**Policies for (Your Business Name)**

***Name***

***Address***

***Phone***

***E-mail***

***All items in red are requirements of North Dakota Early Childhood Services Rules to have in your policies.*** Below are suggestions for creating your document. **It is your responsibility to review the Rules and be knowledgeable of the content of your policies.**

## Part One: About the Program

The program is licensed and operates in compliance with the laws of the state of North Dakota. A copy of the license is displayed (list where) in the program.

**Hiring Policy**

* The program does not plan to hire additional employees or substitutes currently. The program will notify families if this changes.
* The program will hire additional employees or substitutes as needed. They will:
  + Complete an Authorization for Background Check and fingerprinting
  + Current CPR and First Aid certification
  + Getting Started and SIDS training
  + Programs will not employ anyone convicted of a direct bearing offense listed in ND Admin. Code 75-03-08-27 (*Family Rule) or* ND Admin. Code 75-03-09-27 (*Group Rule).*
  + Staff members responsible for caring for or teaching children under the age of eighteen are always supervised by an adult staff member

**Grievance Policy**

* If you have any concerns or complaints about the program, please discuss them as soon as possible. If you have a serious complaint you feel is not being addressed, you may contact the licensing specialist, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(insert name/phone number)*.

## Mandated Reporter

* Licensing requires all staff are mandated reporters and will report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by North Dakota Century Code 50-25.1-03.
* If you need to report a suspected child abuse or neglect you may call (agency) at (phone #).

**Liability Insurance**

* State whether the program carries business liability insurance

**Media Release**

* It is recommended to have a written permission form on file for all children to have their picture taken. Pictures of the children are taken quite often for display, bulletin boards or sometimes social media. Children cannot be photographed without a permission form from their parent/guardians.

## Discrimination

* The program does not discriminate against children or parents based on race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, or national origin

## Part Two: Program Policies

**Enrollment Requirements**

* Ensure pre-admission visits are offered to parent(s)/guardian(s) to view the program and discuss the policies. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided with written notice of any significant changes in services or policies.

## Records for Children

* All records and information with respect to children, families and staff are kept confidential
* List the required forms that need to be completed prior to attendance. Also note that these forms will be updated annually.
  + Immunization records
  + Child Information Sheet
  + Birth Certificate/Passport (must verify identification of children in care)
  + Parent Statement of Health
  + Food Program Form (release of information form must be available and signed prior to the release of information)
  + Parent Consent Forms (Infant Sleep Permission Form, Water Activity Permission Form, Field Trip Form, Medication, Media release form, etc.) Forms available on CCA website.

**Program Access**

* Parents/Guardians will be provided with unlimited access and opportunities to observe their child(ren) in program. This does not prohibit the program from locking the doors to the program while the children are in care.

***Rules for Families/Guardians***

*Add guidelines that are important for families/children to follow for the program, such as:*

* Areas of the program that are off limits to the childcare children
* Where clients may park during drop-off and pick-up times
* Where children’s personal items will be stored.
* Which entrance parent’s/guardians use
* Shoe removal before entering program
* Parent’s must/must not ring doorbell or knock before entering

## Communication

* The program will communicate regularly about the child’s physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. Upon request, parents will be provided progress reports on their children. (group license)
* Please provide any information about the child that will help provide high-quality care.

## Required Supplies

* Explain that the parent/guardian is responsible for providing extra clothing that is labeled (appropriate size/season) for each child in case they become soiled.
* List all required supplies needed for child(ren). Ex. Diapers, bottles, wipes, etc.

**Accountability Policy**

* Program must establish procedures for when a child(ren) fails to arrive as expected
  + If the child(ren) will not be attending or is going to be late, you must notify the program.
  + If the program is not notified by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the program will attempt to call the parent or guardian. The program will call the parent/guardian or emergency designee if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.
  + It is recommended to contact parent/guardian to prevent a heat related incident. Children can die in a hot car within 10 minutes.
* School-age Children (Choose what best fits your program.)
  + School-age children are not allowed to leave the program unsupervised; they must be picked up by a parent/guardian or other authorized person.
  + School-age children can leave the program unsupervised with permission from the parent/guardian.
  + If your child/children will be arriving at the program unaccompanied by a parent (walking from school) and fail to arrive at the expected time, the program will notify you by phone so you can locate the child. If the program is unable to locate either parent/guardian, we will contact the emergency contact person provided by you. If all efforts fail to find a responsible party, we will notify the police.

## Pickup and Drop-off

## Only authorized people listed on your Child Information Sheet may pick up the child(ren) from the program. Please notify the program of any contact information changes.

