



- Employee Handbook -



Mission

At Serenity Early Learning Center, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare program is designed to promote each child's individual social, emotional, Physical, and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe developmentally appropriate learning environment that fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become lifelong learners.

Philosophy

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following principles are excerpted from the PA Early Learning Standards and serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- * Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials, and events.
- * Learning is sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences.
- * Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development.
- * Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- * Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context.
- * Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings, and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance.
- * All children have the potential to achieve the PA Learning Standards with appropriate supports and instruction.

Employment Policies:

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Serenity Early Learning Center does not allow discrimination. Discrimination may include, but is not limited to, taking any adverse employment action as a result of any factors protected by law. This policy applies to all employment actions taken by anyone employed with Serenity.

If you believe you have been discriminated against or have witnessed someone else being discriminated against, please report this violation to management.

Employment-At-Will

Employment with Serenity Early Learning Center is based on a mutual agreement between you and Serenity. Employment with the company is voluntary. You are free to resign at-will at any time, with or without reason however, we ask that you give us 2 weeks notice of a resignation.

In addition, Serenity Early Learning Center may terminate the agreement of employment at any time with or without reason as long as no violations of federal and laws are committed.

Workplace Violence

Serenity Early Learning Center does not allow workplace violence. We are dedicated in keeping up with a safe workplace environment. In the attempt to provide a safe workplace environment, Serenity has implemented the following guidelines:

- All staff members should be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
- All staff members are expected to keep from fighting and all dangerous behaviors.
- Firearms, knives, and all dangerous/hazardous items are not allowed on the premises.
- Any staff member caught in possession of any of the previous stated items may be immediately terminated.
- Behavior that threatens, intimidates a parent, child, or coworker on or off duty is not allowed.
- All threats of violence, whether direct or indirect must be reported to management immediately. This includes threats from other staff members and parents.
- All suspicious behavior should be reported to managaemnt immediately. If you witness any disturbance do not attempt to resolve it, however, report it to management.

- There is a zero tolerance for fighting, if you are under attack you must always act in a professional manner and seek help from another staff member.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Serenity Early Learning Center stands by the belief that all employees are entitled to a workplace free of improper tensions brought about by inappropriate comments of any sort. Serenity has a zero tolerance for staff behavior that is offensive or harmful to other staff members.

Sexual harassment of any staff member is illegal and will not be tolerated. Any revenge against anyone who has made a claim of harassment is not tolerated as well.

Anyone who believes that he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint with the following:

- Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance Field Office, 701 State Office Building, 300 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburg, PA 15222
- Bureau of Civil Rights Headquarters, Room 412 Health and Welfare Building, PO Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105
- Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, 101 South Second Street, Suite 300, Harrisburg, PA 17105
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Region III, PO Box 13716, Philadelphia, PA 19101

Workplace Harassment

Comments, behavior, and form of words whether written or spoken, pictures that someone could believe to be offensive, insulting, demeaning towards anyone in anyway will not be tolerated. This policy is implemented even if the behavior was intended to be done jokingly.

Required Clearances

Staff members must provide all required clearances prior to working in the facility. Failure to provide required clearances may result in disciplinary actions including termination.

Employment Practices

Serenity is pleased to have you as a member of our team. As a new staff member, it is important that you become familiar with your work environment as soon as possible. In order to assist you with this process, Serenity will provide you with an orientation.

You will also be given orientation designed to introduce you to your coworkers and familiarize you with your job description.

Be sure to ask questions to ensure you fully understand your responsibilities.

In addition, you will be required to complete the New Staff Orientation, which can be found at:

<http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare>

Serenity has two categories of employees. Staff members are either exempt or non-exempt.

Staff members with degrees or certification has the option to be non-exempt and receive a W4 form to have taxes taken out of their paycheck on a biweekly basis.

Staff members who do not have degrees or certification are automatically exempt. These staff members will not receive a W4 form and will not have taxes taken out of their checks. You will be required to pay your own taxes at the end of the year by using a 1099 form, which will be provided to you at the end of the year.

90 Day Introductory Period

The first 90 days are considered the Introductory Period. Either the employee or the employer may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after this period, with or without cause or advance notice.

