



**LITTLE MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS**

— PRESCHOOL & DAY CARE —

## **Employee Handbook**

**2023**

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## **Welcome from the Leadership Team**

Welcome to Little Mountain Climbers Preschool and Daycare! As a valued member of our child care staff, you are entrusted with the important task of delivering exceptional care in a nurturing work environment. At Little Mountain Climbers, both the administration and teaching staff are committed to fostering a positive atmosphere for all employees. Our goal is to create a respectful and inclusive community that embraces diversity.

We are delighted to provide you with our Employee Handbook, which serves as a comprehensive guide to the personnel policies and procedures of our child care center. It is our utmost priority to ensure that every employee is treated fairly and equally. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this handbook or any specific policy, we encourage you to approach the leadership team for clarification and assistance.

**Little Mountain Climbers Leadership Team!**

## **Our Mission**

At LMC, our mission is to provide unwavering support to families by prioritizing the needs and guiding the lives of children. We are dedicated to offering a trusted and high-quality child care experience that nurtures and empowers each child in our care.

## **Our Goals**

At LMC, our goal is not only to support families, but also to empower them with the necessary resources to support themselves. We recognize the importance of providing families with peace of mind, assuring them that their children are in excellent hands and will receive the highest level of care.

To achieve this, we are committed to offering simple yet impactful resources to our families. These resources will include easy access to food pantries, specialized behavioral services, local shelters, and other beneficial services. By making these resources readily available, we aim to alleviate any additional burdens families may face and create a supportive community.

We welcome anyone who shares our vision to join us in realizing these goals. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of families and provide them with the support they need to thrive.

## **Family Support**

Little Mountain Climbers supports its families in many ways: the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, Child Care Aware and through the utilization of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Although these programs are specifically for child care, we do offer all our families support through other resources. The parent resource center provides families with support from health care providers, speech therapists, behavioral specialists, local shelters and much more. The big question is how do we know when these families are in need of these resources?

Our enrollment team may be the first to know what families need. Through the process of learning about the family and the child we can better see what the needs of the family are, but this may not always be the case. In the case that families do not request their needs to our enrollment department, it will fall upon our teachers to learn the needs of the children and through that the needs of the parents. The interaction and time teachers are spending with their students will allow them to learn about who they are and what they may need. It is crucial that when a teacher has observed what resources the family may benefit from, that they inform the Director and allow them to help the families find the appropriate community service agencies. We hope that anyone that shares our vision will partake in helping us achieve these goals.

## **The Duty of Mandated Reporters: Safeguarding Children**

In our capacity as both a center and educators, we bear the crucial duty of mandated reporters to promptly report any circumstances we suspect might endanger a child. Our obligation extends beyond mere assumption; it hinges on our direct observations. We urge all staff members to embrace this responsibility and promptly report any concerns for the welfare of children.

Here are the steps to follow if you believe you need to report an issue. It's crucial for all our employees to feel comfortable, even in uncomfortable situations like reporting to an authority. Let these steps help make the process smoother:

- Understand your legal obligations in Colorado:
  - Familiarize yourself with the reporting laws specific to Colorado Springs.
- Document the incident:
  - Write down key details such as dates, times, and descriptions.
- 
- Contact the appropriate authorities:
  - Report to agencies like the Colorado Department of Human Services or local law enforcement.
- Provide accurate information:
  - Stick to the facts and avoid making assumptions.
- Follow up if needed:
  - Ensure that the situation is being addressed by checking with the relevant authorities.
- Maintain confidentiality:
  - Respect the privacy of individuals involved to the extent possible.
- Seek support if necessary:
  - Don't hesitate to reach out to supervisors or counselors for assistance.
- Document your actions:
  - Keep a record of your report and any subsequent communication or actions taken.

**Department of Social Services**  
**1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-1714**  
**303.866.5948 or 800.799.5876**



## **Annual Family Survey for Quality Improvement Plan**

Little Mountain Climbers is committed to delivering exceptional care to our families. To continuously enhance our services, we have implemented an annual survey to gather valuable feedback. This survey serves as a vital tool in identifying areas where we can make improvements.

The comments and insights collected from the survey will undergo thorough evaluation by our dedicated leadership team. Based on these findings, a comprehensive quality improvement plan will be formulated. This plan aims to address any necessary adjustments and enhancements that will foster the optimal development and well-being of our Little Mountain Climbers community.

To ensure transparency and accessibility, the annual quality improvement plan will be disseminated through multiple channels. You can expect to receive it via brightwheel and email, and physical copies will also be available in our lobby. By sharing this plan, we aim to foster open communication and involve our families in the growth and success of Little Mountain Climbers.

## **Workplace Policies**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

We are an equal employment opportunity employer. Employment decisions are based on merit and business needs, and not on race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or any other factor protected by law.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

It is our policy to comply with all the relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We will not discriminate against any qualified employee or job applicant with respect to any terms, privileges or conditions of employment because of the person's physical or mental disability

### **Background Checks**

We reserve the right to conduct a job-related background check at any time. A comprehensive background check may consist of prior employment verification, professional reference checks, education confirmation and credit check.

