



Wellspring Early Learning Center

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1: GENERAL

Welcome

We are pleased to have you on staff with **Wellspring Early Learning Center** and wish you every success in your new position. We pride ourselves on hiring and retaining individuals who have a strong ethic of service and contribute to the growth and success of our organization. We hope that you take pride in being a member of our team.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with **Wellspring Early Learning Center**, providing you with information about working conditions, employee expectations, and some of the policies affecting your employment. If you have questions or concerns about any of the material within this handbook, we urge you to discuss them with your director.

After reviewing this handbook, please sign both copies of the Acknowledgment and Release form included at the end of this document. This confirms that you have received the handbook and understand its contents. Please return the Employer Copy to your director.

No handbook can anticipate every situation or question about all of our policies and terms of employment. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** reserves the right to add new policies and to change or cancel existing policies at any time. We will endeavor to notify you of any changes to this handbook as they occur.

This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks and management memos that may have been issued on the subjects covered. References in this handbook to “us” and “company” include **Wellspring Early Learning Center** and all affiliated entities.

Welcome to **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and fulfilling.

About Wellspring Early Learning Center

Vision: *Every childhood overflowing with fun, discovery, and love.*

Mission: *We recognize the family as the best environment to cultivate the life of a child. Therefore, it is the mission of Wellspring to replicate a nurturing home setting that supports the wholistic development of every child. We invite you to come grow with us!*

Overview: Wellspring Early Learning Center provides full-time, year-round, full-service care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age in our main preschool as well as after school care in a separate building primarily for elementary schoolers from neighboring West Hills Elementary School. Our hours of operation will be from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm (6:00 pm for after-school program). Meals will be prepared daily in our kitchen and provided to all children in attendance, including breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. Our staff will send daily communications to parents -- even photos of special class events or a child's accomplishments -- so that our parents will feel fully connected with their child and life at Wellspring. Wellspring exists to provide a safe, nurturing, and challenging place for growing and learning.

Leadership: The owners, Joe & Sharon Key and Joseph Key, are involved in the center's daily operations. The Director(s) assumes the responsibility of Wellspring and oversees all education functions and many operational tasks of the center. Director(s) recruits, identifies, and hires the best staffing candidates, improving the center's operations and education functions with each new hire. Parent relations is also a priority focus for our Director(s) in providing service to the many families of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**.



SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Wellspring Early Learning Center is an equal opportunity employer, and it is our policy that employees and applicants will not be subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Wellspring Early Learning Center is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and offers equal employment opportunities for qualified individuals who may have a physical or mental disability but can still perform the essential functions of the job.

Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination

Wellspring Early Learning Center wants to provide all employees a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Therefore, it shall be **Wellspring Early Learning Center's** policy to prohibit discrimination or harassment of employees based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis protected by state, federal or local laws.

Wellspring Early Learning Center expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace – including relationships with parents/guardians, those authorized to pick up children, and visitors – will be businesslike and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. Sexual harassment typically is **serious offensive conduct** directed towards an individual because of his/her gender and **is unwelcome** by the individual. Sexual harassment does not refer to casual conversation or compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

Federal Law defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment; or
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as basis for employment decisions; or
- (3) such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance; or
- (4) conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Reporting Harassment

Wellspring Early Learning Center encourages employees to report any problems they experience or observe concerning harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation. Employees should report harassment **before** it becomes severe or pervasive.

Investigation

Wellspring Early Learning Center will promptly undertake an investigation of all complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint, and with witnesses if applicable. The person alleged to have engaged in harassment will also be interviewed.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

Responsive Action

Employees found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. No employee will be disciplined or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a bona fide complaint. However, an individual who brings a false or frivolous complaint is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Child Abuse Policy

Reporting Abuse

All employees are required to immediately report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the DCS Child Abuse Hotline (877-237-0004). We also recommend that the Director of the center be contacted to offer assistance in reporting the incident to appropriate authorities. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** will not tolerate child abuse in any form: physical, verbal or sexual.

General Policy

1. We encourage an open-door policy that allows parents and other authorized individuals to visit the facilities at any time, unannounced.
2. We make every effort to screen each employee's past employment record.
3. Tennessee DHS policies are followed to obtain criminal history checks on all employees.
4. We try to assign two employees to any given situation.
5. We actively encourage comments and suggestions both positive and negative.
6. The Director and Owner are continually supervising and monitoring every situation on an unscheduled basis.
7. We are aware of our legal responsibilities as a reporter of child abuse or neglect and will report any suspected acts of abuse.

