



*A Ministry of Zion Lutheran Church  
2980 Davis Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709*

# **Employee Operations Manual**

*Revised January 3rd, 2017*

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## SECTION I

### **WELCOME TO THE OPEN ARMS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER!**

I am excited that you are joining our staff in the important ministry of caring for children and their families through Open Arms Child Development Center (OACDC). Our goal as a team is to provide a high-quality early childhood education, where children are encouraged to grow and learn at their own rate by a loving and nurturing Christian staff. We believe that each child is unique and a special child of God.

Our center is designed to be safe, stimulating and filled with opportunities for children to interact with one another in small and large group settings. We offer developmentally-appropriate activities for all children; regardless of their race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin. Open Arms Child Development Center, (OA) is a non-profit ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, Fairbanks Alaska. Zion is thoroughly committed to children's ministries. The Zion staff and the Board of Directors of Open Arms will do everything possible to ensure that you are supported as a staff member.

This manual was developed as a guide to uphold the policies and procedures of Open Arms Child Development Center; and to inform the staff of Open Arms/Woodriver Campus about their employment. The provisions in this manual are not to be deemed a provision or condition of your contract of employment. Open Arms and Zion specifically reserves the right to modify or abrogate any provision of this manual at any time and without any notice to employees.

Some of the subjects described here are covered in detail in official policy documents. Please note that terms of written insurance policies are controlling. This manual is not intended to address all possible applications of the policies and procedures described therein. It is not to be construed as imposing any obligation, contractual or otherwise, upon Zion with respect to any subject it contains. No supervisor or other representative of Zion or Open Arms (except the Director) has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the above. These procedures are based on the Department of Health and Human Services; Division of State Child Care Licensing , National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as well as other best practices.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding this manual, please do not hesitate to speak with me.

Maria Vilchez  
Director

## **A. OPEN ARMS HISTORY**

Open Arms Child Development Center (OACDC) was established in the year 2000. Open Arms CDC is a non-profit ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, providing a child care program of the highest quality designed to meet the needs of concerned working parents of Fairbanks, Alaska and the surrounding areas. In our program, each child is guided to develop his/her full potential in every aspect of life; within the shelter and nurturing relationships of Christian love. The family is viewed as the most important influence in a child's life.

We operate the Open Arms Child Development Center assuming each child is an individual. This means that all children must be allowed to grow and learn at his/her own rate and to develop a safe and healthy self-image. Working with children in Early Childhood is a sacred task. Open Arms will endeavor to help each and every child grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

## **B. OPEN ARMS PHILOSOPHY**

Open Arms Child Development Center is a not-for-profit ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, devoted to providing a comprehensive child care program of the highest quality for infants through school-age children; designed to meet the needs of concerned working parents. At Open Arms each child is guided to develop his/her potential in every aspect of life within the shelter and nurturing relationships of Christian love. We operate our Center assuming each child is an individual and must be allowed to grow and learn at his/her own rate and to develop a healthy self-image. Working with children is a sacred task. Open Arms will endeavor to meet each child's spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, physical and nutritional needs enabling him/her to move forward with self-confidence in his/her ability to learn, grow and succeed.

Open Arms endeavors to involve parents and the community as well as volunteers as an integral part of the program. We accept and respect each family's individual differences, their strengths, their struggles and their unique and special needs. Each may give their time, efforts, as well as donations of goods for the well-being of the program. To personally experience being a part of Open Arms, is beneficial to the children, families and volunteers in the community.

## **C. OPEN ARMS MISSION**

Open Arms' mission is to provide a caring, cooperative workplace where human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. This includes interactions between all aspects of the program; staff, children, parents, volunteers and co-workers. Open Arms is committed to assist in providing the highest quality of service to staff, parents and children; while maintaining loyalty to the center and upholding its reputation.

## **D. OPEN ARMS VISION**

Open Arms' vision is to maintain a quality program by establishing a relationship of trust and cooperation between staff and co-workers. Our vision is also to share ideas and resources amongst each other while keeping abreast of up to date standards and requirements from the State. Open Arms will offer support to staff in meeting their needs in their specific areas of work and in their professional development.

**E. CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**  
**NAEYC's Statement of Commitment**

- ❖ I pledge to care for every child entrusted to me with love, understanding and respect. I will never harm a child.
- ❖ I am committed to providing high quality child care in accordance Open Arms goals, philosophy and objectives. I will ensure that activities for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education.
- ❖ I will protect and promote each child's physical and emotional well-being, mental capability, and social competency. I will serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in the community and society.
- ❖ I will agree to reach out to each child and family, attempting to enhance their quality of life by recognizing their unique needs. I will engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families.
- ❖ I respect parents as the prime educators of their children and will endeavor to strengthen the bond among all family members. I will be open to new ideas and willing to learn from the suggestions of others. I will respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- ❖ I promise to conserve and protect the property and resources of Open Arms entrusted in my care. I will continue to learn, grow and contribute as a professional.
- ❖ I will accept responsibility of involving the community in all aspects of nurturing its future leaders. I will stay informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- ❖ I will continue to improve my personal growth and skills as a child care professional through relevant training. I will respect colleagues in early childhood care and education as well as support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- ❖ I will dedicate myself to maintaining high professional standards, safeguarding confidentiality and performing with intelligence, commitment and enthusiasm. I will not participate in any illegal activity.
- ❖ I will honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Under no circumstances should any child be unsupervised or left unattended. If a teacher needs to leave the classroom or playground the child/teacher ratios **MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES**. If assistance is needed, contact the front desk.

## F. OPEN ARMS CORE VALUES

- **Quality:** Striving to consistently provide the highest level of service to children and families. To create a cohesive environment that fosters commitment and supports continuous improvement. To effectively accomplish its goals, Open Arms respects and values the time, effort, and resources that parents, volunteers, and the community provides.
- **Inclusion:** Building a community where each child and adult is treated as an individual while maintaining a sense of belonging. Open Arms values, respects and responds to diversity; in culture, religion, ethnicity, language, and physical ability.
- **Collaboration:** Building relationships amongst children, families, staff and the community. Formal and informal network of community agencies can partner with one another to serve families.
- **Empowerment:** Believing that children and families are capable of finding their own solutions and making changes where needed. Open Arms will be there to support growth and allow opportunities for change.
- **Learning:** Creating a spiritual and culturally sensitive environment in which children grow and develop in their awareness in their surroundings, enhancing their skills, understanding that they are loved and valued, while promoting the fact that children, parents, and staff can learn from each other.
- **Wellness:** Ensuring the vision of health and spiritual guidance for children, families and staff by making sure their needs are met; encourage self health practices that prevent illnesses or injuries; and promote positive culturally behaviors that enhance lifelong well-being of children.
- **Nurturing:** Supporting the spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of each child as an individual in the context of the child's family and culture. This development is supported through caring relationships among staff, parents and children.
- **Diversity:** Identifying the idea that all members of the Open Arms community: children, families, staff and volunteers have ancestry in many cultures. Working together as a team transforms and promotes respectful, sensitive and proactive approaches to diversity in the program.

## **G. OPEN ARMS' CONCEPTS AND PROCEDURES**

### **Multicultural/Anti-Bias and Diversity Commitment**

Open Arms is committed to diversity and multicultural education. This means we share a commitment to human rights, dignity of the individual and social justice. Staff strives to create programs that truly reflect the lives of our children, families and community. By recognizing the impact culture plays on families, the program will make every effort to provide culturally responsive child development programs by affirming human differences and the right of people to make choices about their own lifestyles. The program strives to recognize, appreciate and respect the uniqueness of each child regardless of gender, special needs, religion or composition of the family. It is the staff commitment to:

- Recognize the beauty, value and contributions of each child and his/her family
- Foster high self-esteem and positive self-concept in children
- Have children and their family share about their own culture.
- Introduce children to other cultures.
- Provide children with a positive experience exploring similarities and differences.
- Encourage children to respect other cultures and languages.
- Increase children's ability to talk to and play with people who are different from themselves.
- Help children be a group member.
- Talk about racism and current events with children.
- Help children live happily and cooperatively in a diverse world.
- Help children notice and do something about unfair behavior and events.

## **H. OPEN ARMS PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES**

This employee manual is not a contract and should be treated as confidential. The purpose of this manual is to serve as a guideline to Open Arms expectations and to familiarize Open Arms employees with our customs and practices. All staff is expected to know and follow these policies. All Lead Teachers/Supervisors are expected to keep a copy of these policies at their work stations. These policies are not meant to be binding as a part of a contract, but are always subject to changes/modifications or interpretation as it deems necessary, with or without notice.

Open Arms will endeavor to make personnel decisions that are fair and equitable, while at all times assuring that the best interest of OA are served. OA has the right to employ the best qualified persons available; the continuation of employment is based on the need for work to be performed, availability of funds, faithful and effective performance, proper personal conduct, continued ability to perform the job, and OA's continued satisfaction with the employee. **ALL EMPLOYEES ARE TERMINABLE AT WILL** *(at any time, with or without cause)*

Open Arms will endeavor to fully inform employees of their duties and responsibilities and provide them with adequate administrative and supervisory direction. Employees will be informed of their performance levels. They will be compensated according to OA standards and considered for promotional opportunities. Employees will be treated with dignity and respect. Each new employee will be provided with a copy of the Employee Handbook and must sign the Receipt for Employee Handbook indicating that it has been received and read and that she/he will abide by its rules and regulations.

## **I. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

It is Open Arms policy that all employees are responsible for assuring that the work place is free from sexual harassment. The Center does not condone or excuse sexual harassment of any kind. Sexual harassment by management and supervisory staff, co-workers, and non-employees over whom the Center exercises some measure of control will not be tolerated on or off Center premises. Because of the Center's strong disapproval of offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior with respect to the work place, all employees must avoid any action or conduct which could be viewed as sexual harassment. Therefore, under this policy, the following acts are specifically prohibited:

- Granting or denying job benefits based on receptivity of sexual advances or threatening or insinuating either expressly or implying that an employee's refusal to submit to sex;
- Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual harassing nature;
- A working environment of unwelcome sexual conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an affected person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; and
- Sexual slurs, vulgar jokes, display of sexually explicit pictures, or other sexually offensive conduct.

Any employee who has a complaint of sexual harassment with respect to the workplace by anyone including supervisors, co-workers, visitors, or any other person over whom the Center exercises some measure of control should immediately bring the problem to the attention of the Director, Assistant Director, or the Human Resources Department. All complaints will be promptly handled on a confidential basis. The Center will retain confidential documentation of all allegations and investigations and will take appropriate corrective action to remedy all violations of this policy. Corrective action may include disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or termination of the business relationship for persons found to have engaged in sexual harassment.

## **J. SMOKING**

To protect and enhance our indoor air quality and to contribute to the health and well-being of all employees, Open Arms is entirely smoke free. Additionally, the use of all tobacco products, including illegal drugs, chewing tobacco, is banned from Open Arms workplace, except as designated in this policy. Smoking is prohibited at all times inside the building and on the premises; in all of the enclosed areas within Open Arms worksites, without exception. This includes common work areas, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, hallways, break rooms, restrooms; employer owned or leased vehicles, and all other enclosed facilities.

The only designated smoking area is outdoors, on the far back-end of the building (at least 25 ft. from doorways), beyond the fenced-in area (*off O.A property*). No one may smoke along any path way or walk way leading to or from the designated smoking area. Additionally, employees may smoke in their personal vehicles, but the smoke and tobacco products must be completely contained within the vehicle. It is not acceptable that either smoking or non-smoking employees are subjected to smoke that they must walk through to reach their vehicle or any other destination on Open Arms premises. Open Arms is in no way has any legal responsible for employee smoking. Employees who choose to use these smoking areas do so at their own risk. No additional breaks are allowed to any employee who smokes. Odors that are disruptive or offensive to others or may exacerbate allergies are unacceptable in the workplace. Finally, smokers and users of tobacco products must dispose of the remains properly. This helps to keep a neat and clean environment for all employees and our visiting partners and customers. Failure to comply with all

of the components of this policy will result in disciplinary action that can lead up to and include employment termination.

## SECTION II

### EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS

#### **A. Americans with Disabilities Act**

Open Arms is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). It is Open Arms' policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, Open Arms will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made Open Arms aware of his or her disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on Open Arms. Employees with a disability who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact the Director. Open Arms encourages individuals with disabilities to come forward and request reasonable accommodation.

#### **B. Background Check**

Employees must also receive provisional clearance with the background check unit for the State of Alaska and submit their fingerprints before they can work in a classroom. Applicants will pay a \$25 dollars for this background check. Employees will be reimbursed the \$25 background check fee after the 90 day probation period has ended.

#### **C. Barrier Crimes**

The Director must be notified within 24 hours if any employee is arrested for a barrier crime. If a law enforcement agency notifies the Center that an employee is under investigation for a crime, the employee will face suspension without pay or termination, based on Directors discretion.

#### **D. Childcare Licensing Regulations**

Open Arms is licensed by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Childcare Licensing. Open Arms meets or exceeds all State of Alaska requirements. Each employee must be familiar with, understand, and comply with Alaska Administrative Code Chapter 57 - Childcare Licensing, a copy of which is available in the administrative office. All employees are required to complete a minimum of 24 hours of training in early childhood training each year. All staff are expected to be familiar with the most recent state child care licensing regulations, to know where they are kept at each center and to be able to access them easily to look up regulations as needed.

#### **E. Confidentiality (of Records)**

All Open Arms records and information, including medical, financial, and sociological data contained in a child's record or in employee files, are privileged and must remain confidential at all times. Only authorized persons will be permitted to see children's records.

In practice, this means the following:

- Employees should not disclose the personal information (address, living situation, health or economic status) of any child or family to any other family without permission of the family or a court order.
- Employees should not share sensitive information provided by a parent to anyone else without the parent's permission unless there is a risk to the child.

- Employees should not discuss a child or family in a public location, or with any third party in a way that makes their identity obvious.
- Employees should only share information with other employees that is necessary to provide quality care for the children.
- Employees should not divulge or discuss their wage rates with other employees.

Except in the approved course of performing duties on behalf of Open Arms, unauthorized removal of documents, notes, files, records or computer files or unauthorized divulgence of parent, employee or the program's confidential information is a violation of Open Arms policy and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees who are unsure about the confidential nature of specific information should ask the Director for clarification.

## F. Conflicts of Interest

Open Arms expects our employees to conduct themselves and their jobs as caregivers according to the highest ethical standards of conduct. Although it is not possible to specify every action that might create a conflict of interest, this policy discusses the one which most frequently presents problems.

- ❖ **Babysitting:** Open Arms supervises its employees within the confines of the facility and associated activities. Employees of Open Arms are not supervised by Open Arms during their off duty hours and are not acting within the scope of their employment. Open Arms is not liable for employee actions outside of duty hours; we respectfully request that you do not care for enrolled children outside of the Open Arms Lutheran Child Development Center. Open Arms employees may not solicit for outside employment.

If an employee has any question whether an action or proposed course of conduct would create a conflict of interest, she/he should contact the Director to obtain advice on the issue. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- ❖ **Outside Employment:**

In general, outside work activities are not allowed when they:

- prevent the employee from fully performing work for which he or she is employed at Open Arms, including overtime assignments;
- involve organizations that are doing or seek to do business with Open Arms, including actual or potential vendors or customers; or
- violate provisions of law or Open Arms' policies or rules.

From time to time, Open Arms employees may be required to work beyond their normally scheduled hours. Employees must perform this work when requested. In cases of conflict with any outside activity, the employee's obligations to Open Arms must be given priority. Employees are hired and continue in Open Arms' employ with the understanding that Open Arms is their primary employer and that other employment or commercial involvement which is in conflict with the business interests of Open Arms is strictly prohibited.

## G. Equal Opportunity

Open Arms Child Development Center is an equal opportunity employer where employment is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of gender, race, age, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law, in employment or other administrative policies. This policy of Equal Employment

Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, termination and all other terms and conditions of employment.

## **H. Evaluation and Management**

Open Arms expects employees to continue growing and developing professionally. Employees will receive constructive work reviews to address their performance at Open Arms and their skill development needs. The Director/Assistant Director/Lead Teacher will make a written and verbal evaluation of each employee's performance against job standards in the month of March. The employee will meet with the designated supervisor to discuss the evaluation and will be asked to make additional comments about their performance at this time. Merit increases may be considered at the time of the evaluation. Employee will receive a copy of standards expected and basis for merit raises.

## **I. Maintenance of Equipment and Materials**

Adequate materials and equipment will be provided for each classroom quarterly for setting up a developmentally appropriate environment for children. Staff members are expected to take proper care of the materials and equipment and to teach the children to do so as well. Materials such as glue, paints, markers, crayons etc. are not to be stored in the classroom for future use, but to be distributed as needed for children to use in their daily activities.

Classrooms are to be kept orderly, especially when children are all sleeping or leave for the day. Each morning, classroom interest centers are expected to be set up, re-organized and prepared for each new day. Staff members are expected to complete basic housekeeping tasks in their classroom on a daily basis. A daily checklist will be completed by staff. All materials, table surfaces and equipment used by children are to be sanitized daily, and more often as needed using the required bleach/water solution. (Outdoor environment is to be inspected daily by designated classrooms)

## **J. Mealtime/Outside Food/Break room**

Based on USDA regulations, snack foods such as chips, sodas, open coffee cups, candy, etc are not allowed in the classrooms. Employees may drink water at any time during the day. Other drinks are permitted. However, any drink that is not water **MUST** be in a covered container that is not see-through. Since staff breaks should be taken outside of the classroom, these items may be stored and consumed in staff break rooms or other designated areas of the center, but never in the center kitchen or classroom areas.

**(Three violations will result in a water only rule for the violating room).**

As part of family style meal service and good early childhood education practices, classroom staff are required to sit at the tables with the children and eat the same foods being served to the children. Children should be serving food onto their own plates and passing the food. Food should be contained in manageable size containers to facilitate this. Mealtime should be pleasant and relaxed and used as an opportunity to broaden children's food experiences, social conversations, etc. Mealtime is a curriculum activity, not a fringe benefit to employees. Therefore, non-classroom staff eating periodically at the center will eat with the children. An employee with food allergies or religious convictions should be document as an exception to this expectation. If an employee chooses to eat something different for lunch, it must be eaten in the break room or in the classroom when all children are napping. (See Nutrition section for more details).

### **Break Room**

This is the only room for your personal time. If you are off the clock, you will either be in this room or off premises. For the benefit of all employees, the break room provides a telephone (limit

length of calls please), computers, chairs, sink, and refrigerator for access during breaks or before or after scheduled work hours. Out of courtesy for fellow staff, employees are expected to clean up after themselves, being sure to clean dirty dishes and put them away. Staff mailboxes and a message/bulletin board are provided to facilitate employee communication. Please check both frequently for important messages from administration, prayer requests, notices of meetings and training schedules.

#### **K. Media/Media Exposure/Social Media/Photographs**

It is the responsibility of all the staff to promote the program, its philosophy, goals and objectives. Staff must display professional behavior at all times. However, it is primarily the responsibility of the Open Arms Director and all other administrative staff to actively promote the program and its activities by using informational brochures, writing articles for newsletters, and other interest groups. All other presentations/representations must be approved by the Open Arms Director.

Employees should not expose children to TV, Computer or Video screens unless it has been planned and incorporated through the approved curriculum. Christian children's music or instrumental CDs may be played in the classrooms. Otherwise, only the K-LOVE or Air1 Christian radio stations should be broadcasted in the classrooms or center areas.

Employees are prohibited to take any form of pictures with their personally owned cell phone and/or distribute photos, videos, and audio of children/classroom over social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat etc. Photos of children, families or personal information about children should not be sent, shared or posted. Families should not be asked or request to join your networks or be "friended". Watch what you post; parents can view at any time as you represent Open Arms as an employee. An employee whose conduct, actions or performance violates or conflicts with Open Arms' policies may be terminated immediately and without warning.

Parents or legal guardians must sign a consent form before any employee is allowed to videotape, record, audio tape and/or photograph their child/ren using ONLY CLASSROOM CAMERAS.

#### **L. Nepotism Policy**

For the purpose of this policy the term "immediate family" refers to the following: parent, spouse, child, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, first cousin, aunt, uncle, or grandparent.

The basic criteria for the appointment or promotion of any staff member shall be appropriate qualifications and performance. Relationship by a family or marriage shall constitute neither an advantage nor a disadvantage. No immediate family may share the same classroom if the job description creates a direct supervisory relationship of one over the other.

Exceptions approved by the Director as being clearly in the best interest of the center.

#### **M. Non-Discrimination Policy**

Open Arms is committed to an environment in which all individuals, employees and students, are treated with respect and dignity. Each employee has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment.

#### **N. Parking**

Staff are to park in designated parking areas. Staff may not park in the loading/unloading (No idling under the overhang during the winter/summer months). Handicapped parking spaces are reserved only for individuals with placards or stickers provided by the State indicating s/he is

eligible for handicapped parking. Infant front row parking spaces are reserved for parents dropping off or picking up their small children. A special month-long front row parking is designated for the “Employee of the month” award.

#### **O. Parent Handbook**

All staff are expected to read the Open Arms Parent Handbook in order to be familiar with exactly what parents/families have been given as guidance for program operations. This will facilitate staff providing information to families that is consistent with program practices.

#### **P. Personal Property**

Staff are required to keep personal items in a cabinet or drawer out of the reach of children and others at all times.

#### **Q. Public Relations/ Employee Requirements in Public**

All employees shall be of good character; in good physical, mental, and emotional health; understand basic growth patterns of children; be able to meet basic caregiver requirements set by the Alaska Department of Family and Youth Services.

A positive public perception of Open Arms and Zion Lutheran Church is vital to the operation and ministry of these two groups. Therefore, it is imperative and required that all employees represent Open Arms and Zion Lutheran Church in a positive manner. Wearing Open Arms apparel in public draws attention to the fact that you are employed by Open Arms and requires a higher level of accountability. Always keep a low profile and think before speaking while out in public. Present an appropriate and professional appearance at all times.

#### **R. Record Retention**

All records including medical, financial, sociological data of children, and salary information become the property of Open Arms and will remain a part of the record database in accordance with standard record keeping practices.

No information in the personnel records will be forwarded to any outside agencies, with the exception of the State of Alaska Child Care Program Office, or person without written approval from the employee. Employees have the right to view the contents of their personnel file upon request to the Director.

Personnel Records will include:

- Employment Application
- Three (3) References
- Disclosure of Personal History & Fingerprints
- Release to Review Background Information
- Offer Letter for Applicants for Exempt Positions
- Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification with supporting documents
- Copy of Fingerprints submitted to Background Check Unit
- IRS Form W-4
- Insurance enrollment forms and all correspondence with provider
- Position Description
- Records of professional training, continuing education, workshops, and conferences
- Copies of Performance Evaluations
- Salary Actions
- Requests for Time Off (with/without pay)—Paid time off used

- Record of absences—approved or unapproved
- All correspondence with and about employees
- Employee disciplinary actions
- Records required by Department of Health and Social Services, Chapter 57, Childcare Facilities Licensing

### **S. Staff Meetings**

The Open Arms Director or other administrative staff may call staff meetings periodically or schedule training sessions as deemed necessary for effective program operations. The employees will be paid for their attendance at mandatory meetings, such as monthly staff meetings, parent meetings, parent/teacher conferences and meetings with Pastor or church representative. All staff are required to attend applicable training sessions and recommended monthly staff meetings as part of their job description/responsibility. Agendas and sign-in sheets are logged in a staff-meeting binder by the director. The employee will be paid at the overtime rate if a conference or staff meeting requires the employee to work more than 40 hours in one week. There are also occasions when staff members are expected to be involved in mission and outreach events, including but not limited to Christmas and Easter activities and Open Arms Sunday.

### **T. Staff/Volunteer Relationships**

Parent and community volunteers (such as college students in practicum experiences and others) are invited to share their time and talents with the program. All regular volunteers (working more than 8 hours per week) are subject to the same requirement as employees; submit to a criminal history report, release of information form, fingerprints, & 3 written references, orientation and/or health checks.

Staff are expected to welcome volunteers, to orient them to the classroom routine and daily schedule and to involve them in meaningful activities. Volunteers are not counted in the actual teacher/child ratios but are used as additional hands to enrich the interactions and provide additional attention to children. All volunteers are required to wear name badges for identification purposes. Those who work more than 8 hrs. per month will be assigned an ID code and be asked to check in/out on the computer when entering/leaving. Employee's visitors, including family members and friends, must sign in, provide identification, and wear a Visitor badge while on premises. Visitors are only allowed to visit classrooms with the approval of the management team. If approved, they must wait in the office until they are escorted elsewhere on the premises.

### **U. Teacher/Parent/Family Relationships**

We believe parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We strive to create mutual respect between parents and the center staff to develop a partnership for the benefit of the child. Our doors are open to parents at all times and staff is expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner on all occasions with parents/families. During the year, the center will sponsor events (parent's night out, individual classroom parties, etc.) that parents will be encouraged to participate in and staff will also be required to attend. Christian/Staff Relations: At Open Arms, employees rely on each other for support and care. Employees are expected to support the decisions of the administrators as well as the actions or decision of other staff members. Employees should also NEVER demean fellow co-workers or children in the presence of other co-workers or parents.

## SECTION III

### DAILY OPERATIONS

#### A. Arrival and Departure of Children

Arrival and departure are transitional times for children and need to be handled in an orderly, systematic manner. Children must be brought ***directly to their assigned classroom***. Children must not be left unaccompanied in the parking lot, dropped off at an entrance, playground or in the hallway. Classroom staff must be aware of **all** arrivals and departures.

Classroom staff must constantly count to determine the number of children in their care. This number should be at a readily visible location in the classroom and changed as the number increases or decreases during the day; such as on the sign-in sign out sheet. Parents who drop off or pick up their child must sign the roster sheet and tell the classroom staff they are dropping off or picking up their child. When the class is outdoors or if they leave the building for any reason, the roster/sign-in and out sheet must accompany the teacher.

If someone other than the parent is going to be picking up the child, the parent is asked to contact the center in advance, whenever possible. At time of enrollment, the parent will have indicated who is authorized to pick up the child other than the parent. Only individuals listed on the form, or an addendum contained in the child's file, as authorized as responsible adults to whom the child can be released. ***Under no circumstances are staff to release a child based on a phone call, fax or note if the designated person was not an addendum to the list.*** All changes must be made in person and must be signed. Only paid Open Arms staff are authorized to release children (not volunteers, other parents or foster grandparents)

***Staff must check identification of individuals with whom they are unfamiliar prior to releasing a child.*** These procedures must be followed for the safety of the children. We are responsible and liable for each child's safety from the time we receive the child until we return or release the child to his/her parent or designated responsible adult. The class schedules that are posted in each classroom have been designed for the maximum benefit of the children enrolled at Open Arms.

- Ratios and Room Occupancy

Each age level has a specific teacher to child ratio. Each classroom has a specific age range and a specific number of children permitted to be in that classroom at any time. These state mandated guidelines must be followed at all times. Ratios are available at front desk.

Employees may suggest changes to the administrative staff for consideration and approval but otherwise, the schedule that is posted must reflect what is actually happening in the classroom, or for that age group.

#### B. Attendance/Absences/Sign-In/Unscheduled Absences/Tardiness

***Parents:*** All parents will be informed at time of enrollment to contact the center whenever their child must be absent. This allows the teacher or staff member to document their contact on the sign-in sheet immediately. Each classroom will submit their completed Sign-in/Sign-out sheets to the front desk (administration) weekly. These forms will have all children listed, authorized persons' signatures and drop-off and pick-up times. Each classroom will document his/her class daily attendance.

**Staff:** Employees must report to work, sign in and sign out every day. The sign in/out record must reflect the employee's assigned hours, unless otherwise authorized. Overtime MUST be pre-approved by the Director/ Assistant Director, or designated appointee. A full-time work schedule is based on a seven work hours per day or 30 hours per week.

Employees must report to work every day that they are scheduled to work, allowing enough time to prepare their classroom or assigned work area before their shift starts. Unexpected and unscheduled absences and tardiness place an undue burden on co-workers and leave a void for the children.

If an employee anticipates missing a day of work because of illness, she or he should notify the supervisor the evening before the day that will be missed. If that is not possible, you must call the Assistant Director at least 2 hours before scheduled shift. Employees should not make this notification via voice message or texting, but instead speak directly to the administrative staff member in charge. If we are closed you MUST speak with an administrator - voice or text messages will not be accepted as excused.

As soon as possible following the unscheduled absence, you must speak with the Assistant Director. Medical documentation may be requested at any time for an unscheduled absence. If unscheduled absence (asking to go home early not due to illness, or calling in sick) occurs 3 times, there will be a documented verbal warning. If it occurs 4 times, there will be a written warning. If it occurs 5 times, employee may be terminated.

An employee's tardiness (reporting to work after their scheduled time) and absenteeism will be documented; excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **C. Disenrollment**

Disenrollment is the process by which a parent removes his/her child from the Open Arms CDC or the program disenrolls the child/family from services. Reasons for disenrollment vary but may include: relocation, child not ready for center-based activities, transportation or other child care issues which cannot be resolved. Under certain circumstances, a staff member may request that a child be disenrolled from the program. This may occur when one of two conditions exists:

1. The child has been absent eight or more consecutive days and all attempts to contact the parents and emergency contacts have failed.
2. The child has been absent for four or more days, the staff have been unable to contact the parents AND emergency contacts, neighbors or other family members have reported that the family has relocated.

A child who the staff are able to locate may only be disenrolled from the program after staff have worked with the family to resolve any identified issues and if the family is unable or unwilling to follow through and/or if staff determine this setting not to be in the best interest of the child or the program at this time. All disenrollments are tracked by administration and logged in the Pro Care system for a monthly report to be accessed. Any disenrollment creates a vacant slot; every effort is made to fill the vacancy by taking applicants off the waiting list as soon as possible.

## **D. Grievances**

To foster sound staff relations through communication and reconciliation of work-related problems, Open Arms provides employees with an established procedure for expressing employment related concerns.

In situations where employees feel a complaint is in order, the following steps should be taken:

If an employee believes that she/he has a legitimate work-related complaint, the employee is encouraged to first attempt to resolve the issue(s) through discussions with her/his immediate supervisor or lead teacher.

Barring extenuating circumstances, if the situation is not resolved within five working days from the time the complaint is first discussed with the employee's immediate supervisor; it should be brought to the attention of the Director with written documentation.

Upon receiving notice of the grievance, The management team will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint within a reasonable period of time while preserving the confidentiality and privacy of those involved to the extent feasible. The Director will make a decision regarding the problem and set up a meeting to discuss the disposition of the grievance with the employee within five (5) working days after notification. The Director's decision should also be conveyed in writing, to the employee either at the meeting or within two (2) working days following the conclusion of the meeting. A copy of the Director's decision is retained in the employee's personnel file.

If the grievance is settled at this point, no further action is taken.

If the employee is not satisfied with the Director's decision, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors of Open Arms in writing, at which time the Board of Directors will meet and follow the above-referenced procedures. The Board of Directors' decision is final.

## **E. Parent Fees and Tuition**

See Attachment in the back of the Employee Manual

## **F. Parents are not at Home or Children Who are not Picked-up**

If a parent has not picked up his/her child at the center by one hour after closing time and the center has not been contacted by the parent or another designated responsible adult, the staff will attempt to locate the parent, then the emergency contact numbers. If there has been no contact from the parent, family member or designated adult, the staff member will contact the center Director. OA staff are NEVER to take children to their own home or drive children anywhere. After the hour, if neither the parent nor the emergency contact numbers can be reached, the child will be left in the custody of the local police and/or the appropriate state agency (i.e. OCS). A note will be left on the door for the parent indicating where the child has been taken, what time, etc. A note will also be let for the morning staff at the program documenting what happened.

## **G. Schedule of Operations**

The hours of the administrative offices and hours for staff to work are determined by the Director to best meet the needs of the children and families serves. It may be necessary for staff to attend nighttime and weekend functions. Hours of operation for Open Arms are 7:00 am to 6:30 pm. Employee work schedules are assigned by the administrative staff focused on the needs of the center to provide appropriate staffing of all classrooms.

## **Schedule of Operations** *(cont.)*

Work hours are assigned based on the number of children enrolled and/or expected to be in attendance. Assigned hours may be changed without notice. Open Arms does not guarantee or imply a specific amount or fixed number of hours per pay period.

Open Arms may attempt to honor employee desire for certain schedules but if it is not feasible, the employee will be expected to work as scheduled. Employees may not alter schedules without approval from the Director or Assistant Director. Daily work schedules include an appropriate lunch break, which must be taken at the designated time. Staff members may not work through their lunch break. Employees that are scheduled to leave early must still take a lunch break.

***Introductory Period:*** All new employees must complete a 90-day introductory period. During this period, employees will not be eligible for benefits or paid time off and may not request unpaid time-off in increments longer than 2 working days unless approved by the Director.

During the introductory period, the employee's attitude, attendance and punctuality will be assessed. Their ability to promote the mission of Open Arms, their interactions with children and parents, and their participation as a member of the Open Arms staff will also be evaluated. The informal review held with the employee's direct supervisor at the end of the introductory period will provide the employee with feedback about their performance and any changes to, issues with, or questions about their responsibilities at Open Arms.

***Current Information:*** Open Arms needs to keep current personal data and emergency contact information for each employee on file at all times. If there is any change to the employee's address, telephone number, number of dependents, etc., the updated information shall immediately be given to the Director in writing. A change in the number of dependents will require completion of a new W-4 form.

## **H. Serving Employee's Children or Children of Relatives**

Employees of Open Arms may enroll their own child/ren or children of their relatives in the program if they meet the enrollment and selection criteria, and are selected for the program. Employees who are interested in enrolling their child/ren will abide by the same policies and procedures governing other parents, as detailed in the Parent Handbook. No exception can be made for children of employees. Normally, children will not be placed in classrooms where their parent is a teacher or assistant.

To help prevent disruption, employee/parents are expected to refrain from visiting their child's classroom during the day, unless during scheduled lunches or break, or for nursing an infant. Repeated disruption of classroom routine may result in the Center's declining the enrollment of the child or in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including termination.

## **I. Breastfeeding Employees**

Breastfeeding employees shall be provided reasonable break time, approved by the Director, for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their children. The approved break time will be uncompensated time. The Center will provide a designated area for these breaks.

## SECTION IV

### Concepts and Procedures

#### A. Birthdays

If celebrating birthdays is in the family's traditions, parents may bring in already prepared food from a local grocery store. Foods from home (homemade cakes) are not allowed in the center. Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate, but are asked not to bring candy items. Store-bought foods that are brought in should be limited to "bite-sized" portions and served during the scheduled morning snack time to accommodate the Food Program.

#### B. Cell Phones/ Personal Phone Calls

Open Arms employees are not allowed to use their personal cell phones for texting, checking emails or making personal phone calls (during working hours) in the classrooms nor outdoor play.

If a parent or staff member sees another employee using their cell phone in the classroom for any call that is not associated with a medical emergency, fire, earthquake or lockdown, it should be turned over to the Front Office until the end of the day. A warning will also be placed in the employee's file.

**\*After three such warnings, the employee can and will be terminated.**

Open Arms is making an ongoing effort to continue to improve the quality of service, classroom environments, and the health & safety of the children/families in our program. Please help us to be pro-active in areas listed below:

- ❖ Cell Phone Use/Naptime Change: Naptime is not designated to spend the entire time on your cell phone. In the past, OA has allowed staff to check important messages; (*ECERS-PS #11*)
  - Our policy will be changing as of August 2014. No more cell phones during naptime. Staff can receive emergency calls from family/children through Open Arms Front Desk and you will be notified personally. Any Cell phone usage in the classroom/outdoors during working hours will be prohibited after July 30, 2014.
  - When all children are sleeping, naptime will be used more proactively by cleaning/sanitizing designated furniture, toys, and materials within the classroom (at least once a week, the entire classroom should be addressed as needed) Ex. Wiping down cubbies on Monday, shelving on Tuesday, countertops/sinks on Wednesday, toys & manipulative on Thursday, stuffed animals/clothing- laundry on Friday; set up a schedule for your classroom. Provisions should be made for early risers and non-nappers (*read books, play quietly, separate space & activities used for non-nappers*)

Personal cell phones are only allowed to be used in the staff lounge when an employee is on a scheduled break and should be kept to a minimum. An alternative telephone that can be utilized for personal calls will also be available in the staff lounge. Unless an incoming personal call relates to an emergency, a message will be taken at the front desk and the employee may return the call at her/his next scheduled break or after work hours.

#### C. Dress Code

Personal hygiene and professional appearance is very important. Odors that are disruptive or offensive to others or may exacerbate allergies are unacceptable in the workplace. Employees are

expected to maintain a properly groomed and conservative appearance at all times. Extremes in dress should be avoided, especially in the summer months. The following clothing is not allowed:

- Clothing that exposes stomachs
- Shorts that are cut-off, or designed for running
- Shorts, dresses, jumpers or skirts which are shorter than 3” above the knee unless tights are worn
- Sheer shirts
- Sleeveless shirts
- Shirts with straps less than 1”
- Bare feet are not allowed. Covered shoes year-round are recommended for safety.

If an employee is participating in a water activity while on duty, only modest, one-piece swimming suits are permitted.

Employees who violate this policy will be asked to return home to re-dress in proper attire before returning for duty. A warning will also be placed in the employee’s file and after three such warnings, the employee will be terminated.

#### **D. Field Trips**

Field trips are used as an integrated experience, which enhances the children’s learning. Field trips give children an opportunity to:

- Explore natural environments within their community;
- Learn and participate in community cultural activities;
- Observe and interact with objects, environments, plants, animals or community workers as related to learning;
- Extend a child’s learning related to a specific activity (i.e. a visit to the library).

Open Arms program promote active exploration and learning in a setting away from the center. However, field trips must be relevant and integrated into the curriculum.

- a) Teachers must submit a copy of the Field Trip Request form prior to the date of the field trip.
- b) Teachers must obtain a signed permission slip from the parent/guardian(s) for each child in the class to participate in any field trip, which includes the destination and routes of travel.
- c) There must be a minimum of two adults with appropriate child to staff ratios.
- d) Teaching staff must ensure that snack requirements are met and children are offered adequate liquids during the field trip.
- e) Safety is our first concern: “nature walks” should not endanger the safety of the children. Walking along busy streets, intersections, rivers or ditches should be avoided.
- f) Teaching staff must review safety procedures with children prior to the trip (e.g. practice bus safety, playground safety, holding hands, etc.)
- g) The first-aid kit will be taken including the attendance sheet and emergency forms.

#### **E. Guidance and Discipline**

The long-term goal for children enrolled in the program is to provide a setting where children can slowly develop a sense of inner self-control; that they can begin to understand the reasons for limits that are set, and develop a sense of both being respected and respecting other’s rights and feelings.

When behavior problems arise, staff are encouraged to look at classroom routines, the environment and individual needs of the child, to help the child overcome the behavior. It is important for all adults to be aware of the language, tone of voice and the manner of foreseeing problems and

responding to their needs immediately enables us to help the child positively without having to use direct discipline.

One of the goals of guidance and discipline is to help children develop tools to problems solve. Discipline is the external tool to help children develop internal control. Young children learn by experimenting, testing limits and experiencing the consequences of their behavior. The following methods of guidance and discipline define what is and is not appropriate in Open Arms.

**Method: *Indirect Guidance***

- **Prevention:** A well-designed and well-equipped classroom tailored to the developmental level of the children prevents frustration, interruption and hazards. It offers privacy, independence and easy adult supervision. In additions, the daily routine provides enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting and few transitions.
- **Modeling:** Teacher-modeled appropriate behavior and communication, as well as positive peer models, are provided to help children learn responsibility for their actions. Staff actions and interactions set forth the tone through their actions, body language and voice level. Children copy what they see and hear. If we wish to provide a peaceful and cooperative environment for children to grow and learn, then staff must demonstrate this in actions and voice. When voice levels are soft and calm, the children set their tone in a similar fashion. Adults need to model appropriate expression of their feelings.
- **Descriptive Praise & Positive Encouragement**

When opportunities arise for genuine, descriptive praise and encouragement, staff will recognize appropriate behavior with positive statements such as, “Look how high you are building blocks.” In order to promote the child’s physical, intellectual, emotional, social well-being and growth, Open Arms requires employees to interact with children to provide needed help, comfort, and to encourage the development of appropriate social behavior and problem-solving skills.

Employees are expected to:

- Get down on the child’s eye level to get their attention and to talk with them
- Insert themselves between children who are physically or verbally fighting
- Engage quiet children in activities with peers or teachers
- Remove children from the center of attention when they throw a temper tantrum, especially when children, other teachers or parents are coming and going
- Respect a child’s personal property
- Respect differences in cultural, ethnic, and family backgrounds
- Encourage decision-making abilities
- Promote ways of getting along
- Encourage independence and self-direction; and
- Use consistency in applying expectations

➤ **Limit Setting**

Classrooms have few, clear, simple rules that vary according to the developmental level of the children. In establishing rules, teachers should follow these guidelines:

1. Tell children what they should do in a positive tone of voice
2. Post rules prominently throughout the classroom for parents/staff to read
3. Specify results of the following rules.
4. Explain rules to children and apply rules consistently.

Teachers will set limits that are clear, kept to a minimum and that make sense to the age and stage of children in the classroom.

**Method: *Direct Guidance***

Prior to utilizing any direct guidance method, staff must be sure to have the child's attention: arm around child's shoulder, kneeling down, eye contact (where appropriate), confident voice: **avoid calling across the room.**

- ❖ **Problem Solving:** Teachers appeal to the child's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences and asking questions to encourage problem-solving. Teachers can help identify their needs, feelings, causes, alternatives and choices. Staff can provide cues such as the statement, "I see you both want to use the same tractor, what do you think we can do?" (*"I" statements*)
- ❖ **Redirection:** A child who is out of control, throwing blocks because he/she seems frustrated or angry, could be redirected to throwing bean bags into a tub or pounding clay—a good chance to use creativity and problem-solving abilities by assessing why the child may be doing this and figuring out how to best respond. A child may need redirecting to one-on-one interaction with a teacher (i.e. in a rocking chair together or a story in a quiet corner).
- ❖ **Distraction by Focusing Play:** Teachers can enter into play directly by helping children refocus using the materials constructively, timing this so it happens before it gets to out of control; teachers can provide a few different props that might stimulate further interest.
- ❖ **Using Positive Statements:** Teachers should use positive statements as much as possible. "Please keep the play dough on the table" as opposed to "Don't throw the play dough on the floor."
- ❖ **Active Listening:** Staff will listen closely to the child to help determine the underlying cause of the behavior.
- ❖ **Time Out:** Open Arms **do not** support the use of "traditional" time out. Positive statements such as, "Do you need to be by yourself for awhile?" should you be used to help the child recognize the need to quiet him/herself. Other statements such as "This seems to be hard for you right now, can I help you find something else to do?" allows children a choice in choosing a more appropriate activity for that time. Children may be invited to work independently for a short time in order to gain self-control and, in those cases; the child has an open invitation from the teacher to return to the group when s/he feels ready.
- ❖ **Separation:** A child may be separated from the group only when many less intrusive methods of guiding his/her behavior have been ineffective. A child should be separated from the group only when his/her behavior cause concern for his/her safety or that of the other children. When separated from the group, the child will remain in an area of the room where his/her physical presence can be seen and heard by the teaching staff. In most cases, when a child is this upset or out of control, a staff member should remain with the child to help them feel safe to cope with such strong feelings. When a child has been removed from the group, s/he may return when the child has calmed

and is no longer a threat to him/herself or the rest of the group. The child shall return to the group at the earliest possible opportunity.

- ❖ **Unacceptable behavior:** Behavior, which is unacceptable, will be considered by the staff as “mistaken” behavior. This behavior is the result of the child’s level of development. The staff will reinforce reasonable limits and teach children “what to do instead” and not just “what not to do”. Staff realizes that everyone makes mistakes and, when they do, they are capable of taking care of their mistakes (with staff guidance). Staff will demonstrate awareness of the idea that acceptable behavior takes time to learn.

Persistent, unacceptable behavior will be dealt with in the following manner:

- a) The child’s behavior will be recorded in writing using a behavioral incident report or log which will include date and time.
- b) Classroom staff and director will meet to review the logs and develop a program plan, with the parents to meet the individual needs of the child in question.
- c) If the child does not respond to the program plan, a family meeting will be held in which parents and staff will review the concerns and develop an action plan as needed to meet the needs of the child and family. Any consultation or referral action will be offered and can be authorized by the family.
- d) A child could be placed on a modified plan or excluded from the classroom if a child’s behavior poses a significant risk to the health and safety of himself, other children, or anyone else (teachers) in contact with the child. Program modification may include shortening the child’s day until the child becomes more successful while in attendance; having the child attend fewer days, temporarily transfer child to another classroom, collaborate with other programs to find a more suitable environment.

Examples of behaviors that may require program modification or exclusion: are behaviors that are continuous, excessive and dangerous:

- Repeated biting
- Repeated kicking
- Throwing objects
- Inflicting harm to self or others
- Oppositional behavior or non-compliance in times of urgency; running from the teacher or from the room or playground.

### **Prohibited Actions**

Staff members are prohibited from practicing the following methods of discipline:

- Children shall not be subjected to any form of corporal punishment, including spanking; other physical punishment, including striking a child, rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting or shaking a student, restricting physical movement through binding or tying, forcing a child to assume an uncomfortable position, or using exercise as punishment
- Children shall not be subjected to any form of emotional abuse, including name calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family, or using language that threatens, humiliates or frightens the child.
- Enclosure in a small, confined space or any space that the child cannot freely exit himself from. (This does not apply to the use of safety gates or a playground fence when it is used for its intended purpose.)

- Punishment by another child
- Separation from the class so that the student is out of the sight and hearing of the staff member. Unsupervised isolation.
- Withholding or force of food or rest
- Verbal remarks that demean the student
- Punishment for toileting accidents
- Yelling or raising voice (unless the child is in some type of danger, such as running into the street and traffic is coming).

Any staff member who violates the above Prohibited Actions is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### **F. Holiday and Celebrations**

Young children can be over stimulated by the consumerism associated with major holidays (Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc.) The program is interested in facilitating an environment, which offers meaningful experiences for children so there is not an emphasis on specific holiday celebrations or activities. Children will be exposed to meaningful experiences within their own family traditions, which they will be asked to share with the class. Conversations about the diversity of ways that people celebrate is encouraged and will be included as part of our curriculum.

#### **Open Arms is closed on the following holidays:**

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the following Friday
- Christmas and one consecutive day. Open Arms is open (7:00 AM to 3:00 PM) on Christmas Eve, if Christmas Eve is not one of the two days we are closed.

\*\*In addition we are closed three days annually for staff to attend professional development trainings.

#### **G. Outdoor Play**

Daily outdoor activity is very important for young children and is a planned part of each day twice a day. The classroom and staff will go outside most days except in extreme conditions. Staff will check weather reports and be aware of wind-chill conditions and heat to determine if there is a health or safety concern. It is the program policy that children who are well enough to come to the program are well enough to go outdoors. It is the understanding that if children are dressed properly, weather conditions should not pose a health risk. Classroom staff should encourage parents to supply appropriate clothing allowing for the weather extremes.

Classroom staff should view the outdoor setting as an extension of the classroom and a natural setting in which learning and interaction can occur. The outdoor setting is not viewed as a playground where "recess" happens but rather as an "outdoor learning environment". Activities, which encourage children to be actively involved in the learning process, should be planned for the outdoor setting. Staff are expected to go outdoors and facilitate the outdoor environment in the same manner as the indoor classroom.

The child to teacher ratio must be maintained while outside, therefore, teachers must remain outside with their class. Employees should spread out on the playground to ensure that all children

can be seen and heard wherever they are. Blind spots must be observed and gates must be chained. Playground time are scheduled by classroom and will be contingent upon acceptable weather conditions. No outdoor playground time will be allowed for the following groups of children when the temperature drops below:

-20 degrees Fahrenheit for Preschool

-10 degrees for toddlers

0 degrees for Wobblers

Infants do not go outside during the winter months

## **H. Pets**

In compliance with state law and to protect our children with allergies, pets are not allowed in Open Arms. If an animal is to be brought into the center on a temporary basis for educational purposes, a current statement from a licensed veterinarian must be provided, to show proof of compliance with required immunizations, and that it is free from parasites and communicable disease upon Director's discretion.

## **I. Rest/Nap**

We provide a rest/naptime in our full day programs with the exception of Kindergarten. Preschool children may need a rest time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. A quiet time in the daily schedule enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier child at home at the end of the day. It is our policy that if a child falls asleep his/her body requires rest.

Employees are not allowed to sleep during the children's nap times. If an employee falls asleep, disciplinary action consistent with leaving children unattended will be taken, up to and including termination.

## **J. Touch and Nurturing**

Physical touching is an important part of the care and nurturing of young children. Children feel loved, accepted and supported through the sensations of touch by nurturing adults and peers. Staff should be respectful of children's body cues and touching only occurs with their permission. Staff members should be sensitive to children's responses and requests for physical interaction and model appropriate nurturing touches. Except for safety or cleansing, children will always have the right to refuse touch. Children are also taught to respect adults' and other children's touch preferences.

### **Acceptable forms of touch by staff members:**

#### **Nurturing touches** (spontaneous):

- Hugging, i.e. welcoming into the classroom & departures
- Holding on laps, i.e. reading a book or during group time
- Rocking, i.e. reading a story
- Rubbing and patting backs, i.e. saying "thanks" or saying "I'm proud of you."

#### **Comforting touches:**

- All the touches listed above, plus:
- Holding or carrying in arms, i.e. when a child is injured
- Kissing, i.e. kissing an injured finger, top of head, etc.

## SECTION V

### Health and Safety Procedures

#### **A. Aids and HIV Policy/Hepatitis Type B Policy**

The “need to know” about children who: are HBV infected or carriers, with AIDS or are HIV infected does not require that parents of other children be informed of the attendance of these children. Failure to follow the child and family’s right to privacy or breach of confidentiality concerning this matter will be cause for disciplinary action, which may result in termination.

#### **B. Accidents**

Our teachers meet the requirements set by the State for child care personnel. Designated staff members are required to be certified in First Aid and CPR. Open Arms provides the training directly and under certain circumstances (pre-approved), reimburses full-time staff for the cost of training, if approved by the Director and within budgetary means.

Minor accidents requiring first aid will be treated in the center office by staff certified in first aid. If the child sustains any type of head injury, bump or broken skin, the child’s parent must be notified by the Teacher, or management. An accident report must be prepared by the Teacher immediately after the child is treated and signed by the director or administrator in charge. One copy will be placed in the child’s file and the other will be given to the child’s parent.

First Aid will consist of a cold compress, when appropriate. Open wounds may be cleaned using soap and water only. A non-medicated band aide or sterile cloth may be used to cover the exposed area. Under no circumstances will topical medications or sprays be applied.

If serious accidents occur inside the center or on the playground, the following steps will be followed; the first step is for the staff member to assess the extent of the injury. If the child is not able to be moved, a senior staff member will be called to the scene of the accident immediately. The following procedure will be followed:

- If the child has sustained a head, neck or spinal cord injury, has an obvious leg or arm fracture, or is unconscious, a staff member will call 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- If the child has none of the above and is able to be moved, the child’s parent must be contacted and can choose to transport the child to the doctor or emergency room.
- The director will call ahead to alert the emergency room or doctor with pertinent information.
- Emergency records will be sent to the hospital with the adult accompanying the child if it is not the parent or legal guardian.
- If the child is not accompanied by a parent or emergency contact person, an Open Arms staff person will accompany the child in the EMS vehicle, if allowed by EMS staff.
- Under no circumstances are staff to transport an injured child.

#### **C. Administration of Medication and Storage Procedures**

For prescription and over the counter medications: medications will only be administered when:

- If required by a local state agency, the staff person has attended required training
- The medication is in the original container
- Is not expired
- Has the first and last name of the child and dosage to be administered

- The doctor/physician has provided written notice of approval (for over-the-counter medication)
- The name of the prescribing doctor is listed on the original container (for prescription medication)
- The parent provides WRITTEN consent “Medication Administration Authorization”
- All medication will be stored in the child’s classroom in a locked/closed cabinet out of reach of children. (Prescriptions requiring refrigeration will be stored in classroom refrigerator or staff lounge refrigerator).
- A red “MEDS” sign will be placed on the child’s cubbie, all times medication is needed and where it is stored (classroom or refrigerator).
- Use the 7-step Method for giving medication to the child.
  - Wash your hands
  - Identify the right medicine
  - Identify the right child
  - Identify the right amount
  - Identify the right time
  - Identify the right method: chew, swallow, inhale, eye/ear drops, diaper cream, etc.
  - Return medication to locked container/cabinet away from reach of children and record information on the right authorization form.
  - ALWAYS call a parent if you have any questions or if you forget to give a dose.
  - DON’T wait until the end of the day to call.

Staff will log all medications given on the Medication Authorization Form. All medications kept at the center must be kept in a locked box and/or away from access by children at all times. All empty or unused medication containers are to be returned to the parent. Parents need to inform staff of any medications a child received BEFORE arriving at school.

#### **D. Child Abuse and Neglect: Identification & Reporting**

Alaska State law 47.17.020 requires that Open Arms must report **any suspected** evidence of child abuse or neglect to the Alaska Department of Family and Youth Services. If an employee does not comply with these standards regarding reporting suspected child abuse or neglect, she/he will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reportable situations include but are not limited to:

- Bruises, sores or other injuries observed on the child’s body, even though the source or event of injury is unknown;
- Abandonment of a child by a parent or guardian;
- Suspected sexual abuse;
- Absence of proper parental control or subsistence, education, medical or other care of control necessary for the child’s well-being.

The following procedure has been established regarding the steps taken if a staff member or parent is suspected of abusing and/or neglecting a child that attends Open Arms:

In the event that an employee has a concern regarding suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child enrolled in the program, either through visual observation or a spontaneous disclosure by the child, staff members will remain discreet in the interactions with the child. The child is not to be isolated or removed from the room, and only one person should be engaged in the interaction with the child. It is important that ONE person document what the child discloses. Leading questions SHOULD NOT be presented to the child: i.e.: “Did someone hit you? Or should the child make a

disclosing statement such as “My dad threw me into the fence,” the staff will not continue to question the child.

Any staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a staff member or parent may have been abusive or neglectful to a child (ren) or that any child may have been abused by an unknown person or persons is required by law to report to the appropriate agency and shall immediately notify the Director.

- The Director will prepare, within 24 hours, a written Incident report of the situation. The report shall include the dates, times, names of all parties involved (adults and children), places, and description of the event and/or observations.
- The Director will assess the situation. The staff involved and the Director will report (*by phone*) the suspected abuse or neglect to OCS. Open Arms will not tolerate any form of abuse or neglect of a child. Incidents which involve staff are reported to the required state authorities and the Director. The Director will remove the staff person from involvement with children and/or place the individual on leave or suspension until the investigation is completed.
- All situations must remain confidential and not discussed with fellow staff members or other parents. In many instances, the parent/family will not be informed of the report so that the agency can complete the investigation. Follow-up is a critical. If off site, management team will notify the Director at the main office at 907-455-9466 by phone and also file a written Incident report of Suspected Abuse.

## E. Diapering

Learning to use the toilet is a stage in the child’s development and should be viewed and planned for as any other developmental stage. Children should not be segregated because of their stage in learning to use the toilet.

When children are diapered, the following procedure will be followed: The number of pairs of gloves is not meant to be confusing or difficult. Contaminated gloves should not touch the clean diaper or cleaned child.

- Clean changing area/table with appropriate solution
- Wash hands
- Put on gloves
- Place child on changing table. *If child is old enough, the child may use the built in steps some tables provide.*
- To provide security of the child, the adult will never leave, turn his/her back and will always keep one hand on the child.
- Unfasten diaper and leave soiled diaper under child: *Lift the child’s legs and use disposable wipes to clean skin creases, genitalia and bottom. Wipe front to back using a clean wipe each time.*
- Remove soiled diaper and place in appropriate receptacle: *fold diaper inward and pull glove off, covering the diaper. Place diaper in covered, hands-free plastic lined container.*
- Re-diaper with clean gloves as necessary (*put on ointment provided by parents upon their request.*)
- Wash child hands: *with soap and water, put child safely in supervised area*
- Wash your hands: *with soap and water*
- Spray changing table with sanitizing solution: *wet the entire changing surface with sanitizing solution and leave for 30 seconds before drying.*

If the child is old enough and would like to stand, the same procedure as above should be followed with the child standing and helping remove his/her outer clothing.

## F. First Aid

Employees should know where each first aid kit is located in their assigned classroom or work area. No medications, including over the counter products like sunscreen, can be administered unless a medication authorization form is on file in the Lead Teachers binder.

Employees who render first aid in responding solely to injuries resulting from workplace incidents need not receive a pre-exposure Hepatitis B vaccination. However, all practices will be strictly adhered to by all employees. Should an accident occur where an employee is exposed to a blood-related incident, the full Hepatitis B vaccination series will be offered no later than 24 hours after the “exposure incident” occurs. It is the employee’s responsibility to inform the administrative staff of possible exposure.

It is required that designated staff at each center be CPR and First Aid certified. Certification in pediatric First Aid and CPR is required for all direct caregivers and highly recommended for all other staff members. Directors are responsible for maintaining records of incidents of HBV exposure and all child/staff records of immunization at the center level.

## G. Infectious Diseases

Any employee who contracts a reportable communicable disease that presents a health hazard to the children or their families will be placed on immediate sick leave. Following an absence of more than three work days for a personal illness or injury, a signed statement from the employee’s physician documenting that they are free from illness or injury, will be required to return to work.

Gloves are to be worn by all Open Arms Staff whenever exposed to bodily fluids including: blood, urine, feces, vomit or saliva. Gloves will be required for all blood borne pathogens. Staff are reminded that infection control is best managed by frequent hand washing, the use of gloves and the use of disposable towels.

- Gloves should be immediately available and worn.
- The area will be cleaned with soap and water.
- Any surface such as counter, tables or floors will be cleaned with a bleach solution made fresh daily.

## H. Sanitizing Furniture and Toys

In order to maintain a healthy center environment, NAEYC regulations, as well as State child care licensing regulations, require that furniture, equipment and toys be kept clean and in good repair. All staff are responsible for maintaining healthy classroom environments. A schedule for sanitizing toys will be posted in each classroom:

- In the classrooms, staff will ensure that all contact surfaces are sanitized BEFORE and AFTER use with designated cleaning solution which is made fresh daily.
- Toys and objects that are mouthed by young children shall be cleaned and disinfected daily, or more often if necessary.
- **Toothbrushes:** shall be individually labeled so that sharing of the same toothbrush among different children does not occur. Toothbrushes shall be stored so that they will not touch one another.

## I. Sick Child Procedures

The teacher, after consultation with the Director/Assistant Director, or designated appointee, will contact the parent if the child has a fever of 100 degree F, has diarrhea, is vomiting, or has other medical conditions that cause concern (or is not able to participate in classroom activities). Parents will be asked to be considerate of other children enrolled in the center and to keep a sick child at home if signs of illness are evident. If a child becomes ill while at the center, s/he must be isolated from the other children. The location of the isolation area is a quiet corner of the classroom.

Staff are required to document unusual incidents relating to the health of the child, such as bowel movements with blood, a sore that may not be healing or a child who is unusually irritable without an apparent reason. All reports are confidential and will be brought to the parent's attention.

Exclusionary Criteria. Parents will be advised to care for the child at home until symptoms have subsided and the child is able to participate in daily activities, or consult their primary source of medical care for further instructions. Children who appear ill or show visible signs of fever are excluded based on the following symptoms:

- **Fever:** Temperature over 101. Degrees.
- **Behaviors:** If a child looks/acts differently, is unable to participate in daily activities, and complains of not feeling well enough to do so, has been awake all night, is unusually tired, pale, lethargic, lack of appetite, irritable or restless.
- **Breathing difficulties:** Wheezing, complaints of it being hard to breath, having chest pains when breathing or coughing. Any deep hacking cough or severe congestion that interferes with the child's activity. Coughing up mucus and having a runny nose in which the mucus/discharge is green or brown (may be bacterial infection need to be evaluated by your health provider.)
- **Vomiting:** Vomiting before school, or two or more episodes within the past 24 hrs.
- **Diarrhea:** Frequent watery bowel movements not related to medications/food allergies or reactions, blood or mucous in stool, or stool that is black or very pale. Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing soiled pants or clothing. In addition, diapered children with diarrhea should be excluded if the stool frequency exceeds two (2) or more stool above normal for that child; or loose or watery stools associated with fever; or if the child's ability to participate in program activities is affected. *NOTE: Breast-fed infants may have loose stools that may not always be contained in the diaper; they are not to be excluded unless there is a significant change in their normal stool pattern.* Children that are on antibiotics will sometimes have loose stools; they should not be excluded unless they meet the criteria above.
- **Rash:** If rapidly spreading and/or associated with fever or behavioral changes. Any undiagnosed rash that involves redness, crusty wet scabs, oozing, or appears to be spreading (This type may have developed an infection and may be contagious) needs to see a health care provider to determine cause.
- **Sore Throat:** Sore throat and fever with swollen glands in neck, white patches on tonsils, general discomfort, loss of appetite. (May be strep)
- **Eyes:** Excess amount of blood visible in the whites of the eye and eyelid (giving the eye a pink appearance), watery, itchy eyes, with purulent (white or yellow) discharge, in the absence of cold-like symptoms. (Note: A blocked tear duct, or common cold, can cause eye discharge and is not necessarily an infection or "pink eye" .)
- **Head Lice.** As soon as it is identified by symptoms of scratching and visually checking for and identification of nits. See Head Lice policy below.
- **Other Illnesses.** Any medically identified reportable or contagious disease, to include:
  - Mumps
  - Measles
  - Rubella
  - Rosella

- Chicken Pox
- Whooping cough (pertussis)
- Tuberculosis

Readmission Criteria. Children may return to the center when they feel well enough to participate in usual daily activities and have met the exclusion periods as outlined below, or with clearance from a Health Care Provider (HCP):

- Fever has been absent for 24 hours without medication.
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- The appropriate number of doses of an antibiotic has been given over a 24 hour period for known strep or other bacterial infection.
- Chicken pox lesions have all crusted, usually 5-6 days after onset.
- Scabies is under treatment and a note from a HCP.
- Lice are under treatment for 24 hours. See Head Lice Policy below.
- Pinworm treatment has occurred 24 hours before readmission and a note from a HCP.
- Lesions from impetigo are no longer weeping.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) has diminished to the point that eyes are no longer discharging, or 24 hours after medication has started for diagnosed bacterial infections.
- The child has completed the contagious stage of the illness and a note from a HCP.
- The child/youth is able to participate in the normal daily activities.
- Hand foot and mouth disease – when fever has been absent 24 hours and there are no fluid-filled blisters; rash is not contagious.
- Other Diagnosed Communicable Diseases - refer to exclusion periods outlined in the State of Alaska Infectious Disease Management Guidelines for Alaska Schools.

#### **J. Head Lice Policy.**

If a child has **any** head lice present, including eggs, they are to be excluded from the Center until treatment has commenced and all live lice and eggs have been removed (the most important part of the treatment is the removal of eggs with a comb; -treatment alone does not remove the lice and eggs). Children are not allowed back to school for 24 hours after using the shampoo and combing through their hair. Children will be checked upon their return to Open Arms and parents will need to describe treatment used.

##### **1 Role of parents- precautions you can take to prevent the spread of head lice:**

- Brush your child's hair vigorously at least once a day. Teach your child how to brush their own hair vigorously. Head lice are fragile creatures and easily damaged
- Inspect hair and scalp weekly (daily during an outbreak)
- Shampoo hair regularly
- Keep long hair tied back in a bun or a pony tail
- Do not share combs, brushes or hats. Wash combs, brushes and hats regularly

##### **2 Role of the Classrooms:**

- To notify parents of any outbreak of head lice via signs posted on classroom doors
- Inspect every child's head in the classroom
- Bag all children's cubby items including: clothes, blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, etc.
- Vacuum carpets every day during an outbreak

- Wipe down cubbies, sanitize counters, and toys

### 3 **Role of the Center:**

- To distribute up to date and accurate information on detection, treatment and control of head lice to staff and parents
- To ensure all families are kept up to date with current information on head lice and any changes to the policy
- To ensure all families are aware of the Center's head lice policy and ensure it is reinforced during outbreaks

## **K. Universal Precautions and Blood Borne Pathogens**

Universal precautions will be observed at all times in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All blood, other bodily fluids or excrement will be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source.

## **SECTION VI**

### **Emergency Procedures**

#### **A. Bomb Threat**

This subsection describes drills and procedures established to maintain the physical safety of children and employees when they or the building is exposed to natural dangers.

1. A bomb threat call is ALWAYS treated as an IMMEDIATE threat. The staff person receiving the call should get as many details as possible from the caller:
  - WHAT kind of threat is it?
  - WHY are they issuing a threat?
  - WHEN will it take place?
  - WHO is the threat against?
2. Write down:
  - Anything unusual about the call or caller, including background noise, names accents, use of certain words or speech peculiarities, etc.
  - Exact time and date
3. Call 911 to report the threat.
4. Evacuate the premises.
5. Notify the Director or a form of Administration, Lead Teacher or any supervisor who is available IMMEDIATELY!
6. The director or his/her designated representative will give permission to return to the building once the police or other authority has determined it to be safe. The director will complete an Incident Report.

#### **B. Community Violence**

All threats of community and/or physical violence are to be taken seriously and should be reported. The safety of all staff, children, parents, and visitors is of the utmost concern. Employees are to immediately report any recognized hazard to their supervisor or when not available, any administrator. A recognized hazard may include a disruption or eruption of violence within the community, or any person who makes expressed threats against Open Arms (OA) or anyone connected with OA. Immediately call 911 to report the event to the Police.

The director, assistant director or any person responsible for contacting the appropriate law enforcement agency as needed. If children and classroom staff must leave the center, staff will take information regarding emergency contacts for children. The director will complete and submit required Incident Report immediately.

If staff feels threatened by a parent or community member, they should immediately tell the director. The Director will speak with the individual regarding his/her behavior and if necessary, call 911 for everyone's protection.

### **C. Dental Emergency Plan**

In the event of a dental emergency, the following plan of action is to be followed:

- Assess the type of injury to determine the type of first aid needed.
- Contact parent immediately if follow-up treatment is needed. If unable to contact parent, call Emergency contacts.
- One staff member (who is first aid certified) will initiate first aid as another staff member supervises remainder of classroom or group of children.

*Toothache:* Rinse mouth vigorously with warm water to clean out debris. Take a gauze pad, place on either side of tooth, grasp firmly and wipe tooth carefully to remove food trapped between tooth. Use dampened gauze pad, if necessary.

*Knocked Out Teeth:* Rinse tooth gently in cool running water (Do Not Scrub It). Wrap tooth in moist gauze and place in a container of cool water. When notifying parent or authorized emergency contact, recommend that they take the child to a dentist within the next 30 minutes, if possible.

*Broken Teeth:* Gently clean dirt or debris from the injured area with warm water. Place cold compress on face in the area of the broken tooth to minimize swelling.

*Bitten Tongue or Lip:* Apply direct pressure to the bleeding area with a clean cloth. If swelling is present, apply cold compress. If bleeding does not stop within 5 to 10 minutes, call parent or other authorized person to take child to dentist or emergency room. Child may sip on ice water and /or rinse mouth with ice water.

*Object Wedged Between Teeth:* Using gauze pad, grasp firmly on both sides of tooth, wipe from gum area to top of tooth with one long, firm consistent stroke.

*Possible Fractured Jaw:* Immobilize jaw by any means (towel, handkerchief, etc.). Apply cold compress and advise parent or authorized emergency contact person to take child to dental office or emergency room as soon as possible. Notify Director; complete Incident Report.

### **D. Evacuation Drills**

Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted and documented on a regular basis in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Procedures. A Fire/Emergency Evacuation Drill Summary Report must be completed and maintained in the Safety Log. The steps established for fire drills should be followed in the case of evacuation, in order to ensure that all children and staff are accounted for.

In exception to the cell phone usage policy, teachers should bring their cell phones with them during an evacuation. If the evacuation is expected to be extended, teachers will contact parents using cell phones. Children will remain under staff supervision until all families have been contacted and reunited.

### **E. Fire Drills**

Open Arms is required to conduct monthly fire drills and post evacuation plans. Drills will be scheduled by the Director or Assistant Director keeping in mind the climatic conditions and well-being of children. The scheduled times will vary from month to month. Documentation of the length and the drill itself will be completed immediately following the drills.

All staff are responsible for the safe evacuation of the children in attendance. Careful attention is required during this time. If staff have any reason to suspect a fire or any smoke in the building, staff should quickly investigate. If there is any fire or smoke present, immediately pull the nearest fire alarm and call 911. The first and primary responsibility is to the children. Each classroom and “area” must have a map posted which shows a fire evacuation route and alternate route. The exit routes differ based upon the season of year so please refer to the proper maps to ensure that the correct route is taken.

The following steps should be taken to ensure an orderly drill and evacuation if it is ever required:

1. Once a fire alarm sounds, stop whatever you are doing and start moving the children out of the building. Stay calm, but be quick. If the children get upset at the noise and the rushing, try to keep them as calm and organized as possible.
2. Gather children safely to exit the door of the classroom and proceed to designated area (winter drills meet in the lobby area of Zion Lutheran Church/summer drills meet outside in the back) unless directed otherwise.
3. Ask children to remain quiet and to walk slowly while exiting.
4. One staff person should lead the children, with the Emergency Book, clipboard with daily attendance sheet, and First Aid Kit in hand.
5. The other staff person should walk at the end of the children’s line, carrying the classroom’s Parent Sign In sheet, Emergency Bag (containing warm blankets, extra hats/gloves/mittens) and turning off lights, and shutting the door behind them.
6. Once everyone has exited, each classroom or age group should take a “Name-to-Face” check and count based on the day’s Parent Sign In sheet and clipboard daily attendance sheet.
7. Staff/children should remain until they are given clearance to return to their classrooms.

When the drill is completed, the management team will complete the “Emergency Evacuation Drill Report”. A list of all staff/children in attendance at the time of the drill will also be printed.

#### **F. Inclement Weather/School Closures/Wind Chill Chart**

In case of inclement weather, Open Arms will be closed:

- When the temperatures reach -50 degrees Fahrenheit in Fairbanks as determined by phoning the National Weather Service (907) 458-3745 between 6-6:30am. The Program closing will be announced on the major television and radio networks.
- Open Arms will follow the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) inclement weather closures with the exception of the -50 agreed policies stated above.
- Should Open Arms close during working hours due to inclement weather, parents will be notified by the preferred method of emergency contact chosen (i.e. text, electronic email, or personal phone call). **Family emergency contact information (on yellow cardstock) located at the front desk.)**

**\*\*Note: School-Age and Kindergarten Parents:** In the event of an unexpected FNSBSD closure, Open Arms (OA) will not have full day care for School-age due to limited staffing.

#### **Open Arms will offer:**

7:00am- 9:00am Before School  
3:00pm to 6:30pm After School attendees  
1:00pm to 6:30pm Early out Kindergarten

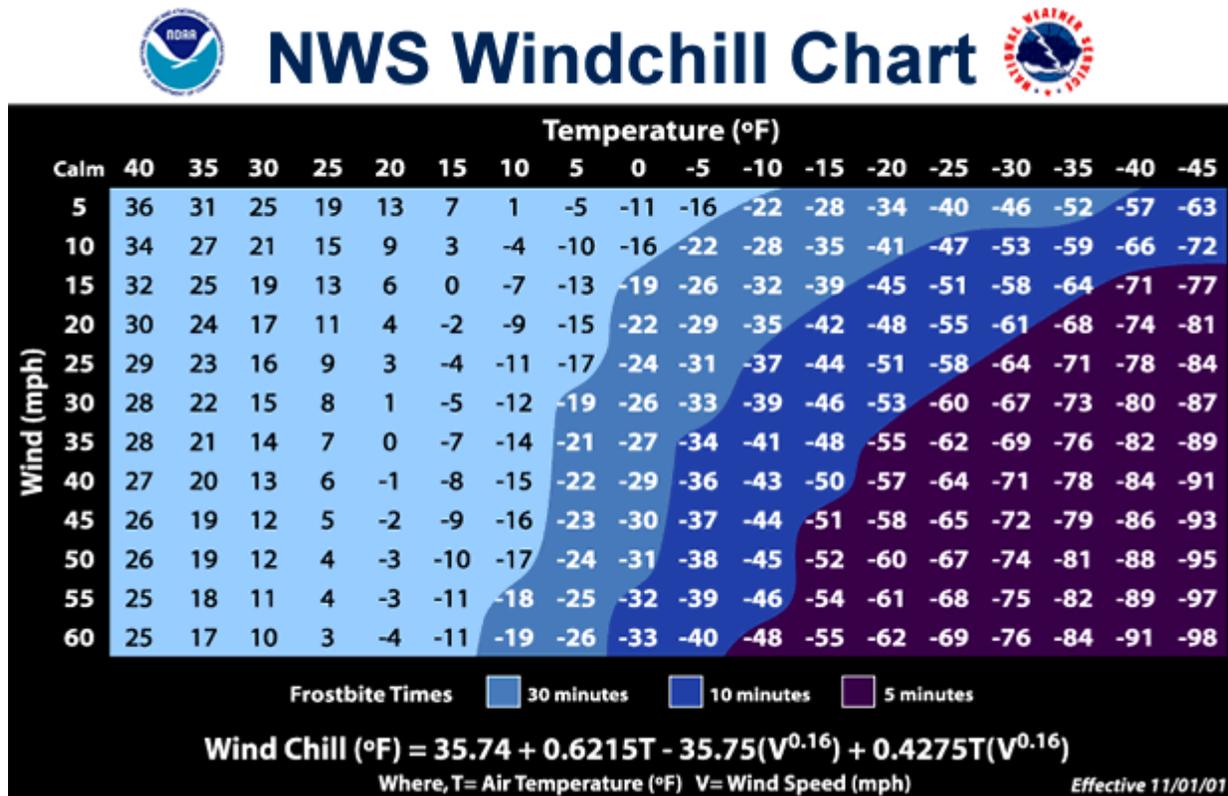
Open Arms will continue to offer full day care if your child attends Kindergarten here. All children need to have snow pants and warm jackets or snowsuits, boots, waterproof gloves or mittens and hats when it is cold. Children may go outside up to -20; if colder- we'll stay inside.

For weather conditions, see <http://forecast.weather.gov>.

For air quality conditions, see <http://old.co.fairbanks.ak.us/airquality/AQNearRealTime.aspx>.

**Outdoor policy (per age group)**

- Infants- remain inside
- Wobblers- outside down to 0 degrees
- Toddlers- outside down to -10 degrees
- Pre-school & School-Age- outside down to -20 degrees
- Below -20, children will remain inside.
- Children will remain inside when the FNSB determines the air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups.



**G. Lockdown**

A lock down may be initiated by the Director or any other staff person or at the direction of the police in the event of suspected endangerment of children or staff. Examples of suspected danger may be a suspicious person in the neighborhood, stray dog, or toxic item on playground.

When a lock down is initiated, all children should be brought into the classroom if they are not already, curtains should be closed, the door to the outside locked and children should be helped to

hide out of view of windows. Everyone should remain in their classrooms and hidden until notified that the lock down has ended. (*See Lockdown Procedure Addendum in back of manual*)

## **H. Medical Plan**

At least one individual during all operating hours of Open Arms and the bus driver should have a current First Aid and CPR certification. If a child is injured while at Open Arms or on the bus, a certified staff member will administer emergency care as needed.

All children's files shall contain an emergency treatment and transportation information form signed in advance (e.g. enrollment) by a parent/guardian in the event s/he is unavailable to give such permission at the time of an emergency. All medical emergencies will be documented on an Incident Report Form. The original form is maintained at the program in the child's file and a copy is given to the parent. In the event a child experiences a medical emergency, the following steps should be taken:

1. First Aid and/or CPR will be immediately administered, as necessary, by a first aid certified staff person.
2. If a child requires immediate medical attention beyond basic First Aid CPR, 911 will be called.
3. Notify the child's parents/guardian or other designated emergency contact.
4. If the child is to be transported by an emergency medical vehicle, s/he will be accompanied by a staff member in the absence of the parent/guardian or emergency contact, if allowed by the EMS staff. A qualified office staff individual will assist the classroom to provide the proper child/staff ratio.
5. The staff member accompanying the child will take the child's medical emergency documentation with him/her to the medical facility.
6. Notify the Director, and the Health Services coordinator (State).
7. The Incident Report Form must be completed within 24 hours of the incident, to include a detailed account of the incident, child's response to treatment and medical follow-up. This report is submitted to the Open Arms Director. A copy of the incident report will be provided to the parent.

## **I. Missing Children**

If a child is missing from a classroom or center, the following procedures will be followed:

- Notify Administration immediately (the Director, Asst. Director, or Staff in Charge)
- One staff person will be designated to check all immediate classrooms areas, including bathrooms, center areas, large play equipment, divided space, offices, janitor's closets and kitchen areas.
- All inside space away from the immediate classroom will be checked by the Director or designee. Areas include: hall space, restrooms, employee staff areas, library, conference room, teacher work areas and reception area.
- Other available building staff will assist in checking the outside area surrounding the building (storage sheds, outdoor playhouses, etc.) If out of the center for a field trip, the Director will be notified.
- If the child is not found, the Director or Teacher will contact the parents, notify the local police, and required state agency. The staff will provide a recent picture to the police or other search and rescue personnel.
- The Director and/or Lead Teacher will complete and submit an Incident Report.
-

## J. Natural Disasters

In the event of a natural disaster, the following procedures will be followed. Following evacuation related to one of these natural disasters, the Director/Lead Teacher will complete the Incident Report.

- a) **Severe Electrical Storms:** Staff should not attempt to use the telephone or any other electrically powered equipment during such a storm. If possible unplug the electrical equipment.
- b) **High Winds:** In the event of sudden, extremely high winds immediately everyone should move to the center of the building /structure away from window and outside doors. Staff and clients should crouch down with their heads between their knees and protect their heads with their arms. Staff will assist those/children unable to protect themselves.
- c) **Earthquake:** Individuals should stay away from stacked objects, bookcases, windows, or storage cabinets, and assemble near any support-bearing wall. Staff and clients should sit down and protect their heads with their arms. Staff will assist those/children unable to protect themselves.
- d) **Flood:** Individuals will evacuate from the area of potential danger to an area of higher elevation, assisting others as necessary. Staff will assist those individuals needing assistance to evacuate. During storms, areas known to be flood plains, ditches will be avoided due to flash flood danger. If evacuation is necessary, staff and clients will remain together at a predetermined safety location until it has been confirmed that conditions are safe to return.

## SECTION VII

### Early Childhood Curriculum

#### A. Assessments

The Instruments/tools utilized will be developmental screening tools, various speech and language screen tools, hearing, and articulation. In addition, further evaluations may be utilized. Staff also uses classroom observations, and the information given by parents in interviews and conferences to plan curriculum activities and events around the interest and needs of the children.

#### B. Curriculum

The curriculum used at Open Arms is based on sound principles of early childhood education and developmentally appropriate practices. Teachers also look at other resource materials for ideas for activities and concepts to be developed according to each child's stage of development and individual needs. To individualize the curriculum to meet each child's developmental stage and areas of interests, a number of screening and assessment tools are utilized. The teacher uses observations and other helpful instruments throughout the year to gather information about the children to then plan activities for the large group, small groups and for individuals within each classroom.

Weekly Lesson Plans are prepared each prepared each week by the teaching staff. Plans include activities to promote physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social growth appropriate for each child's age and stage of development. Plans also include indoor and outdoor activities, fine motor and gross motor, language development, problem solving, creative and self-esteem building opportunities. Plans are reviewed by the assistant director and filed for future reference.

Children will have the following interest centers/learning areas to work in:

- Art/Creative Media
- Blocks

- Dramatic Play
- Manipulative or table toys
- Nature & Science
- Water & sand play
- Reading languages area or library
- Writing/Computer

Music and gross motor activities are scheduled daily. Cooking activities and/or woodworking would be periodically throughout the year. The daily schedule is designed to meet the developmental needs of the children in each class.

Three Year Olds:

- Will have regularly scheduled activities
- Activities will emphasize development of problem-solving abilities
- Activities will focus on development of social relationships
- Teaching staff will help children develop perceptual abilities and
- Activities will begin to focus on small muscle coordination and self-help skills

Four Year Olds:

- Will have regularly scheduled activities
- Will continue to develop problem-solving abilities
- Activities will emphasize reasoning abilities including development of social relationships
- Teaching staff will help children w/classification/categorization skills and continue to develop conceptual abilities
- Activities will promote large and small muscle coordination and
- Activities will increase concentration/listening/sharing through group time experiences

### **C. Daily Record Keeping**

Daily record keeping regarding attendance, food service reports, and unusual incidents relating to a child's health (such as rash, sore that may not be healing, etc.), and portfolios is required by all staff. Incident Reports are to be kept confidential and will be brought to the parent's attention. Injury/Accident reports are turned in to the Assistant Director for monthly reports. Daily notes can be kept concerning a child's developmental process, social and group skills, and any other incidents that may be of interest and helpful when planning the curriculum or sharing progress reports with parents.

### **D. Nutrition**

Meals and snacks will be delivered to the classroom by cook assistants. The snacks or breakfast will be set up and ready to be eaten by the children at designated times. Snacks can be available in the classroom for those who missed the snack period. Each child will be invited to have a snack. Children will sit down to participate in snack time.

Family style meal service is observed at all meal and snack times. Food will be served in bowls, plates, baskets or pitchers at the dining table(s). The children will serve themselves. If a child does not want to eat a particular food item, the child is encouraged to have a taste but is never forced or coerced.

Teachers, assistants, aides or guests will not eat or drink any food item in the classroom or at the dining table that is NOT being offered to the children: Coffee, sodas, tea, etc.

Cooks will be notified in advance of food and equipment needed for special projects or extended food experiences at least 48 hrs in advance. Foods served at celebrations will be healthy and nutritious. Children having difficulty eating, chewing, or eating a variety of foods may be at nutritional risk. The teacher will notify parent to discuss the concern.

All personal staff food should be labeled with the staff member name in a refrigerator outside of the classroom. Administrative staff should eat in the classroom periodically to socialize with children and to monitor food quality and quantity.

#### **E. Plants** (*in the classroom*)

Plants that are poisonous or toxic for children are not allowed in Open Arms. Common poisonous plants are poinsettia and philodendron.

If a plant is brought into the center for decoration or as part of a classroom project, please be sure to research if it is poisonous or not. As well, please notify the front office so that it can notify parents and add it to the list of plants kept in the center

#### **F. Services for Children with Disabilities**

Public Law 94-142 was passed by Congress in 1975 to establish a “right to education” for all disabled children.

Public Law 99-457 was enacted by Congress in 1986 which extends the provisions of PL 94-142 to children from birth through age five.

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part B, Local Education Agencies and Part C Early Intervention Infant/Toddler Programs)

Open Arms Child Development Center:

- Offers provisions for a non-discriminatory evaluation by qualified professionals.
- Organize a parent meeting utilizing qualified teaching staff and administration to develop an individualized plan and short-term objectives.
- Assure that the parents are involved and consent to all aspects for the education process.
- Assure confidentiality of records.
- Parents will have the right to object to the program’s decision concerning their child.

Other Resources:

- **ACCA:** offers related services to children from birth to age three.
- **Child Find:** locates and identify disabled children which include the provision for a screening of preschool children.

Children are eligible for services if they are professionally diagnosed.

#### **G. Staff**

The quality of Open Arms is a direct reflection of its staff. We, therefore recognize the importance of our employees. Open Arms is committed to providing a working environment that exemplifies cooperation and support for the staff.

#### **H. Toilet Learning**

Child development specialist say that teaching a child how to use the toilet is best started sometime between 30 months (2 ½ years old) and 36months (3yrs.). Consequently, because of this newly learned procedure, some 3yr. olds and older may need REMINDERS, even though they might say “I don’t have to go.” A child’s soiled clothing is to be rinsed and bagged to be taken home to wash.

Reminders should be issued and scheduled bathroom times should occur:

- Before going to the playground
- Before lunch time
- Before and after nap time and
- Before going on field trips

Children who forget and have accidents must NEVER be degraded by harsh words or appearances of disgust. A conference between the teacher and the parent will serve to establish common goals and methods. Be sure to encourage parents to dress their child in suitable clothing (easy to get on and off). Parents must provide a change of clothing just in case the need arises. ACCIDENTS ARE TO BE EXPECTED. Coordination with the family around toilet learning is imperative. *(See diapering and touch & nurturing procedures)*

## SECTION VIII

### Employee Benefits

#### **A. Annual Leave/PTO**

Open Arms provides paid time off to employees (after the 90 day introductory period) so that they may care for themselves and/or their family members when time off is needed for illness, doctor's appointments, vacation or other personal reasons.

Employee must present to the Director *(for review)* a completed "Request for Time-Off Form" at least 2 weeks, and no earlier than 12 months, in advance. Only leave days that have been accrued will be available to use. Leave requests will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis. While we try to accommodate as many requests as possible, some may be denied. A full-time employee can accrue up to two-weeks of annual leave/PTO (after their 90-probationary period).

Full-time employees (those who are regularly scheduled to work thirty (30) hours or more per week) are eligible to start to accrue PTO (following the 90-day probationary period) and receive other benefits. PTO will automatically be used if employee is on unscheduled leave during a holiday. "Leave Without Pay" will not be initiated until all PTO is exhausted.

Part-time employees may start to accrue PTO hours (following their 90-day probationary period) Part-time employees do not qualify for any other medical or health benefits, including holiday pay. No additional paid time off **or vacation leave** will be granted after accruals are exhausted so employees are encouraged to use this benefit judiciously and with respect to fellow co-workers. For example, employees are encouraged to schedule doctor's or routine appointments at times outside their regular working schedule. Also, all employees will be eligible for a \$100 bonus after 90-continuous days of satisfactory employment.

#### **B. Bereavement Leave**

Full-time employees are eligible to receive up to 3 days off with pay for the death of their spouse, mother, father, sister, brother or child. Bereavement leave for the death of other family members will be determined at the Director's discretion. If additional leave is approved, any available paid time off can be used or a leave without pay may be granted.

#### **C. Employee of the Month**

Open Arms recognizes employees who have given exceptional care to a family or co-worker. Each month, we review nominations and select one employee to receive this award. The selected

employee will receive a \$50 bonus and a designated parking space for making a difference! Nomination forms are available on the check in counter by the front desk.

**D. Family Medical Leave**

Open Arms will hold open an employee’s position for up to six (6) weeks while she/he is on unpaid maternity/family leave. Additional family leave time may be granted at the Director’s discretion.

**E. Family Member Discount**

After satisfactory, completion of the 90 day introductory period, Full-time employees may be eligible for a (25%) tuition reduction based on the length of service for the care of their children (children in their legal guardianship), if enrolled at Open Arms. There is an information sheet at the front desk, if you qualify for this discount. The reduction may not exceed \$500, or the cost of tuition.

Employee Discount Rate	
Length of Service	Discount Rate
< 12 Months	25%
12 – 36 Months	30%
36 – 60 Months	35%
> 60 Months	40%

**F. General Provisions**

In accordance with certain state laws and for the safety and courtesy of children, families, volunteers and fellow employees, Open Arms employees are required to comply with certain other policies, procedures and standards of behavior. The following subsections describe these requirements in detail.

Open Arms benefits will apply to all full-time employees. All employees shall be of good character; in good physical, mental, and emotional health; understand basic growth patterns of children; be able to meet basic caregiver requirements set by the Alaska Department of Family and Youth Services.

**G. Health Insurance Benefits**

After satisfactory, completion of a 60 day introductory period, full-time employees may elect to start receiving health care coverage through Concordia Health Plans. Employees are required pay \$200 per month for this coverage which is deducted from payroll checks twice monthly (\$100 taken from first 2 checks of the month). All employees have the option to pay for AFLAC insurance coverage.

Insurance benefits end on the last day of the month in which your last day of employment falls. An employee, unless dismissed for gross misconduct, has the option to convert to individual life insurance, and/or to continue Medical/Dental Benefits in accordance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act ("COBRA") regulations.

An employee on an approved leave of absence has the option to continue health care coverage, but must pay the entire cost of the plan to continue coverage during that absence.

## H. Holidays/Religious Holidays

Open Arms is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the following Friday
- Two consecutive days@ Christmas. Open Arms is open (7:00 AM to 3:00 PM) on Christmas Eve, if Christmas Eve is not one of the two days we are closed.
- In addition we are closed three days annually for staff to attend professional development trainings.

ONLY full-time employees (following the 90-day probationary period) are eligible to receive pay for their normally scheduled number of hours on days when Open Arms is closed for a holiday. Full-time employees will receive full pay for normally scheduled work hours on designated holidays if **both** of the following conditions are met:

- The holiday occurs on a normally scheduled workday **and**
- The employee is paid for working the day before and the day after a holiday.
- An employee who calls-in sick (*before or after a holiday*) may use PTO only for the sick day; and forfeits the holiday pay.

For those holidays that do not fall on a regularly scheduled day of the week, i.e. Independence Day and two days at Christmas, the Director will determine which day/s the Center will be closed on, and subsequently which days off will be designated and paid as holidays.

**Religious Holidays:** Employees are entitled to take leave in order to accommodate an individual religious preference. Leave under this section should be requested/approved in the same manner as other leave (by the Director).

## I. Jury Duty Leave

If you receive a summons for jury duty, please notify the Director immediately.

If a full-time employee is summoned for jury duty on a day that they would normally work, Open Arms will pay the difference between their normal rate of pay (based on hours scheduled) and the jury duty compensation. To receive this compensation, the employee needs to submit a copy of their duty record and payment from the courts to the bookkeeper.

If an employee is excused from jury duty before their regularly scheduled day is over, they are expected to return to work the remaining hours.

## J. Military Leave

Employees who are required to serve in any branch of the United States Armed Forces or who are engaged in state military service are given the necessary time off and reinstated in accordance with federal and state law. The time is unpaid unless accrued PTO is used.

If an employee is aware of service obligations in advance, they are required to notify the Director. Otherwise, military orders should be presented to the Director as soon as possible prior to the departure so that arrangements for leave can be made.

## **K. Leave w/o Pay**

Under special circumstances, a full-time employee with more than one year of service may be granted a leave of absence without pay. This type of leave is granted at the discretion of the Director, for compelling reasons, and only after any accrued paid time off is exhausted

## **L. Retirement Plan**

All full-time workers must be enrolled in the Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP) and Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP). Open Arms pays the entire cost of the retirement program rate and disability/survivor plan rate.

# **SECTION IX**

## **Compensation and Payroll Practices**

### **A. Change in Position**

All requests for changes in employment status require two (2) weeks notice. "Change in Employment Status" forms are available at the front desk and are to be turned in to the Director or Assistant Director.

### **B. (Resignation)**

If an employee decides to leave Open Arms for any reason, the Director would like the opportunity to discuss the resignation before final action is taken in case another alternative may be better.

If, however, after full consideration the employee decides to leave, it is requested that the employee provide Open Arms with a minimum two-week advance notice period, in writing (bear in mind that vacation days or personal days may not be included in the two-week notice period). If the employee would like to write a letter to say good bye to students and/or parents, this is permissible on letter approval from the Director.

### **C. Compensation for Outside functions**

Open Arms will reimburse employees for approved expenses incurred in the planning of the curriculum, set-up of the classroom or for other special events.

Purchases should be approved in advance by completing and submitting a Reimbursement Form. After the approval is received and the purchase is made, all ORIGINAL receipts should be attached to the same form and submitted to the Assistant Director for review, and then to the Accountant for processing. Open Arms will also provide reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred by employees while traveling on pre-approved, official Open Arms business.

### **D. Final Paychecks**

Employees who resign or leave employment voluntarily will receive their final paycheck on the next regularly scheduled pay date, following their last day worked. If an employee is discharged, a final paycheck will be issued within three business days in accordance with Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, wage and labor laws.

### **E. Initial Compensation Rates**

Employee compensation will be based on:

- Knowledge & Ability

- Professional Training
- Length of service in specified area of expertise
- Education
- Experience
- Job responsibilities

Employees will be eligible for up to a \$100 bonus after 90 continuous days of employment.

**F. Salary Wage Adjustments**

Employees are paid by check every other Friday. Direct Deposit is available, please see Bookkeeper for information.

Social Security (FICA) and federal income tax will be deducted from wages. Federal withholding tax forms must be completed at the beginning of employment and whenever the employee needs to change in the amount of withholding; (marriage, divorce, birth of a child, additional withholding, exemption from withholding, etc.)

Wages earned by Open Arms’ employees are exempt from Unemployment Insurance coverage. No Unemployment Insurance deductions are withheld from employee’s wages. Employees are, however, eligible to file for unemployment insurance benefits.

**G. Salary/Wage Plan**

Employees will accrue Paid Time Off (PTO) based on the number of regular hours actually **worked**. Maximum PTO Days: An employee can accrue up to a maximum of twice their yearly PTO days. When an employee reaches their maximum days they will not accrue additional PTO hours until their balance is reduced below the maximum allotment.

0>3 years	.05 per hour
3>5 years	.05769 per hour
5+ years	.06538 per hour

Cashing Out PTO: Once each calendar year an employee can choose to receive cash for up to 40 hours of PTO when they have reached 80% of their maximum hours.

**H. Salary and Placement Ranges**

An employee’s wage rate is personal and confidential information and should only be discussed with the Director. An employee’s salary is determined by their education, training and years of experience combined.

**I. Rehire Policy.** In some cases, former employees who return to work may be eligible for credit for prior service. If eligible, an adjusted start date will be calculated for seniority, paid time off accrual, and family member discount rates. For other benefits, consult current benefit plans. If the rehired employee's previous service was longer than the equivalent of one year of full-time work, and the time during which the employee was not employed by the company

doesn't exceed the length of prior service, the employee may be reinstated to reflect seniority with no break in service. For example, if the employee's previous service was five years and he/she is rehired after a break of two years, he/she returns to the company with service credit of five years. On the other hand, if he/she was previously employed for five years and his/her break in service was six years, he/she may not be eligible for return to work with five years of creditable service.

#### **J. Overtime Compensation**

Employees may be required to work overtime when necessary. Overtime will be paid at a rate of one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 work hours per week or 8 hours in a day. Paid time off, holidays, sick time leave or unscheduled absences will not be considered hours worked for the purposes of calculating overtime.

If an employee is going to be working more than 8 hours in a day, they must complete an overtime approval form and have it signed in advance by the Director/ Assistant Director, or designated appointee.

#### **K. Part-time Employees**

Employees whose standard scheduled work week is less than thirty (30) hours on a regular basis will be considered part-time employees. Part-time employees:

- are not entitled to participate in employee benefit plans.
- are not eligible for paid holidays.
- will be paid an average number of hours if Open Arms is closed because of inclement weather, or other emergency situations.

Part-time employees requesting a leave without pay must prepare a "Request for Leave" form reflecting approval of the Director/Assistant Director.

#### **L. Payroll Period (*Time Cards*)**

Employees are expected to Check-In and Check-Out each day, in order to accurately record their time worked. Paid Time Off is used for any absence, unless employee has no PTO remaining.

It is the employee's responsibility to review the time reported on the timecard at the end of each pay period so that accurate paychecks may be issued. All timecards must be signed acknowledging that the recorded information is true and accurate and returned to the management team the same day. Any corrections or missing time should be written on the timecard and returned to the Assistant Director for approval.

#### **M. Payroll deductions**

If the employee fails to attend any paid training sessions, then she/he is obligated to reimburse and pay Open Arms for training on her/his own. Outstanding balances will be deducted from the final paycheck upon resignation/dismissal.

If the employee has entered an agreement for tuition assistance for CDA credentialing, or other courses, and leaves/resigns/is dismissed before completion, the cost will be deducted from the final paycheck.

The final paycheck will reflect appropriate deductions. Full-time employees will be also paid for any accrued but unused PTO hours.

## **N. Training (Annual Requirements)**

All staff members are expected to continue their education in the field of Early Childhood Education and Development in order to stay knowledgeable of new research, techniques, practices and applications (regardless of previous experience or training).

In addition to:

- Employee Orientation
- Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid Training
- Each employee is responsible for completing a required number of (24) training hours on a yearly basis as set forth by state licensing on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. .
- Each employee must show proof of completed hours.
- Designated Child Development Associates (CDA) must take at least 25 hours of training each year.

This documentation will be kept in the Staff Member's personnel file.

Additional training requirements for the Director and Associate Director will be defined in their job descriptions.

### **Food Service Training**

Since employees handle food when distributing snacks and meals to children, each employee is required to obtain a State Food worker Card.

The training, practice test and qualifying test to be qualified is on the internet at the following website: <http://alaska.state.gogov.com/foodworker/>. It is also saved as a favorite website on the computer in the staff lounge. After you pass your test, please print out the sheet confirming that you've passed and turn it into Human Resources.

### **Reimbursement for Training**

Open Arms will periodically offer training opportunities in childcare free of charge to employees. If the employee fails to attend any paid training sessions, then she/he is obligated to reimburse and pay Open Arms for training on her/his own. Financial assistance may be available for early childhood courses.

### **Tuition Assistance**

As an additional benefit to employees, tuition assistance is available to employees wishing to further their education in early childhood education, and complete their Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing. Open Arms will pay for tuition expenses and administrative support, provided that the employee completes and passes all required course work. If the employee fails to fulfill all terms as outlined in the agreement, he/she will be obligated to repay the full tuition and pro-rated cost of administrative support to Open Arms CDC as outlined in the agreement.

## **O. Unpaid Time Off**

If an employee needs to take unpaid time off, a Request for Time Off form should be completed and submitted for the Assistant Director's consideration.

## **P. Worker's Compensation**

Open Arms employees are insured under the State of Alaska Workers' Compensation Act. Our carrier is Church Mutual Insurance.

Any injury sustained by an employee while at work must be reported immediately to the Director, who will help to secure medical attention if necessary. An original report of injury must also be completed at that time or as soon thereafter as possible.

## SECTION X

### Violation of Open Arms Policy and Procedures

#### **A. Disciplinary Actions**

All employees are expected to meet Open Arms' standards of performance. Work performance encompasses many factors, including attendance, punctuality, personal conduct, and general compliance with the Open Arms' policies and procedures.

If an employee violates or fails to observe the stated policies and procedures of Open Arms or applicable state or federal laws, they will be subject to disciplinary action. In certain cases, gross violations of expected conduct may result in immediate termination.

Open Arms may, under appropriate circumstances, take corrective action, other than immediate dismissal, in the event of certain specific violations of policy or procedure, including but not limited to:

- unexcused or excessive absences  
\*this includes not calling in at least 2 hours before your shift and going home early without a valid reason. 3 unexcused absences will result in a write up
- unexcused or excessive tardiness
- wasting of school materials or supplies
- careless work, poor preparation, or discourteous interactions
- valid parent complaints

#### **B. Disciplinary Steps**

The following steps have been established to ensure that Open Arms can quickly, fairly and consistently administer discipline for policy and procedure violations. Open Arms' intent is to formally document problems while providing the employee with a reasonable time within which to improve performance. The process is designed to encourage development by providing employees with guidance in areas that need improvement such as poor work performance, attendance problems, personal conduct, general compliance with the Open Arms' policies and procedures and/or other disciplinary problems:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense - Verbal Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - First Written Warning
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense - Final written Warning
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense - Discharge or Termination

It is our desire to follow the above disciplinary steps, however if warranted please keep in mind that Open Arms is an "At Will" employer and as such reserves the right to terminate an employee with or without cause, superseding the above steps.

### C. Immediate Dismissal

- **Unprofessional Conduct:** If an employee's conduct warrants an immediate dismissal an employee from employment at Open Arms, the employee will be paid in full for the hours worked by the next business day following the discharge date.
- **Illegal Drugs:** We reserve the right to give random and/or mandatory drug tests at any time, if results are positive for illegal substances; this is grounds for immediate dismissal.
- **Firearms/Ammunition on OA Property:** Firearms or ammunition are not permitted under any circumstances in the building or on Open Arms or Zion property, this is grounds for immediate dismissal.

The employee will be asked to review and sign the Termination/Disciplinary Action form, which outlines the employee's actions that resulted in the termination action.

### D. Reasons for Termination

An employee whose conduct, actions or performance violates or conflicts with Open Arms' policies may be terminated immediately and without warning.

**The following are some examples of grounds for immediate dismissal of an employee:**

- Leaving children unattended
- Harsh treatment of children (verbal or physical)
- Sleeping on the job
- Excessive absence or tardiness after prior warning
- Divulging confidential information including medical, financial, sociological data of children, and salary information
- Falsification of time records or other records of Open Arms
- Damage, destruction, or theft of property of Open Arms
- Insubordination
- Neglect of work assignments after prior warning
- Reporting to work intoxicated by drugs or alcohol
- Possession of or use of illegal drugs or alcohol on property of Open Arms at any time
- Provoking or instigating a fight or fighting on property of Open Arms
- Failure to report to work without notifying the office of Open Arms
- Rude, discourteous, or uncivil behavior towards staff, parents, or visitors
- Leaving work early without prior permission
- Unauthorized absence from assigned work area
- Immoral conduct or indecency
- Sexual harassment
- Inappropriate treatment of any kind to other employees
- Failure to carry out reasonable requests of a supervisor
- Discrimination against another employee or child
- Possession of firearms or weapons on premises of Open Arms
- Improper or unauthorized administration of medicine
- Failure to comply with state standards on reporting suspected child abuse
- Director feels dismissal is in the best interest of the center

## **ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. This includes interactions with children, parents, and coworkers.

### **Responsibilities to coworkers:**

- To establish and maintain relationships of trust and cooperation with coworkers.
- To share resources with coworkers.
- To support coworkers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.

### **Principles to follow:**

- When we have a concern about the professional behavior of a coworker, we shall first let that person know of our concern and attempt to solve the matter congenially.
- We shall exercise care in expressing views regarding the personal attributes or professional conduct of coworkers. Statements should be based on firsthand knowledge and relevant to the interest of children in our care.

### **Responsibilities to employer and program:**

- To assist the program in providing the highest quality of service.
- To maintain loyalty to the center and uphold its reputation.

### **Principles to follow:**

- When we do not agree with program policies, we shall first attempt to effect change through constructive action with the Director, and if necessary, the Board will be contacted by letter.
- We shall speak or act on behalf of the center only when authorized. We shall take care to note when we are speaking for the center and when we are expressing a personal judgment.

## RECEIPT FOR EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Open Arms Lutheran Child Development Center Employee Handbook.

I acknowledge that I have read this Handbook thoroughly, including the statements in the Welcome section describing the purpose and effect of the Employee Handbook.

I agree that I will seek clarification from the Director of Open Arms if I have questions regarding any policy or provision in this Employee Handbook.

I know that this Open Arms Employee Handbook and other related documents do not form a binding contract and do not create a promise of future benefits or conditions.

I understand that Open Arms is an "at will" employer and as such employment with Open Arms is not for a fixed term or definite period and may be terminated at the will of either party, with or without cause, and without prior notice.

Nevertheless, the policies, procedures and provisions set forth in this Employee Handbook are incorporated into this receipt and I agree that I shall abide by its provisions and standards. I understand that violation of any of these policies may result in immediate termination.

I also am aware that Open Arms continually evaluates and may change, add to, or delete the provisions of the handbook policies at any time.

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*Employee Printed Name*

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*Employee Signature*

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*Date*

### **Policy Changes**

Open Arms Lutheran Child Development Center reserves the right to change the policies and procedures written within the employee handbook at any time. Every effort will be made to communicate any changes in a timely manner. Furthermore, proper notice will be provided to each employee through written communication.

# Public Notification

## USDA Non-discrimination statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.