### **Criminal Records**

A criminal record check is performed as required by law and licensing to protect the Company's interest and that of its employees and clients.

### **Immigration Law Compliance**

All offers of employment are contingent on verification of the candidate's right to work in the United States. On the first day of work, every new employee will be asked to provide original documents verifying his or her right to work and, as required by federal law, to sign Federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form.

### **Drug & Alcohol Free**

It is our policy that the workplace be free of the possession and use of illicit drugs and alcohol. The abuse of drugs and alcohol impairs the coordination, reaction time, emotional stability and judgment of the user. For these reasons employees could have their ability to make sound decisions impaired. We reserve the right to conduct alcohol/drug testing at any time we deem necessary without prior notice.

### **Open Door Complaint Procedure**

Employees who have a job-related issue, question or complaint should first discuss it with their direct supervisor. Employees who suspect a violation of the Company's procedures and policies should immediately report the violation to their direct supervisor.

### **Open Communication**

Employees are encouraged at first to discuss issues they may have respectfully and directly with that person. If a resolution is not reached, employees should arrange a meeting with their direct supervisor to bring to light the situation. Any information discussed between a supervisor and employees is strictly confidential and should not be addressed outside or inside the workplace by another outside party.

### **Promoting Ethical Conduct and Respectful Workplace Practices**

In any professional setting, it is imperative for employees to uphold ethical standards and maintain a respectful environment. One fundamental aspect of this is refraining from soliciting parents for work or attempting to lure fellow staff away from their current employment. Such actions can be damaging to both the company and the individuals involved. Soliciting parents for work may lead to potential conflicts of interest and breach of confidentiality, compromising the trust of parents and the organization's reputation. Similarly, poaching staff disrupts team dynamics and creates an atmosphere of mistrust among coworkers. Instead, employees should focus on fostering positive relationships with parents and other staff, emphasizing the value of the organization's services and the strength of its team, thereby promoting a harmonious and growth-oriented work environment for everyone involved.

## **Code of Professional Conduct**

### **Overview of the Code of Professional Conduct**

Little Mountain Climbers insists on the highest ethical standards in conducting Company business. Integrity, objectivity, confidentiality, professional competence and professional behavior are all values that are not always rewarded, but seen through one's character. When faced with ethical issues, employees are expected to make the right professional decision based on the Company's principles and standards.

Employees are instructed to use good judgment when their job responsibilities require them to be one on one with a child.

### **Confidential Information & Nondisclosure**

All employees are expected to sign a Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Agreement. This agreement ensures that employees will not disclose or use any confidential information, either during or after employment.

### **Privacy of Personnel Records & Administration**

Personnel files are locked and kept confidential at all times. An employee may review his or her file by making a request through his or her supervisor. Employees are not permitted to remove, copy or distribute any portion of the information.

### **Prohibited Behavior**

Employees are prohibited from displaying any of the following behaviors:

- Use of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment means punishment inflicted directly on the body including, but not limited to:
  - Hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, biting or squeezing.
  - Demanding excessive physical exercise or excessive rest.
  - Forcing a child to eat or have in his or her mouth soap, food or foreign substance.
  - Exposing a child to extreme temperatures.
- Isolating a child in another room, closet, hallway or any other area that cannot be supervised by the teacher.
- Binding or tying.
- Withholding food or water and using them as a punishment or reward.
- Toilet training methods that punish, demean or humiliate a child.
- All forms of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing or isolating a child.
- Any neglect, abuse or maltreatment of a child.
- Abusive language such as; profane or sarcastic language, verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or child's family.

- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment.
- Physical activity or outdoor time taken away as punishment.
- Discussion or teaching about sexual reproduction.
- Discussion or teaching about religion.
- Any behavior that threatens the safety or security of a child. This would include behaviors that occur among or between staff. Children should not see hitting ridicule or gossip among staff members

Teachers are restricted from having any romantic relationships with parents. Teacher/parent relationships must be professional. Any illicit behavior between teachers and parents could result in termination of the employee as well as disenrollment of the parent's child.

### **Harassment Policy**

We do not tolerate workplace harassment. Workplace harassment can take many forms including, but not limited to, racial slurs, signs, social media posts, offensive jokes and any conduct that creates an intimidating working environment for the employees.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

We do not tolerate sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or any other unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.

### **Change of Personal Information**

Any changes made to an employee's personal information, such as name, address, phone number or anything that may void any existing information should be reported in writing immediately to their supervisor.

### **Cellular Phones**

Our center will be using a software, MyBrightWheel, which will be accessible via tablet. This app allows employees to communicate with parents about the progress of their child's progress through pictures and posting to their child's individual feed and will also allow employees to sign in and sign out.

We believe that phones are necessary for emergencies and in our center, but not for communicating with parents. Little Mountain Climbers does not allow employees to have cellphones on their person or personal bag.

All classrooms are equipped with clear cubbies for staff to store their cellphones in. Phones will need to be in those cubbies at all times and not in a personal bag or cabinet.

Any personal use of cellular phones while at work could result in written warnings, probation or possible termination.

\*A single cell phone from the lead teacher in the class will be allowed to be brought to the playground in case of an emergency.

