

KIDS R LOVE LEARNING CENTER

Childcare & Early Education Center

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2024 – 2025



LOCATION

KIDS R LOVE LEARNING CENTER
(817) 626-8604
1107 Roberts Cut Off Rd.
River Oaks, TX 76114
emailus@KidsRLove.com
www.KidsRLove.com

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday – Friday
6:30 AM – 6:00 PM

CENTER DIRECTOR

VICTORIA TRUJILLO

KIDS R LOVE LEARNING CENTER

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SECTION 1: GENERAL

Welcome!

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

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

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

No handbook can anticipate every situation or question about all of our policies and terms of employment. Your supervisor may tailor the policies set forth herein to specific situations. **Kids R Love Learning Center** reserves the right to add new policies and to change or cancel existing policies at any time. We will endeavor to notify you of any changes to this handbook as they occur. Questions about the handbook or its application to specific situations should be directed to your supervisor.

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

Welcome to **Kids R Love Learning Center**. We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and fulfilling.

SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

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

Accordingly, **Kids R Love Learning Center** will hire, train, and promote individuals in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy; make decisions according to the principle of equal opportunity by imposing only bona fide occupational qualification requirements for employment opportunities; and administer all personnel practices and programs (including, but not limited to, compensation, benefits, transfers, and training) in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

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Americans with Disabilities Act

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

Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, **Kids R Love Learning Center** will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made **Kids R Love Learning Center** aware of his or her disability, in writing, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on **Kids R Love Learning Center**.

Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination

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

Kids R Love Learning Center expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be businesslike and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment. Sexual harassment typically is **serious offensive conduct** directed towards an individual because of his/her gender and **is unwelcome** by the individual. Sexual harassment **does not** refer to casual conversation or compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

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

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

The following list provides some examples of conduct that **could be viewed as** sexual harassment. This list does not cover every type of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. It is meant to provide employees with some idea of the type of conduct that is prohibited under this policy.

- Sex oriented verbal "kidding," "teasing," or jokes
- Foul or obscene language or gestures
- Physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body
- Pressuring someone to go on a date
- Comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, body gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experience and discussion of one's sexual activities.

Communication of any harassing material by e-mail, voice mail, organization bulletin boards or otherwise is a violation of **Kids R Love Learning Center** policy against harassment.

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Reporting Harassment

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

- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged (but not required) to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive.
- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy must report it to their immediate supervisor or a member of management if the supervisor is the offending individual.
- Every reported incident of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be investigated.
- Individuals reporting complaints or providing information in good faith in connection with an investigation will not be retaliated against for their participation in this procedure.

Investigation

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

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

Responsive Action

Employees found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No employee will be disciplined or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a bona fide complaint. However, an individual who brings a false or frivolous complaint is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Grievance Procedure

Employee Grievance Procedure - Employees who file a grievance or complaint will need to address their issues to the Director. An employee/director conference will be scheduled to air out any complaints or differences. Policies as per center practices, local-state-federal laws will be fully reviewed by both parties. A full and satisfactory resolution will be the expected result of the conference.

Complaints About Management - Any employee who has a direct grievance or complaint about the Director or management will be given every opportunity to pursue all avenues within the local-state-federal guidelines for fairness. This employer will make every attempt to process all information that will speed up the investigation of any grievance, complaint, or alleged mismanagement by any member of this legal authority.

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Ethics Policy

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

Confidential Information

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

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

“Confidential Information” is defined to mean confidential information of **Kids R Love Learning Center**, including, but not limited to, **Kids R Love Learning Center’s** existing and contemplated products and services; procedures of distributing, pricing, selling and marketing products and services; confidential and proprietary information related to current, former, and prospective clients; confidential and proprietary information related to vendors and suppliers; trade secrets and proprietary information; treatments, applications, procedures, and testing methods; marketing, business and financial plans; proprietary literature and publications; and other confidential and proprietary information of **Kids R Love Learning Center**, all of which are unavailable or not known to the general public or to individuals or entities working in the same or similar industry.

