



*Kids Central Incorporated*

# **Employee Handbook**

*Proudly Serving The Head Start Community  
Since 1965!*

**Revised May 2008**



# **Kids Central**

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## **Employee Handbook**

**Revised May 2008**

## DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

This handbook has been prepared to help you become familiar with your new employer and to make your transition smooth and effective. **The adoption of this employee handbook is entirely voluntary on the part of the Agency and shall not be construed as creating a contractual relationship between the Agency and any employee. It is neither a contract nor an agreement of employment for a definite period of time;** rather, it is a summary of Agency policies, work rules, and benefits you enjoy as an employee.

From time to time, conditions or circumstances may require management to change, amend, or delete some of the policies and benefits contained in this handbook. The provisions and guidelines of this handbook may also be subject to change in accordance with applicable federal or state law. When such changes are made, management, of course, will notify you of the new or revised policy.

The contents of this handbook are presented as a matter of information only. None of the benefits or policies in this handbook are intended by reason of their publication to confer any rights or privileges upon you, or to entitle you to remain employed by the Agency. While we hope that your employment with the Agency will be long-lasting, employees are free to resign at any time, just as the Agency is free to terminate your employment at any time.

This issue of the employee handbook supersedes all previous issues and any other previously-issued employee policy.

This Agency is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

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## **RECEIPT FOR EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

# Welcome

**W**e welcome you into our family! We also congratulate you upon your entrance into Head Start, a program that has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive and high quality services designed to foster educational, health, emotional, and physical development in enrolled children, while assisting parents with meeting their individual and family needs.

What greater satisfaction is there than in knowing that you are providing services that are responsive and appropriate to each child's and family's developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience. The satisfaction you will experience for helping them through this important time of their lives is without measure. The satisfaction you will gain from doing a job which lifts children and families to a greater plain is a great reward in itself.

The steady growth of this organization since its inception has been planned, coordinated, and controlled within the framework of our high caliber of personnel. This stable growth can be maintained only through the cooperative spirit you have demonstrated in the past. It is only through your continued efforts that this Agency will be in a position to expand and improve upon the benefits that it can provide for you now and in the future.

This handbook is a summary of the principles for which we stand, the benefits to which you are eligible, and the obligations you assume as an employee. We do not intend that any "rule" or "policy" cause an undue hardship for any employee. We set them forth simply to let you know what to expect from Kids Central and what will be expected of you.

Please understand that this handbook cannot anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment. ***It is not an employment contract.*** Kids Central reserves the right to change or revise policies and procedures whenever such action is warranted.

You are requested to read your handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. Please ask us if you should have any questions concerning the policies or benefits outlined in this handbook. We will always be glad to be of help to you.

It is a pleasure to welcome new staff and to extend best wishes for continued success to those who have become a part of the growth and progress of our organization. We are sincerely proud to have you as a member of our team.

Sincerely,

*Darrell Edwards, MS*

Executive Director

***Kids Central***

## **About Kids Central, Inc....**

Kids Central is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation and a grantee of the Head Start Bureau of ACF (Administration for Children and Families), a division of HHS (Health and Human Services). Kids Central currently operates a Head Start program funded to serve 360 children and families in Wise County, Dickenson County, and the City of Norton, Virginia. Kids Central also operates an Early Head Start program funded to serve 44 pregnant women, infants, and toddlers in Wise County and the City of Norton.

Kids Central is governed by a Board of Directors and a Parent Policy Council. The Board of Directors is comprised of members selected from every strata of the community. The Policy Council is comprised of Head Start parents and community representatives.

## **Kids Central Philosophy**

Kids Central's mission focuses on excellence in providing services to children. Kids Central believes success in this mission depends on the collective efforts of a diverse workforce made up of individuals committed to excellence in service and performance. In keeping with this commitment, Kids Central establishes guidelines for policy formulation and administration which:

- ◆ Emphasize the integrity of Kids Central community through a unified institutional effort;
- ◆ Support and promote individual development for the betterment of the children served and the community;
- ◆ Recognize individual contribution at all levels and appreciate innovative effort and accomplishments, and;
- ◆ Encourage open communication and shared stake holding to accomplish the mission.
- ◆ Kids Central takes pride in its tradition of leadership and innovation.

# Mission Statement

*To embrace our children, teach our children, and to inspire our children.*

## Vision Statement

*We envision Kids Central as a leader in providing high quality community-based educational services to meet the needs of our children, families, and community.*

## Values Statement

- ◇ ***Service:*** We are committed to the highest standards of quality in our programs and operations. We promote courtesy and dedication in our classrooms and administrative community.
- ◇ ***Integrity:*** We will maintain loyalty to our Mission and the highest standards of ethical and professional character within a supportive work community. We will work honorably and justly in all pursuits.
- ◇ ***Innovation:*** We provide leadership in the development of solutions to address problems for our children and their families; and encourage creative visionary ideas from our staff, volunteers, and our community.
- ◇ ***Respect:*** We will maintain respect for the worth and dignity of all persons with whom we work and serve.
- ◇ ***Diversity:*** We will maintain employment policies and provide services that promote cultural diversity, inclusion, and that capitalize on the strength of our program, while pursuing our Mission.
- ◇ ***Stewardship:*** We will be diligent, responsible stewards of financial and human resources while maintaining resources to address the needs of our constituents.

# What You Can Expect From Kids Central

We have an established employee relations policy at Kids Central. Our policy is:

- TO seek employees of highest quality.
- TO select employees on the basis of skill, training, ability, and character without discrimination.
- TO reward employees fairly, according to the success of the Agency.
- TO compensate our employees comparably to other like businesses in our area.
- TO continually review employee benefits and working conditions, with the objective of providing the best programs we can, consistent with sound business practices.
- TO respect the individual rights of each employee and to treat all employees with courtesy and consideration.
- TO ensure employees the right to discuss freely with management any problem concerning either their own welfare, or the Agency's welfare.
- TO make promotions from within the Agency, whenever possible.
- TO develop competent supervisory personnel who understand and meet the objectives of the Agency and who accept with open-mindedness the ideas and suggestions of fellow employees.
- TO provide work areas which are safe and orderly.
- TO keep employees periodically informed of the progress of the Agency, as well as keep them acquainted with the overall aims and objectives of Kids Central.
- TO dedicate ourselves to the goal of daily improvement.
- TO do all these things in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation so that our Agency will continue to be known as "a good place to work."

# Employment Policies And Procedures

## **Our Working Relationship**

We welcome you to Kids Central and want you to find satisfying employment and share in the rewards of a job well-done. Our management team is pledged to help you in every way.

During the early stages of your employment with us, you will find your supervisors and co-workers working more closely with you than at any other time of your employment. Their years of experience will give you a welcomed "head start" with your orientation and job training.

Throughout your career, we will always be interested and involved with you and your employment here. Should you ever wish to leave our employ, or should we desire to sever the employment relationship, we both are free to separate at will. If this is ever necessary, we encourage advanced counseling on our part and a notice of separation on your part, giving us both time to prepare and hopefully prevent any misunderstandings or unfortunate separations.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

It is our policy to provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, citizenship status, marital status, physical or mental disability, or past, present, or future service in the Uniformed Services of the United States, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law. It is the intent of Kids Central to treat qualified persons without discrimination in employment practices, such as: advertising, employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, benefits, training, upgrade, transfer or demotion, layoff or termination, and all other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. In addition, Kids Central expects each employee to provide equal treatment to each other, to the Agency's children and families, and to the Agency's visitors.

If, at any time, you feel you have been treated in a manner that does not reflect our policy on equal employment opportunity, please talk with your immediate supervisor, the Human Resource Officer, or any member of the management team with whom you feel comfortable discussing the situation. An employee can raise concerns or make reports without fear of reprisal. An employee found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Employees With Disabilities Or Diseases**

Kids Central will fully comply with all requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

Our policy is to treat all employees without discrimination because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which they are qualified, and to treat them equally in employment practices, such as the following: rate of pay or other forms of compensation, benefits, training, upgrade, transfer or demotion, layoff or termination, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

Kids Central will make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants or employees with a disability, to enable them to perform essential job duties, unless such accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business.

The Agency will maintain all Agency information regarding the medical condition or history of applicants, employees, and employees' dependents on separate forms and in separate locked medical files, and treat such information as a confidential medical record, to be utilized only as permitted by law.

Employees in need of accommodation for workplace accessibility or usability, to perform essential job duties, to participate in Agency-sponsored programs and activities, or who need alternative accessible formats for Agency communications, or emergency treatment or emergency evacuation assistance, should make a written request of such needs to their immediate supervisor.

Further, any employee who feels that this policy is not being adequately fulfilled should make, in writing, such feelings known to their immediate supervisor or to any member of management with whom they feel comfortable discussing the situation.

Employee accommodation requests and related information will be treated as confidential by the Kids Central, to the maximum extent feasible.

## **Accommodation Transfers**

An employee who can no longer perform the essential functions of their current position because of a disability, with or without accommodation, will be placed on a lateral basis in an existing (or soon to be) vacancy for which they are qualified and can perform the essential job duties, with or without accommodation. Accommodation transfers will be considered before vacancies are made available for other employees or applicants.

If no such vacancies exist, or the employee declines placement, the employee will be terminated.

Employees in need of an accommodation transfer should make the need known to their supervisor and will be given first consideration for such vacancies on a lateral or downgrade basis.

Employees in need of an accommodation transfer will be considered for promotional opportunities, along with other internal candidates, without priority or preference, provided such a transfer does not run counter to our seniority system.

## Harassment Policy

We expect every person at Kids Central to be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity. Accordingly, any form of harassment related to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability, or any other legally-protected basis is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

For these purposes, the term "harassment" includes slurs and any other offensive remarks, jokes, graphic material, or other offensive verbal, written, or physical conduct.

Examples of harassment include:

- ▶ Degrading any group or class of people;
- ▶ Assigning less desirable work or working conditions to members of a protected group based solely on their group membership; or
- ▶ Treating protected individuals in a demeaning fashion.

Unwelcome or repeated sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or any other unwelcome, unbecoming verbal or physical conduct will not be tolerated and is not a condition of employment. Neither submission to, nor rejection of, such conduct will be used as a basis for employment decisions. Employees who believe they have been subjected to unwelcome sexual advances or conduct are encouraged to inform the perpetrator of the specific behavior that is unwelcome, (preferably at the time of the unwelcome advance), and request the perpetrator to stop.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- ▶ Unwelcome, deliberate, or repeated unsolicited verbal comments, jokes, epithets, slurs, or stories of a sexual nature;
- ▶ Offensive physical contact, gestures, assault, or any physical interference with work or movement.
- ▶ Offensive graphic communication such as photographs, cartoons, posters, documents (including letters, poems, etc.), or drawings;
- ▶ Implicit or explicit unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or repeated unwelcome expressions of sexual interest;
- ▶ Any other behavior of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an applicant's or an employee's job placements, job performance or job advancement, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Kids Central respects the rights of employees to practice the religion of their choice. Harassing conduct directed toward an individual based on their religious beliefs will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. The Agency will seek to accommodate the religious needs of employees in the workplace, provided that the accommodations do not cause an undue burden on the business operations of the Agency.