### **Vaping, Smoking & Tobacco Policy**

Little Mountain Climbers is committed to providing a safe environment for all children. Due to hazards from exposure to second-hand smoke it shall be the policy of Little Mountain Climbers to provide a tobacco-free environment for children, staff members, child care providers, and parents.

All use of tobacco and products alike are prohibited from all entryways and playgrounds. This is applicable to all staff members, child care providers, parents, visitors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and other guests in relation to Little Mountain Climbers.

Any smoking paraphernalia that is found in the classrooms will be confiscated immediately.

### **Dress Code**

An employee's personal appearance and hygiene is a reflection on the Company. Employees are expected to dress appropriately for the individual work responsibilities and position.

In the case that LMC implements a uniform code, employees will be provided with Little Mountain Climbers branded attire. Employees will also be required to wear a Little Mountain Climbers name tag that will be in the form of a lanyard.

Employees should be neatly groomed and present a clean appearance at all times.

Jewelry is acceptable as long as it does not interfere with the above guidelines. Infant and toddler room employees should consider jewelry that is not dangling, easily accessible or considered a choking hazard.

Employees may not:

- Wear see through leggings or tights
- Wear excessive or large jewelry

- Use heavy or strong perfume or cologne
- Wear sandals or open toe-shoes

All Little Mountain Climbers apparel is loaned and must be returned on the date of termination or resignation. Employees will have the option to purchase their shirts that are initially given and are able to purchase additional items.

Offensive tattoos and body piercings must not be visible.

### **Company Property**

Company property, such as equipment, computers and software, is not for private use. These devices are to be used strictly for company business and are not permitted off campus unless authorized.

Any equipment must be returned upon the date of termination or resignation.

## **Employment Classification**

### **Recruitment & Retention Plan**

The **mission** of the LMC Recruitment and Retention Plan is to ensure Little Mountain Climbers has the opportunity to attract the best available staff for all open positions.

The **vision** of the LMC Recruitment and Retention Plan is to establish and evolve a healthy culture that serves its employees.

### **Recruitment**

There are three parts of the recruitment process that LMC focuses on; source, education and experience. These areas are the bases of recruiting because of the tangible data that can be observed for a potential candidate.

Sources of recruitment have been seen in multiple areas such as online, word of mouth and through online hiring resources. LMC does a thorough work search into who they are hiring through this process. Reading through resumes, calling references and looking for consistencies in work history is only a few ways of how we determine their eligibility.

Education shows more than just intelligence, but dedication to see a task through to completion. Consistency is something that is vital to an employees character as they are relied on in aspects that are determined by their position. When looking into a potential employee, LMC looks at how long they worked at a previous job and why there are inconsistencies as well as why there are consistencies. We want to know why they were inconsistent to understand what another company may have been doing wrong or if the employee couldn't be committed to working. And we want to know why they were consistent to see what their previous companies were doing right and how we can implement growth.

Experience that LMC is interested in seeing for potential employees is that of child supervision, customer service and exceptional references. Child supervision is the number one priority at LMC, because without proper supervision our children could not be accountable for the negative and positive actions they conduct.

LMC desires to see future employees with experience in a customer service setting. Interacting with children and their families is a demanding task some days and all LMC employees are held to a high standard of quality customer service. To go above and beyond is what we truly want to see with any employee.



It's not just enough to have worked in another child care facility, but to have worked at a high standard and have accountability for that work ethic is important. Through our work search we contact references and take those conversations into consideration when looking for the next LMC employee.

## **Retention**

There are three parts of the retention plan that LMC focuses on: benefits, communication and training. These areas are the bases for retaining staff and growing new ones.

Benefits at LMC are paid time off (sick leave & vacation), employee child rate reductions and flexible schedule. There are future benefits that LMC would like to implement, but one that is being worked on is the implementation of extra staff in our rooms to add extra support. The benefit of having a third teacher in a classroom would be to allow each child to have their needs met consistently and teachers to be given support.

Communication is crucial when trying to retain staff as communication sets the precedence of how well our leaders manage our staff. There are several forms of communication used at LMC; brightwheel (a system that is used to communicate with staff and parents), email, newsletters and monthly meetings. Communication is not only done in the form of groups but also individually. Annual evaluations allow LMC leaders to communicate the growth and strengths of an employee and give them tools and goals to set for their success.

Training is an essential part of retention because training not only makes employees experts at their jobs, but they become better informed and more motivated to progress in their careers. Formal training is not only offered, but on-hands training which allows employees to actively engage with immediate practice in the new skill they are learning. Trainings that are important and offered, but not limited to are: state rules and regulation training, de-escalation training, positive environment training, ITERS and ECERS, mission and vision training. These trainings are emphasized at LMC to establish a firm working foundation and create an expectation for any potential and current staff.

Our hope at LMC is to recruit people that share the same mission and vision as we do. And our belief is that the recruitment and retention plan aligns those goals.

## Full-Time

Employees who complete the introductory period and are regularly scheduled to work between 30-40 hours per week each week for a (12) month period are considered full-time.

Any overtime must be approved by their supervisor.