If a parent/guardian were to present a complaint, we would:

1. Listen, take notes, ask questions, and generate a specific report.
2. Immediately question staff involved or in proximity.
3. If abuse is suspected, we would:
 - a. Contact police and appropriate State and local authorities.
 - b. Contact our attorney and insurance carriers.
 - c. Immediately place all staff suspected of involvement on administrative leave without pay until investigation is completed.

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4. If it is determined that the charge of abuse is unwarranted, we would:
 - a. Confront parents with our findings and ask parents if they were satisfied or wanted further involvement by others.
 - b. If no further involvement is wanted, we would ask parents to sign a dated written statement to that effect.
 - c. If parents are not satisfied, we would call TN DHS or other supervising authority and set up appropriate meetings to determine resolution.

If a State or local agency presents a complaint, we would:

1. Listen, take notes, ask questions, and generate a specific report.
2. Immediately place staff on leave without pay pending investigation.
3. Contact our attorney and insurance company.
4. Cooperate completely by supplying information, data and support to the investigation.
5. Issue a special bulletin to all clients and staff explaining what was going on and urging their complete cooperation with the investigation.

Steps taken during an investigation:

1. Respect the privacy of all those involved by ensuring compliance with our confidentiality policies.
2. Utilize the advice of our attorney to ensure that the rights of any staff member accused of abuse or neglect are protected by due process.
3. Make every attempt to operate “normally”, as that is the professional responsibility of everyone.
4. Maintain constant and clear information and communication to parents in a caring and professional manner.
5. Make every effort to insure that, as much as possible, that investigators perform their duties away from the site.

Steps taken after an Investigation:

1. If investigation determines that claims are unwarranted, employee may be compensated for lost time/wage.
2. Ask our attorney to immediately sue any parent or agency who had falsely claimed abuse and ask not only for restitution but punitive damages.
3. Continually update staff and parents of further developments.

Relationship with Media

The owners will be the only individuals authorized to speak to reporters, television crews, or any member of the media. ALL STAFF ARE TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE OWNER.

State Licensing Rules and Regulations

ALL staff must be knowledgeable in the Tennessee Department of Human Services Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers. Failure to adhere to these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All staff are required to be at least 18

years of age. We prefer staff to have a high school diploma or its equivalent, hold a degree or be pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Development.

Each staff member must have current training in CPR for Infants and children, as well as First Aid with rescue breathing and choking. Each staff member must provide a statement informing the facility about any of the offenses listed in the Tennessee Department of Human Services Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers rule book. At least one employee with CPR/First Aid certification must be onsite at all times.

State ratios are important indicators of quality. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** is required to maintain state ratios at all times. Staff are to notify the director or supervisor for assistance when they need to leave the group and the total number of children in attendance exceeds the state ratio.

Curriculum

Wellspring Early Learning Center implements curriculum on a daily basis. The director(s) and/or learning coordinator provide all teachers with the instructional guidelines necessary for developing age-appropriate learning activities, along with training to effectively implement the programs in their classrooms.

Ethics Policy

Ethics are integral to the successful achievement of our mission at **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Employees are expected to comply with this policy and to hold to the highest ethical standards. By understanding this policy, employees will recognize the situations and activities that must be strictly avoided and those that require disclosure or prior approval. Employees must treat all co-workers, clients, and external parties with honesty, integrity, and fairness in all regards.

Confidential Information

Rules pertaining to the use and disclosure of confidential information are listed below:

- Information entrusted to employees must be treated as confidential and privileged, and must not be disclosed to anyone, either inside or outside **Wellspring Early Learning Center**, who does not have a legitimate need for the information.
- Confidential financial information about **Wellspring Early Learning Center** must not be disclosed to outsiders.
- Using confidential information for personal gain is strictly prohibited.

Conflicts Of Interest

Employees must manage their personal financial and business affairs to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interest in a transaction, or an obligation s/he owes to someone else, comes into conflict with the employee's obligation to **Wellspring Early Learning Center** or its clients.

If an employee is confronted with a conflict of interest, s/he must disclose the conflict to her/his manager, describe the facts giving rise to the conflict, and excuse her/himself from any deliberation or decision with respect to the transaction. Employees must not accept anything of value from clients, suppliers, or others in return for any business, service, or confidential information of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**.