Kids Central is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment and takes all appropriate health and safety precautions consistent with current medical knowledge. Accordingly, employees may not refuse to work with, cooperate with, withhold services from, or otherwise harass, intimidate, demean, or isolate a co-worker because of a known or suspected disability or disease.

If employees have any questions about what constitutes harassing behavior, they should ask their supervisor.

The Agency will take all steps necessary to prevent any form of harassment from occurring. All supervisors and managers are informed of this policy and have been instructed as to what constitutes proper and improper behavior. The Agency is prepared to promptly take steps necessary to enforce this policy.

Violation of this policy by any employee will subject that employee to disciplinary action, possibly including dismissal. If an employee feels that they have been a victim of harassment by a co-worker, member of management, vendor, or visitor of the Agency, or if an employee becomes aware of such behavior around them, they should contact the Executive Director, or any member of management with whom they feel comfortable discussing their concern, as soon as the problem arises. In the event the complaint involves the Executive Director, the employee should contact the Board Chairperson.

Kids Central will investigate all complaints and will endeavor to handle these matters expeditiously, confidentially, and in a professional manner so as to protect the offended individual and other individuals providing relevant information. When the situation is fully understood by management, prompt and appropriate action will be taken. If wrongful harassment is established, the offending party will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. There will be no retaliation against anyone for stepping forward with a concern regarding any type of harassment.

## **Legal Work Status**

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires that all employees hired by Kids Central provide documentation proving that they have a legal right to work in the United States.

In compliance with this Act, all job offers extended to successful applicants are made contingent upon the receipt of the required documentation and completion of DHS Form I-9. The required documentation must be provided within three working days of the date the employee begins work. Only those successful applicants who complete Form I-9 will be permitted to continue working.

## **Background Checks**

Prior to becoming an employee of Kids Central, a job-related background check will be conducted. As you may know, a comprehensive background check may consist of prior employment verification, professional reference checks, education confirmation, and a criminal record check. As appropriate, a Motor Vehicle or DMV driving record history may also be obtained.

All employees must satisfactorily pass a criminal record check through the Virginia State Police and a Child Protective Services background check through the Department of Social Services before hire. Individuals convicted of certain “barrier crimes” are not eligible to work in childcare services in the State of Virginia. Any employee whose background checks do not meet the current standards for hire will be terminated immediately.

Similarly, any current employee who is convicted of a crime that would preclude employment will be immediately terminated.

## **Your Supervisor**

Your supervisor is a very important person for you. When you have a problem or need a question answered, you should go to your supervisor. Your supervisor will be keeping you up to date on information you need to do your job effectively. The goal of any supervisor is the ultimate attainment of organizational goals through the use of people and materials.

The person whom you will depend on the most in this organization will be your Supervisor. He/She is here to schedule assignments, notify you of changes, pave the way for employees with new assignments by letting you know what to expect, and handle any complaints. He/She is here for you to notify if there are any problems in your performing your assignment on time.

Supervisors work hand-in-hand with the supervisor in evaluating job performance, skills, and the general qualities of our staff such as dependability, neatness on the job, attitude, etc.

Always feel free to discuss any problems you may encounter with your supervisor, a member of management, or the Human Resource Officer.

## **Your Probationary Period**

It is the policy of Kids Central to provide a probationary period to all new employees. The probationary period is essentially a period of adjustment for you, your co-workers, and your supervisor. During this period you will work closely with your supervisor to learn how to do your job. It gives you an opportunity to gain more knowledge about the job and the work environment. At the same time, the probationary period gives your supervisor an opportunity to observe your job performance, ability to get along with co-workers, and attendance, as well as other job-related responsibilities.

The probationary period shall be defined as the first 90 calendar days of employment. There will be three evaluations completed during this timeframe. One will be completed at 30 days, the second at 60 days, and the final evaluation at 90 days. The probationary period is not an employment contract or agreement for a definite period of time. You have the right to terminate employment with or without notice, and with or without cause. Kids Central has a similar right.

## Employee Definitions

- **Full-Time Employee:**

A full-time employee is an employee who has completed the probationary period and works a normal workweek, in accordance with an established schedule of at least 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Full-time employees are eligible for all benefits as they meet the eligibility requirements.

- **Regular Part-Time Employee:**

A regular part-time employee is an employee who has completed the probationary period with an established schedule of 40 hours per week for less than 52 weeks per year. Regular part-time employees are eligible for benefits as they meet the eligibility requirements.

- **Part-Time Employee:**

A part-time employee is an employee who has completed the probationary period with an established schedule of less than 40 hours per week for less than 52 weeks per year. Part-time employees are only eligible for federally or state-mandated benefits such as Workers' Compensation and Social Security protection.

- **Temporary Employee:**

A temporary employee is an employee who is hired for specified or limited periods during the year. Temporary employees may work either "full-time" or "part-time," but are only eligible for federally or state-mandated benefits, such as Workers' Compensation and Social Security protection.

Individuals who are at Kids Central, but are employed by an employment Agency that is contracted by the Agency, should refer to that Agency concerning their benefits. Hospitalization and other benefits are not available to temporary employees. The Agency will review with you your eligibility for Agency benefits. Should you have questions concerning any employee benefits, please see the Human Resource Officer.

Employees are also categorized as either exempt or non-exempt:

- **Nonexempt Employee:**

Nonexempt employees can either be salaried or hourly. These employees are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Wage and Hour laws. Employees in this category are entitled to premium pay for work in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Such employees include, but are not limited to, clerical, secretarial, and support personnel.

- **Exempt Employee:**

Exempt employees are salaried and are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Wage and Hour laws of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This exemption will depend upon the employee's duties and responsibilities. Such employees include, but are not limited to, those who qualify as exempt executive, administrative, professional, or supervisory personnel.

## **Job Posting**

Whenever possible, we prefer to promote from within our own workforce. Qualified in-house candidates will be given first consideration when filling job vacancies. Our Agency can provide the tools, the incentive, the training opportunities, and proper working atmosphere; but it is you who are primarily responsible for developing your own abilities.

Job openings for which supervisors are seeking candidates will be posted in-house for five working days prior to going public.

To be eligible to apply for a posted job, employees must have been in their current position for at least 90 days, possess the minimum qualifications, and performed competently in their current position. To apply for an open position, employees should consult their supervisor and must also comply with normal application procedures.

In our operation, some positions may require special training or education in order to fulfill the position requirements. These positions may be filled from outside the organization, if no suitable internal candidate is identified.

## **Employee Privacy**

Kids Central respects each employee's right of privacy. The following things will be done to make sure we live by this policy:

- ▶ We will comply with all aspects of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) that governs the collection, maintenance, transmission, use, and disclosure of Private Health Information (PHI).
- ▶ We will maintain separate medical and "general" personnel files and make sure that all information in your records is maintained in a confidential manner.
- ▶ Only those people who have a "need to know" will review your records.
- ▶ We will refuse to release information about you to outside sources for matters such as credit checks, without your written approval. We reserve the right, however, with or without your approval, to verify your employment and to comply with mandatory legal process from the courts and law enforcement agencies or pursuant to any mandatory or required regulatory or governmental regulations.
- ▶ We will require all employees who have access to your records to comply with these policies and practices.

## **Employment Of Relatives**

It is the goal of Kids Central to avoid creating or perpetuating circumstances in which the possibility of favoritism, conflicts of interest, or impairment of efficient operations may occur. Therefore, while

relatives of Agency employees may be hired, relatives may not work at the same location or in a reporting relationship.

For purposes of this policy, relatives are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, spouse, grandparent, or individual who has acquired such a relationship through marriage or cohabitation, or who makes their home with an employee, and is any way related to that employee.

If an employee enters a relationship as defined by the above paragraph, while both parties are employed by the Agency, the relationship will be reviewed to ensure that no direct reporting relationships exist, nor that the two parties work in the same department. If either of those guidelines are violated, one of the employees must volunteer to change positions as offered by the Agency, or if neither volunteers, one of the employees must change positions as directed by the Agency. Refusal by either employee to resign or transfer may result in both employees being terminated.

## **Personal Relationships**

Kids Central does not wish to intrude into the private lives of its employees. However, in order to protect employees from sexual harassment and the Agency from the legal ramifications of these actions, and in order to avoid conflicts of interest, misunderstandings, or the appearance of favoritism or impropriety, Kids Central has adopted the following policy.

Co-workers or individuals in different departments of the Agency are not prohibited from socializing or having personal relationships as long as they do not interfere with the work performance of either employee or with the effective function of the workplace. Friendships and personal relationships often develop in the workplace; however, if someone declines a polite offer to socialize outside of work, do not approach the individual again.

No employee of the Agency shall have an amorous relationship (consensual or otherwise) with any person of lesser authority if the person with the more authority supervises, evaluates, or otherwise is in a position to exercise power or authority over that employee.

Additionally, all Kids Central employees are strictly prohibited from having an amorous or sexual relationship with any parent of any Kids Central enrolled children, and are strongly discouraged from doing so with any Kids Central volunteers.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

# Hours Of Work And Pay

## **Your Workweek At Kids Central**

The official workweek for all staff at Kids Central begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends the following Saturday at midnight. The normal working hours of the Agency are: Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Your particular work hours will depend on your job and the schedule to which you are assigned. Your supervisor will explain your work schedule to you. Should you have any questions on when you are to be at your work area and ready to work, please ask your Supervisor.

Daily and weekly work schedules may be changed from time to time at the discretion of Kids Central to meet the varying conditions of our business and demands of the children we serve. Changes in work schedules will be announced as far in advance as practicable.

## **Wages And Salaries**

To attract and retain qualified employees, we endeavor to pay wages that are comparable or higher to those paid in our profession and our area. In keeping with this objective, we monitor our pay scales on a regular basis to ensure they are in line with local and regional conditions. We adjust our wage and salary ranges in accordance with the business and general economic conditions as funds permit.

Your individual job classification and level of compensation are determined by the requirements of your job in such factors as responsibility, skill, training, education, and working conditions. Wage increases are based upon your record of performance on the job, your particular job classification, and the financial situation of the Agency.

## **Why Time Records Are Important**

The laws and regulations today are very strict about recording the exact number of hours you work. It is our responsibility to keep accurate records. Additionally, keeping accurate time records provides us with a permanent record of time for computing your earnings.

Non-exempt employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons.

It is the employee's responsibility to sign their time record at the end of each pay period to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The supervisor will review and then sign the time record before submitting it for payroll processing.

No employee is to work while on their lunch break. Additionally, employees are not to work any overtime unless authorized by their supervisor. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Overtime**

Occasionally, as the result of increased workloads or other unforeseen circumstances, it may become necessary to request you to work beyond your regularly scheduled hours or to report back to work in emergency work situations. When this occurs, we expect you to cooperate fully with your supervisor. We will try to ensure that overtime work is distributed as equally as possible. We will try to give you adequate notice of extended hours.

**Non-exempt** employees will be compensated at the rate of one and one-half (1-½) times their regular hourly rate for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek, as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Overtime is computed only on actual hours worked. Other paid time off such as vacations, holidays, or sick leave will not be considered as time worked for the purposes of computing overtime. Exempt salaried personnel are not eligible for overtime pay.