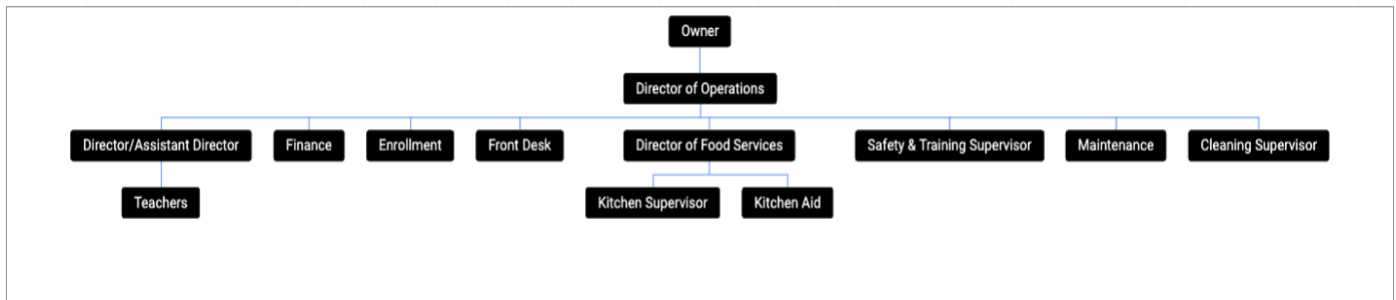
## Part-Time

Employees who complete the introductory period and are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week are considered part-time.

Part time employees will have to schedule all appointments during the time they are not working at LMC. Only emergency appointments will be approved during their shift.

Any overtime must be approved by your direct supervisor.

## Organizational Chart



## Lead Teacher

The Lead Teacher in the classroom carries the credentials to manage the classroom solely on their own and within the state regulated ratios.

## Aide Teacher

The Aide Teacher in the classroom supports the Lead Teacher in their role to assist with managing, supervising and interacting with the class. Aide Teachers have the opportunity to become Lead Teachers through a training process that is maintained by the Safety and Training Supervisor.

For more information on how to become a Lead Teacher, see the Safety and Training Supervisor.

## **Employee Wages & Benefits**

### **Salary/Pay Scale Policy**

The salary/pay scale policy for Little Mountain Climbers is determined by three categories; education, experience and performance. There are also 2 salary scales that are recognized; new hire salary scale (Lead and Aide) and current employee increase salary scale (Lead and Aide).

The new hire scale looks at only 2 of the 3 categories. Education and experience can be documented and have proof of completion, but performance is viewed and evaluated.

The current employee increase salary scale looks at all three categories. Evaluations and performance reviews are conducted on a regular basis.

### **New Hire:**

#### Lead Education

- CDA
- Associate's Degree (in ECE)
- Bachelor's Degree (in ECE)
- Verifiable Lead Certificate

#### Lead Experience/hours

- 1 year
- 2 - 5 years
- 5+ years
- +455 hours - Minimum amount of documented hours to be submitted on PDIS
- 1,850+ hours - preferred amount of documented hours to be submitted on PDIS

#### Aid Experience/hours

- 1 year
- 2 - 5 years
- 5+ years
- +455 hours - Minimum amount of documented hours to be submitted on PDIS
- 1,850+ hours - preferred amount of documented hours to be submitted on PDIS

## **Current Employee Increase Salary Scale:**

Lead & Aid Continued Education:

- PDIS Education
- College/Related Education

Lead & Aid Performance Reviews:

- Poor Performance
- Satisfactory Performance
- Outstanding Performance

## **Payroll & Paydays**

We comply with Federal and State laws when garnishments are necessary. As allowed by law, repeated garnishments may subject employees to discipline or dismissal.

Employees with questions regarding their paycheck should discuss the matter with their supervisor immediately. Employees should report any lost or destroyed paychecks as soon as possible.

Employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis

## **Employee Benefits**

Benefits at LMC are paid time off (sick leave), employee child rate reductions and flexible schedule. There are future benefits that LMC would like to implement, but one that is being worked on is the implementation of extra staff in our rooms to add extra support. The benefit of having a third teacher in a classroom would be to allow each child to have their needs met consistently and teachers to be given support.

## **Vacation Time**

Requests for vacation time off must be submitted through our website, [www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff](http://www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff) prior to the requested date. Approval is subject to mutual agreement by the employee and the Leadership Team.

## **Paid Sick Time (old policy: ended 12/31/2023)**

An employee at Little Mountain Climbers accrues Paid Sick Leave at a rate of 1 hour for every 30 hours worked. Paid sick leave is earned at the end of the pay cycle and is eligible for use the following pay period.

Paid sick leave is issued automatically based on absences due to the following reasons:

- The employee has a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; needs a medical diagnosis, care or treatment related to such illness, injury or condition; or needs to obtain preventive medical care.
- The employee needs to care for a family member who has a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; needs a medical diagnosis, care or treatment related to such illness, injury or condition; or needs to obtain preventive medical care.
- The employee or family member has been the victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault or harassment and needs to be absent from work for purposes related to such crime.
- A public official has ordered the closure of the school or place of care of the employee's child or of the employee's place of business due to a public health emergency, necessitating the employee's absence from work.