Conflicts Of Interest

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

If an employee is confronted with a conflict of interest, s/he must disclose the conflict to her/his manager, describe the facts giving rise to the conflict, and excuse her/himself from any deliberation or decision with respect to the transaction.

Employees must not accept anything of value from clients, suppliers, or others in return for any business, service, or confidential information of **Kids R Love Learning Center**.

Substance-Free Workplace

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

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances, including the illegal use of prescription drugs;

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- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, distribution, or possession of drugs while on organization business or premises and while operating vehicles on organization business.
- The use, sale, possession, transfer, or purchase of alcoholic beverages on organization premises or while performing organization business, except in connection with organization-authorized events; and
- Working under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair judgment or motor functions and potentially place persons or property in jeopardy.

Kids R Love Learning Center will not condone criminal activity on its property, or on property under its direct control, and will take appropriate action up to and including terminating an employee or requiring him or her to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify **Kids R Love Learning Center** of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction.

Kids R Love Learning Center has the right to conduct a search of all property owned or controlled by us (desks, computers, cabinets, etc.) and employee property on the facilities, such as handbags and briefcases, if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of the substance abuse control policy has occurred. **Kids R Love Learning Center** may, but is not required, to obtain the employee's consent when property belonging to or used by an employee is to be searched.

Immunizations

Kids R Love Learning Center mandates as a condition of employment, all employees must be current with all immunizations routinely recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or, if not immunized for medical, religious or philosophical reasons, provide written documentation of the reason before their effective start date.

Confidential, Proprietary and Other Nonpublic Information

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

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

The disclosure of **Kids R Love Learning Center's** confidential, proprietary, or other nonpublic information, whether intentional or unintentional, will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including possible discharge), even if he or she does not actually benefit from the disclosed information. Please refer to Section 5: Employee Conduct, Electronic Communication for further explanation.

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Personnel Records

Employee Files: This employer will maintain a complete file on each employee. An employee may request to review his/her file but will not be allowed to remove, copy, or alter any of its contents. These records will be maintained in a manner to protect the privacy of the employee and will be the responsibility of management.

Employment Classification

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

In addition, employees will be classified as the following:

- Full-time:** A full-time employee is scheduled to **work thirty (30) hours or more** per week.
- Part-time:** A part-time employee is scheduled to work **less than thirty (30) hours per week**, and is **not temporary**.
- Regular:** An employee who has **completed** their introductory training period.
- Temporary:** An employee who is hired to temporarily supplement the work force or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment beyond the initial stated period **does not in any way imply a change in employment status**.

Training Requirements

All new & current employees are required to have specific pre-training and annual training requirements as specified by the minimum standards” of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

All training requirements must comply with minimum standards for childcare centers as stipulated by the Texas state legislature. These training requirements include and are not limited to annual service hours that include child supervision, child abuse and neglect, CPR, First Aid, transportation and safety training, high school childcare work study, special needs children, and all other specific needs as determined by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Timecards

Each employee is responsible for maintaining his/her own timecard. - Timecards are provided by **Kids R Love Learning Center** and the employee is responsible for keeping track of all hours worked. - All work-related time is registered in the current week and paid on the following Friday. - All work times must be recorded either mechanically (time clock) or recorded manually with the approval of a director. - Lunch breaks and all other personal time (time that is not in the capacity of one's duties as an employee) must also be recorded by “clocking in/out or writing one's time manually with director's approval. - Each employee must review and sign his/her own timecard for the current week. - Employees will get paid for actual hours worked and/or holidays & earned vacation leave.

All timecards must include:

1. Last four (4) of Employee's Social Security Number
2. Employee's first and last name (printed)
3. The start and end date of work week (Monday-Sunday)
4. All "In & Out" times
5. Employee signature at the bottom confirming all hours worked

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Employee Compensation:

- All current and new-hire employees will be paid a **minimum of \$12.00 per hour**.
- A regular work week consists of forty (40) hours worked in a single week. Any time worked over forty (40) hours in a single week will be paid at the overtime rate of One & a Half times the regular rate of pay for that individual.
- Lunch breaks will not be paid and must be recorded on a timecard as time off.
- There will be no overtime scheduled unless authorized by the Director.
- Holidays and earned vacations will be paid as additional compensation to/or in place of the employee's regular work schedule. Holidays and earned vacation will be paid at the regular rate of pay for that employee.