No overtime work is to be performed without the authorization of your supervisor. An employee who fails to work scheduled overtime or works overtime without prior authorization from management may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Your Payday**

Employees are paid bi-weekly on every other Friday. Each paycheck includes earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

Paychecks are direct deposited or mailed to the employees' home address. However, in extenuating circumstances, you may have a relative or another employee pick up your check, provided they supply your written authorization. When regular payday falls on holidays, special arrangements for earlier distribution of paychecks may be made.

Every effort is made to avoid errors in your paycheck. If you believe an error has been made, contact the Comptroller immediately. They will take the necessary steps to research the problem and to assure that any necessary correction is made. Corrections will be made on the next regularly-scheduled payday.

## **Payroll Deductions**

We are required to deduct from your pay your federal and state withholding tax (income tax). These deducted amounts are turned over to the appropriate treasuries, and you are given credit for it on your income tax at the end of the year, shown on your Form W-2. If an employee's marital status changes or the number of exemptions previously claimed increases or decreases, a new Form W-4

must be submitted to payroll. Each year you will receive a W-2 showing your total earnings for the year and the amount of taxes withheld.

Social Security and Medicare will be deducted from your paycheck at the rate established by law, as well as other employee-authorized deductions. Kids Central pays an equal amount in Social Security and Medicare contributions on your behalf, up to the legally-mandated maximums. Any other deductions must be authorized by you, in writing, before they can be deducted through payroll.

## **Wage Garnishment**

Garnishment of wages results when an unpaid creditor has taken the matter to court. A garnishment is legal permission for creditors to collect part of an employee's pay directly from the Agency. Although the Agency does not wish to become involved in an employee's private matters, we are compelled by law to administer the court's orders.

In doing so, the Agency will contact the employee to explain the details of garnishment and how it affects wages. Employees are encouraged to resolve these matters privately to avoid the Agency's involvement in the mutually-unpleasant situation. Repeated instances where the Agency is involved in garnishment proceedings may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Performance Reviews**

All of us like to know how we're doing on the job. Day-by-day comments from supervisors help, but now and then there is a need to review all phases of your work performance.

In our Agency, we have a method that we call "Performance Review." This procedure requires each supervisor to evaluate the performance of every employee under their supervision. Your supervisor will discuss your performance with you at the time of each performance review and point out how well you are carrying out your job and suggest where and how improvements can be made.

Your review will be based on such factors as the quality and quantity of the work you performed during the past year, knowledge of your job, initiative, attendance, personal conduct record, your attitude toward your job and other employees.

This performance review gives you an opportunity to have a face-to-face discussion of your performance with your immediate supervisor, and to learn how you can maintain and/or improve your on-the-job performance.

If you have any questions about how you are doing, or what we can do to help you improve your performance, please ask your supervisor to meet with you in private. They will always try to help you in every way possible.

**Wage and salary increases are not automatic, not guaranteed, and are not based on length of employment.**

## **Break Periods**

All Agency employees are granted two 15-minute rest periods on each shift -- one in the first half of the shift and another in the second half of the shift. These paid breaks are provided for your relaxation and refreshment. Care should be exercised, when taking a break from one's work that others engrossed in their work, should not be disturbed. Also, it is important to return to your work obligation after your break in a timely fashion.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

The inclement weather policy will be administered if/and when severe weather conditions occur and jeopardize Kids Central employees' safe arrival or departure from work. The policy will be administered as follows:

All centers and Home Base located in Dickenson County will follow the Dickenson County School schedule. All centers and Home Base located in Wise County and The City of Norton will follow the Wise County School schedule.

For all other staff, if severe weather conditions occur, delays in arrival time or the closing of the Agency will be broadcast on the local WCYB television station by 6:00 a.m.

If during your scheduled workday severe conditions occur, a judgment will be made by management, based on weather reports, the Sheriff's Department, and/or the Virginia Department of Transportation. With this information, management will make the decision on allowing employees to leave. Any unauthorized early departures will be considered an occurrence of absence.

During periods of inclement weather, employees will be paid only for hours actually worked. Vacation may be substituted for time missed during inclement weather. Employees who call in sick during inclement weather periods may not receive payment as a sick day unless medical documentation is provided.

## **Employee Incentive Policy**

Kids Central recognizes that the children and families we serve are what continue to make this agency succeed. We also recognize that it takes a diligent effort by all staff to ensure we continually meet our enrollment obligations. Incentives will be given to full-time employees and regular part-time employees on pay agreement, when our enrollment is maintained for a one year period (November 1 – October 31). The incentive will be up to 1.5% of the employee's annual salary and will be awarded as long as funds are available. Incentives will be awarded by December 15<sup>th</sup>. This incentive is to show our appreciation for the continuous hard work of our employees.

# Employee Benefits

## Introduction

Our benefits program represents a significant investment to provide you and your family with comprehensive protection and security. It is made possible by the Agency's success, which is, and will continue to be, the direct result of your efforts and dedication.

You can measure the value of many of your benefits in “dollars and cents” terms by noting what it costs the Agency to provide these benefits to you. If you were to buy equivalent benefit plans, the cost to you, as a private individual, would be far greater.

These benefits are also our way of showing that we care about your personal and professional growth and that we want you to remain with us as a successful, fulfilled employee. We hope you will find the information in this section useful and that it helps you understand the value of your total compensation.

## Paid Vacations

Because we recognize the importance of vacation time in providing the opportunity for rest, recreation, and personal activities, Kids Central grants annual paid vacations to its full-time employees as a way of showing our appreciation for your length of service and good work.

Regular full-time employees will earn vacation in accordance with the following schedule:

<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Paid Vacation</b>
Up To 1 year	5 days prorated
2 – 5 years	10 days
After 5 years	15 days

Employees are eligible to take vacation leave after successfully completing 180 days of service.

Vacations must be scheduled in such a way that we can best serve the children by maintaining sufficient manpower to serve their needs.

All vacation time must be pre-arranged with your supervisor's approval. We request that you schedule your vacation as far in advance as possible, but at least one week in advance for three days or more, and at least two days in advance for less than three days' requested vacation. Requests for vacation must be submitted on a Request for Leave form, which is available on the website or through the Human Resource Officer. Insofar as possible, your supervisor will honor your request

for vacation days preferred. Should there be more than one request in a department for the same period of vacation time, only one employee may be scheduled off. When this situation occurs, seniority will be the determining factor.

During the first year of employment, vacation leave will be calculated according to the fiscal calendar year and will be earned on a prorated basis. Thereafter, vacation will accrue on the employee's anniversary date.

Vacation must be taken in the fiscal year that it is earned. Vacation may not be carried over from one year to the next and it will not be paid should it not be used.

Vacation will be paid at your applicable straight-time rate or salary earned.

## **Paid Holidays**

At Kids Central, we observe 13 holidays per year. Due to commitments to the children we serve, some work activity may be required on a holiday, but every attempt will be made to keep such time to a minimum. Our acknowledged holidays include:

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| ◇ New Year's Day   | ◇ Thanksgiving Day            |
| ◇ Good Friday      | ◇ Day after Thanksgiving      |
| ◇ Memorial Day     | ◇ Christmas Eve Day           |
| ◇ Independence Day | ◇ Christmas Day               |
| ◇ Labor Day        | ◇ Agency-Designated Holidays* |

\* Kids Central-designated holidays (x 4) will be scheduled during the Christmas/New Year's holidays by the Executive Director and the senior staff for inclusion in the full-year planning calendar established in May/June of the current program year.

\* Kids Central-designated holidays (x 3) will be scheduled during the Christmas/New Year's holidays by the Executive Director and the senior staff for inclusion in the part-year planning calendar established in May/June of the current program year.

If one of these holidays falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday; if an Agency-observed holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. If a holiday falls within an employee's scheduled vacation, the day will be counted as a holiday and not as vacation time.

Full-time and regular part-time employees qualify for paid holidays immediately upon hire.

Holiday pay for time not worked will not be considered hours worked for purposes of computing overtime.

## **Sick Leave**

The Agency's ability to serve its children in a timely and efficient manner is of the utmost importance. Regular attendance and promptness in reporting to work contributes a great deal toward a better team effort and better served children. Being here in accordance with your schedule is expected and is considered an important factor in overall employee performance.

We recognize that occasionally it may be necessary for employees to be absent from work as a result of illness (their own or a member of their immediate family), or to attend to medical appointments or other health emergencies. Therefore, the following sick leave policy has been implemented for regular full- and part-time staff:

- **Full-Time Staff:**

During the initial year of employment, employees will accrue sick leave on a prorated basis up to a maximum of 10 days. New employees begin earning sick leave at their date of hire.

Unused sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 240 hours. After an employee reaches the maximum of sick leave accrual, accrual will stop and the employee will not accrue any more sick leave until the balance falls below the maximum limit of 240.

- **Regular Part-Time Staff:**

Regular part-time staff will earn sick leave at a prorated amount based on the number of weeks actually worked per year.

Unused sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 240 hours. After an employee reaches the maximum of sick leave accrual, accrual will stop and the employee will not accrue any more sick leave until the balance falls below the maximum limit of 240.

Employees may be required to submit medical certification of disability, injury, or illness for such leaves of more than three consecutive calendar days, or whenever requested by their supervisor. Sick leave cannot be taken in conjunction with any vacation time.

Sick leave benefits are paid at an employee's regular hourly rate, and will only be paid for regularly scheduled workdays. Unused sick leave will not be paid upon separation of employment.

Sick leave does not apply to injury or illness covered by the Workers' Compensation Act.

Abuse of this privilege may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Family And Medical Leaves Of Absence**

- **Establishing Employee Eligibility:**

Employees who have at least 12 months' total service at the commencement of the leave and who have worked for at least 1250 hours during the preceding 12 months will be granted a total

of up to 12 weeks' unpaid leave during any designated 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons listed below:

▪ **Establishing Leave Eligibility:**

- A. Because of the care of an employee's newborn child or newly adopted child, or newly placed foster child in the employee's home. This leave must be taken and concluded within a year after the child is born, adopted, or placed in the employee's home.
- B. In order to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- C. Because of the employee's serious health condition, which makes the employee unable to perform the functions of their current position.
- D. Because an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) is called to active duty in the Armed Forces.
- E. In order to care for a "recovering active duty service member" (spouse, child, parent, or nearest blood relative). (26 weeks)

▪ **Helpful Definitions:**

For purposes of Kids Central's FMLA policy, the following definitions apply:

- A **child** is anyone under 18 years of age who is an employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or an adult legally-dependent child. This may also include a child for whom the employee has day-to-day responsibility.

If both spouses are employees of the Agency, they will be entitled to an annual combined total of 12 weeks' leave for birth, adoption, foster placement, or to care for a seriously ill parent. However, each is still entitled to the difference between the amount of leave they have individually taken for those purposes and the amount of leave (up to 12 weeks) needed for their own, their spouse's or their child's serious health condition.

- A **parent** is a biological, foster, or adoptive parent, stepparent, legal guardian, or someone who plays or has played the role of parent, but does not include parents-in-law.
- A **spouse** is anyone recognized as a spouse through a legal marital relationship.
- A **serious health condition** is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition serious enough to:
  - ◆ Involve hospitalization, in-patient care in a residential health care facility; or

- ◆ Require continuing treatment or supervision by a health care provider for a condition that results in more than three consecutive days of incapacity (including subsequent treatment or periods of incapacity relating to the same condition.)