The max paid sick leave that an employee can accrue in the year is 48 hours. Paid sick leave will be paid automatically. After your 48 hours have been paid - you will not accrue or be paid for your sick leave.

If terminated paid sick leave is not payable to the employee. However, if rehired within 6 months of your last day, any sick leave accrued during your first time employed will be available to you.

If you have any questions regarding this policy please speak with our HR or Finance departments.

### **Paid Time Off (New Policy effective 01/01/2024)**

#### **Accrual Rate: 20 to 1**

- For every 20 hours worked, 1 hour of paid time off is given.

**Max Hours:** 48 Hours Per Year (6 days)

**Rollover Eligibility:** Yes, but you can still only max out at 48 hours for the year. Meaning, if you roll over 12 hours from the previous year, you will not earn 60 hours of paid time off, you will simply start closer to 48 hours.

**Acceptable Uses:** Sickness (must be requested within 3 days of sickness), bereavement and caretaking leave, family emergencies & personal Time

**Notice:** Must give advance notice, with exception to sickness, which must be requested within 3 business days of the sickness. If you request more than what you have earned you will only be given the max of what you earned.

**How to request:** complete form on [www.littlemountainclimbers.com/paidtimeoff](http://www.littlemountainclimbers.com/paidtimeoff)

\*This form does not dictate or translate as a time off request and a separate form will need to be completed at [www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff](http://www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff)

### **Employee Child Rate**

Employees with children are always welcome to be enrolled. The child rates differ depending on Colorado Child Care Assistance Program or Child Care Aware. We take pride in working with our employees to also provide them with affordable child care.

### **Time Off**

LMC is not obligated to approve time off requests, with exception to reasons under the Family and Medical Leave Act and other potential civic duties. LMC will work with all employees to make and schedule appointments, if our working schedule allows it, but all and any appointments should be made before or after an employee's shift or when LMC is closed (weekends). All time off requests need to be sent in 2 weeks in advance.

All LMC staff will have up to 2 weeks (80 hours) of vacation/personal time to request off.

Part time employees will have to schedule all appointments during the time they are not working at LMC. Only emergency appointments will be approved during their shift.

If appointments need to be scheduled during work hours, a week's notice must be given. LMC can currently accommodate two employees per day, scheduled off. Any time off requests sent in the week of will be denied unless discussed with the direct supervisor.

If denied a time off request, employees are required to come in during their scheduled shift. If a staff member leaves for a denied request or does not arrive from a denied time off request, it will be considered a no call no show. A no call no show is a considered reason for write up or termination.

Follow this link to submit a time off request:

[www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff](http://www.littlemountainclimbers.com/timeoff)

### **Observed Holidays**

We recognize the following holidays as holidays:

- New Year's Day, January 1st
- Memorial Day, Last Monday in May
- Independence Day, July 4th
- Labor Day, first Monday in September
- Thanksgiving Day, Last Thursday in November
- Christmas Day, December 25th

## **Attendance Policies**

### **Attendance & Punctuality**

Little Mountain Climbers working hours are 6:30am to 6:00pm. Hours for employees may vary on position and responsibilities. It is important that each employee is on time in their assigned work area and ready to begin their job duties.

### **Weekly Schedule**

All schedules are created on a weekly basis. Any schedule changes must be written and approved by your supervisor. These include days off, change of hours, leave or resignation.

Schedules will be provided via website and accessible anytime.

Employees may be reassigned as required by the needs of the center.

### **Daily Schedule**

A daily schedule is developed to ensure any callouts for that day are accounted for. This is sent out through brightwheel and accessible anytime.

Employees may be reassigned as required by the needs of the center.

### **Meal & Break times**

Meal and rest breaks will be provided in accordance with federal, state and local law. Where meal and rest breaks are not required by state law, we will provide regular breaks to ensure all employees are not burned out and energized throughout the day.

Employees are not permitted to bring outside food into the classroom, but are urged to eat any outside meals in the breakroom. A breakroom is provided with snacks and beverages to honor our employees and their hard work.

Breakfast, Lunch and afternoon snacks are provided and all teachers are encouraged to partake in these with the children.

As a nut free facility, any nut or products made from or prepared in an environment containing nuts are not allowed in Little Mountain Climbers facility. To prevent children with food allergies from being exposed to potentially hazardous foods, employees must remember to wash hands thoroughly after eating food items which contain peanuts before returning to the classroom.



All classrooms will have a designated cabinet for employees to place drinks such as coffee, soft drinks and water. For the safety of the children we do not allow ceramic mugs or glass bottles. All drinks must be encased in a plastic bottle or a metal coffee mug that has a secure lid.

### **Absence, Unscheduled Absences & Tardiness**

Punctuality and regular attendance are essential to the proper operation of the Company. From time to time, it may be necessary for an employee to be late or absent. We are aware that emergencies, illnesses or personal business that cannot be scheduled outside work hours may come up. It is the responsibility of all employees to contact their supervisor if they will be absent or late.

When an employee must leave work for any reason before the end of their scheduled shift, he or she must notify their supervisor. Failure to report for work or to notify your supervisor will result in an unexcused absence without pay and could result in further discipline or possibly termination.