Secure Workplace/Visitor Policy

Employees are to be mindful of the overall security of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Security codes used to access the center are to be kept confidential. The presence of suspicious individuals outside the buildings or anywhere on the grounds should be immediately brought to the attention of a director or owner. This also includes suspicious individuals loitering along the Jean Teague Greenway or on the neighboring school and church campuses.

Our visitor policy outlines guidelines for receiving visitors at our facility. This policy applies to all employees. “Center visitors” may refer to employees’ friends and family (referred to as personal visitors) contractors, external vendors, prospective families, future and former employees, and the public.

The following rules apply for all visitors (including former employees):

- Visitors should sign in at the reception counter and show some form of identification.
- Visitors must be escorted by a director or by another staff person.
- Former employees will have an escort while on the premises.
- Visitors will not be allowed to hold children.
- Contractors, suppliers and service vendors, like IT technicians and plumbers, can enter our premises only to complete their job duties. A director or owner is responsible for monitoring these service providers at all times on our premises.
- Employees who violate this policy may face disciplinary consequences in proportion to their violation.

Substance-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 requires **Wellspring Early Learning Center**, as a federal contractor and/or grant recipient, to certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace. As a result, the following is prohibited:

- Reporting to work impaired or under the influence of alcohol, CBD products or illegal drugs or substances, including the illegal or wrongful use of prescription drugs; [CBD warning: most CBD products are not regulated by the FDA, meaning they could also contain various other ingredients, including THC, resulting in staff inadvertently ingesting substances that violate drug policies.]
- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, distribution or possession of drugs while on organization business or premises and while operating vehicles on organization business;

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- The use, sale, possession, transfer or purchase of alcoholic beverages on organization premises or while performing organization business, except in connection with organization-authorized events;
 - Working under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair judgment or motor functions and potentially place persons or property in jeopardy; and
 - Bringing alcohol, illegal drugs or substances, tobacco, vaping and CBD products into Wellspring Early Learning Center facilities.

As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify **Wellspring Early Learning Center** of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** has the right to conduct a search of all property owned or controlled by us (desks, computers, cabinets, etc.).

Prescription Drugs

The use of a prescription drug/medicine is permitted provided that the employee notifies management that the drug may affect the employee's performance and working ability. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** reserves the right to limit a particular employee's work if it is concluded that the prescribed medication will have any side effects that might affect their performance. The use of medication or prescriptions that a licensed physician does not prescribe is prohibited. Prescription drugs should only be carried and used by the person they are prescribed for.

Reasonable Suspicion

Wellspring Early Learning Center will not condone criminal activity on its property, or on property under its direct control. Based upon reasonable suspicion, management may require an employee to undertake a drug test randomly or when joining the company if there are any factors that result in reasonable suspicion. These factors are:

- Odors of drugs such as marijuana and alcohol
- Dilated and watery eyes
- Unsteady body movements, excessive staggering, or loss of balance
- Inability to verbalize thoughts and slurred speech
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Changes in behavior and personality
- Poor concentration
- Erratic behavior, sleepiness, extreme drowsiness
- Impaired perception of time

Drug Testing Procedures

The TN DHS requires that **Wellspring Early Learning Center** establish a drug testing policy for all staff that have direct contact with children. This section outlines all the drug testing procedures that will be followed. All tests will be handled with a high level of privacy. All sample collection and testing for drugs such as cocaine, opioids, marijuana, phencyclidine, and amphetamines will be conducted under the following conditions and procedures:

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- Samples will be conducted under tight sanitary conditions by a certified laboratory or healthcare institution specified by **Wellspring Early Learning Center**.
 - Samples collected shall be tested with a high level of privacy and without interference.
 - The collected and tested samples should be well-documented. Management will file all drug test documents in a secure location away from the employee's personal records for future reference.

Any cases of adulteration or sample contamination will not be handled lightly. Staff must report for a scheduled testing appointment and cannot refuse to be tested; and they must provide a specimen at the required time. All testing expenses will be incurred by **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Any employee who fails to comply or cooperate with the policy's requirements may be subject to disciplinary actions. This may include suspension or termination of employment.

Consequences for Positive Test Results

Wellspring Early Learning Center will provide for immediate and effective enforcement action in the event of a positive drug test. If a person is tested positive for drugs and has abused the drug testing policy in the workplace or when handling company business elsewhere, management will decide on the disciplinary action to take. This can be putting the employee on a drug treatment program, issuing a warning, taking disciplinary action, suspension, or termination of employment.

The provisions of this policy are effective immediately and throughout the working period in the Company. All new applicants and employees will be informed of this Policy before joining the Company. Drug test results shall be maintained for all currently employed staff members who are subject to drug testing and for five (5) years after employment is terminated. All drug test results are confidential and may be disclosed to the TN DHS upon their request.

Confidential, Proprietary and Other Nonpublic Information

The protection of confidential information and proprietary inventions is vital to the interest and the success of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Donor Names/Information
- Employee data
- Family/Client information
- Financial information
- Research and development initiatives
- Pending projects and proposals

Children and family (and staff personnel) files are kept secure in digital format; any paper documents are kept in a locked file cabinet. Only authorized **Wellspring Early Learning Center's** staff or certain authorized governmental representatives (DHS licensing) may have access to these files. Gossiping about children, families, staff,

wages, or the agency business will not be tolerated, and is grounds for disciplinary action.

Employment Classification

All employees are classified as either “exempt” or “non-exempt” from overtime compensation according to the overtime provisions of state and federal laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay. Exempt employees are not.

In addition, employees will be classified as the following:

Full-time: An employee who is normally scheduled to work a standard workweek.

Part-time: An employee who is normally scheduled to work less than 34 hours per week and is not temporary.

At-Will Employment

Employment with **Wellspring Early Learning Center** is at-will, meaning that either you, the employee, or **Wellspring Early Learning Center**, the employer, may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without a reason or notice. Statements or promises, information in this Employee Handbook, or in any other publications cannot modify this at-will employment relationship. Only a written and signed contract by the Director or the Owners can change an individual’s at-will employment status.

Introductory Period

The first 90 days are considered the Introductory Period. Either the employee or the employer may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after this period, with or without cause or advance notice. An employee performance evaluation may be provided at the end of this period. Pay increases are merit-based and are typically not included in the performance evaluation.

The Introductory Period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a level of performance acceptable to **Wellspring Early Learning Center** and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Director(s) and employees are encouraged to discuss job performance and goals informally, as needed.

Personal Data Changes

To help keep record and benefits program information accurate, please notify **Wellspring Early Learning Center** of any changes to your personal information, such as: mailing address, emergency contacts, changes in marital status, dependents’ information, and other possible relevant information.

Open Communication

Employees should share their concerns, provide input, seek information, and resolve work-related issues by professionally discussing them with the director. The simplest, quickest and most satisfactory solution is often reached at this level. If discussion with

the employee's director is not able to resolve the matter, the concern then may be presented to the next level of management.

Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment. While the law does not require advance notice, **Wellspring Early Learning Center** requests at least two weeks' written resignation notice from all employees.

In Case of Injury

Any employee, if injured while at work, must report the injury to their director immediately. This includes any injury that the employee deems minor.

SECTION 3: SCHEDULES, COMPENSATION & ABSENCES

Work Schedules

Wellspring Early Learning Center retains the right to vary work schedules according to its needs. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate amendments in start and end times, class or task assignment, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Your director will inform you of your expected work schedule and when/if amendments are needed. Employees are asked to park in northern lot, furthest from both buildings so that parents have access to the closest parking spaces.

Recordkeeping

All hourly employees are responsible for timely and accurately recording the hours they work. Using the company “time clock”, each employee must accurately record the time they begin and end work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each break period. Each employee should also record the beginning and ending time of any departure from work for personal reasons. A director must always approve overtime work before it is performed. Any overtime hours that are not on the schedule or that have not been approved in writing will not be eligible for pay.

Employees’ actual hours worked (logged on the time clock) are meant to reflect the master schedule as maintained by the Director. If any employee clocks in more than 5 minutes prior to the start of their shift without director approval, this time will not be eligible for pay since they were not scheduled or authorized for this time. If any employee clocks out later than 5 minutes after the end of their shift without director approval, this time will not be eligible for pay since they were not scheduled or authorized for this time. All employees (including exempt employees) are required to get ample prior written approval for vacation time.

Altering, falsifying or tampering with pay records and other fraudulent actions are strictly prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Breaks/Lunch for Hourly Staff

Wellspring Early Learning Center does not have a defined break policy in which operations stop for a specified period of time. It is recognized, however, that occasional pauses for rest are beneficial. Therefore, it is suggested that the time and occasion of such breaks be at the discretion of the director and that the taking of short breaks is not against **Wellspring Early Learning Center’s** regulations.

Non-exempt staff do not have to “clock out” for breaks, providing the break is no longer than 10-minutes in length and the staff remains inside the buildings. Staff will clock out if

they leave the buildings. All employees who work more than 6 consecutive hours are required to have at least a 30-minute unpaid break.

Workweek & Payroll

Wellspring Early Learning Center's normal business hours are Monday through Friday, as early as 7:30 am to 5:30 pm (until 6:00 pm for afterschool). The payroll period is every other week (26 periods per year). Payday is on every other Friday and will be administered via ACH direct deposit into employee's bank account. In the event a regularly scheduled payday falls on a holiday, employees will receive pay on the next business day.

There is a one-week delay in the payment of wages after they are earned. Therefore, employees are paid for the prior work period.

Payroll Deductions

Wellspring Early Learning Center is required by law to deduct from your paycheck, federal, state and local withholding taxes, social security taxes and any court-ordered withholding such as garnishments or child support payments. These amounts, which are designated on your paycheck stub, are forwarded directly to the appropriate entity.

Wellspring Early Learning Center will also make other deductions that have been authorized by you.

You must maintain a current, valid IRS W-4 form designating the number of exemptions for federal tax withholding. We cannot honor oral or email requests to "stop withholding" or "just use 99 exemptions this week."

Overtime

As a general policy, overtime will be avoided. When operating requirements or other work plan needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees will be given the opportunity to volunteer for overtime work assignments. However, in instances where an insufficient number of employees volunteer, a director may require employees to work overtime. All overtime work must receive the director's prior authorization.

Time off or paid time off on sick leave, center closed holidays, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. Overtime work cannot be "traded" for time off.

Errors in Pay

If you become aware of an error in your pay or deductions, bring it to the attention of the bookkeeper (accounting@wellspringkids.com) immediately so that it can be corrected as soon as possible.

Absences

Regular attendance is a condition of employment. Attendance will be tracked using an Attendance Point System (APS), and each employee will be provided a regular status update. The APS will be discussed in the employee's orientation.

You should report any anticipated absence to your director ahead of time. In an emergency, let your director know as soon as possible the reason for your absence and when you expect to return. Communication is to be done via text using the Wellspring Google Voice number (865-214-7290).

Unexcused absences are subject to immediate discipline up to and including termination. If you are absent from work for two consecutive days **without** advising your director, you may be terminated. If you are absent for five consecutive working days and do not notify your director, you will be considered to have abandoned your job and you will be terminated.

Emergency Conditions/ Safety

Any employee, if injured while at work, must report the injury to their Director immediately. This includes any injury that the employee deems minor. Compliance with common safety rules is considered a condition of employment. Every possible precaution must be taken to prevent accidents to children and staff. Use extreme care during all activities and in all situations to preserve a safe environment. This includes using proper techniques when lifting, supporting or guiding children.

Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, or fire can disrupt operations and interfere with work schedules, as well as endanger employees. These extreme circumstances may require closing of the work facility.

In the event of an emergency or severe weather, a director or owner will notify you of any schedule changes or closures. Employees who come in late, leave early, or are absent because of an emergency or severe weather situation must notify their director immediately.

If you encounter another employee who is having a medical or safety emergency, contact your director immediately. When in doubt, call 911. Do not attempt to assist or move another employee who is having a medical problem unless you are qualified to do. Get professional help.

SECTION 4: BENEFITS

Holidays

Wellspring Early Learning Center will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees after 90-day introductory period. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would have been scheduled to work on that day, up to a maximum of 40 hours for the holiday week in question. Employees must work their scheduled day before and after the holiday to receive holiday pay, unless it is an approved day-off or sick day with doctor's note.

Paid holidays are as follows:

- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

(If holiday falls on a weekend, owners may select a weekday for observance)

Leave Provisions

a. Bereavement Leave

At the discretion of management, full-time employees may be allowed appropriate time off without pay in the event of the death of an immediate family member. Please notify your director as soon as possible if you need to take bereavement leave.

For the purposes of this policy, immediate family is defined as husband, wife, child, grandchild, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, and those same relatives of your spouse, and members of your immediate household.

b. Jury Duty/Court Duty

If you are called for jury duty or subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, please notify your director as soon as possible to coordinate time off. When the court obligation does not demand services for a full day, the employee must return to work.

c. Military Leave

Wellspring Early Learning Center will grant military leave of absence in accordance with applicable law.

Vacation

Wellspring Early Learning Center provides one week of vacation time to all regular full-time employees upon their one-year anniversary of employment. Vacation hours are accessible to be used only after successfully finishing and continuing to work with Well-spring Early Learning Center beyond the first 12 months. Employees may not “cash out” vacation pay by continuing to work in lieu of taking vacation.

Vacation leave requests should be submitted to the director in writing a minimum of two weeks in advance and must be approved in order to qualify for the paid time off. Re-quests will be evaluated based upon various factors, including anticipated operating re-quirements, and staffing considerations during the proposed absence. No more than one teacher per classroom may be on vacation at one time.

Vacation time must be used within the anniversary year it is earned. Unused vacation time will not be paid out at the end of the anniversary year. Upon termination of employ-ment, employees will not be paid for vacation benefits which have accrued through the last day of work or as required by state law.

SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Computer Use

Use of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**'s computer and telecommunication resources and other organization equipment by a person who is not properly authorized is not permitted. All employees have the responsibility to use their assigned computer and telecommunication resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner. Electronic media and devices (computers, tablets, smart phones, etc.) cannot be used with children under age two. Measures are in place to protect children from all inappropriate content.

Employees may not install software onto their individual computers or the network without management authorization to do so. Any duplication of copyrighted software, except for backup and archival purposes, is a violation of organization policy and federal law.

Wellspring Early Learning Center may delete unlicensed and personal software without notice.

Center Phone Usage/ Cell Phone Policy

Personal calls on cell phones or the center's phone is prohibited during working hours so it does not interfere with the employee's work and attentiveness to children, parents/guardians, staff and guests. Unauthorized use of the phones during work time is not allowed. Personal earbuds, headphones or speakers are not allowed while on the clock.

In order to maintain a safe and professional workplace, cell phone use for personal phone calls, answering personal email, texting, taking photographs or surfing the web is not permitted while "on the clock." However, there may be times when either a cell phone or walkie-talkie will be required for safety when on a field trip or in case of emergency. These instances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Electronic Communication

All communications transmitted by, received from, or stored in **Wellspring Early Learning Center**'s computer systems or tablets are considered to be the property of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. The following apply to use of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**'s computer and telecommunication resources and services:

- Employees must comply with all software licenses, copyrights, and all other state and federal laws governing intellectual property.
- Employees should not alter or copy files belonging to others.
- Electronic communication (e-mail, voice mail, Internet, etc.) should not be used in any way that is disruptive, offensive to others, harmful to morale, fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating or unlawful. Specifically prohibited are sexually explicit materials, ethnic or racial slurs, or anything that may be construed as disparaging of others based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic

information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws. This also applies to downloading, displaying or storing of such materials in **Wellspring Early Learning Center's** computers.

- The computer and telecommunication resources and services of **Wellspring Early Learning Center** may not be used for the transmission or storage of commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs (viruses and self-replicating code), religious, or political material.
- Employees are responsible for safeguarding their passwords for the system. Individual passwords should not be printed, stored online, or given to others. Employees are responsible for all transactions made using their passwords.
- The rules in this Employee Handbook on confidentiality and electronic communication extend to social media to the extent it is used on company equipment or with identification of us as your employer. Using, storing and/or transmitting of photos and personal information of families, children and staff on personal phones and tablets is prohibited. Please be mindful and careful when engaging in exchanges of social media with other employees, and our families, vendors, sponsors, customers, and the like, so that you do not disclose our confidential information to outsiders or the general public, and so that you represent us in a positive light. Even seemingly harmless posts on social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) can violate the privacy of children and families. Social media comments that are playful or teasing in a personal setting may be out of place when identified with us. If you identified yourself as an employee of ours in social media, you may be subject to the applicable portions of this Employee Handbook with respect to that conduct.

Social Media Policy

Social media are defined as online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information. Some of the most popular social media are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. While social media can keep you connected with a broad range of colleagues and friends they also have inherent risks.

- Once information is released into cyberspace it is GONE FOREVER and CAN NEVER BE RETRIEVED. It can be copied and passed to hundreds of people in a fraction of a second.
- You may think social media posts are private but they are NEVER PRIVATE. They can be copied by your friends and passed to people you don't know.