Serious health conditions also include incapacity due to pregnancy or prenatal care, chronic illnesses, permanent or long-term conditions for which treatment may not be effective, and conditions that would result in incapacity absent treatment.

- ▶ A recovering service member, as in (E) is defined as a member of the Armed Forces who suffered an injury or illness while on active duty that renders the person unable to perform the duties of the person's office, grade, rank, or rating.

- **The 12-Month Period:**

The 12-month period for taking leave is determined as follows: An employee would be entitled to 12 weeks of leave during a 12-month period from January 1 through December 31.

- **Intermittent Leaves:**

Leave of Absence requested for reasons (A) or (D) cannot be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless approved in advance, in writing, by Kids Central. Leave requested for reasons (B), (C), and (E) may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary; however, the employee may be required to temporarily transfer to an available alternative position providing equivalent pay and benefits.

- **Application For Leave:**

An employee requesting a family and medical leave of absence for any of the above-listed purposes should obtain from the Human Resource Officer, an FMLA Leave Request form. The employee is expected to complete and return this form to the Human Resource Officer at least 30 days prior to the desired beginning of the leave. When this is not possible, the employee must provide the requested certification within 15 calendar days of the Agency's request.

- **Certification Of Need:**

An employee requesting a family and medical leave of absence for the reasons listed in (B), (C), or (E) must submit to the Human Resource Officer a Certification Of Health Care Provider form which certifies the medical need for the leave. This form must be completed and signed by the physician providing care to the person with the serious health condition. It should include: (1) the date the illness or condition began; (2) the probable duration of the condition; (3) the estimated time the employee will need to care for the family member; and (4) a statement that the illness or condition requires the participation of a family member.

The Agency reserves the right to require the employee requesting a family and medical leave of absence for the reason listed in (B), (C), and (E) to provide additional Certifications of Need. Any cost associated with completing the initial form will be the employee's responsibility; however, any costs associated with additional forms will be paid by Kids Central.

- **Scheduling Medical Treatment:**

When a family and medical leave of absence is being requested for planned medical treatment for the reason listed in (B), (C), or (E), the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt Agency operations.

- **Use Of Sick Leave, Vacation, And Holidays:**

Employees on approved family and medical leave of absence will be required to use any earned, unused paid leave (e.g., sick leave and vacation leave) for reasons (A), (B), (C), (D), or (E), which will be charged against the employee's outstanding FMLA entitlement.

Holidays occurring during FMLA are to be counted against the employee's FMLA entitlement. Normal paid holiday policy applies, but the holiday will be paid if paid vacation time would otherwise be substituted for the holiday.

- **Responsibility For Insurance Premiums:**

The employee on an FMLA leave of absence will remain responsible for their portion of any group health and/or group life insurance premiums which become payable during the leave, if applicable. If premiums are raised or lowered, the employee would be responsible to pay the new premium rates. Premium payments will be discussed with the employee prior to going on FMLA, if possible, and a payment option agreement will be signed. Also, an employee not returning from a FMLA leave of absence without permissible cause may be responsible for repaying any insurance premiums or portions of insurance premiums paid by the Agency during the leave.

- **Seniority And Other Benefits:**

Seniority and holidays will not accrue during the unpaid portion of the leave, but seniority accrued prior to the leave will be fully credited and available upon return from leave.

If an employee is on FMLA and does not return to work by May 31, any vacation time they have will be lost.

- **Reinstatement:**

Generally speaking, employees returning from an FMLA leave of absence will be reinstated to the position they left or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Employees returning to work from a medical leave for their own serious health condition are required to furnish medical certification of fitness-for-duty when they return to work.

Leave taken under this policy will be counted against the employee's annual FMLA 12-week entitlement. Time not worked because of leave under this policy will not be counted against an employee's attendance record.

- **Failure To Return From Leave:**

If an employee fails to return to their scheduled work after an FMLA leave of absence, employment will be considered voluntarily terminated as of the first scheduled workday the employee misses following the expiration of their approved leave. If the employee is covered by the Agency's group health insurance, they will become eligible for continuation rights at that time.

## **Employee's Return To Work**

Kids Central will make every effort to bring back to work, an employee who has suffered a compensable injury or illness. The Agency realizes that employees suffer financially when they are unable to work, and it has been proven that employees recover much faster if they are able to work among their co-workers and remain active. Efforts to bring individuals back to work may include job modification and/or light duty work.

When considering return to work for an injury or illness, the Agency may require a physical examination to determine if employees can return safely to work and perform the duties and responsibilities of the job in question.

Any employee off from work under Workers' Compensation must notify their supervisor once every two weeks as to their condition and probable date of return to work. On final release from the doctor, employees must report to work the next scheduled workday after their release.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees receiving a summons to serve on a jury should inform their supervisor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for another employee to work in their place in their absence. In order to avoid any severe financial loss to employees, the Agency will pay full-time and regular part-time employees their normal rate of pay for a period of up to fifteen days. Should an employee be required to serve more than fifteen days on jury duty service, the employee may take the additional time as unpaid time off. Time spent on jury duty will not be used to calculate overtime pay. Saturdays and Sundays are not considered scheduled workdays under this policy.

To be eligible for jury duty pay, you must deliver to your supervisor a statement from the Court Clerk, indicating the time served on the jury.

When on jury duty, you are expected to report back to work on any day in which you are excused early or are not required to report for jury duty service.

## **Uniformed Services Leaves Of Absence**

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the Uniformed Services of the United States, in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment ACT (USERRA) and state law. Advance notice of military service

is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice, or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

Employees should inform Agency of training or drill schedules as far in advance as possible.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible.

Employees on military leave for up to 30 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws.

Reinstated employees will receive full credit for length of service and other rights and benefits determined by length of service that they had at the start of the leave, plus full credit for the period of time spent (up to five years) in the Uniformed Services.

Contact the Human Resource Officer for more information or questions about military leave.

## **Voting Time**

We encourage you to exercise your duty as an American citizen in elections in which you are eligible to vote. Polls are open before and after normal working hours, and you should have ample time to vote. However, if an unforeseen circumstance keeps you from voting, the Agency will give you time off to take advantage of this privilege. Employees should contact their supervisor to discuss taking time off to vote.

## **Group Benefits**

Kids Central provides certain benefits to all full-time and regular part-time eligible employees, including: medical, prescription drug, dental, life, retirement, AFLAC, and short-term disability insurance.

The following insurance benefits are presented in summary form and are included for illustration purposes only and are not meant to give the specific details of the benefit plans. Employees will be provided more information on these insurance benefits at the time of enrollment.

- **Life Insurance:**

Kids Central offers every full-time and regular part-time employee group life insurance coverage. This policy goes into effect the first of the month after completing 90 days of employment.

- **Medical Insurance:**

The Agency makes available group medical insurance coverage to all full-time and regular part-time employees and their families. You will be eligible to participate from the first of the month following 90 days of employment. Kids Central currently pays a portion of the premium for individual coverage as provided during each enrollment period. A portion of spouse and/or dependent coverage is paid for by Kids Central, if elected. The employee's portion of the insurance premium shall be deducted from your paycheck.

A separate booklet is provided and outlines the details of the health plan at time of enrollment. Please refer to this booklet or see the Human Resource Officer if you have any questions.

As health care costs continue to rise, the Agency will attempt to provide suitable health coverage to its employees at an affordable cost. However, when necessary, the Agency reserves the right to change the portion paid by employees for health insurance premiums.

- **Health Savings Account:**

Kids Central offers all employees enrolled in our group health insurance a health savings account through Vested Health. Kids Central will contribute \$1,000 per year to this account for employees to use to cover medical expenses. When first enrolled, the contribution will be prorated to the employee's eligibility date. This account will pay or reimburse medical expenses approved by United Health Care for the employee and their enrolled dependents.

- **Prescription Drug Insurance:**

Kids Central offers prescription drug coverage as part of the medical insurance package for all full-time and regular part-time employees. Information regarding this benefit will be provided at the time of enrollment.

- **Dental Insurance:**

Kids Central makes available group dental insurance to all full-time and regular part-time employees and their eligible dependents. You will be eligible to participate from the first of the month following 90 days of employment. Kids Central currently pays 50% of the premium for individual coverage. Spouse and/or dependent coverage is paid for by the employee, if elected. The employee's portion of the insurance premium shall be deducted from your paycheck.

- **Short-Term Disability Insurance:**

All full-time and regular part-time employees of Kids Central are eligible for short-term disability coverage. This coverage becomes effective the first of the month following 90 days of employment.

STD benefits are offset by any workers' compensation benefits so that combined benefits do not exceed the maximum level.

- **Retirement:**

A 401(k) tax qualified retirement savings plan will be provided to all eligible full-time employees and regular part-time employees who have completed 1080 hours of service and have been with the agency for one year. Employees may contribute up to the amount set by the Internal Revenue Service. Kids Central will match up to 3% of the employee's annual salary.

- **AFLAC:**

Full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to purchase various insurance policies offered from AFLAC, if they so choose. Premiums are the responsibility of the employee.

- **Voluntary Life Insurance:**

Although Kids Central offers full-time and regular part-time employees a group life insurance policy, we understand that some employees would like coverage for their family members as well. Kids Central offers an additional voluntary life insurance policy to eligible employees for themselves and their family members. Enrollment is voluntary and premiums are the responsibility of the employee.

- **COBRA**

COBRA is part of a federal law enacted in 1986 requiring certain employers to offer employees and their families an opportunity for the temporary extension of health coverage under certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end. At the time a new employee becomes eligible for health care coverage through Kids Central, that employee will be provided literature notifying them and their families of their rights under COBRA. This should be read carefully, both by the employee and their family, and retained for future reference.

If an employee's hours are reduced, or an employee is terminated for any reason other than gross misconduct, and this reduction of hours results in loss of health care coverage, that employee and their family will be provided literature notifying them of their right to elect coverage under COBRA. If elected by the employee or the employee's dependents, coverage will continue for a period of time specified by the law at the expense of the employee or the employee's dependents.

In order that Kids Central may comply with this law, we require that the employee notify the Agency of any change in status. Specifically, those changes are:

- Employee's change of address
- Change of address of spouse or dependent
- Birth or death of a dependent
- Death of a spouse
- Divorce or legal separation from a spouse
- Disability of employee, spouse, or dependent within 60 days of qualifying event

- ▶ Medicare eligibility for employee or spouse
- ▶ Dependent child ceases to be a "dependent child" (child reaches age 19 and is not eligible for continued coverage)

Any questions regarding COBRA continuation coverage should be addressed to the Human Resource Officer.

## **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' Compensation insurance coverage is provided in accordance with state law for all employees from the day they start work. The Agency pays the full cost of this protection. This insurance covers employees who are injured on the job, or who suffer a job-related illness. Benefits include income replacement for lost wages, hospital and medical expenses, compensation for total or partial permanent disability, and death benefits.