Employees that are showing symptoms of sickness must notify their supervisor no less than 4 hours before their shift via phone call to ensure the maximum amount of time is given to find proper replacements and rearrangements. It is not acceptable to have another employee pass along the information of your absence or tardiness to your supervisor. It is your responsibility.

## **Work Performance**

### **Expectations**

Little Mountain Climbers expects all employees to act in a professional manner. Exceptional performance of job duties and responsibilities is key in all work environments. Employees should attempt to achieve their job tasks and act with persistence and consideration at all times.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

Employees are required to report any suspected child abuse or mistreatment of a child immediately to Child Protective Services (1-844-CO4-KIDS, 1-844-164-5437) as required by state law. The report should also be documented and provided to your supervisor immediately.

### **Discipline of Children Policy**

Employees use positive guidance and redirection as the primary method of managing behavior. When teachers use encouragement, positive reinforcement, provide children with choices and allow children to verbalize their frustrations, children will learn how to confront their feelings and learn self-control.

### **Supervision of Children**

Employees are responsible for the supervision of children at all times. At no time does an employee abandon the responsibility for children in his or her care.

### **Reviews**

We may regularly evaluate an employee's performance. The goal of a review is to establish areas in which an employee excels and where they need improvement. All reviews are based on merit, achievement and other qualifications obtained by the employee.

### **Opportunities for Advancement**

We want to see our employees succeed and grow in their jobs and so we seek to provide employees with opportunities to advance to other positions or opportunities within the Company. Approval of promotions depends largely upon training, experience, work record and business needs.

## **Discipline Policy**

### **Employment Discipline Policy**

Little Mountain Climbers reserves the right to discipline and/or terminate any employee who violates company policies, standards, practices or rules of conduct. Poor performance and misconduct are also grounds for discipline or termination.

The following actions are unacceptable and could be considered grounds for disciplinary action. This list is not comprehensive; rather an example of the types of conduct that the Company does not tolerate. These actions include, but are not limited to the following:

The following is a partial list of actions that necessitate corrective actions and/or discipline:

- Abusive behavior to a child
- Conflict of interest
- Endangering the well-being and safety of the children
- Disregard of safety and security procedures
- Mismanagement of the children or curriculum activities
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Breach of confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements
- Failure to properly supervise children
- Improper or inappropriate discipline of a child
- Using profanity, abusive or threatening language
- Theft or destruction of property
- Falsification of employment application
- Repeated failure to report to work on time
- Unauthorized failure to report to work on time
- Failure to promptly report a child illness, injury or accident

We reserve the right to determine the severity and extent of any disciplinary action based on the circumstances of each case.

## **Verbal Warning, Written Warning & Probation**

Different circumstances require different steps and the written warning to a probation process works according to the severity of an employee's actions. Below is the order of LMC's disciplinary actions.

- Verbal warning
  - A verbal warning is given (but not limited to the following) when an employee is not following an LMC policy and procedures or breaking state regulations.
- Written warning
  - A formal meeting between the supervisor and employee is scheduled to discuss the continued actions and a written warning is created as well as a plan for improvement.
- Probation
  - After a written warning has been given and the plan for improvement is not being followed, a probation is created. Depending on the severity of the continued behavior a probation can last from 2 weeks to 90 days. Within the probation period any behavior that is specific to the probation and that is continued can be cause for termination.

## **Termination**

Employment with Little Mountain Climbers is on an at-will basis and may be terminated voluntarily or involuntarily at any time.

Upon termination, an employee is required:

- To continue to work until the last scheduled day of employment, unless otherwise discussed with your supervisor and the Leadership Team.
- To turn in all reports and paperwork required to be completed by the employee when due and no later than the last day of work.
- To return all files, documents, equipment, keys, access cards, uniforms, software or other property belonging to the Company that are in the employee's possession.
- To participate in an exit interview as requested by Little Mountain climbers.

**Resignation/Voluntary Resignation**

Any employee who chooses to resign must provide a two-week notice. As permitted by law, any money due to the Company for services or property will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck if payment has not been made prior to the last date of employment. All staff are expected to continue their daily duties during their resignation period and are also expected to continue to follow all policies and procedures.

**Final Paycheck**

Employees who terminate employment with the Company will be given their final paycheck on the next pay day. Any Which is required by state law. Should the employee be unable to personally retrieve their paycheck, it will be mailed to the address on file.

**Return of Company Property**

An employee must return all Company property such as computer equipment, keys, parking passes, company credit card or proprietary manuals to the Company upon leaving the Company, for whatever reason. Employees will be responsible for any lost or damaged items.

**Exit Interview**

The Company may request an exit interview prior to an employee leaving the Company, whether because of the employee's voluntary resignation or as a result of being terminated. The purpose of the exit interview is to complete necessary forms, collect company property and discuss employment experiences with a Company representative.

## **Health & Illness**

### **Employee Illness**

In the event an employee falls ill, they should be excluded from the center under certain circumstances, including if they are unable to participate or perform the functions required for their position or if they are suffering from certain infectious diseases. An employee means any person working or volunteering to perform duties in the center.

It is the directors/supervisors duty to observe employees for signs of illness throughout the day. Employees have the responsibility of reporting, to their direct supervisor, any signs of infections or illness that may present a hazard to the health of children and other employees. When an employee is sent home, it is important to know when they are able to return to work.

### **Employees Handling Food in Regard to Illness**

Special attention must be given to staff members that handle food because many illnesses can be spread through food from an infected individual. Additionally, children under the age of 5 years of age and those with a compromised immune system are at higher risk for foodborne illness. Food handling activities include preparation of any food (i.e. washing, cutting, cooking and portioning), the mixing and feeding of bottles, and feeding infants and toddlers solid food. Food handling staff must notify their direct supervisor if they exhibit any of the following symptoms.

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Jaundice
- Sore throat with fever or
- Any open or draining wound that is not covered with waterproof bandage and is:
  - On the hands or wrists
  - On any exposed portions of the arms
  - On other parts of the body

### **How Sick Is Too Sick?**

When evaluating a sick employee or child, supervisors must consider which illnesses are currently circulating among the center as well as the community. Known exposure to cases or an outbreak of a contagious disease may necessitate more demanding requirements before returning to the center.

During Colorado's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, children and staff who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should receive testing and follow the COVID-19 Isolation guidance until testing is completed or if they test positive. If the individual tests negative for COVID-19, the individual should then follow the recommendations for their disease or symptoms using the below guidance.

- The child or employee is at risk of infecting others with COVID-19 or another contagious illness, either because of symptoms or recent close contact.
- The child or employee does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy or will not stop crying.
- A child needs more care than teachers can give while still caring for the other children.
- The child or employee has symptoms or an illness that is on the list below.

| Guidance for COVID-19 Symptoms   | Employee or child must stay home?  |
|--|--|
| <p>COVID-19 symptoms which must be <b>fully resolved</b> before a child or staff member returns to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Feeling Feverish, having chills or Fever</b><br/>(Temperature of 100.4° F or greater. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100° F or higher)</li> <li>● <b>Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</b></li> <li>● <b>Nausea, Vomiting/Throwing Up</b></li> <li>● <b>Diarrhea</b><br/>(Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine)</li> <li>● <b>Cough*</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Yes</b> - These symptoms are often present in individuals with COVID-19 and other contagious infectious disease, and a person with any of these symptoms (whether new or worsening from baseline) should first receive a diagnostic test for COVID-19.</p> <p><b>When to seek emergency medical attention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trouble breathing</b></li> <li>● <b>Persistent pain or pressure in the chest</b></li> <li>● <b>New confusion</b></li> <li>● <b>Inability to wake or stay awake</b></li> <li>● <b>Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips or nail beds, depending on skin tone</b></li> </ul> <p>These are not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.<br/>Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility. Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.</p> <p>If all symptoms are consistent with the usual symptoms of a known chronic condition and the child is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>If the test is positive, or the individual has not yet been tested, the individual should follow CDPHE’s isolation guidance, <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine">https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine</a>. Further guidance for the school or child care can be found at <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance">https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance</a>.</p> <p>If the test is negative AND the symptoms are explained by a specific illness other than COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If the test is negative and the illness is not explained by a new illness or a known chronic condition, the ill individual should still stay home until symptoms have been resolved for at least 24 hours without medication.</p> <p>*Students and staff may return if the cough is not fully resolved following discussion with a care provider.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sore throat</b></li> <li>● <b>Runny nose or congestion</b></li> <li>● <b>Muscle or body aches</b></li> </ul>   | <p>the child is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>If the diagnostic COVID test is positive, or the individual has not yet been tested, the individual should follow CDPHE’s isolation guidance,</p>  |



- Headache
- Fatigue
- New Loss of Taste or Smell\*\*

<https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine>. Further guidance can be found at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance>.

If the diagnostic test is negative and the symptoms are explained by a specific illness other than COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.

If the COVID test is negative and the illness is **not** explained by a new illness or a known chronic condition, the ill individual may return to school as long as all symptoms are improving and cough, shortness of breath, fever, diarrhea and vomiting have fully resolved.

\*\*Loss of taste or smell can persist for weeks or months. This condition does not need to be resolved or improving before an individual returns to school or care.

| Guidance for Symptoms Not Due to a Specific Disease, Following a Negative COVID Test   | Employee or child must stay home?   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Diarrhea</b><br/>Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine.</p>                                       | <p><b>Yes</b> - Unless the diarrhea is related to an existing chronic condition, is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home, or is consistent with the person's baseline.</p> <p>The child or staff member may return to school or child care 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the diarrhea is explained by a specific illness, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p>                              |
| <p><b>Fever</b><br/>Fever is a temperature of 100.4° F or greater. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100° F or higher.</p> | <p><b>Yes</b> - The child or staff member may return to school or child care if the fever has been resolved for 24 hours without fever reducing medications unless the fever is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the fever is explained by a specific illness COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p>  |
| <p><b>Flu-like Symptoms</b><br/>Fever<br/>Sore throat<br/>Runny nose or congestion</p>   | <p><b>Yes</b> - Children and staff may return to school or child care as long as they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms are improving, unless the symptoms are caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the symptoms can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>In consultation with a healthcare provider, additional evaluation for flu-like illnesses, sore throat, and upper respiratory symptoms may be appropriate, including evaluation for strep throat.</p> |
| <p><b>Vomiting/Throwing Up</b></p>   | <p><b>Yes</b> - Unless the vomiting is related to an existing chronic condition or is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home. If the vomiting is unexplained and inconsistent with the person's baseline state of health, the child or staff member may return 24 hours after their last episode of vomiting. If the vomiting can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p><b>If a child with a recent head injury vomits, seek medical attention.</b></p>   |