At-Will Employment

Employment with **Kids R Love Learning Center** is at-will, meaning that either you or **Kids R Love Learning Center** may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without a reason or notice.

Statements or promises, information in this Employee Handbook, or in any other publications cannot modify this at-will employment relationship. Only a written and signed contract by the Executive Director can change an individual's at-will employment status.

Introductory Period

The first thirty (30) 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 **Kids R Love Learning Center** and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Similarly, **Kids R Love Learning Center** 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.

Personal Data Changes

To help keep record and benefits program information accurate, please notify **Kids R Love Learning Center** of any changes to your personal information, such as: mailing address, emergency contacts, and other possible relevant information. If you are enrolled in benefits plans, please keep the provider or us informed of relevant changes in marital status, dependents' information, beneficiaries, and the like.

Open Communication

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

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

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Performance Evaluation

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to discuss job performance and goals informally, as needed. A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of an employee's introductory period.

Additional formal performance reviews are conducted annually to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to review job tasks, recognize strengths, identify, and correct weaknesses, and discuss positive approaches to achieving goals.

Resignation

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

SECTION 3: SCHEDULES, COMPENSATION & ABSENCES

Work Schedules

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

Your supervisor will inform you of your expected work schedule and when/if amendments are needed.

Recordkeeping

All hourly employees are responsible for timely and accurately recording the hours they work. Timecards are provided by **Kids R Love Learning Center**. You **must accurately** record the time you begin and end work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each lunch period.

All employees (including exempt employees) are required to record all vacation and/or sick time taken as well as any departure time from work, for personal reasons.

Your supervisor must always approve overtime work before it is performed.

All work-related time is registered in the current week and paid on the Friday following the end of the current pay week.

All work times must be recorded either mechanically (time clock) or recorded manually *with* the approval of a director.

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

Breaks/Lunch for Hourly Staff

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

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Non-exempt staff do not have to “sign out” for breaks, providing the break is no longer than 20-minutes in length.

All hourly employees who work more than thirty (30) consecutive hours will have at least a 30-minute unpaid lunch or eating period. **Working through break/lunch period must be authorized by a supervisor and an employee must be paid for all hours worked.**

Workweek & Payroll

Kids R Love Learning Center’s normal business days & hours are **Monday** through **Friday**, between the hours of **6:30 AM & 6:00 PM**.

The payroll period begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. Payday is **weekly, on Fridays**.

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

In the event a regularly scheduled payday falls on a holiday, employees will receive pay on the business day prior.

Payroll Deductions

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

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

Overtime

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

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with prevailing federal and state laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

Working overtime without prior authorization from your supervisor may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. **Overtime work cannot be “traded” for time off.**

Expense Reimbursement

Employees must maintain accurate documentation of any business-related expenses incurred on behalf of **Kids R Love Learning Center** that need to be reimbursed. Receipts and detailed explanations of expenses must accompany all reimbursement requests. Expense reports and reimbursements may be subject to other specific policies and practices beyond those provided in this handbook.

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Errors in Pay

If you become aware of an error in your pay or deductions, bring it to the attention of your supervisor so that it can be corrected as soon as possible.

Absences

Regular attendance is a condition of employment.

You should report any anticipated absence to your supervisor ahead of time. In an emergency, let your supervisor know as soon as possible the reason for your absence and when you expect to return.

Unexcused absences are subject to immediate discipline up to and including termination.

If you are absent from work for three consecutive days **without** advising your supervisor, you may be terminated.

If you are absent for five consecutive working days and do not notify your supervisor, you will be considered to have abandoned your job and you will be terminated.

Emergency Conditions/ Safety

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

When operations are closed due to an emergency, the time off from scheduled work will be paid for regular full-time and regular part-time employees. In the event of an emergency or severe weather your supervisor will notify you of any schedule changes or closures.