If you are injured on the job, you are required to report immediately to your supervisor or the Human Resource Officer, who will assist you in completing an accident report and see that you get medical attention, if required. In accordance with Virginia Workers' Compensation law, Kids Central has created a Panel of Physicians from which employees are required to select a physician for treatment. Failure to use a doctor from the panel may result in denial of any claim for Workers' Compensation benefits, including payment of medical expenses.

An employee injured at work may be entitled to receive both time off under the Family and Medical Leave Act and compensation benefits under the Workers' Compensation system. In those instances in which both the Family and Medical Leave Act and Workers' Compensation apply, Kids Central will follow the guidelines and extend the benefits to the employee required under both statutory schemes.

## **Unemployment Insurance**

Kids Central pays a percentage of its payroll to the Virginia Unemployment Commission Fund, to fund unemployment compensation. Employees who become unemployed may be eligible for unemployment compensation for a limited period of time, under certain conditions. Unemployment compensation provides temporary income for workers who have lost their jobs. To be eligible, you must have earned a certain amount and be willing and able to work. Terminated employees should apply for benefits through their local State Unemployment Office as soon as possible.

Kids Central pays the entire cost of this insurance.

## **Social Security Benefits And Payments**

Federal Social Security provides a variety of benefits, including retirement income, health benefits, death benefits, and monthly income payments for retired employees and for certain dependent survivors of covered employees. A percentage of your gross earnings is deducted as your contribution for this protection. The Agency contributes an equal amount. Normally, you will be

eligible to receive a monthly income from Social Security when you reach retirement age, or become disabled.

## **Education Assistance**

Kids Central recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are critical to the success of the agency. Kids Central will reimburse pre-approved tuition costs (up to six credit hours per semester and three credit hours during the summer term) to eligible employees up to \$1,000 per fiscal year. Eligible employees are those who have completed one full year of service, who remain on active payroll and are performing their job satisfactorily through the completion of each course, who have completed and submitted a written request and obtained prior approval from their Supervisor and the Comptroller, and who submits receipts for reimbursement.

## **Benefits Summary**

Kids Central reserves the right to amend or terminate any of its benefit programs, or to require or increase employee premium contributions toward any benefits, at its discretion. This reserved right may be exercised in the absence of financial necessity. Whenever an amendment is made to any of Kids Central's benefits programs, the respective plan administrator will notify plan participants of all approved amendments or plan terminations, in accordance with the requirements of applicable Federal law.

If information in this handbook and our summary plan descriptions contradicts information in these master contracts or master plan documents, the master contracts/documents shall govern in all cases. For more complete information regarding any of our benefits programs, please contact the Human Resource Officer.

# Employee Responsibilities

## What Kids Central Expects From You

Along with the advantages and opportunities offered by Kids Central go certain responsibilities -- obligations that you will want to meet. Your primary and most important responsibility, of course, is to do a good job on the work assigned to you. Your supervisor is primarily responsible for your performance; respect their experience, listen to instructions carefully, and carry them out promptly to the best of your ability.

In addition to following instructions, doing a good job requires you to think for yourself -- to ask questions and make constructive suggestions, to set goals for yourself, and to work toward these goals. It also requires that you be a team player -- willing to work together with your co-workers in a spirit of cooperation and harmony.

Doing a good job also implies certain obligations on your part, such as using good judgment, being prompt and regular in attendance, and being loyal and committed to the Agency -- its people and its services.

You will want to keep well-informed about Kids Central so that you will be able to talk intelligently about it to your friends and neighbors. To them, you represent Kids Central, and what you say can do much to shape their final opinion of us.

## Reporting Child Abuse

Now that you are an employee of Kids Central, you have assumed a great deal of responsibility for the care and well-being of the children whom we serve. Many children here and elsewhere cannot adequately protect themselves or their interests, and rely on others to do so for them.

As an employee working in a Head Start Agency, you are required by the Code of Virginia to report suspected **abuse, neglect, or exploitation** of any children, whether by staff, family members, or others with whom they may have contact.

If you suspect that a child is being abused, neglected, or exploited, you should first notify your supervisor or the Executive Director. Failure to report suspected abuse could lead to a \$500 fine, as well as endanger the mental or physical health of the child.

Virginia law protects persons who report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. If you have any questions or concerns about the care or treatment of our residents, or what is meant by "abuse," "neglect," or "exploitation," ask the Executive Director.

## **Business Ethics And Practices**

The Agency is committed to maintaining the highest legal, ethical, and moral standards in the conduct of our business. The commitment applies without exception to all our activities as we deliver services to the children and families we serve, fulfill contractual obligations and other agreements, authorize and account for the use of Agency assets, and carry out our obligations to the public and employees. The Agency respects the privacy of employees when not at work. However, employees are expected to behave so as to be a positive reflection on the Agency and what it stands for.

### ▪ **Conflicts Of Interest**

The basic principle of conflict of interest is that employees should avoid any activity, investment, or interest that might reflect unfavorably upon the integrity or good name of Kids Central. or in any way damage Kids Central's business or reputation.

Any employee who wishes to engage in outside professional, business, or volunteer activities must be certain that the proposed activity does not:

- ▶ Interfere with the employee's effective performance of their job duties;
- ▶ Make use of any of Kids Central's proprietary or confidential information; or,
- ▶ Require the use of Kids Central time, resource, facilities or equipment.

Whenever there is a possible conflict of interest, it should be discussed with the employee's supervisor or the Executive Director. Violations of this policy will be considered grounds for termination of employment.

### ▪ **Confidentiality:**

All of us who work at Kids Central share the responsibility of observing a strict code of ethics and confidentiality. In the process of performing our work, it is possible to overhear many items regarding confidential information of those we serve.

These are not to be discussed outside Kids Central or with other Kids Central personnel. No information, records, or materials concerning children and their families or Kids Central business may be used, released, or discussed with anyone outside Kids Central or with other Kids Central employees without authorization. Breaches of children and families' confidentiality will be grounds for disciplinary action.

**No one other than authorized personnel may have access to confidential records.**

### ▪ **Perceived Violations Policy:**

It is Kids Central's policy to comply fully with the spirit and letter of all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to Kids Central and its business operations. If an employee believes that any employee of Kids Central may be acting in violation of any such law or regulation -- or in violation of a Kids Central policy -- the employee has a duty to report the perceived violation, preferably in writing, to the Executive Director within 24 hours of the

observation of such conduct. All inquiries pertaining to perceived violations will be handled in the strictest confidence possible.

**Examples** of perceived violations of law include violations of child labor laws, wage-hour regulations, and unlawful discrimination or harassment. **Examples** of violations of Kids Central policy include employee theft, discrimination, and harassing conduct.

Compliance with this policy is a term and condition of continued employment with Kids Central. If employees have any questions with regard to this duty to report perceived violations, they may contact their direct supervisor or Executive Director.

## **Press Releases/Media**

Because of the nature of our business, at times we receive requests from print or broadcast media regarding the Agency. All employees should refer any requests for information from print or broadcast media regarding the Agency or its operations to the Executive Director.

## **Leaving Early And Taking Time Off From Your Job**

You may request permission from your supervisor to leave your job in the event of an emergency, or other personal business that cannot be attended to outside your normal working hours. Your supervisor will consider the urgency of your request and the time when you can best be spared. You must record your time when leaving the premises on personal matters and when you return. If at all possible, please schedule your doctor and dentist appointments during non-working hours. However, in emergency situations where this is not possible, you may request the necessary time off through your supervisor.

## **Holding Other Jobs**

We at Kids Central appreciate the ability, energies, and loyalty you bring to your job. In fairness to fellow workers and to us, employees are not permitted to hold employment with another organization, or have an interest in any business which may, in any way, result in a conflict of interest, or which would adversely affect their employment here. However, should employees wish to involve themselves with work which cannot be described by the above stipulation, they are free to do so, provided it is not done on Agency time, will not interfere with their performance as an employee at Kids Central, and they have the approval their appropriate supervisor and the Executive Director. Employees on an approved leave of absence from Kids Central are not allowed to work another job.

## **Attendance**

Each of our employees plays an important role in getting the day's work done. Therefore, each employee is expected to be at their workstation on time each day. Absenteeism or tardiness, even for

good reasons, is disruptive to our operation and interferes with our ability to satisfy the needs of the children we serve.

Occasionally, however, it may be necessary for you to be absent from work as a result of illness, injury, or for personal reasons. In such cases, you must notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible, but no later than one hour before the beginning of your scheduled starting time. This advance notification is necessary in order that proper arrangements can be made to handle your work during your absence. Only under exceptional circumstances will notice from a family member or friend satisfy the notice requirement.

Three consecutive scheduled workdays in which an employee fails to report to work or notify their supervisor as expected will be considered a voluntary resignation on the part of the employee

Failure to provide notice of an absence, as described above, will result in an unexcused absence regardless of the reason. Unexcused absences or any other violation of the Attendance policy could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Telephone/Cell Phone**

### **▪ Telephone Conduct:**

The telephone is an important public relations tool for Kids Central. Telephone contacts warrant special consideration since the person calling cannot see to whom they are speaking. They can only draw their impression from the employee's voice and manner. Employees should be alert, pleasant, natural, distinct, and expressive.

Employees should answer promptly – at the first ring, if at all possible - with their name and location. Prompt answering helps build a reputation of efficiency. Employees should be friendly and give the caller their undivided attention. If the caller waits on the line, a “thank you for waiting” is a must when the employee returns to the line. Employees should always remember to say “thank you” and “I’m sorry.” Hang up gently. Employees should use the caller's name in the conversation and give them individual consideration. Take time to be helpful.

### **▪ Use Of Kids Central Telephones:**

Please keep your personal telephone calls to a minimum by requesting your relatives and friends to call you at home, whenever possible. Our telephone lines are a vital link with those we serve, and we ask your help in keeping them open by exercising discretion in using our telephones.

Should we receive an emergency call for you, you will be notified immediately. Otherwise, we will take the message and deliver it to you, when possible. Telephone calls may be made during breaks.

### **▪ Cell Phone Usage**

Because they create distractions and disrupt regular work routines, the use of personal communication devices such as cellular phones and audible pagers is prohibited during work

hours and in work areas, unless the Agency has provided such device(s) to the employee for business use only. Any employee carrying a non-Agency-issued pager with an audible alarm must ensure the alarm is turned off during work hours and in work areas. Employees must not make, return, or receive calls on personally-owned cellular phones during work hours or in work areas. Agency telephones are available for limited personal use.

Limited and temporary exceptions to this policy permitting the use of personally-owned communications devices for ongoing personal emergency situations (such as the imminent birth of a child), can be made only with the prior and continued approval of the supervisor. In the case of an accident to a family member or other urgent personal emergency where the employee's supervisor cannot be immediately contacted for permission, reasonable and appropriate use of personal communication devices is permitted.

This policy applies to all categories of employees, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary. Violations of this policy will be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who have a cell phone are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are strongly encouraged to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not an option, employees are expected to keep the call short, use hands-free options if available, refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional discussions, and keep their eyes on the road. Kids Central encourages that special care be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.

## **Computers/Electronic Communications**

Kids Central provides computers, printers, and other electronic devices to many of its employees to perform their job functions. These devices are to be used Kids Central business only. Only computer programs that are authorized by Kids Central are to be used or installed on Kids Central computers. Outside computer services such as the Internet, E-Mail, etc. are to be accessed and used only for Kids Central business.