* Explain your process to release the child(ren) to adults not on the list and that they will be asked for a photo ID before releasing the child(ren).
* If there is a court order (such as a divorce settlement or restraining order) that limits the rights of one of the child’s biological parents to drop-off/pick-up child(ren), you must provide the program with a copy of that court order.
* If you cannot or have not safely transported a child at pickup or drop off time, the program will call one of the people authorized to pick up the child and ask that person to transport the child.
* If you refuse to agree to an acceptable alternative and insist on taking the child, the program will immediately call the police and report the unsafe situation.
* You are required to accompany your child(ren) into and out of the program. You are required to verbally communicate with the caregiver upon arrival and departure to ensure an opportunity to exchange information about your child. Program requires that parents remove their infant from their car seat as well as any outerwear when they arrive. You are responsible for placing your own child in their car seat and securing the car seat safety straps unless the program is transporting them.
* Follow North Dakota car safety restraint laws

**Part Three: Program Policies and Procedures**

**Daily Reports**

* Program must have daily individual and small group activities appropriate to the ages and needs of the children.
* A written daily report shall be available to parents upon request, including details regarding eating, napping and diapering.

**Supervision**

* Supervision means a provider caring for/teaching children must be within sight or hearing range of an infant, toddler or preschooler at all times so the provider is capable of intervening to protect the health and safety of the child. For the school-age child, it means the provider is available for assistance and care so that the child’s health and safety is protected. It is recommended to have children within sight AND hearing for all ages.
* Ensure that children do not depart from the child care premises unsupervised, except when the parent and provider consent that an unsupervised departure is safe and appropriate for the age and development of the child. The provider shall obtain written parental consent for the child to leave the child care premises unsupervised, which must specify the activity, time the child is leaving and length of time the child will be gone, method of transportation and parental responsibility for the child once the child leaves the child care premises.

## Guidance and Discipline Policy

* Licensing requires the program have a written policy regarding discipline.
* Discipline must be constructive or educational in nature and may include diversion, separation from the problem, talking with the child about the situation, praising appropriate behavior, or gentle physical restraint, such as holding. A child must not be subjected to physical harm, fear, or humiliation.
* Separation, when used as discipline, must be appropriate to the child’s development and circumstances. The child must be in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated room within sight or hearing range of a provider responsible for caring for or teaching children. Provider may not isolate a child in a locked room or closet.

**Personal Possessions**

* Explain the programs storage of personal belongings and how storage is labeled
* Explain your policy for toys brought from home. Most programs do not allow this due to the possibility of the toy being broken or misplaced. The exception to this rule could be nap or comfort item or toys brought specifically for show and share

## Transportation Policy

* Explain the programs transportation policy if providing any type of transportation. If not transporting children, it needs to be stated that no transportation is the policy.
* Let families know children will never be left in a vehicle unattended
* Let families know, if transporting, children will be placed in age appropriate, compliant child safety restraints.
* Identify the insurance coverage your program carries if transporting.

**Field Trips** (If not offering field trips delete this section.)

* The program will require completed field trip permission forms from all guardians.
* Explain how children will be transported to/from field trips (walking/driving).
* The program will take along a first aid kit, recent photo of each child, emergency contact information and any emergency medication and a copy of the care plan for children with special needs.

**Pets** (If there are no pets, delete this section.)

* The operator shall ensure parent/guardians are aware of the presence of pets and animals in the child care.
* All required pet immunizations will be kept current

## Part Four: Health and Safety

**Incident Procedure**

* Explain when first aid will be administered or when incident reports will be written up, when parent/guardians will be called and when emergency services will be called.
* Let parent/guardians know incident report forms are required within 24 hours of incident and recommended it be signed by the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian receives a copy and a copy placed in the child’s file.

**Emergency Procedures**

* The program will determine if they will shelter in place or seek shelter in an alternate location. and document on SFN 517 form and post for parents to view.
* Be sure to cover how you will communicate with families, what has happened, and how parents/guardians should proceed.
* Program follows state/federal guidelines for emergency drills
* It is always recommended for children to keep shoes on in case of emergency

**Children with Special Needs**

* Explain that all children with diagnosed special health needs are required by licensing to have a current written health care plan signed by a parent/guardian or physician (should be updated yearly).
* Emergency medication and/or equipment included in a child’s care plan should be provided by the parent, so it is available when the child is in care. If not provided program will need to call 911 or have an emergency plan in place.

**Immunization**

* Licensing requires that children be up to date with their immunizations or have a valid exemption.
* Discuss the program policy concerning unimmunized children. It is recommended to consult an attorney to discuss liability risk.
* If a vaccine preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs at the program, it is recommended for unimmunized children to be excluded for the duration of the possible exposure.