Because of the nature of social media, our policy is very clear and unequivocal.

Protect confidential information at all times. Never post any photos or information about a staff member, our organization, child or family involved in our care, either by name or by any other descriptive nature, on any social media site, ever. This includes positive as well as negative comments.

As your employer, we reserve the right to review sites to ensure adherence to this policy. Violations of this policy are grounds for discipline including the possibility of dismissal.

Outside Employment

Wellspring Early Learning Center expects that all of its employees will be professionally committed to their position and responsibilities. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** also supports employees who wish to engage in outside employment or community related activities, as long as such efforts do not create a conflict of interest or interfere with the regular and punctual fulfillment of your work with **Wellspring Early Learning Center**.

If an employee decides to go work for another employer, recruiting of Wellspring staff for the new employer is prohibited. We discourage center staff members from accepting extracurricular baby-sitting jobs from parents at **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Doing so compromises the parents' agreement with Wellspring in the Parent Handbook stating they would not engage staff to babysit.

Customer Relations

Our customers' impression of **Wellspring Early Learning Center** and their willingness to stay with us is greatly formed by you, the employees who serve them. In a sense, regardless of your position, you are **Wellspring Early Learning Center's** ambassador. The more goodwill you promote, the more our clients will respect and appreciate you and our center. Below are several things you can do to help give clients a good impression.

1. Deal with parents/clients in a courteous and respectful manner.
2. Communicate pleasantly and respectfully with other employees at all times.
3. Follow up on orders and questions promptly; provide businesslike replies to inquiries and requests, and perform all duties in an orderly manner.
4. Remember parents are welcome in the Center at any time, unannounced.
5. Teachers and parents are partners. We all work together in a climate of trust and honesty to provide the children with a happy, healthy environment.
6. It is not our job to "judge" anyone's "parenting" techniques or other personal traits. Do not discuss parents in a negative way – they are doing the best that they can with what they have to work with – just as we are! We need to be supportive, honest, and helpful.
7. Communicate frequently with the parents of children in your group using Procare.
8. Greet all parents by their name, or with "Good Morning" or "How are you today?"

Political Activity

You can participate in political activities as long as it does not conflict with your work performance, or federal or state law and you make it clear in your interactions that you are acting as a private citizen, not representing **Wellspring Early Learning Center**.

Personal Appearance and Dress Code

Employees have a direct impact on the image of **Wellspring Early Learning Center** and should appear neat, clean, and dressed appropriately for the work being performed. All employees must report to work wearing their **Wellspring Early Learning Center**

logo shirt. Two logo shirts will be provided upon hire. Additional shirts may be purchased by the employee.

The following dress code will be implemented and enforced at all times.

- **Uniform:** All employees must report to work wearing their **Wellspring Early Learning Center** logo shirt. Black, blue, or khaki slacks and scrubs, or blue jeans with no tears or holes. Knee-length shorts or capris are allowed during warm-weather months only; they must fit loosely with no holes or lavish accessories. A black, zip-up fleece is allowed during cold weather months. New garments with the Wellspring logo may be made available periodically. Management is encouraged to wear business-professional apparel when warranted by their schedule (e.g., meeting with parents, consultants, vendors, etc.).
- **Jewelry** should be conservative. Long chain necklaces or pendants should not be worn as they can present a safety hazard to small children. Earrings should also be small, conservative and secure, to prevent children from grabbing and pulling them loose. Facial piercing must be covered or removed.
- **Shoes** must be neat and in good repair at all items. Tennis shoes or flats are best. Since you are expected to engage the children in activities on the playground shoes should be appropriate for the situation. Open-toe or open-heel shoes are not recommended for safety reasons (no flip flops). All kitchen staff must wear closed-toe shoes. Bare feet are prohibited. Slippers may only be worn in the infant room as an alternative shoe covering.
- **Hair:** hair should be clean, well-groomed and present a professional image. Caps and hats are not allowed unless for outdoor sun protection or warmth (during cold weather). Proper head-covering is allowed for kitchen/food-service staff.
- **Nails:** should be maintained in a conservative length to prevent any unintended scratching of the children in your care and to help prevent the spread of germs or bacteria potentially found in longer nails.
- **Tattoos and Body Piercings:** are generally acceptable if they are tasteful, do not interfere with work activities, and maintain a high level of professionalism. The issue is not if employees have tattoos or piercings, but rather the message that the body art portrays. If you have tattoos of a design that are visible but not lewd, crude, sexist, racist, violent, etc. there will not be an issue. Piercings should be limited in size and remain close to the skin as not to present a health and safety issue (for employee or child). In a busy center or playground where there are a lot of active children, there is a very real risk of accidents or possible injury to staff. The director may request that an employee cover tattoos and/or remove piercings if they are inappropriate or present a safety concern.