- **E-Mail:**

Kids Central has established a policy with regard to access and disclosure of electronic mail messages created, sent or received by Kids Central's employees using the Kids Central's electronic mail system. Kids Central reserves the right to change the policies set forth below at any time, as may be required by the circumstances.

- Kids Central maintains an E-Mail system. The system is provided by Kids Central to assist in the conduct of business within Kids Central.
- The E-Mail system hardware is Kids Central property. Additionally, all messages composed, sent or received on the E-Mail system are and remain the property of Kids Central. They are not the private property of any employee.

- ▶ The use of the E-Mail system is reserved solely for the conduct of business at Kids Central. It may not be used for personal business.
- ▶ The E-Mail system may not be used to solicit for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations.
- ▶ The E-Mail system is not to be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.
- ▶ The E-Mail system shall not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials without prior authorization from the MIS Services Coordinator or the Executive Director.
- ▶ Kids Central reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received or sent over Kids Central's E-Mail system for any purpose. The contents of E-Mail properly obtained for legitimate business purposes may be disclosed within Kids Central without the permission of the employee.
- ▶ The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it does not guarantee confidentiality. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality. All passwords must be disclosed to Kids Central or they are invalid and cannot be used.
- ▶ Notwithstanding Kids Central's right to retrieve and read any E-Mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any E-Mail messages that are not sent to them. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval by the MIS Services Coordinator or the Executive Director.
- ▶ Employees shall not use a code, access a file or retrieve any stored information, unless authorized to do so. Employees should not attempt to gain access to another employee's messages without the latter's permission. All computer pass codes must be provided to the MIS Services Coordinator. No pass code may be used that is unknown to Kids Central.

Any employee who violates this Policy or uses the E-Mail system for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

▪ **Computers:**

- ▶ The computers at Kids Central are for Kids Central business only. At no time may any computer be used for other business or personal use.
- ▶ The software on Kids Central computers is the property of Kids Central; no unauthorized copies will be made or distributed. No additional software will be

installed on Kids Central computers without specific written authorization. Software from home is not permitted to be installed onto Kids Central computers at any time.

- ▶ All data contained within Kids Central computers belongs to Kids Central and cannot be altered without specific written authorization.
- ▶ No data stored on Kids Central computers is to be released to any person or outside organization without specific written authorization. This includes release through data transfer, in magnetic form, on printed reports or any other media or electronic transmission as well as databases without specific written authorization from the MIS Services Coordinator or the Executive Director.
- ▶ The computer passwords and security codes assigned to employees are not to be communicated to any other employee, unless specifically authorized. No passwords, security codes or computer access telephone numbers are to be communicated to any persons or outside organizations without specific written authorization from the Executive Director.
- ▶ The system technologies employed by Kids Central give it a unique competitive edge. No person is to disclose the names of software, databases, or the system used by Kids Central to persons outside Kids Central.

## **Business Reimbursements**

Approved expenditures for Kids Central business will be reimbursed upon presenting a bona fide receipt. Do not, under any circumstances, make personal purchases and charge them to the Agency. Purchases of Agency supplies and materials must be authorized by a purchase order issued by our purchasing agent.

## **Personal Appearance And Conduct**

### **▪ Conduct:**

Each Kids Central employee has an obligation to observe and follow Kids Central's policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times. If an individual's behavior interferes with Kids Central's orderly and efficient operations, the employee may be subjected to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

The reputation of Kids Central has been built on excellent children services and high quality education services, and a dedication to high standards of conduct. To maintain this reputation requires the vigilance and active participation of every employee. The opinions and attitudes that people have toward Kids Central may be influenced for a long period of time by the behavior and actions of one employee.

At all times, each Kids Central employee must be sensitive to the importance of providing fair and courteous treatment in all working relationships, projecting a professional image, and maintaining the standards of conduct expected of all Kids Central employees.

▪ **Appearance:**

Employees are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal cleanliness and present a neat, professional appearance at all times. The image Kids Central projects must demonstrate that it is the most professional, productive, thorough, and reliable provider of service in the child development area. Appearance is a major element of Kids Central's image. Kids Central's employees represent role models for the children we serve. To this end, it is the policy of Kids Central that an employee's dress and grooming should be, in Kids Central's opinion, appropriate to the employee's work situation and responsibilities.

- ▶ Personal grooming (regular shampooing of hair, daily bathing, etc.) is absolutely essential and required. Remember that you will be in close contact with children and/or parents and we do not want to offend them. Perfume, cologne, and aftershave, if worn, should be worn in moderation, as some people are allergic to these products.
- ▶ Hair must be kept neat, clean, and controlled at all times. Extreme hairstyles or colors are not acceptable. Save these hairstyles for the weekend. Make-up should be natural looking.
- ▶ Employees are expected to dress in a manner that is not only conducive to the image Kids Central reflects to its children and families, Board, donors and the general public, but also appropriate to the safe performance of job requirements.
- ▶ No halter tops, strapless tops, shirts that expose the midriff area, mini skirts, or shorts shorter than two inches above the knee may be worn at any time.
- ▶ Kids Central employees will not have any exposed body piercings or tattoos except for earrings.
- ▶ Kids Central employees will wear appropriate footwear at all times. No house shoes or other type of inappropriate shoe will be worn. Family Advocates and Home Visitors are urged to wear shoes that lace up and tie when on home visits.
- ▶ Jeans may be worn at any time by any employee so long as the work being performed warrants their use. However, jeans with holes in them may **not** be worn at any time.
- ▶ No T-Shirts will be worn by any employee displaying advertising on them except for advertising Kids Central or Kids Central events.
- ▶ No hats will be worn indoors by any employee displaying advertising on them except for advertising Kids Central or Kids Central events. Hats must be clean at all times. No dew rags will be worn at any time.

Kids Central reserves the right in all situations to decide whether any employee is in violation of this policy. Employees reporting to work improperly dressed may be sent home by their supervisor to change clothing and any time missed will be considered an unexcused absence.

Violations of this policy may also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Policy For Use Of Kids Central Vehicles**

You may be required to use Kids Central vehicles to carry out some of your duties. All personal use of Kids Central vehicles is prohibited without the knowledge of management. If you operate an Agency vehicle, you must follow these rules:

- ▶ You must possess a valid operator's license and a clean driving record.
- ▶ You are responsible for the safe and legal operation of the vehicle and the proper securing of all children and cargo.
- ▶ You are responsible for checking the vehicle at the beginning of each trip for safety and maintenance features, and for reporting needed maintenance or other vehicle problems to their supervisor. A designated employee will be responsible for insuring that needed services are completed on the vehicles.
- ▶ All doors on the vehicle should be locked after use at the end of the day and all items (trash, etc.) removed.
- ▶ Drivers and passengers must wear seatbelts at all times.
- ▶ All accidents must be reported promptly and failure to do so can result in discharge.
- ▶ There is to be no smoking in Kids Central vehicles.
- ▶ Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to operate an Agency vehicle or personal vehicle for Agency business when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of illness, medication, or intoxication.
- ▶ You are responsible for keeping the vehicle clean inside and out at all times.

**Remember – the vehicle is completely under your responsibility when in use!**

## **Kids Central Property Issued to Employees**

Depending on the need, employees may be issued items such as equipment, tools, cell phones, keys, cameras, etc. to use while performing their jobs. These items are property of Kids Central and when an employee terminates his/her employment either voluntarily or involuntarily, these items are to be returned to either the Supervisor or the Human Resource Officer. Failure to return agency issued property may result in the value of the property being deducted from the employee's last paycheck.

## **Good Housekeeping**

The condition of our facilities and workstations reflects an image to those who visit Kids Central. Poor and cluttered conditions send the wrong message as well as create a safety hazard. All employees play a part in keeping our facility in good order. Return all materials, tools, equipment, and devices to their proper place immediately after use.

## **Personal Visitors**

Visits to Kids Central offices by friends and relatives should be discouraged during working hours. However, the Agency does recognize this will occasionally occur. Please remind your visitor that you are working and, therefore, must make the visit as short as possible. We do not allow outsiders to sell their merchandise in the office. Agency employees selling items to other Agency personnel; i.e., Christmas Cards, school fund raisers, etc., should restrict this to break periods.

All adult visitors and guests must enter through the building's main entrance and sign in with the receptionist. They are to be escorted by an employee at all times. Employees shall be responsible for the conduct of their guests and visitors and their compliance with the Agency's rules and regulations. The employee shall be held accountable for any violation of the rules by the guest.

Minor children should not be brought into any Agency workplace except in extraordinary circumstances. Such visits must be for a limited time (a few hours up to but not exceeding one work shift) and with supervisor's approval. Employees with childcare emergencies are encouraged to take vacation time. Children too sick for school or public daycare should not be brought to work.

## **Solicitation And Distribution**

While the Agency actively encourages the participation of its employees in many community activities and organizations outside of work, the time spent at work is more productive and pleasant when not interrupted by active solicitations and distribution of materials by employees.

Therefore, during working time, no employee shall solicit or distribute literature or other material to another employee for any purpose. "Working time" is defined as that portion of any business day in which the employee is supposed to be performing actual job duties. It does not include such times as breaks or times prior to the start or after the completion of the regular workday. Conversely, no employee who is on "non-working time" (such as breaks, etc.) shall solicit or distribute literature or material to an employee who is on "working time."

No employee shall solicit, or distribute literature or materials to, any visitors at any time for any purpose.

## **Smoking**

Because we are expected to maintain the highest possible safety conditions and as we are concerned for our employees' health you are encouraged not to smoke. No one may smoke or use tobacco products anywhere on Kids Central property or in agency vehicles at any time. Employees who want to smoke or use tobacco products during work hours must leave the premises during designated breaks.

## **Search, Theft and Audit Policy**

In order to ensure its ability to conduct business efficiently and effectively and to protect itself

against the unauthorized use and removal of Kids Central property, Kids Central will from time to time conduct internal investigations including inspections, searches, and audits on Kids Central premises.

Kids Central reserves the right to conduct a routine inspection, search or audit at any time for Kids Central property or Kids Central-related information. Kids Central reserves the right to inspect the following, including but not limited to: personal property brought onto or taken from the premises; any work, rest or storage areas; all Kids Central vehicles, desks, cabinets, lockers, computers, satchels, etc., that are within the employee's possession or control.

A routine search or inspection may result in the discovery of personal possessions or those of others. Employees are discouraged from bringing into the workplace items of personal property they do not want revealed to Kids Central management. Under certain circumstances, Kids Central will generally attempt to obtain employee consent before conducting a search or inspection, but may not always be able to do so.

If an employee becomes aware of any theft, misuse, or unauthorized removal of Kids Central property, they are directed to notify their supervisor immediately. The theft, misuse, or unauthorized removal of Kids Central property is cause for immediate discipline, up to and including termination from employment.

## **Substance Abuse**

The purpose of this policy is to enable your Agency to continue to fulfill its responsibility to provide reliable and safe service to the children we serve and a safe working environment for our employees. In order to be physically and mentally fit to perform our duties in a safe and efficient manner, no employees shall work, or report to work, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. No employees shall consume, display, or have in their possession alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on Kids Central property, or performing work for Kids Central off our property. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Agency that employees shall not be involved with the unlawful use, possession, sale, or transfer of drugs or narcotics, in or out of the workplace, in any manner that may impair their ability to perform assigned duties, or otherwise adversely impact the Agency's business. To do so is a prime cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. All employees are subject to a pre-employment drug test and random drug testing at any time during the year.

