sick Leave

Eligible employees may receive paid sick leave subject to service requirements and annual use rules. Unused sick leave generally does not carry over unless required otherwise by current law or policy.

Social Security and Medicare

The center participates in required Social Security and Medicare withholding and matching programs.

Jury Duty and Bereavement

Eligible employees may receive leave for jury duty and bereavement in accordance with handbook rules and applicable law. Documentation may be required.

Simple IRA Retirement Plan

The source handbook references a Simple IRA retirement plan for eligible employees and directs staff to the separate plan description for details.

Military Leave and Leave of Absence

Military leave is provided in accordance with USERRA and applicable law. In special circumstances, unpaid personal or medical leave may be approved at management discretion, subject to documentation, staffing needs, and the center's ability to reinstate the employee to the same or a similar position.

Workers' Compensation

Employees injured on the job must report the injury immediately and complete the required workers' compensation documentation.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

Teachers and ratio staff are expected to complete required training, including first aid, CPR, entry-level training, and annual continuing education. The source handbook distinguishes between training required by the state, training required by the company beyond minimum requirements, and self-selected training.

8. Other Policies and Procedures

Ethics and Integrity

Employees are expected to comply with all relevant laws and regulations, act with honesty and integrity, maintain a safe and respectful learning environment, communicate appropriately, and model responsible behavior for children and families.

- Demonstrate care, commitment, and professionalism.
- Communicate meaningfully with families, children, and colleagues.
- Maintain respect, accountability, consistency, and preparedness.
- Promote children's self-worth, safety, and citizenship.

Problem Resolution

Employees are encouraged to raise work-related questions, complaints, or suggestions first with their immediate supervisor. If the issue remains unresolved or another reporting path is preferred, the employee may raise the concern with center leadership.

Conflict of Interest

Employees must avoid personal interests that conflict with or appear to conflict with the center's interests. Potential conflicts should be disclosed in writing to a supervisor.

Reporting Violations and Reporting Procedure

Employees have a duty to report suspected violations of law, regulations, ethics standards, handbook rules, or company practices. Reports should be prompt, specific, and factual. Retaliation for good-faith reporting is prohibited, while false or malicious reporting may lead to discipline.

9. Classroom Policies

Constant Supervision of Children

Children must be supervised at all times. Infants and toddlers require supervision by sight and sound at all times, including when sleeping. Older children must also remain under constant supervision indoors, outdoors, and during transitions and nap time.

Positive Guidance and Discipline

Teachers are expected to guide children with patience, redirection, consistency, and positive reinforcement. Staff should understand the reason behind behavior, teach acceptable alternatives, and preserve the child's dignity.

- Encourage desired behavior with sincere praise and reinforcement.
- Use redirection and clear classroom limits.
- Support self-control and emotional regulation.
- Immediately intervene when behavior threatens people or property.
- Do not use corporal punishment, humiliation, taunting, intimidation, bullying, isolation, food withholding, or other abusive responses.

Curriculum

The center uses curriculum and assessments aligned with Oklahoma early learning expectations and child development goals. Assessment methods may include performance-based tools, curriculum-based assessments, and screenings.

Daily Cleaning Duties and Naptime Tasks

Teachers are expected to keep classrooms sanitary and organized throughout the day. Daily duties include sanitizing toys and furniture, wiping tables and chairs, cleaning sinks and mirrors, and maintaining shelves, walls, and other surfaces. Lead teachers may also use naptime for lesson preparation, progress reports, portfolios, supply organization, and classroom planning.

Hand Washing Procedures

Hand washing is required upon entering the building, when entering classrooms, after lunch, after taking out trash, after using the restroom, after eating, and whenever hygiene or licensing standards require it. Staff should follow posted step-by-step hand washing procedures.

Diaper Changing Procedure

Staff must follow a consistent sanitary diaper-changing method, including preparing supplies, sanitizing the changing area, using gloves, keeping soiled items separated, washing both the child's hands and their own hands, disinfecting the changing surface, and changing gloves between children.

Transitions of Children

Classroom moves are based on developmental readiness and age. Transitions are planned with parent communication, classroom visits, teacher collaboration, and gradual scheduling intended to make the move comfortable for the child.

Daily transitions between activities should be smooth and efficient. Staff should avoid unnecessary lines or waiting, and use songs, fingerplays, and engaging routines to ease movement from one activity to another.

Rest and Nap Time

Children in care for extended periods are provided a rest or nap opportunity in accordance with licensing rules. Children who do not sleep may be offered quiet activities that do not disturb others. Children should not be forced to remain on a cot once they are awake and ready to transition.

Food Service, Lunch Etiquette, and Food from Home

The center provides balanced meals and snacks. Outside food is generally restricted unless prepackaged and suitable for classroom sharing when approved. Staff should respond to spills or food accidents calmly and assist children respectfully. Food served or brought in must be consistent with the center's nutrition and allergy expectations.

Allergies and Special Health Conditions

Children's allergies and special health conditions must be documented with action plans and accessible classroom information while preserving confidentiality. Staff should take precautions so children with allergies can participate safely with peers.

Outdoor Play and Physical Activity

Physical activity is part of the curriculum. Children should go outdoors when weather conditions permit, using the temperature thresholds and supervisory guidance outlined in the source handbook.