When representing **Wellspring Early Learning Center** outside of the center, employees are to wear the approved uniform.

Company Equipment and Supplies

Exercise care when using tools and equipment and follow all operating instructions, maintenance requirements and safety guidelines. Please do not use any equipment requiring operation that you do not fully understand. Ask for assistance. Report damages of equipment immediately to the director. Equipment and supplies are intended for company use only. Company equipment and supplies are not for personal use and are not to leave the premises. Acceptable equipment, supplies, toys, etc. that are donated to the center must be approved by the owners and becomes the property of **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Do not bring any item or allow any item to be brought into the classroom without director approval.

You are responsible for all property, materials or equipment issued to you or in your control during your employment with **Wellspring Early Learning Center** unless otherwise provided in a valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreement. Company tablets, computers and speakers may not be removed from the center and must be checked in and out each day with your director for use in the classroom. Should you leave **Wellspring Early Learning Center** for any reason, you are required to return all company owned equipment and supplies to the director before your last day of work.

Co-Worker Relationships

Employees are expected to keep a positive work environment at all times and treat co-workers with respect. In the event that a conflict or problem situation arises, please discuss it directly and professionally with the person involved. Concentrate on positive feedback and constructive criticism over negativism, personal attacks, gossip and/or slander. Employees are expected to work through the concern with their co-worker first. If you are unable to jointly resolve the problem, approach your Director to help you work through the concern. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and refrain from discussing their concerns with co-workers, customers or the general public. Gossip will not be tolerated.

Smoking Policy

As required by law, all facilities and vehicles owned, operated or leased by **Wellspring Early Learning Center** are smoke-free and shall be free of all tobacco and tobacco related products, including smoking, smokeless and electronic products. The campus is inclusive of all vehicles used to transport enrolled children, all outdoor spaces, and all indoor locations, whether or not children are present. Childcare employees and volunteers may not use tobacco or tobacco-related products while off-campus at provider-related activities (i.e. fieldtrips, walks, and all other outdoor activities). Employees who use tobacco products while off campus are required to change clothes and wash hands thoroughly prior to interacting with children.

END OF HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM - Employee Copy

(Employee's Copy—to Remain in Handbook)

I understand that I am an at-will employee, and I therefore understand that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without prior notice, and with or without cause or reason by **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Likewise, I understand that I am free to resign at any time, for any reason. No employee, agent, or representative of **Wellspring Early Learning Center** other than its executive officers has authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time, or to make any representations, promises or agreements contrary to the foregoing. I further understand that any such agreement authorized by executive officers shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both an executive officer and myself.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. As **Wellspring Early Learning Center** changes, the need may arise to change policies described in this handbook. **Wellspring Early Learning Center** reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. As soon as practical, **Wellspring Early Learning Center** will notify all team members of such changes, and they will be applicable even if I have not signed a new Acknowledgment and Release Form for them. This Handbook supersedes any previous Employee Handbook.

I understand and acknowledge that violation of the Employee Handbook or any other workplace rule may result in immediate disciplinary action against me, up to and including termination of employment.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I have read and will familiarize myself with its contents and follow its policies and rules as well as those in the TN DHS Licensure Rules for Child Care Centers. I also agree to ongoing training from various online educational providers and Wellspring Center & Classroom Guidelines.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM - Employer Copy

(Wellspring's Copy—to Be Placed in Employee File)

I understand that I am an at-will employee, and I therefore understand that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without prior notice, and with or without cause or reason by **Wellspring Early Learning Center**. Likewise, I understand that I am free to resign at any time, for any reason. No employee, agent, or representative of **Wellspring Early Learning Center** other than its executive officers has authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time, or to make any representations, promises or agreements contrary to the foregoing. I further understand that any such agreement authorized by executive officers shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both an executive officer and myself.

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Please date, print and sign your name and forward this form to the director. -

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date