Employees who come in late, leave early, or are absent because of an emergency or severe weather situation must notify their supervisor immediately. Failure to notify your supervisor may result in being charged the time against available personal or vacation leave balances. Please check with your supervisor to learn more about these policies for your specific job responsibilities.

Help keep our workplace safe. It is **Kids R Love Learning Center's** policy to provide a workplace free of safety or health hazards. Observe all posted safety rules, adhere to all safety instructions and use safety equipment where required. You must report all observed unsafe equipment, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions, processes or procedures to the immediate attention of your supervisor. Any deliberate or ongoing safety violation or creation of a hazard by an employee will be dealt with through disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Don't engage in horseplay or pranks that may create unsafe conditions.

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

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SECTION 4: BENEFITS

Holidays

According to applicable restrictions, **Kids R Love Learning Center** will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees **after 30 days of employment**. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would have worked on that day. Regular employees will be eligible **for nine (9) paid holidays annually**.

Paid holidays are as follows:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) New Year's Eve | 4) July 4th | 7) Day After Thanksgiving |
| 2) New Year's Day | 5) Labor Day | 8) Christmas Eve |
| 3) Memorial Day | 6) Thanksgiving Day | 9) Christmas Day |

To be eligible for holiday pay you must have worked your scheduled hours the **days before and after the holiday**. Holidays occurring during an employee's scheduled vacation leave will not be counted as any part of *that* vacation leave.

If any approved holidays fall on a Saturday or Sunday, please confirm with Center Director if center will be closed the following work day.

Insurance

Kids R Love Learning Center does not offer health or life insurance options to employees. As **Kids R Love Learning Center**, we are excited to explore those options.

Workers' Compensation

Kids R Love Learning Center provides a workers' compensation program to our employees. The program reimburses certain out-of-pocket costs and may provide reimbursement for lost wages sustained as the result of injuries or illnesses sustained in the course of employment.

If you are injured or think you have been injured while working, no matter how slightly, you must report the injury immediately to your supervisor to protect your eligibility for compensation and alert **Kids R Love Learning Center** to any potential workplace hazards.

Workers' compensation is intended to cover only work-related injuries and illnesses. Because of this, neither **Kids R Love Learning Center** nor the program will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that might occur outside of work or during employees' voluntary participation in off-duty recreational, social, athletic or community-based activities, even if sponsored by **Kids R Love Learning Center**.

Leave Provisions

A) Jury Duty/Court Duty - If you are called for jury duty or subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, **Kids R Love Learning Center** will pay up to **one (1) day** (less any court pay received), per year to regular full-time and regular part-time employees. When the court obligation does not demand services for a full

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day, the employee must return to work. **To receive this benefit, you must show the court summons or subpoena to your supervisor as soon as it is received.**

- B) **Military Leave - Kids R Love Learning Center** will grant military leave of absence in accordance with applicable law.
- C) **Personal Leave** - Under limited circumstances, employees may be granted a leave of absence for emergency circumstances (where the employee does not have available other leave, such as sick leave, vacation leave, etc.). Generally, this leave is only for extraordinary circumstances, and the decision about whether an employee will be granted such a leave is at the sole discretion of the Center Director. **All personal leave is unpaid.**
- D) **Voting - Kids R Love Learning Center** encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, employees are able to find time to vote either before or after their regular work schedule. Flexibility in the work hours may be allowed to accommodate your right to vote. Notify your supervisor prior to Election Day, if you require any such accommodation.

Sick Time

If an employee is ill and knows that he/she will not be able to show up to work, the employee must notify the Director or Assistant Director **at least three (3) hours before** his/her next scheduled work time. The Director / Assistant Director will fill that position with another employee. Employees who request leave for illness **must** have a doctor's release to return to work. **No exceptions.** It is your responsibility to request a note from your doctor. If one is not turned in upon your return to work, it will count as an **unexcused absence. Three (3) sick absences without documentation are considered grounds for termination.**

All doctor's appointments need to be made outside of your scheduled work hours. If your doctor's hours are only during your scheduled work hours, then you must submit documentation of the fact by way of a written document. Please fill out **an Employee Time Off Request Form.**

Temporary employees do not accrue paid sick leave. Sick time is provided for the purpose of allowing employees to take time off for medical reasons. Acceptable medical reasons include the employee's own illness or injury, and that of a child, parent, or spouse who is ill or injured.

- All employees are responsible for recording sick time used.
- Sick leave does not carry over from year to year.
- Employees who separate from **Kids R Love Learning Center** will forfeit any unused sick time, unless state or local law requires otherwise.

Vacation

Kids R Love Learning Center provides vacation time to all regular full-time and part-time employees. Vacation hours accrue each pay period to the employee based on the employee's classification, hours worked during the pay period, and years of service. Employees will not accrue more than the maximum allocated accrual for any one pay period.

An employee will earn no vacation time during an unpaid leave of absence.

Vacation pay does not include shift differentials, incentive pay, bonuses, or other special forms of compensation.

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Vacation leave requests should be submitted to your supervisor a minimum of **two (2) weeks** in advance and are subject to approval. Requests will be evaluated based upon various factors, including anticipated operating requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed absence.

Kids R Love Learning Center has a responsibility to maintain staffing compliance with “minimum standards” requirements and therefore may deny a specific request for time off for vacation leave. We will make every effort to try to accommodate each employee's request for vacation leave.

Vacation benefits will be awarded to each regular full-time and part time employee at the completion of a year of service, beginning on the employee's hire date and each anniversary date, thereafter. Vacation benefits for exempt employees are based on their normal wages.

Vacation benefits will be awarded to eligible employees as noted below:

Regular Full-Time: Forty (40) hours annually

Regular Part-Time: Thirty (30) hours annually

There will be no carry-over of paid vacation leave from one year to the next.

Vacation time must be used within the anniversary year it is earned. Unused vacation time **will not be paid out** at the end of the anniversary year.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for vacation benefits which have accrued **through the last day** of work or as required by state law.

SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Computer Use

Use of **Kids R Love Learning Center's** computer and telecommunication resources and other organization equipment by a person who is not properly authorized is not permitted. All employees have the responsibility to use their assigned computer and telecommunication resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner.

Employees may not install software onto their individual computers or the network without management authorization to do so. Any duplication of copyrighted software, except for backup and archival purposes, is a violation of organization policy and federal law. **Kids R Love Learning Center** may delete unlicensed and personal software without notice.

Electronic Communication

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

- Employees must comply with all software licenses, copyrights, and all other state and federal laws governing intellectual property.
- Employees should not alter or copy files belonging to others without first obtaining permission from the owner of the file.
- No personal right of privacy exists in any file contained within or transmitted by **Kids R Love Learning Center's** computers. **Kids R Love Learning Center** reserves the right to monitor the

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operation of these systems, to access all records within them, and to retain or dispose of those records as it deems necessary.

- Electronic communication (e-mail, voice mail, Internet, etc.) should not be used in any way that is disruptive, offensive to others, harmful to morale, fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating, or unlawful. Specifically prohibited are sexually explicit materials, ethnic or racial slurs, or anything that may be construed as disparaging of others based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws. This also applies to downloading, displaying, or storing of such materials in **Kids R Love Learning Center's** computers.
- While **Kids R Love Learning Center** understands that employees occasionally use their computer and the Internet for personal use, such use should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with the performance and completion of their job responsibilities.
- Employees are responsible for safeguarding their passwords for the system. Individual passwords should not be printed, stored online, or given to others. Employees are responsible for all transactions made using their passwords.
- The rules in this Employee Handbook on confidentiality and electronic communication extend to social media to the extent it is used on our equipment or with identification of us as your employer. Please be mindful and careful when engaging in exchanges of social media with other employees, and our families, vendors, sponsors, customers, and the like, so that you do not disclose our confidential information to outsiders or the general public, and so that you represent us in a positive light. Even seemingly harmless posts on social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) can violate the privacy of children and families. Social media comments that are playful or teasing in a personal setting may be out of place when identified with us. If you identified yourself as an employee of ours in social media, you may be subject to the applicable portions of this Employee Handbook with respect to that conduct.