Employees required to take prescription or non-prescription medication, which may potentially affect job performance, are required to report this to their supervisor. The supervisor will determine if it is necessary to temporarily place them on another assignment to ensure the safety of our employees and the public, or to remove them from the workplace.

Intoxication at work is grounds for disciplinary action, including immediate discharge. As used in this policy, intoxication means both being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or physical evidence that indicates that drugs or alcohol have been consumed. If an employee's job-related behavior and/or performance create reasonable suspicion of being intoxicated at work, they will be subject to reasonable suspicion drug testing. During this time, the Agency may discuss the employee's behavior with their co-workers and supervisors.

To protect the best interests of employees and the public, management at Kids Central will take whatever measures are necessary to determine if illegal drugs are being used, or alcohol or illegal drugs are located on, or are being used on the job. Measures that may be used will include, but will not be limited to, searches of people and of personal property located on Agency premises.

When a urinalysis and/or breath test is requested, samples will be taken under the supervision of an appropriate health care professional. The above-mentioned searches and drug tests will not be conducted if an individual refuses to submit; however, refusal to submit will result in immediate suspension and will be grounds for termination. Results of drug and alcohol tests may be shared with an employee's supervisor or others in management who have a legitimate need to know.

Employees experiencing problems with alcohol or other drugs are urged to voluntarily seek assistance to resolve such problems before they become serious enough to require management referral or disciplinary action. Successful treatment will be viewed positively; however, it will not prevent disciplinary action.

## **Workplace Violence**

Kids Central is concerned about the increased violence in society that has also filtered into many workplaces throughout the United States, and has taken steps to help prevent incidents of violence from occurring at the Agency. In this connection, it is the policy of Kids Central to expressly prohibit any acts or threats of violence by any employee, or former employee, against any other employee in or about the Agency, or elsewhere, at any time. The Agency also will not condone any acts or threats of violence against our employees, the children we serve, or visitors on our premises at any time or while they are engaged in business with, or on behalf of, the Agency, on or off Agency premises.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of this policy, and to ensure that the Agency's objectives in this regard are attained, it is the commitment of Kids Central:

- ▶ To provide a safe and healthful work environment, in accordance with our safety and health policy.
- ▶ To take prompt remedial action up to, and including, immediate termination, against any employee who engages in any threatening behavior or acts of violence, or who uses any obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures.
- ▶ To take appropriate action when dealing with children and/or families, former employees, or visitors to our Agency who engage in such behavior. Such action may include notifying the police or other law enforcement personnel and prosecuting violators of this policy to the maximum extent of the law.
- ▶ To prohibit employees, former employees, children and/or families, and visitors from bringing unauthorized firearms or other weapons onto our premises.

- ▶ To establish viable security measures to ensure that our Agency is safe and secure to the maximum extent possible, and to properly handle access to Agency facilities by the public, off-duty employees, and former employees.

All employees are entitled to perform their work free from violence, regardless of location, whether on the employer's premises or elsewhere.

In furtherance of this policy, employees have a duty to warn management or personnel representatives of any suspicious workplace activity, situations, or incidents that they observe, or that they are aware of, that involve other employees, former employees, the children and families we serve, or visitors and that appear problematic. This includes, for example, threats or acts of violence, aggressive behavior, offensive acts, threatening or offensive comments or remarks, and the like. Employee reports made pursuant to this policy will be held in confidence to the maximum extent possible. The Agency will not condone any form of retaliation against any employee for making a report under this policy.

## **Your Guide To Personal Conduct**

Kids Central wants to provide a good work environment for all employees. This desire is expressed in many forms: safe working conditions, maintenance of facilities and equipment, equitable wage structures, and progressive benefit programs. In turn, it is reasonable to expect a productive effort and acceptance of responsibility on the part of employees.

Each of us has the responsibility to our fellow workers to conduct ourselves according to certain rules of good behavior and conduct. In any business, some rules are needed to help everyone work together by letting them know what they can and cannot do. We expect our employees to follow our Agency rules and show good behavior and efficiency. For these reasons, we have included in our handbook a number of work rules. You are expected to read, understand, and follow these rules in your day-to-day work.

Disciplinary action, whether verbal or written, is given only for the purpose of correction. Having to dismiss an employee is distasteful for everyone, and we try to work with our employees to avoid such action. However, failure to follow our work rules is against the best interests of your fellow employees and the Agency and may lead to dismissal. In cases where disciplinary action is being considered, you will be given an opportunity to explain your side of the story. Should you have questions concerning any work rule listed, please see your supervisor.

While the following list is not all-inclusive, some of the violations that can result in disciplinary action, including discharge, are:

1. Behavior resulting in Kids Central parent, vendor, or employee complaints
2. Immoral or indecent conduct; soliciting persons for immoral purposes.
3. Insubordination, including but not limited to, refusing to obey an order or directive of a supervisor or Kids Central official.

4. Disruptive conduct including: gambling; fighting; horseplay; coercion; intimidation or threats against Kids Central employees; vulgarity; abusive treatment to the public or fellow employees.
5. Making or publishing false, vicious or malicious statements concerning an employee, supervisor, or other Kids Central official, or its services.
6. Destruction or misuse of property.
7. Misrepresentation or omission of facts in seeking employment.
8. Falsification of time records.
9. Making or permitting a false record relating to any material or work.
10. Defacing, damaging, or destroying property of the Agency or of another employee.
11. Possession or consumption on Agency premises, or reporting to work under the influence of, intoxicants or illegal drugs.
12. Theft, pilferage, or unauthorized removal of property of the Agency, employees, or others.
13. Abusing Agency equipment or property, or using any piece of equipment or property without being authorized to do so.
14. Bringing in, possessing, or using weapons or explosives on Agency premises without prior management approval.
15. Assisting any person to gain unauthorized entrance to any portion of Agency premises.
16. Repeated absence or tardiness; failure to report to work without satisfactory reason.
17. Failure to report absence or lateness within one hour of normal starting time.
18. Interfering with, obstruction of, or otherwise hindering the production or work performance of another employee.
19. Leaving work area without permission, wasting time, loitering or sleeping during working hours.
20. Using any piece of equipment or property without being authorized to do so.
21. Inefficiency, or lack of application or effort on the job.
22. Harassment, in any form, of or by employees or non-employees.
23. Contributing to unsanitary conditions.
24. Intimidating, threatening, or assaulting other employees or non-employees.

25. Violations of Agency policy on fair treatment, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination.
26. Any other conduct, which violates any Kids Central policy or which, is not in the best interests of the organization.

Violations of Agency policies outlined above or within other sections of this handbook, or habitual offenders of any Agency rules, may be handled in accordance with the progressive counseling policy. However, as described in the policy on progressive counseling, circumstances may warrant deviation from normal progressive counseling procedures and may include any level of discipline including immediate discharge.

Should your performance or behavior warrant disciplinary action, you may be assured that your case will be fully investigated and reviewed before final action is taken. In certain serious cases, a supervisor may suspend an employee from work, pending management review.

We believe that a person's mistakes with the Agency should not haunt them for years afterwards unless there is a consistent pattern of similar or related problems. Therefore, if you have made a "mistake," we will "wipe the slate clean" if no more rule infractions occur within 12 months from the date of the last rule violation.

## **Progressive Counseling Policy**

When it becomes necessary to change an employee's performance or behavior from unacceptable to acceptable, our Progressive Counseling Policy enables us to do so in a fair and consistent way. When management determines disciplinary action is appropriate, actions will be taken according to Kids Central's Progressive Counseling Policy.

Normal steps in the disciplinary process are outlined below. However, based on the seriousness of the offense, management may enter into any level of disciplinary action or termination.

### **1. Verbal Correction:**

The supervisor will provide a verbal correction to the employee. A written record of this correction will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **2. Written Correction:**

If the employee does not correct their behavior, the supervisor will consult with their manager and prepare a written correction. The employee will be asked to sign, indicating receipt of a copy of the written correction, and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **3. Termination Warning:**

If the written correction does not correct the problem, the employee will meet with their supervisor and the Executive Director and will receive a written termination warning.

#### 4. Termination:

When all other means of discipline have been used, or when the offense justifies such action, the employee may be terminated. The supervisor may recommend termination of employees. Recommendations will be reviewed by the Executive Director, who will determine the action to be taken.

If the employee feels the termination is unfair, they may fully utilize the employee grievance policy.

**The Progressive Counseling Policy in no way guarantees that all the steps will necessarily be followed. Depending upon the circumstances, and factors such as the employee's past work record and seriousness of the offense, management reserves the right to enter into any level of disciplinary action, or termination, it deems appropriate. The use of progressive counseling does not alter the employment-at-will status of our employees.**

### Employee Grievance Policy

Kids Central strives to maintain fair and consistent policies towards its employees. If an employee believes that established human resource policies and procedures are not being properly interpreted or applied to the employee's situation, the employee would follow the respective grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is intended to be utilized for specific violations of policy as opposed to concerns related to general complaints, job analysis, or compensation.

**STEP 1:** An employee who has a grievance shall present a Grievance Form to their immediate supervisor within five (5) working days of first receiving knowledge of the alleged incident underlying grievance. The supervisor shall respond in writing to the employee with a reasonable time, generally not to exceed three (3) working days from receipt of the Grievance Form. At that time the employee and supervisor should meet to discuss and attempt to resolve the grievance.

**STEP 2:** Within two (2) working days of receipt of the supervisor's response, the employee may seek review of the supervisor's response by submitting a statement in writing to the Senior Staff member in charge of the employee's department. The Senior Staff member will reasonably inquire into the nature of the grievance and shall meet with the employee to discuss and attempt to resolve the grievance. The Senior Staff member shall respond to the employee in writing within a reasonable time, generally not to exceed five (5) working days from receipt of the Grievance Form.

**Step 3:** Within two (2) working days of receipt of the Senior Staff member's response, the employee may seek review of the Senior Staff member's response by submitting a statement in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will reasonably inquire into the nature of the matter, and shall respond to the employee and the employee's department Senior Staff member in writing within a reasonable amount of time, generally not to exceed 20 working days from receipt of the Grievance Form.

**STEP 4:** Within a reasonable time, generally not to exceed three (3) working days of the receipt of the Executive Director's response, the employee may appeal the response to the Staff Grievance and Termination Review Board.

▪ **The Staff Grievance And Termination Review Board:**

1. The Board is a standing committee made up of members of the Senior Staff, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee of the Parent Policy Council.

▪ **Procedure For Grievance Hearings:**

1. The Board shall convene and conduct the hearing(s) as soon as practicable.
2. The hearings shall be conducted in private; however, the Board may, at its discretion permit one advisor to accompany each party(ies). The advisor may not participate in the hearing.
3. The grievant and the party(ies) in the grievance will be allowed to present evidence and make statements before the Board.
4. The Board may consider any and all facts, which it deems relevant and proper.
5. All parties are expected to attend all meetings in which they are scheduled to participate and if they are not able to do so, they must promptly notify the Chairperson prior to the scheduled meeting time. Failure of the grievant to respond promptly to the Chairperson's requests or to participate will be reported to the supervisor(s) and noted in the documentation presented to the Executive Director.
6. The Board shall make a written recommendation regarding the grievance, reached by the majority of the Board, to the Executive Director or their designee within a reasonable time, generally not to exceed 30 working days.