The Introductory Period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a level of performance acceptable to Serenity and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Similarly, Serenity uses this period to evaluate the employee's capabilities, work habits, and overall suitability for the job.

The completion of the Introductory Period does not represent a guarantee of continued employment, as employment is always at-will.

Work Schedule

Serenity operates from two locations, the address for our Early Learning Center is 5090 Summerdale Ave Philadelphia PA 19124, and is open 5 days a week, Monday – Friday 6:00am – 6:00pm.

The Address for our School Age Program is 7510 Brous Ave Philadelphia PA 19152, the hours of operation are Monday - Friday 1:30pm – 5:30pm.

Performance Evaluations

Staff members receive evaluations to assist you in identifying your strengths and areas of improvement. Evaluations will be conducted on an annual basis. You will also be asked to conduct a self-evaluation, which will be discussed with management on an annually basis in conjunction with the evaluation conducted by management.

Problem Resolution Policy

Serenity is dedicated to providing support to its staff and to create the best workplace environment as possible. All staff are welcomed to share their concerns as a valued member of the Serenity team. If a conflict arises staff members are expected to maintain in a professional at all times. Staff are encouraged to resolve issues amongst themselves in a professional manner, if said resolution is not possible amongst the parties involved, all staff are encouraged to seek help from management. If all attempts fail then staff are expected to agree to disagree and maintain a high level of professionalism at all times.

Professional, Appearance and Dress Code

It is important that all staff members dress and act in a professional manner.

Respect and courtesy to others is an important factor needed to keep a high level of service and professionalism, which is our goal.

Personal appearance is a key factor in your attitude towards your work and effects the way others view you. Serenity has adopted specific appearance standards that all staff are expected to follow.

Dress Code

All staff must adhere to the following dress code:

- Arrive to work each day with your smock on.
- Jeans are permitted as long as they aren't excessively frayed excessively low.
- Clothing should be comfortable and permits movement, however, if the clothing works well for the beach, yard work, dance clubs, exercise, sports, yoga then the clothing is not permitted.
- Tank tops, halter tops, very short shorts, low cut tops, t-shirts with vulgar symbols, words are not permitted as well.
- Clothing that has offensive words or pictures are not allowed either.
- Clothing should be clean and free from tears, rips and fraying.
- Please consult with management if you are uncertain about what is permitted.

In conclusion, no dress code can address all forms of clothing please use your best judgment when preparing for work.

Access to Personal Files

Serenity maintains personnel files on all staff members. Your file may have your resume, all DHS/STARS required documents.

Only management has the right to review a staff member's file. If you would like to review your file you may do so in the office in the presence of management. You may not add, remove, or copy anything from your file.

Quality Standards

Serenity is a voluntary participant with the Pennsylvania STARS program. In order to maintain our credentials all staff are required to follow the following requirements:

- All teaching staff must maintain the required training hours set by the STARS program.
- New Hire Orientation must be completed within 90 days of employment, which can be completed at <http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare>
- Curriculum, Instructions, and Assessment
- Teachers whether lead or assistant must submit a weekly lesson plan.
 - Early Learning Standards must be used when planning lessons
 - All postings on himama must be friendly, positive, objective and welcoming.

Trainings/ Meetings

- Monthly staff meetings/trainings will be held the first Saturday of each month. Additional trainings may be added periodically, all staff are required to attend the trainings. Serenity Early Learning Center has a standard training rate of 8.00 per hour for all employees.

Confidential Information

All staff members who have been privileged to student or staff personal information must never discuss it with another person whether verbally or in written form. personal information is private, any breach in the privacy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Pay Practices

Serenity's Pay periods are biweekly, on Wednesdays. Checks are created by our payroll company and delivered in paper check form.

Workplace Policies and Procedure

Ethical Standards

At Serenity Early Learning Center staff take part in the responsibility in maintaining a code of ethical conduct, which requires truthfulness, honesty, and integrity in all activities. Staff are expected to follow all policies and procedures implemented in Serenity Early Learning Center, especially policies on confidentiality.

Personal Property

Serenity will not be responsible for loss, stolen, or damaged personal property staff may bring to the workplace. Items that are not necessary for work should not be brought to work.

Anyone suspected of theft or in possession of a weapon/drugs will be required to participate in an investigation.