Outside Employment

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

Kids R Love Learning Center **strongly discourages** families from entering employment arrangements with staff (i.e., babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers **outside** the programs and services we offer is a private matter, **NOT** connected or sanctioned by **Kids R Love Learning Center**.

Employees who have questions regarding possible conflicts of interest should seek advice from their supervisor.

Personal Appearance

Employees have a direct impact on the image of **Kids R Love Learning Center** and should appear neat, clean, and dressed appropriately for the work being performed.

Uniform Requirements - All employees are required to wear a standard uniform to work. The uniform will consist of **solid black leggings/ bottoms and center staff T-Shirt**.

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SHOES	Acceptable and appropriate shoes are closed-toe sneakers or loafers, as feet that are well protected and provide proper support, to allow us to interact during outdoor activities. NO sandals, open-toed, or open-heeled shoes.
BRAS	All female employees must wear a bra.
JEWELRY	To ensure child safety, necklaces and earrings should be kept short to prevent children from pulling on them. Additionally, all jewelry, including rings, must not feature offensive language or sharp elements that could harm children. Facial and dermal piercings must be covered with a band-aid or removed from child accessibility.
FINGERNAILS	To ensure a safe and healthy daycare environment, keep your nails short to prevent accidental harm to children. Additionally, maintain good nail hygiene by keeping them clean and free from bacteria and fungus to prevent the spread of infections.
TATTOOS	No visible tattoos from the neck up.
HAIR	To prevent hair from obstructing a child's face during interactions, long hair must be secured and kept out of the way by pulling it back or fastening it with a hair tie or clip.
HYGIGNE	You are expected to come to work clean with clean clothes. Ensure deodorant is used to help illuminate body orders.

Personal Relationships

While **Kids R Love Learning Center** has no prohibition against hiring relatives of other employees, close family members such as parents, children, spouses, siblings, significant others, or in-laws **will not** be hired into, or transferred from, positions where they directly or indirectly supervise or are supervised by another close family member or significant other. **Kids R Love Learning Center** reserves the right to determine in all cases if a close relationship exists to prohibit a supervisory relationship.

Equity and Safety in the Child Care Center, Amended 12/20/24

To ensure inclusivity and equality among all children in care and to mitigate potential liability risks associated with providing personal items, foods, or snacks to individual children by employees, this policy applies to all employees of **Kids R Love Learning Center**.

1. **Inclusivity:** Employees are prohibited from purchasing personal items, foods, or snacks for any specific child. This policy is implemented to maintain an inclusive environment for all children in care.
2. **Safety and Liability:** The Center recognizes the potential risks associated with providing personal items, foods, or snacks to individual children. If an employee provides any such items, the Center runs the risk of liability should any adverse event or allergic reaction occur. Therefore, to protect the safety and well-being of all children, this practice is strictly forbidden.

Procedures:

1. All employees are required to adhere strictly to this policy.
2. Any violations of this policy must be reported immediately to the center Director.

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3. Employees found violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Exceptions: In exceptional circumstances where a child requires specific items, foods, or snacks due to medical or dietary needs, these items will be provided by the child's guardian in accordance with the Center's procedures for handling such requests. These items must be clearly labeled with the child's name and details of the medical or dietary requirements.

Approval and Compliance: This policy has been approved by the Kids R Love Learning Center management team. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all employees.

Phone Usage/ Cell Phone Policy

In order to facilitate better communication between the parent(s) and teacher and the parent and child, it is best if staff are not distracted by use of electronic devices while supervising children at the center.