If the Executive Director is an interested party to the grievance, another disinterested Kids Central officer (member of the Board of Directors) shall be authorized by the Chairperson to consider the matter. The decision of the Executive Director, or their designee, or another disinterested Kids Central officer authorized by the Chairperson to act in place of the Executive Director, shall be final and binding on all parties.

There may be special instances when it would be appropriate to bypass one or more steps of the grievance procedure. Whether to bypass one or more steps will be determined by the Executive Director following a request of any party to the grievance.

## **Open Lines of Communication**

Employees are encouraged to bring their comments, questions or complaints to their supervisor's attention as soon as practicable. If the employee's supervisor does not resolve issues, the employee may request a meeting with their supervisor's supervisor.

Kids Central wants to assure its employees that their ideas, suggestions, and complaints will be heard. It is also Kids Central's policy to attempt to resolve disputes that may arise between or among fellow employees or between employees and their supervisors.

Open communication between employees and immediate supervisors is encouraged. Employees should feel free to voice ideas, suggestions, or complaints without fear of reprisal or retribution. If an employee wishes to remain completely anonymous, they can write the idea, suggestion, or complaint down on paper and drop it off at the Human Resource Officer's mail box. Otherwise, if employees have ideas, suggestions, or complaints to share, they are directed to follow these simple steps:

**STEP 1:** Employees are directed to discuss complaints with their immediate supervisor within three working days of the matter causing the complaint. Employees should provide detail and offer possible solutions. Most matters can be resolved at Step 1. If the complaint concerns the supervisor, the employee may skip Step 1 and go to Step 2.

**STEP 2:** If the employee is not satisfied with the results of a discussion with their immediate supervisor, the employee is directed to take the matter to the next higher supervisor (in other words, their immediate supervisor's supervisor) within three working days after meeting with the immediate supervisor.

**STEP 3:** If the employee believes that the matter remains unresolved, they are directed to present the matter in writing to the Executive Director within three working days. The Executive Director shall consider all matters brought to their attention pursuant to this procedure and all decisions made by the Executive Director shall be final.

In the event of a complaint involving the Executive Director, another Kids Central official will fulfill the investigation and decision making role in this process.

## **Separation Of Employment**

### **▪ Resignation:**

Although we hope you remain with us for a long time, sometimes circumstances create a need for an individual to change jobs. In such cases, we request that you give your supervisor adequate notice, preferably two weeks' written notice, should you decide to resign. This advance notice will allow your supervisor time to adjust working schedules and attempt to secure a replacement.

Should a resignation occur, you must return all Agency-owned property, including badge, keys, equipment, and manuals. You will be provided your final paycheck for wages earned no later than the next regularly-scheduled payday on which those wages are due.

- **Termination Of Employment:**

Discharges are always unpleasant and costly, so you can be sure that they won't be considered lightly. If, however, discharge becomes necessary, advance notice may or may not be given, depending on the circumstances surrounding the termination. If you believe you have been treated unfairly with regard to your termination, please utilize your grievance procedure.

Should a termination of employment occur, you must return all Agency-owned property, including badge, keys, equipment and manuals. You will be provided your final paycheck for wages earned, no later than the next regularly scheduled payday on which those wages are due.

- **Our Exit Interview:**

Whenever possible, an exit interview will be conducted for anyone who leaves our Agency. The importance of this interview is to find out what each employee thinks about our Agency policies and practices, what is liked or disliked, under what conditions they might have continued working here, and what can be done to make the Agency an even better place to work for everyone. This interview will also provide the Agency with an opportunity to explain or to deliver any notices or materials related to the Agency's benefit plans or to perform any other required actions.

- **Reemployment Policy**

The decision to voluntarily leave the Agency is a serious matter and one that should not be taken lightly. Any decision to rehire previous employees must have the approval of the Executive Director. Only those employees who leave the Agency in good standing will be given consideration for rehire and then only in positions for which they are suitable and possess appropriate skills and experience. Former employees interested in job openings must apply through the normal application process and will be given consideration along with other qualified applicants. Such individuals will be considered as new employees, and no continuation of any previous Agency benefits or seniority will apply to the new hire. Benefit eligibility requirements will be provided as with any other new employee.

- **Employment References:**

Kids Central will cooperate with former employees by answering appropriate inquiries from prospective employers relative to your employment with us. However, we must first obtain your written consent to release information, or only verification and dates of employment will be released.

## **Kids Central Property Issued to Employees**

It may be necessary to issue employees equipment such as tools, cell phones, keys, cameras, etc. to be used in their job functions. Employees receiving such equipment will be required to sign a receipt for the equipment; keep equipment clean and protected from damage and theft; be responsible for the value of the equipment if lost or stolen (if stolen, employee must notify their Supervisor immediately); and if the employee terminates his/her position voluntarily or involuntarily, all

equipment issued must be returned to the Supervisor or the Human Resource Officer. Failure to do so will result in the value of the item(s) being deducted from the employee's last paycheck.

## **Employee Requests**

Kids Central understands that sometimes employees need copies of documents from their personnel file, verification of employment/pay, or a replacement items such as an identification badge. While Kids Central will honor requests as soon as possible, employees must realize we must have adequate time to complete the request and that it costs the agency to make copies of documents and replace issued materials.

Employees requesting copies of documents they have been issued, such as W-2, check stubs, transcripts, etc. will be charged \$.50 per page. All requests will be completed within three (3) business days.

Employee requests for completion of a form for proof of wages or employment will be completed within three (3) business days. Employees are asked to give a contact name and fax number so we may send the form directly.

Identification badges are issued at the time of hire. Free updated badges are available once per year during August orientation. A \$5.00 charge will be issued for a lost or misplaced replacement badge.

## **Advanced Funds**

There are times when funds must be advanced to employees for such things as field trips and training events. Employees are personally responsible for advanced funds as well as receipts and documentation pertaining to such.

Advanced funds for travel and conference expenses must be requested on Form A-108 (Travel Advance Requests and Expense Invoice). Funds for a field trip or other purchases must be requested on Form A-107 (Purchase Requisition).

The request must be approved by a Supervisor and submitted to the Comptroller for administrative approval. No purchases or advances will be made without prior approval by the Comptroller.

Employees shall obtain receipts for all expenditures except per diem. Receipts should show the date of the expenditure, the place where expenditure was made and the amount.

All receipts and unused funds are to be sent to the Comptroller. Employees will not be issued new funds until outstanding advanced funds are accounted for.

If receipts and/or funds are not turned in within 30 days of issue, the total amount will be added to the employee's W-2, or in the case of the employee's termination, the amount will be deducted from their final paycheck.

## **Donations**

As a member of the greater Southwest Virginia community, Kids Central recognizes the importance of outside contributions. Employees are discouraged from soliciting donations for Kids Central on their own without prior approval. Kids Central does not ask parents to solicit anyone or any company for the benefit of the program. Kids Central must have control of all requests being made to vendors, churches, fraternal organizations, civic clubs, businesses or individuals so that multiple requests are not made of the same sources.

Under no circumstances are employees, parents or volunteers to solicit donations without prior approval.

Employees, parents and volunteers wishing to solicit donations for the program must submit a request in writing to the Executive Director explaining the need for the donation, who will be solicited, and for who and what center or program the donation will be used to support.

Upon review, the Executive Director will issue a written approval or disapproval to the requestor. If approved, a letter to the party being solicited will be prepared. The letter from the Executive Director will contain the reason for the solicitation, the name of the person recommending the solicitation be made, and the general facts of our agency.

All donations must clearly state the specific intended use, must be made to Kids Central and must be submitted to the Administration Office, not to an individual or classroom.

Employees will request donation funds by completing a purchasing requisition. Funds must be used for the purpose intended by the donor.

Any funds not used, must be returned in accordance with Policy 418 - Advanced Funds.

# How We Keep In Touch

## Your Confidential Records

When you became an employee, you completed a form supplying us with the information we must know about you. This information was transferred to confidential files (personnel file and medical file) that are the Agency's factual pictures of you as an individual. Keeping these records correct and up-to-date is important to you because it enables the Agency to reach you in an emergency, forward your mail, properly maintain your insurance and other benefits, and compute your payroll deductions, etc.

You are expected to help keep this record correct by notifying the Human Resource Officer promptly of changes in:

- ▶ Address and telephone number.
- ▶ Marital status.
- ▶ Name.
- ▶ Beneficiary or dependents listed in your insurance policies and profit-sharing/retirement plan.
- ▶ Number of dependents for Withholding Tax purposes.
- ▶ Person to notify in case of accidents or illness.
- ▶ Driver's License Number or driving restrictions (if driving Agency vehicles).
- ▶ Military status.

In addition, you should give notification about the completion of training or education courses so that you may receive proper consideration as better job opportunities arise throughout the Agency. Your files are held in strict confidence, and only those with a need-to-know will have access to your files.

## Other Booklets And Letters

In addition to this employee handbook, you may receive other informative booklets from the Agency. You should take these booklets home with you so that your family may know more about your job and your benefits. In addition, you may receive letters at your home, or with your regular paycheck. There is no regular schedule for distributing this information -- the function of each letter or publication is to provide you and your family with interesting news and helpful information, which will keep you up-to-date on the happenings here.

## Summary And Closing Word

The material presented in this handbook in regard to policies, benefits, and relationships here at Kids Central is, of course, in a condensed form. We reserve the right to make any revisions from time to time that in our judgment are necessary or advisable. You may be assured that no such changes will be made except after due consideration of the mutual advantages, benefits, and responsibilities to the Agency and its staff. This handbook is intended as a guide for personnel policies, benefits, and general information. These statements should not be construed as an employment contract. If there is any conflict between the statements offered in this manual and the original source document, the original will prevail.

At times, and in some cases, application of these principles, rules, and policies may be affected by government regulations, as well as thoughts and suggestions from you -- our most important asset!

The reputation that Kids Central now enjoys was only obtained through dedicated service on the part of our staff. The only way that this reputation can be maintained is through the day-to-day efforts of each employee working as a team. **We must remember always that we are dependent upon the children and families we serve; they are not dependent upon us.** On behalf of Kids Central, our sincere appreciation is extended to you for your continued efforts and contributions.

# Receipt For Employee Handbook

I have received my copy of Kids Central's employee handbook. I understand that this handbook is intended as a guide for personnel policies, benefits, and general information, and that these guidelines are not intended to be, nor should be, construed as an employment contract.

I understand the policies and guidelines contained within this handbook supersede those previously written or communicated, and that Kids Central reserves the right to make changes in these guidelines or their application as it deems appropriate, with or without notice. I also understand that employment is terminable at the will of either the employee or the Agency at any time, and that no representative of the Agency other than the Executive Director has authority to make any contrary agreement.

SIGNED:

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DATE:

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DEPARTMENT:

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WITNESSED:

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