Away Field Trips, Playground Expectations, and Transporting Children

Field trips require advance notice, permission slips, supervision, and compliance with transportation safety requirements. On the playground, active supervision is required at all times. When transporting children, staff must use transportation logs, proper child restraints, emergency information, a first aid kit, vehicle checks, and a final walkthrough process to make sure no child is left behind.

10. Health and Safety

Safety

Employees must obey safety rules, use common sense, report unsafe conditions promptly, and protect themselves, children, coworkers, and the public. This includes wearing seat belts in company vehicles, cleaning spills quickly, keeping exits clear, avoiding unsafe lifting, and knowing the location of emergency resources such as first aid kits, fire extinguishers, gas shutoff valves, and emergency numbers.

Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings

In severe weather, fires, power failures, or similar emergencies, the owner or management may close the center. The source handbook states that emergency closure time off is unpaid unless otherwise required.

Daily Health Screenings

Staff perform daily health screenings and monitor changes in behavior, temperature concerns, rashes, pain complaints, signs of illness, and parent-reported injuries or illnesses.

Center Abuse Policy and Reporting

All child care staff are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Suspected abuse, neglect, corporal punishment, humiliation, or failure to report must be taken

seriously and reported immediately. The source handbook lists the Child Abuse Hotline as **1-800-422-4453**.

Accidents and Incident Reporting

Injuries involving employees, children, parents, or visitors must be reported immediately. Child incident and injury reports should be completed clearly and promptly, signed the same day when required, and filed appropriately. Serious injuries or emergencies may require parent contact, 911 response, director involvement, and possible reporting to outside agencies.

Tracking Illness and Communicable Diseases

The center maintains illness and injury logs including the affected person's information, symptoms, actions taken, contacts made, and the name of the reporting employee.

Universal Precautions

Staff must use gloves and proper hygiene when exposed to blood or bodily fluids, wash hands thoroughly, dispose of contaminated materials safely, and clean and disinfect affected surfaces and items.

Reducing Back Injuries

Proper lifting techniques, supportive equipment, safer transport methods, and lift-and-carry expectations are intended to reduce back injuries. The source handbook states that employees must be able to lift and carry 40 pounds.

Disaster Plan

The center maintains a disaster and emergency preparedness plan designed to reduce injury, protect children and staff, support reunification with families, and restore child care operations as quickly as practical.

11. Facility Maintenance

Building Service Loss

If the facility loses power or critical utilities such as heat, air conditioning, water, electricity, telephone, or plumbing service, management must be notified immediately. If essential services are not restored within a reasonable time, families may be asked to pick up children.

Severe Weather

The center refers to its disaster plan for severe weather procedures and will make reasonable efforts to remain open when safely possible. If weather worsens during the day, families may be contacted for early pick-up.

Equipment and Maintenance Checks

All staff are responsible for watching for safety hazards, removing broken equipment from use, reporting concerns promptly, and supporting replacement of unsafe classroom items. Playground inspection logs should be completed regularly.

Inside Temperature

The source handbook sets the indoor temperature range at not less than 67 degrees Fahrenheit and not greater than 78 degrees Fahrenheit. Management should be notified promptly if indoor temperatures fall outside that range.

Appendix Summaries

This HTML edition preserves the appendix topics that were readable from the source PDF and summarizes items that appeared as forms, logs, or image-based pages.

Child Transition Process

Transitions should be planned with advance family notice, teacher introductions, classroom visit schedules, transfer of child information, and movement of belongings after the transition week is complete.

Positive Guidance and Discipline Guidelines

Staff should use positive reinforcement, redirection, calm intervention, and respectful language. Corporal punishment, humiliation, isolation, bullying, harsh verbal conduct, and food-related punishment are prohibited.

Cleaning Checklist

The source handbook included a weekly cleaning checklist covering windows, chairs, trash cans, cubbies, doors, toys, bathrooms, floors, cabinets, and vacuuming. Management may monitor completion.

Handwashing and Diapering Forms

These appendix pages appeared to reference posted procedures or scanned forms. Their key steps are incorporated into the classroom hygiene sections above.

Playground Guidelines

Active supervision, circulation, frequent child counts, hazard checks, zero cell phone use, outdoor planning, and immediate safety intervention are central requirements. Signature acknowledgment lines were included in the source document.

Retention Plan, Forms, and Logs

The source appendix also referenced an employee retention plan, playground inspection log, illness log, injury report form, medical administration log, staff training materials, and handbook acknowledgment and revision log pages.

Employee Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received access to the **Little Hands Big Hearts Learning Center Employee Handbook**, that I have had the opportunity to review its contents, ask questions, and understand that I am responsible for following the policies and procedures described in it.

I understand that this handbook is a guide to current expectations and does not create a contract of employment for any specific period of time. I also understand that the center may revise policies and procedures as needed.

Employee Name:

Employee Signature: Date:

Director or Supervisor Signature: Date:

Handbook Revision Log

Visible handbook metadata has been updated for the 2026 edition. Use the log below to document future revisions and employee acknowledgment of updated procedures.

Revision Date	Change Summary	Employee Acknowledgment
2026	HTML reconstruction created from prior handbook source and updated for current Little Hands Big Hearts Learning Center branding.	

**Revision
Date**

Change Summary

**Employee
Acknowledgment**