Tobacco Use Policy

The use of tobacco product is not permitted in any area of the premises or within 100 feet of any entrance or exit. Staff may use tobacco only on their assigned breaks.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are not allowed to be used in the classroom. As a result, Serenity requires that all phones remain turned off and stored in a purse, bag, or coat while on the clock.

One teaching staff is expected to take a cell phone to accompany off site walks and trips. This phone must be used for emergency circumstances only.

Absenteeism Policy

Absenteeism and lateness affects Serenity's ability to provide adequate care to the children and families we service. It is understood that emergency circumstances will arise and that one's attendance may be affected; however, it is not understandable when it appears to be frequent and excessive. To assist the company in maintaining a high level of quality, the following policy will be implemented:

- Staff must notify the center director within two hours prior to their normally scheduled starting time in the event of an emergency.
- Staff must request days off by filling out a Time off request form and have it approved by the center director.
- Staff is responsible to find their own coverage when requesting Time off. Time off may be denied if adequate coverage is not established, and approval will be at the discretion of the center director.

- When absent, supporting documents must be submitted the first day a staff member returns to work.
- If a staff member is absent due to sickness/injury he or she must submit a doctor note permitting him/her to return to work.
- If a staff member fails to report to work without notifying management three consecutive days, the absence will be considered a voluntary separation of employment.

The following are considered policy violations:

- Absences occurring in patterns such as calling off Mondays and Fridays, holidays.
- Calling off giving less than required notification time.
- No call/ No show
- Failure to report from break on time.
- Frequently leaving work early and not completing shift.
- Failure to talk directly with the manager who is directly responsible for call outs.

Lateness Policy

Staff will be considered late after 10 mins from the time their shift is scheduled to start.

Staff are expected to arrive to work at least 10 mins prior to the start of their shift to get settled and ready to work.

Disciplinary actions will occur if a staff member violates the Absenteeism/Lateness Policy. The disciplinary actions can and may result in termination.

Safety

Handwashing

Washing hands frequently is an important safety precaution. It should be done when you first enter the building, after changing a child's diaper, helping a child use the toilet, wiping your nose or child's nose, before fixing meals, before and after meal times, after removing gloves, after playing with sensory materials such as sand and play dough, after using the restroom, after returning from break, and after coming inside from outdoor play.

Staff are expected to follow proper handwashing procedures, which are located above every sink.

See management if you have questions or concerns about proper handwashing procedures.

Drug-Free Workplace

Serenity will not tolerate any substance abuse from any staff member. Any staff member who reports to work under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance will be terminated immediately.

If a staff member is taking medication whether prescribed or over-the-counter and his or her attention is impaired he or she will be required to clock out because they are unable to perform and provide adequate supervision and care for the children. Being alert and possessing their full capabilities.

He or she may return to work once there is no more evidence of side effects such as drowsiness.

Violations to this policy will result in immediate termination.

Conduct Expectations

These following expectations are put in place to aid staff in their awareness of what is expected of them.

No staff is to use their personal cell phones to take videos, pictures, or recordings of children or other staff member. The tablets provided by Serenity will be used to capture such images to be shared with families on Himama or Class Dojo in a positive objective manner to foster communication with the families. Images may not be used on social media outlets.

Violate of this policy will result in disciplinary actions that may include termination.

Staff will receive counseling from management to aid staff in maintaining their qualifications, clearances, and to eliminate undesirable behaviors and disturbances in the workplace. Staff will allow receive counseling by management for violations of regulations, policies, and procedures set by Serenity.

Staff will receive the following progressive counseling steps for any violation:

- Verbal Warning (Signed record of conversation)
- Written Warning
- Final Warning
- Suspension

- Termination

In some instances, staff maybe placed on an improvement plan or reassigned to another position. This will at the discretion of the center director.

Acknowledgement of Serenity Early Learning Center Employee Handbook

By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have been made aware of S.E.L.C Employee Handbook.

You are agreeing to adhere to the terms and conditions stated in this Handbook.

After signing this document, you understand that the terms and conditions in this Handbook supersedes any other Handbook issued by S.E.L.C.

I understand that by signing this document I agree my employments is "at-will", which can be terminated by myself or S.E.L.C with or without reason at any time.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Management witness:

Date: