

# Parent Handbook



Providing Quality Childcare and Preschool

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**"Equal Opportunity Provider"**

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## **Mission Statement**

Postville Childcare Services, Inc.'s (PCCS) mission is to provide children with an inviting, stimulating environment where play, developmental growth, and social skills are encouraged.

## **Goals**

For the child-

1. to develop a sense of self, and increasing independence
2. to build physical strength, coordination, and motor skills
3. to establish a foundation for good health, hygiene, and safety
4. to express ideas and feelings creatively through various facets

For the parents-

1. to provide quality care for the child while the parent(s) pursue their own work, education, or other interest
2. to provide opportunities to meet and work with other parents and teachers, who have as their common concern, the interests and needs of their children

For the staff –

1. to work with children in a developmentally appropriate setting
2. to continue their professional development

For the community-

1. to help meet the need for quality early childhood education facilities
2. to provide employment opportunities
3. to offer a quality child care for individuals interested in the area
4. to contribute to the wholesome growth and development of its children

## **Board of Directors**

- **Membership**

The PCCS Board of Directors will consist of no less than five, but no more than twelve volunteers, who are elected and voting members.

1. The President shall serve as the chairperson for the Board of Directors.
2. The Board shall consist of parents and community members of Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, and/or Winneshiek counties.

- **Term of Elected Officers**

The term of each Board Member shall be three years. Board Members elected to a position shall hold that office for one year and until their successors are elected and qualify.

- **Election of Officers**

At the first meeting of each new year, an election of officers will take place. Those who wish to be elected to an office need to inform the Nominating Committee at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. Open floor nominations will also be taken that night. New committees will be formed and new members are encouraged to join.

- **Responsibility of Board Members**

President

1. Shall exercise general authority, subject to the control and direction of the Board, over the affairs of the Corporation.
2. Shall determine the agenda and preside at all meetings of the Board.
3. Shall appoint members for each of the Standing Committees and be an Ex-Officio member for all committees except the Nominating Committee.

Vice President

1. Shall perform any and all of the duties of the President in the event of his/her absence.

Secretary

1. Records proceedings of all meetings.
2. Prepares correspondence for all parties.
3. Maintains permanent files of all Board records and correspondences, as legally required.

Treasurer

1. Shall serve as the Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation.

Other members

1. Support and assist the Director in the following areas:
  - a. Public relations for the center
  - b. Policy enforcement
  - c. Active on sub-committees
2. Make recommendations for the growth and development of the center.
3. Review, revise, and develop appropriate policies.

- Regular Meetings

The Board of Directors will meet on a monthly basis. Meeting times are the third Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m. All meetings are held at the Center. Special meetings may be scheduled as needed. Meetings are open to the public.

- Grievance Policy

Parents must first attempt to resolve the concern with the classroom teacher and then the Director. The Director will respond to the grievance within five working days. A copy of the decision will be sent to the Board of Directors. If the concern is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent must then submit the concern in writing to the Board of Directors at least one week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting. The concern will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Parents may address the Board for five minutes at that Board meeting. A special Board meeting may be called and a decision will be rendered within 30 days.

- Policy Adoption and Revision

There must be two readings of a new or revised policy before it takes effect. All proposed policies will be posted for parents to read prior to the second reading. More information can be found regarding the structure and purpose of the Board of Directors in the PCCS Bylaws. If you would like to review them, please ask the Director for a copy.

- Any parent/ family who is in need of assistance reading or understanding these policies and procedures will be offered assistance through an on-site translator, AEA, Postville Community School, or CR&R.

## General Information

- Hours of Operation

The Center shall be open for childcare Monday through Friday 5:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The center will be closed for the following holidays each year: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the following Friday, Christmas Eve, and Christmas. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed the Friday prior. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed the Monday after. Parents will not be charged tuition for these days. The center will be closed one day per year for floor maintenance. Parents will not be charged for that specific day.

- Closing of the Center

Weather conditions can sometimes be hazardous. If icy or snow covered roads make driving hazardous, parents are asked to listen to local radio or television stations for the official closing of PCCS. It will also be posted on our Facebook page. In the event weather would get bad during the workday, personal calls will be made to parents to pick up, a post will be made to the Facebook page, and a message will be sent via the Remind App.

- Arrival/ Departure

Parents are required to check in with their child's teachers at arrival and before departure. It is very important we know your child is here. At the end of the day, we must know your child is leaving as we are responsible for your child's safety and we are liable if the child is missing.

**Children are only released to people on the Pick-up Authorization form.** Center staff may request identification before releasing the child. The parent must turn in written permission to the Director if someone other than those on the Pick-up Authorization form, is picking the child up. Anyone picking up must be 16 years of age or older.

In the event of legal separation or divorce, parents shall provide the Center with a copy of the Temporary Order of Final Judgment of Custody, indicating who is the custodial parent and visitation. In all cases, the center will discharge the child to the custodial parent unless both parents sign a statement that the non-custodial parent may pick up the child and designate the dates and times the non-custodial parent will do so. In joint custody cases, both parents will be allowed to pick up the children. **We cannot deny a parent the right to their child without a restraining order.**

**When entering or exiting the Center, your child needs to be accompanied by an adult. Children need to be brought to their classroom by an adult and contact needs to be made with the child's teacher in their room.**

- Absentee Child

If your child will be absent from care/preschool for illness or any other reason; please call the center by 8:00 am. If we do not hear from you, we will call to verify whether the child will be attending.

- **Attendance Records**  
**Parents must clock their child(ren) in and out daily indicating the time of arrival and departure.** This is a state licensing requirement. Failure to do so will result in a \$5.00 charge for failure to clock your child in or out.
  
- **Waiting List**  

A waiting list will be maintained for enrollment of children in all classrooms based on a first-come, first-serve policy. However, priority will be given to siblings of children already enrolled. Priority for full time enrollment will be given for any full time openings. In order for your child to be placed on the waiting list, a \$35.00 (annual, non-refundable) administration fee must be paid and the enrollment forms must be completed and returned. (See Enrollment section)

Parents will be called when there is an opening for their child, with a deadline given for a response. If a parent refuses an offered enrollment space, they will be removed from the waiting list.
  
- **Parent Participation/Visitation**  

Parents are invited to observe and participate in the classroom. Parents are afforded unlimited access to their children and to the provider caring for their children during the center's hours of operation, unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. Our center has an open-door policy, and you are welcome anytime. You are required to stop in the office and sign in, or out, so office personnel know you are in the building.
  
- **Smoking Policy**  

Smoking is not allowed in any program area, child-occupied room, or on the PCCS premises. We are on school property and are required to be smoke free!
  
- **Volunteer Hours**  

PCCS requires 10 volunteer hours from each family in our program and 6 hours from parents who use the center for preschool or the school year only. This helps ensure our fundraisers are successful and maintains the viability of our center. It also encourages families to invest in their child's education and the community. There are multiple opportunities to get your hours in throughout the year. Some examples would be fundraisers, volunteering in the classroom or center, and helping with special events. Prior to starting a fundraiser, the volunteer hours it is worth will be laid out on the information sheet. Chaperoning field trips does not count toward volunteer hours. Failure to complete your hours will result in a charge of \$10.00 per incomplete hour.
  
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences**  

We believe that parents are a child's first teacher. We make every effort to keep you informed of all things that are going on in your child's life. Parents are encouraged to visit daily with the teachers about how their child's day was and about their general growth and development.

Please keep us informed of family issues, especially changes that may affect your child's behavior or emotional status. We can assist in a child's adjustment and understanding of changes only if we are aware of them. This information is considered confidential and is treated with respect and privacy. Teachers are responsible for supervising the children, so if your concerns will take longer than a couple of minutes, please schedule a time with the teacher to talk or stop in and let the Director know the situation and he/she will inform the teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be offered for all classrooms (infant to school age) at a minimum of one time per year. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held at a minimum of two times per "school year" for both 3 and 4-year-old preschool programs.

- **Fire and Tornado Emergencies**

Our center practices monthly fire and tornado drills, in compliance with licensing regulations. In case of an evacuation of the Center, staff and children will walk to the Presbyterian Church in Postville. Parents will be contacted via personal phone call, Facebook, or Remind App.

- **Lock-Down Policy**

Our center will go into a lock-down if there is ever an instance where we are concerned for the safety of our staff and/or our children. An example would be if there is a community threat, a prisoner at large, or if a threat of any type has been made against a child or staff. A lock-down is defined as all building doors and windows are locked, blinds are pulled, and all children are kept inside and away from windows. We will be in communication with law enforcement, and doors will remain locked until the threat is resolved. If a parent arrives to pick up a child while the center is in lockdown, the parent will be asked to remain outside the front entrance and the child will be brought to them. Parents will not always be notified of a lock-down.

- **Access Policy**

Centers are responsible for ensuring the safety of children at the center and preventing harm by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but other people present at the facility.

1. Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have "unrestricted access" to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.

\* It is imperative that centers not allow people who have not had a record check assume child care responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to the center.

2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct "supervision" and "monitoring" of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.

\* “Supervision” means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.

3. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason they will contact their Site Manager or another management staff to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation staff will follow the “intruder in the center” procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.

- Sex Offender Policy

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code 692A):

- a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
- b. Shall not be on the property of the child care center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.
- c. The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.
- d. If written permission is granted it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:
  - i. The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present.
  - ii. The reason for the sex offender’s presence at the facility.
  - iii. The duration of the sex offender’s presence.
  - iv. Description of how the center staff will supervise the sex offender to ensure that the sex offender is not left alone with a child.
  - v. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the director and sex offender and kept on file for review by the center licensing consultant.

- Biting Policy

Our goal at PCCS is to provide a safe and caring learning environment for children. When a biting incident occurs, there are many upset feelings. We take biting seriously. We want to find the reason that the child is biting and extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible. Biting is not uncommon, however, it does cause more upset feelings than any other behavior in childcare. Parents of the child who was bitten, parents of the child biting, and our staff all want the behavior to end as quickly as possible.

Children bite for many reasons. Some of them include experimental biting, teething discomfort, becoming independent, learning to play with others, and frustration related to ability to communicate, changes in their home life, sharing, or feeling threatened. We try to avoid biting by acknowledging that it can take place; especially with children through the age of two and providing extra close attention to the children’s interactions at this age.

Our response to a child being bit is to:

1. Intervene immediately and separate the biter and the child who was bit.
2. Take the child who was bit and wash the bite with soap and water. Then apply some ice to the bite. We will be sure to give the child plenty of attention and comforting until they are settled down and ready to rejoin the group.

3. For the child who bit, they will be removed from the situation for a brief period of time and be told in a calm, but firm, voice, “No biting, biting hurts.”
4. Parents of the children will be notified of the incident with an accident/incident form.

If a child is becoming a frequent biter, we will have a conference with the parents to discuss possible solutions and assign a person to stay/shadow the child. We may also send a referral to Keystone AEA asking for their assistance in putting positive supports in place to help change the behavior. While using these techniques, most children resolve the biting behavior. However, if there is no improvement, we must take further steps to ensure the safety of the children in our care. Therefore, we may require that the child who is biting find another learning environment that will meet his or her individual needs.

- **Concealed weapons policy**

Parents and/or visitors may not, at any time while on any property owned, leased or controlled by Postville Childcare Services, including anywhere that childcare business is conducted, such as childcare events, field trips, and so forth, possess or use any weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person.

Regardless of whether the parent or visitor possesses a concealed weapons permit or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on all childcare property or in any location in which the parent or visitor is with the childcare center, including those listed above. Parents and visitors who violate this policy will be subject to legal actions, up to and including the phoning of the authorities and removal from premises.

- **Discipline**

The staff will provide positive guidance to children at PCCS. This includes conflict resolution strategies, setting well-defined limits, and using natural and logical consequences.

When necessary, a brief isolation from the group in a “calm down” area may be used. Prior to returning to the group, the teacher will redirect the child’s behavior and discuss positive alternatives. All staff members follow the guidelines outlined in the Iowa Department of Human Services Daycare Center Standards and Procedures Discipline section. They read as follows:

1. No slapping, spanking, or shaking will occur.
2. No punishment that humiliates or frightens the child will be used.
3. No threats, verbal abuse, or derogatory comments will be made to the child.
4. Punishment is never used in association with a child’s illness or toilet training.
5. A child can never be deprived of food or rest as a punishment.

Any concerns regarding discipline should be discussed promptly with the Director.

When a child behaves in a disruptive manner, or hurts other children, the quality of care for all is affected. When all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted and erratic, disruptive, or violent behavior is being exhibited, a phone call will be made to the parent. The parent is then expected to come and pick up his/her child. Any damage done to the Center’s equipment will be the parent’s financial responsibility.

In the instance a child has an ongoing disruptive behavior, or is hurting other children, staff will document the situation. Conferences will be scheduled with the parents to help determine why the behavior could be happening and a plan of action developed. Other resources, such as Keystone AEA, may be contacted. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive or physically violent and all alternatives have been exhausted, a child may be asked to leave the center. One week's notice will be given to make alternative arrangements, unless the Director deems otherwise.

## Enrollment

- **Enrollment Policies and Procedures**

Enrollment shall be open to all children, provided the Center can meet the needs of that child. Children can be enrolled for full, part-time, preschool, or drop-in care. Enrollment shall be determined by the date the child was placed on the waiting list. Priority will be given to full time enrollment for open full time spots, and part time enrollment for part time spots.

- **Non Discrimination Statements**

**Federal non-discrimination notice:** This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 866-632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339, or 800-845-6136 (Spanish).

**Iowa non-discrimination notice:** It is the policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; website: <http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>.

- **Probationary Period**

Upon enrollment, each child is placed in a one-month probationary period to ensure that the childcare arrangements are a good fit for the child, teachers, and other. During this time, the center reserves the right to terminate care if the arrangements are not working. The Director will notify the family and they will be given reasonable time to work to correct or improve the deficiencies, unless these deficiencies are such that they are grounds for immediate dismissal. If satisfactory improvement does not result, childcare may be terminated. During the probationary period, advance payment for scheduled hours may be requested.

- **Age Requirements**

A child must be at least two weeks when enrolled and may not attend past the age of 12.

- **Administration Fee**

A \$35.00 annual administration fee will be required for each family. Administration fees are nonrefundable and required upon registration of your child to the center, placement on the waiting list, and renewable each September. Payment of this fee is considered to be a contract between the Center and the parent(s).

- **Tuition and Rates**

Tuition is charged on weekly rates depending on your child(ren)'s age. Families decide how many days, either whole or half, they will be attending and will be billed accordingly every week. You are committed to those charges unless you use absent credits or the center is closed. If additional days are added and the center can accommodate the child, families will be billed the extra day(s) at the "additional day" charge. Tuition is billed for the week of attendance. Bills are issues on Monday and payment is expected on Friday. Unpaid tuition will result in loss of childcare privileges. A contract is to be filled out and signed at enrollment.

Parents who work in an industry or field of employment that requires an irregular schedule that includes a rotation of extended periods of days on and off, including weekends can apply for an exemption from PCCS's regular contract. Proof of this work schedule needs to be submitted to the office. The exemption, which is at the discretion of the Director, would allow for a submission of a schedule every six weeks. Parent's holding this exemption would still be held to and billed for the hours scheduled on the six-week submission. Any additional days will be billed at the additional day rate.

- **Financial Arrangements**

If a family is in need of other payment options, a request must be made in writing. If a payment plan is needed, a meeting must be set up with the Director and made in writing.

**Collection Procedure for Late Tuition**

- Week 1: A \$10.00 late fee is charged.
- Week 2: An additional \$10.00 late fee is charged and arrangements for payment must be agreed upon between the parent and PCCS. If no arrangements are made, childcare services will be denied.
- Week 3: A registered letter will be mailed to the parent(s) requesting a payment plan, plus another \$10.00 late fee. Childcare services will be denied until a payment is made.
- Week 4: A second registered letter will be mailed to the parent(s) informing them small claims court has been contacted, plus another \$10.00 late fee will be charged each week until payment is made.

- **Enrollment Forms**

Enrollment shall be contingent upon the receipt of all enrollment forms including:

1. Read Parent Handbook and sign Acknowledgement
2. Rates and Fees Contract signed
3. Enrollment packet pick-up permission forms.
4. Emergency Medical Consent and Information
5. Physical Exam
6. Immunization Record
7. CACFP Application and Enrollment Form

- **Scheduling**

Your child will be scheduled based on what is outlined in your contract. If you contract for half days, any hours between 5:15 am to 12:00 pm may be scheduled. The child(ren) must be picked up by 12:00 pm. **For every minute past 12:00 pm, you will be charged \$1.00.** For families contracting full days, any hours during operation (5:15 am – 6:00 pm) may be scheduled. Hours may be changed at any time. You must notify the office of changes so ratios are maintained. **You are financially responsible for the days you contract.** If your

child is not contracted and is brought to the Center, he/she will not be allowed to stay unless it works with staffing ratios. You will be charged at the additional day rate. If you need to add a day, it is your responsibility to contact the Director to check on room availability. Changes in schedules or contracts must be submitted on the Schedule Change/Vacation Form.

Daily staffing and food preparation for the Center are based on attendance. **You need to notify the Center by 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent.** You may call PCCS at 563-864-7669 or contact us via e-mail at [postvillechildcare@gmail.com](mailto:postvillechildcare@gmail.com)

- DHS Assistance
  1. *Families are responsible for any accrued charges UNTIL we receive your approval notice and those payments are due each week.*
  2. Once approved, families are responsible for any co-pay (small charge based per unit) the state issues you. *You must make the payment for your co-pay each week.* Unpaid copays will result in termination in care and will be reported to the DHS CCA office.
  3. If you use more hours than the state will pay, you will be responsible for any overage at the current daycare rate.
  4. It is your responsibility to respond and/or fill out any CCA paperwork.
  5. CCA does not cover Administration fees.
  6. CCA only covers child care while you are working. Families who use assistance are still required to submit and follow a schedule.
- Extended/Summer/Maternity Leaves

In the instance that a child is going to be absent for 4 or more weeks, families will be allowed to break contract by paying a non-refundable, \$75.00 fee per child, per month to hold their spot until their return. Fees must be paid in full prior to leaving. If the child does not return, no refunds will be issued.
- Late Pick-up

Late fees will be assessed at \$1.00 per minute, per child for every minute a parent is late picking up his/her child past closing time. Since we must pay teachers overtime after 6:00 p.m., we must be reimbursed. We never leave teachers alone. If you are late, two teachers must stay, this costs us extra money. Please call if you are going to be late to save us the time of trying to track you down and to keep your children from worrying. Discussion with the Director should take place earlier in the day to make special arrangements if you know you cannot make the 6:00 p.m. timeline. After 30 minutes, the local authorities will be contacted to pick up children still at the Center. After two late pickups, families will be required to pick up by 5:45pm.
- Absent Day Credits

Each child will be given “Absent Day Credits” **per year**. These are issued September to September. These days can be used when you have contracted the day and do not attend. These days cannot be used once notice of discharge/withdrawal has been given. Once your absence credits are gone, you are then committed to your contracted weekly charge.

*Absent Day Credits are as follows:*

12 Month contract: Five days

School Year Only Contract: Four days

Summer Only: One day

Drop In: Zero Days

- Discharge/Withdrawal

Discharge from the center will occur for the following reasons:

1. Unpaid tuition;
2. Enrollment paperwork is not completed and returned when requested;
3. Center policies and procedures are not being observed;
4. Center and staff cannot provide the type of care a child may need.

You will need to provide written notification to the Director, no less than two weeks prior to the withdrawal of your child from the Center. You will be charged your last contracted hours, for each week your child does not attend and we are not notified. If two weeks pass and we have not been notified of the child's withdrawal, your child's place will be filled and you will be billed for the two weeks.

## Health Information

- Accidents or Incidents

Accidents or incidents, resulting in injury to a child will be reported the day of the incident, in writing, to the parent or person authorized to pick-up the child. If the accident or incident requires more medical attention than can be given at the center, the parent will be notified first. In the event that the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed will be contacted. The written report shall be prepared by the staff member who observed the incident or accident and shall include a general description of the incident or accident and the action taken, if any, by the Center. A copy of the report will be given to the parent and one will be kept in the child's file.

- Sick Child Policy

Our policy is set up to protect children against the spread of illnesses. Children who are ill should not be brought to the center. School-aged children who are absent from school due to illness should not attend the center. We ask that you alert the staff if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, such as strep throat or chickenpox, a sign will be posted at each classroom.

Children with the following conditions **may be permitted** to attend:

- 1) Infants and young children may have as many as six respiratory illnesses each year. These diseases include - the common cold, croup, bronchitis, pneumonia, and otitis media (ear infection).
- 2) Children who are carriers of an infectious disease in their stool or urine that can cause illness, but who have **no** symptoms. Exceptions include *E. coli* 0157:H7, *Shigella* or *Salmonella typhi*;
- 3) Children with conjunctivitis (pink eye) who have a clear, watery eye discharge and do not have any fever, eye pain, or eyelid redness;
- 4) Children with a rash, but **no** fever or change in behavior;
- 5) Children with cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection, parvovirus B19, HIV or carriers of Hepatitis B;
- 6) Shingles, children shall keep sores covered by clothing or a dressing until sores have crusted;
- 7) Children with influenza may return when the child feels well enough;

- 8) Children with Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) do not need to stay home as long as the wound is covered and drainage is contained;
- 9) Children with norovirus infection who have **no** diarrhea and are not otherwise ill, may remain in the program if special attention is paid to handwashing, proper diaper disposal, and maintaining a clean environment. See part II for children who have had diarrhea and/or vomiting;
- 10) Children who have ringworm. Children with ringworm should **not** go to the gym, swimming pools or play contact sports. Treatment may take at least four weeks;
- 11) Children with viral meningitis may return to child care when the child feels well enough.
- 12) Lice, until the child has been treated and there are no nits; child can remain in care until the end of the day, but cannot return until they have received one treatment. THE BOX FROM THE TREATMENT MUST BE BROUGHT AND GIVEN TO THE TEACHER WHEN THEY RETURN OR THEY WILL BE TURNED AWAY.

**To ensure the overall health and safety of all the children, we ask that you not bring your child to child care if one or more of the following exists:**

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child care center activities including outdoor play;
- 2) The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without risking the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care;
- 3) The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in the child care center's activities:
  - a. Fever, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to be included at the facility;
  - b. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness like:
    - i. Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness,
    - ii. Uncontrollable coughing,
    - iii. Unexplained irritability, fussiness, or persistent crying,
    - iv. Difficult breathing,
    - v. Wheezing,
    - vi. Other unusual signs for the child.
- 4) Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV);
- 5) Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, hard stools, or medication.
- 6) Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- 7) Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than two hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms;
- 8) Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that the child is noninfectious;
- 9) Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease;
- 10) Diarrhea, defined as loose, watery, and frequent stools. Children with diarrheal illness of infectious origin generally may be allowed to return to child care once the diarrhea resolves, except for children with diarrhea caused by Norovirus, *Salmonella*

*typhi*, *Shigella*, or *E. Coli* 0157:H7. For *Salmonella typhi*, three negative stool cultures are required. For *Shigella* or *E. coli* 0157:H7, two negative stool cultures are required taken at least 24 hours apart. If treated with antibiotics, samples should not be taken less than 48 hours after therapy is done;

- 11) Norovirus, children not in diapers and child care center staff with diarrhea and/or vomiting should remain at home until 24 hours after diarrhea and/or vomiting cease, and until stools are formed. Children in diapers should remain at home for three days following cessation of diarrhea and/or vomiting and until stools are formed;
- 12) Erythema infectiosum (Fifth Disease), keep child at home if fever is present;
- 13) Pink eye (conjunctivitis) with purulent discharge (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), child may go back to child care when all symptoms are gone;
- 14) Scabies, until after the first treatment;
- 15) Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend care;
- 16) Impetigo, until 24 hours after the child started medicine from the health care provider;
- 17) Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after antibiotics are started;
- 18) Varicella-Zoster (Chickenpox), until all sores have dried and crusted;
- 19) Pertussis, until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment have been completed or 21 days of cough if no antibiotics are given;
- 20) Mumps, child can go back to child care five days after start of symptoms or until symptoms are gone, whichever is longer;
- 21) Hepatitis A virus, until one week after start of symptoms;
- 22) Measles, until four days after onset of rash;
- 23) Rubella, until six days after onset of rash;
- 24) Herpes simplex, children with herpetic gingivostomatitis, an infection of the mouth caused by the herpes simplex virus, who do not have control of oral secretions, shall be excluded from child care. Children with mild cases who do have control of their mouth secretions may not have to be excluded; or
- 25) Meningitis (bacterial), child may return to child care 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

If a child becomes ill while in child care and it is determined that the child should be sent home, PCCS staff will:

- Contact the parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent;
  - Care for the child apart from other children;
  - Give appropriate attention and supervision until the parent picks the child up; and
  - Give extra attention to hand washing, diaper changing, disinfecting surfaces.
- Exposure to Disease  
Parents are required to notify the Center whenever the child has had or been exposed to a contagious disease. In turn, the Center will notify parents of any exposure by posting outside your child's room when a disease has been reported. The length of time a child will be excluded from the Center is determined based on the recommendation made by the Childcare Nurse Consultant and the guideline from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- Administration of Medication

Assuring the health and safety of all the children in our Center is a team effort by the childcare center staff, family, and health care provider. Understanding each of our responsibilities, as well as the policy and procedures concerning the administration of medication is crucial to this goal. Listed below are our guiding principles and procedures of our medication administration policy:

1. If medication is able to be given at home, it will not be given at the center. Dosing of medication can frequently be done so that the child receives their medication prior to going to childcare and again when returning home.
2. The first dose of a new medication MUST be given at home with sufficient time before the child returns to childcare to observe their response to the medication given. When your child is ill with a communicable disease, children are required to be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to childcare. This is for the protection of the child who is ill, as well as the other children in childcare.
3. When a medication is brought to childcare, it cannot be kept in the possession of the child. Medication must be given to the teacher in the classroom, kept in a locked medication box or cupboard or in a locked box in the fridge. Lip balms and lotions are considered medications as they can cause illness if ingested.
4. All antibiotics, medications, or materials applied to the skin (including diaper cream) will be administered only when there is a signed Medication Authorization form completed by the parent or guardian. Your child's teacher will help you complete this form. When medication is administered, the time, date, and staff initials will be recorded on the medication authorization form. In the event, medication is not given when authorization is in effect, a reason will be noted on the form.
5. All medication authorization records are kept in the specific child's file at the center.
6. Any prescription medication brought to the center must be specific to the child who is to receive the medication. It needs to be in its original container, have a child-resistant safety cap, and be labeled with the following information: pharmacy name, pharmacist phone number, child's full name, name of health care provider, prescribing medication, name and expiration date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated, dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions. (If you ask at the pharmacy, they will give you another marked container for childcare care if it is a medication you need to keep in two locations.)
7. Any over the counter (OTC) medication brought to the center must be in the ORIGINAL container and be age/weight appropriate for the child it is to be given to. If an OTC medication is brought that the center feels uncomfortable giving, a doctor's note will be requested prior to the medication being given. OTC medication cannot be premixed or pre-measured in a plastic bag.

8. Medications given in the center will be administered by a staff member who has had training in proper medication administration.
9. For children who receive medications given on an ongoing or daily basis, the staff will advise the parent or guardian one-week prior the medication needing to be refilled.
10. Information exchange between the parent or guardian and the childcare provider about medication that a child is receiving should be shared when the child is brought to and picked up from the center. Parents or guardians should share with the staff any problems, observations, or suggestions they may have related to their child's medication, and likewise with the staff from the center to the parent or guardian.
11. Unused or expired medication will be returned to the parent or guardian when it is no longer needed or able to be used by the child.
12. The center will not administer essential oils or homeopathic medications/methods without the authorization of a doctor.

Confidentiality related to medications and their administration will be safeguarded by the center Director and staff. Parents or guardians may request to see or review their child's medication records maintained at the center at any time.

### **Special Information**

- **Field Trips**

Additional staff will be in attendance on any field trips to provide increased supervision. These additional adults may be volunteers, parents, or staff. Except in the case of routine daily walks and stroller rides near the center, parents will be notified one week in advance of any field trips.

When a field trip requires transportation, the Postville Community School District buses will be used. Children who are under three cannot attend.

- **Pets**

Parents or legal guardians are welcome to bring in their family pet to share with their child's classroom. However, all animals must remain outside the school building during the visit. The classroom teacher will ensure that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal must be in good health and documentation must be provided from a veterinarian or animal shelter that shows the animal is fully immunized and suitable for contact with children. Children will practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal. Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed due to the risk of salmonella.

- **Non-Center Activities**

Children attending non-center activities will be required to have written permission from the parent prior to the activity. Parents are responsible for insuring proper transportation to and from these activities.

- **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect**  
All employees of the Center are mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect, as required by Iowa law. Procedures are posted on the parent board outside the Director’s office. Staff members are to immediately report to the Department of Human Services, when in the course of working with a child, suspicions of the child having suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, mental injury, the presence of illegal drugs, or the denial of critical care.
  
- **Abuse Accusations Against Staff**  
It is the policy of PCCS to investigate quickly and completely any accusations by children, staff, or guest that a staff member has violated any policies or has inappropriately dealt with any children. Whenever an accusation is made, the following procedures will be taken:
  - 1) Any staff witnessing any abuse or inappropriate contact or language between a staff and child will report is immediately.
  - 2) The person making the accusation will make a full statement in writing to the Director. The Director will then determine if any other statements/video or other evidence is able to be obtained.
  - 3) The accused staff member will be put on unpaid administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. All accusations will be reported to all necessary persons and places required by law.
  - 4) The Director will contact the President of the Board of Directors, if there is no conflict of interest. Conflict of interest would include, but not limited to: family members, friends, or being a member of a conflicting organization.
  - 5) The Board President and the Director will meet with the accused to obtain a written statement.
  - 6) A Special Board Meeting will be called for the Board of Directors. Anyone with a conflict of interest will be excused from the meeting and will not be privy to the information concerning the accusation. The Board of Directors will be given the information regarding the situation, without the name of the staff member(s). They will make a determination on the course of action based on if the report is true or false. They will then be told who the staff member(s) are. This prevents any bias on the part of the Board Member/staff.
  - 7) The person making the statement will be requested, if capable, to make a statement in writing. The accusation, true or false, will be written on an Incident Report Form and become part of the child’s permanent file.
  
- **Ratios**  
PCCS complies with the Iowa rules for ratios of children to staff members. They are:

<u>Age of Child</u>	<u>Number of Staff</u>
Under 24 months	1 caregiver for every 4 children
2 years of age	1 caregiver for every 6 children
3 years of age	1 caregiver for every 8 children
4 years of age	1 caregiver for every 12 children
5 + years of age	1 caregiver for every 15 children
4 Year Old Voluntary Preschool	1 caregiver for every 10 children

- **Child and Adult Care Food Program**  
The center is a participant in the federally funded Childcare Food Program, serving breakfast, lunch, and snacks. These meals are prepared according to the CACFP guidelines, ensuring they are nutritionally balanced.
  
- **Meals/Snacks**  
A monthly menu will be posted on the parent board informing parents of what will be served for breakfast, lunch, and snack. Breakfast is served to everyone at 8:00 a.m. If you want your child to eat, they must be here by that time. Lunch is served at 11:00. Meals are served family-style. Please do not send food or drink with your child. If there is an allergy, medical condition, or religious reason, please see the Director/Assistant Director.  
  
If your child has a food allergy, please inform us prior to enrollment. We are required by the food program to have a doctor signed Diet Modification form on file for children who need special exceptions made to their diet.  
  
Snacks are served in the afternoon. Please notify the staff if you would like to provide a special snack, such as a birthday treat, in place of morning or afternoon snack (see *Special Treats* below).
  
- **Special Treats**  
Special treats must be “in store” pre-packaged and in sealed containers or wrappings. Healthy snacks such as string cheese, granola bars, apples, bananas, etc. are encouraged.
  
- **Breastfeeding Policy**  
Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area provides an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water.  
  
Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator and freezer. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date. PCCS will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control to ensure that breast milk is properly treated to avoid waste. Universal precautions will be used while handling human milk. Staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers.  
  
Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breast milk for their children.
  
- **Toilet Training Policy**  
**Things we do to assist your child include:**
  - 1) Have them sit on the potty during natural transition times (before and after meals, before and after naps, and diaper changes)
  - 2) Practice with them getting their pants up and down on their own and good hand washing.
  - 3) Supervise and watch for signs that they have to go or are going.
  - 4) Keep close communication with the parents about any indicators suggesting the child is ready.

### Some things we don't do:

- 1) We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. It's very time consuming with little to no benefit. From experience we have seen this cause many problems with children not being able to hold much urine and having to constantly go to the potty further along down the line. They are not able to settle down at nap because once they relax, they have the urge to urinate and have to get up to go. Going on walks becomes difficult since they again can't make it very long without having to come back to potty. The day pretty much centers around the potty which just isn't realistic in this setting. It's also not fun for the child. They want to have fun, play, and participate just like their friends.
- 2) We don't limit food or drinks to only be given at certain times.
- 3) We don't clean feces or urine out of underwear. We will place the soiled underwear in a plastic bag and place it on top of the child's cubby for the parent to take home and launder.

**We don't put children into underwear until they have been COMPLETELY accident free HERE for two full weeks.** This is an absolute non-negotiable policy. We have potty trained many children and have found that once a child is successful for two full weeks HERE, they are much more successful at staying accident free. This policy is also to maintain infection control standards for the child care and protect the carpet, furniture, and inventory of the child care.

### What to wear during training:

Children should wear easy on and off pants during training. We prefer sweat pant like bottoms until they are physically capable of doing snaps and buttons. **Please don't send them in anything that requires us to remove the top to get to the bottom. We don't allow overalls, kid costumes, union suits, one piece jammies, or shirts with snaps at the crotch.** Belts and suspenders are never allowed in the day care for safety reasons. Diapers and pull-ups are okay for training. ***Pull Ups with the side releases are preferred and the easier for the staff and child to.***

- Sand and Water Tables

We have sand and water tables in the classroom, where children can stand and play with their hands in the water or sand. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with the others to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water. When activity is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

- Outdoor Play

Weather permitting, children play outdoors every day, preferably a minimum of 30 minutes, twice a day. Please ensure your child is appropriately dressed at all times. Our activities will include walks, playground, water play, sand play and sledding. We do not go outside when temperatures and weather conditions make it unsafe or uncomfortable (including wind chill and heat index). We utilize weather guidelines posted on the parent board. Water is made available to children and staff during warm weather. Parents who feel their child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities must keep them out of daycare/preschool until they are able to participate in all activities.

Outdoor play is essential to children's health and wellbeing. Children need to run, climb and play outdoors. The time children spend outdoors each day is just as important to their

learning as the time they spend in their classrooms. For teachers, the outdoors offers many ways to enrich the curriculum and support children's learning and development.

- **Clothing and Attire**

Children should arrive dressed for play. Having fun involves outdoor play and lots of messy activities, so make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. Please don't dress your child in nice clothing. Expect them to be dirty from play when you arrive to pick them up. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate. Children should wear sneakers or rubber soled shoes to prevent injury during outdoor play or emergency situations. **Flip flops and heels are not considered appropriate attire and should not be worn to childcare/preschool.**

Please remove any cords or strings from coats or sweatshirts which may become entangled in playground equipment. Personalized clothing or other identifying accessories is discouraged to prevent identification by strangers. All clothing should be weather-appropriate. We go outside in a variety of weather conditions. This includes snow pants, boots, mittens, and hats during the winter. Scarves are prohibited. Children should always have TWO extra sets of LABELED clothing in their lockers at all times.

## **Program Information**

- **Curriculum**

Teachers plan developmentally appropriate activities for the children using the Active Learning Series curriculum, and Keystone AEA. These activities are a balance of quiet and active, as well as indoor and outdoor activities.

We believe it is important for the children to get involved with their environment, which means sometimes they will get wet, sandy, painted, or "goopy". These are important learning experiences, and we want your child to be comfortable participating in them. Please send your child in play clothes so that he/she can participate freely, without worrying about getting "dirty." Make sure his/her shoes enable them to play hard without tripping and getting hurt. The activities planned in your child's room will be posted at the beginning of each week.

- **Report Forms**

Written daily report forms to parents will be used for children under 24 months of age. For children over 24 months of age, information will be shared verbally.

- **What NOT to Bring**

- There are several items we request that you do NOT allow your child to bring to the center. This Includes: money, gum, videos, candy or food, and toys (especially guns or toys that facilitate violent play)

If these items are brought, the staff will collect them, place them out of the child's reach, and send them home. Most likely, a staff member will request a parent take the item with them.

## PARENT HANDBOOK STATEMENT

*Please sign and return this page to the business office along with your enrollment paperwork.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and fully understand the Postville Childcare Services, Inc. Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures stated. I understand that failure to abide by the policies and procedures stated in the handbook could result in a termination of care for my child(ren).

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_