Cell phones are not permitted in the classroom. Excessive use of the phones during work time will result in discipline. If you receive **(3) write ups**, your employment will be terminated. **Any purses must be out of sight & out of reach of children.**

Please make arrangements to handle all personal business during your personal time & not during work hours. **Our priority is the children & the care they receive.**

To maintain a safe and professional workplace, cell phone use for personal phone calls, answering personal email, texting, taking photographs or surfing the web **is not permitted.**

However, there may be times when either a cell phone or walkie-talkie will be required for safety when off-site during walks or trips outside of the premises. These instances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Political Activity

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

Smoking Policy

As required by law, all facilities and vehicles owned, operated, or leased by **Kids R Love Learning Center** are smoke-free. Smoking shall be permitted:

- 25 or more feet from a building entrance or exit and providing it is away from windows and air intakes.
- In personal vehicles.

No additional breaks beyond those allowed under **Kids R Love Learning Center's** break policy may be taken for the purpose of using tobacco or similar products. Violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

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Guidance & Discipline Policy for Children

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

Discipline must be:

- 1) Individualized and consistent for each child.
- 2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- 3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- 1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- 2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- 3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- 4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- 5) **There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child.**

The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- 1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- 2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
- 3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
- 4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- 5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- 6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- 7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- 8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- 9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect

Kids R Love Learning Center adheres to all state laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and conforms to state laws consistent with licensing requirements and the Department of Protective & Regulatory Standards.

Texas law requires caregivers to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or law enforcement. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against caregivers who make reports in good faith. Call **1-800-252-5400** to make confidential reports.

Sexual Child Abuse

Kids R Love Learning Center will make an active effort to prevent child sexual abuse by reporting and ensuring staff and volunteers report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation directly to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

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Some preventative examples include:

- A thorough background check, including but not limited to, references of past employers, personal references, the military, educational institutions, volunteer organizations, civic groups, personal character, health and activities.
- Allegations or suspicions of child abuse are taken seriously and will be reported to the State for investigation.
- Programs are structured so that staff are not left alone with kids.
- Periodic interviews/evaluations with children and parents about day-to-day experiences, encouraging reports of anything out of the ordinary.
- Staff will not fraternize with children outside the programs, including no babysitting or inviting children home.

Goals for childcare are:

- To support and strengthen the family unit.
- To help children develop to their fullest potential.
- To deliver the program in a positive, clean environment of safety, support and care.

Handwashing Guidelines & Policy

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) affirms that hand washing is the number one way to control the spread of disease and germs in the childcare setting.

Employees must wash their hands:

- Before eating or handling food or medication.
- Before feeding a child
- After arriving at the childcare center
- After diapering a child
- After assisting a child with toileting or diapering After personal toileting
- After handling or cleaning body fluids, such as after wiping noses, mouths, or bottoms, and tending to sores.
- After handling or feeding animals.
- After outdoor activities.
- After handling raw food products.
- After eating, drinking, or smoking; and
- After using any cleaners or toxic chemicals.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends these hand washing steps:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub them well and be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds (tip: hum the “Happy Birthday” song twice.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry; and
- Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

When hand washing and cleaning routines are modeled, children learn good health and safety practices.

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Kids R Love Learning Center provides equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, political belief, age or disability. Kids R Love Learning Center conforms with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, guidelines, and regulations and provides equal employment opportunity in all employment and employee relations.

Kids R Love Learning Center investigates charges of alleged discrimination in employment and informs Kids R Love Learning Center employees of their rights regarding equal employment. EEO-related complaints may be made directly to the Director.

Civil Rights

Kids R Love Learning Center and its owners do not discriminate against any employee or employee applicant because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or political belief. If you or anyone suspects that there is reason to investigate claims of abuse to this policy, please contact the center's Director to inform of suspected abuse or charges and for information to the state's governing agencies for further investigation.

A.D.A. Compliance:

This business will adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act in respect to employees, vendors, and clients alike.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM - Employee Copy

(Employee's Copy—to Remain in Handbook)

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

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

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

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I will read and familiarize myself with its contents and follow the policies and rules indicated.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM - Employer Copy

(Employer Copy—to Be Placed in Employee File)

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

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My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I will read and familiarize myself with its contents and follow the policies and rules indicated.

Please date, print and sign your name and forward this form to your supervisor.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date