**Guidelines for Exclusion**

* Exclusion is recommended when the child is no longer able to comfortably participate in activities or the child needs greater care than the child care staff can provide, therefore compromising the health and safety of the other children, fever above 100.4 with behavior changes, when stool cannot be contained in diaper, with two or more episodes of vomiting within the last 24 hours and abdominal pain. For information on specific illness exclusion please refer to the resources at [www.ndchildcare.org](http://www.ndchildcare.org/).
* Explain that your program can override a health care provider’s orders based on your program’s policies.
* Parents must notify the program when child is ill.
* Explain procedure that will be followed if children become ill while at the program.

**Medication**

* Explain your medication policy by listing whether you will distribute medication or only administer medication required by a child’s health care plan.
* Written parental permission to give prescription, over-the-counter medication, and over-the-counter products is required. It is recommended to obtain written instructions from a health care provider in addition to the written parental permission to administer prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications.
* Explain to parent/guardian that medication should be given to staff and should not be left in diaper bags/backpacks or placed in cubbies.
* Programs should only accept medication in its original container that is labeled with child's name.
* Expired medication should not be given.
* The program will include completed medication records in the child’s file.

**Handwashing**

* Explain when you wash children’s hands. Handwashing upon arrival is recommended, consider asking parents for their help. Handwashing is required for eating, diapering/toileting and contact with body fluids.

**Outdoor Policy**

* Share your outdoor policy according to the day’s outdoor temperature. National Standards for Child Care recommend that children are taken outside when temperatures are above 15 degrees F (wind chill or temperature) and below 90 degrees F (heat index). Use caution when temperature/wind chill is 0-15 degrees F.
* Recommend a health care provider’s written order if parents request that their child does not go outside for play.
* Explain that parents are responsible for providing weather appropriate clothing and shoes (rubber soled, closed toe, back strap, etc.) for active play.

**Aquatic Policy**

* If program participates in aquatic activities, program must have written parental/guardian permission and a description of the child’s swimming ability in writing before the program will allow a child to participate in aquatic activities.
* If not participating, it needs to be stated your program does not participate.
* List all types of water play/aquatic activities provided at the child care program (ex. swimming, wading, sprinklers, field trips to pools, etc.)
* State additional safety precautions that the program will take regarding aquatic activities/water play. Ex. Staff will not be involved in any activity other than directly supervising the child(ren) during water play; children will always be kept in sight during water play.
* Parents are responsible to supply swim diapers, life jackets that are size and weight appropriate

**Meals and Snacks**

* Explain how meals are prepared (onsite or catered)
* Infants should be fed on demand. A written order from the infant’s physician is recommended for alternative feeding instructions.
* Food supplied must meet USDA requirements
* Daily or weekly menus are posted
* Adaptations concerning special food requirements and request from parents.
* Children are encouraged to eat but coercion or force feeding is never allowed
* Discuss how food allergies will be handled and posted.
* Let families know if your program practices family style dining
* Discuss rules for food brought from home (special diet, special events, birthdays)
* Notify parents if program participates in food program

**Toileting Training**

* It is recommended to have a discussion with parent/guardian before starting toilet training. It is important to consider if the child is developmentally/physically ready, (toileting readiness checklist available on CCA website), and the importance of consistency between home and childcare
* It is important to ask parent/guardian to provide several changes of clothing as well as undergarments in case of accidents.
* It is not recommended to allow underwear until the child has mastered toileting. Sanitary conditions cannot be maintained if children are having more than an occasional toileting accident while at childcare.

**Nap and Rest**

* Explain infant sleep policy. Infants are required to be placed completely flat on their backs for sleep and are only allowed to sleep in a crib or a pack ‘n play. If parents request their infant is placed in an alternate sleep position or in another device/equipment for sleep, parents must provide a written order from a health care provider stating medical reason including time frame.
* Written parental permission is required for a pacifier, blanket, sleep sack or a security item to be used for sleep. You are not required to allow any of the items to be used in your program.
* Licensing requires a sound monitor if an infant is not sleeping in the same room as the provider. Licensing also requires visual checks on a regular basis. It is recommended to check infants every 10-15 minutes.
* Explain evacuation procedures during nap/rest time
* Explain policy and schedule for rest time for children not in a crib or pack-n-play
* Parents need to provide nap items. Parents are expected to launder nap items weekly.
* Discuss policies for non-nappers

**The Signatures of the Parties to the Program Policies**

* By signing these policies, clients indicate that they have also read the provider’s policies and agree to follow them.
* Failure to enforce one or more of the terms does not waive the provider’s right to enforce any other terms of this agreement.

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Parent or legal guardian’s signature Date of signature

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Parent or legal guardian’s signature Date of signature

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Co-signer’s signature\* Date of signature

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Providers signature Date of signature

\*A co-signer is required if the client is under the age of 18.