| Guidance for Specific Diagnosed Illnesses  | Employee or child must stay home?   |
|--|---|
| Chicken Pox  | Yes - until the blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days), or in immunized people without crusting, until no lesions within 24 hour period.  |
| Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge           | No - children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are not able to participate in usual activities. Call your doctor for advice and possible treatment.  |
| COVID-19 (clinical diagnosis, symptoms without testing, or a positive diagnostic test) | Yes - children and staff who have suspected COVID-19 or who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 must be excluded and follow CDPHE's <a href="#">isolation guidance</a> .<br>Guidance for schools and child care settings can be found here: <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/cases-and-outbreaks-child-care-schools">https://covid19.colorado.gov/cases-and-outbreaks-child-care-schools</a> . |
| Fifth's Disease (parvovirus)   | No - the illness is no longer contagious once the rash appears.   |
| Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus)  | No - unless the child or adult meets other exclusion criteria, is drooling uncontrollably and has mouth sores or is not able to take part in usual activities.  |
| Head Lice or Scabies   | Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment.   |
| Hepatitis A, Salmonella, Shigella, or Shiga-toxin Producing E. coli                    | Yes - children and staff may return to school or child care when cleared by the health department.  |
| Herpes   | No - unless there are open sores that cannot be covered or there is uncontrollable drooling.  |
| Impetigo   | Yes - children and adults need to stay home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started.  |
| Influenza  | Yes - children and staff should remain out of school or child care until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.  |
| Norovirus  | Yes - exclude children and staff for at least 48 hours after their last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea.  |
| Ringworm   | Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment. Keep the area covered for the first 3 days if participating in activities with person to person contact.  |

| Guidance for Specific Diagnosed Illnesses  | Employee or child must stay home?  |
|--|--|
| Roseola  | No - unless there is a fever or behavior changes.  |
| Croup, RSV<br>(Respiratory Syncytial Virus)  | Yes - Children and staff should remain out of school or child care until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours. |
| Strep Throat   | Yes - for 12 hours after starting antibiotics unless the doctor says that it is okay to return to school sooner.   |
| Other Vaccine Preventable Diseases<br>Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough) | Yes - Children and staff can return to school once they are no longer contagious (see Infectious Disease Guidelines). Public health consultation may be necessary.   |
| Yeast Infections<br>Thrush or Candida diaper rash  | No - follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.   |
| Other Symptoms or illnesses not listed   | Contact the child care center director or school health staff to see if the child or staff member needs to stay home (see Infectious Disease Guidelines).  |

This document was developed in collaboration with pediatricians, medical epidemiologists and public health professionals.

The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*.

Aronson SS, Shope TR, eds. 5th ed. Itasca, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2020.20. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. *Infectious Diseases In Child Care and School Settings: Guidelines for Child Care Providers and*

*Health Consultants, School Nurses and Other Personnel*. 2022. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. COVID-19 Resources. <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>. October 7, 2020.

Updated November 2022



The above information and table was acquired by Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment and is not the property of LMC, but to be used as a helpful guide.

## **Employee Safety**

### **Emergency Procedures**

The safety of children and staff is the number one priority here at Little Mountain Climbers. In each classroom is a booklet to ensure emergency practices are not forgotten as well as monthly training on how to execute these procedures. The following procedures are completed on a monthly basis.

- Tornado drills
- Fire evacuation
- Lockdown
- Shooter Intruder

### **Workplace Safety & Security**

Every effort must be made to comply with all workplace safety requirements as set by federal, state or local laws.

Report immediately to your supervisor:

- Any potentially unsafe working condition or practice.
- All accidents, even minor.
- Any piece of equipment deemed unsafe or not appropriate.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution and common sense in all work activities.

See Leadership team for COVID-19 employee policies

Employees must be alert and aware of any potential dangers to themselves, the children or their co-workers. Take every precaution to ensure that your surroundings are safe and secure.

### **Violence in the Workplace**

Workplace violence in any form is prohibited. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect our Company, or which occur on any Company property, will not be tolerated.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

For safety, insurance and other business considerations, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. When making arrangements for visitors, employees should request that visitors enter through the main lobby area and sign in and sign out at the front desk. All visitors must present valid government-issued photo identification. If an unfamiliar person attempts to pick up a child from the classroom, the teacher must confirm his or her identity with a designated employee to ensure the individual is on the pick up list prior to releasing the child.

Visitor Pass Procedure:

After a visitor is signed in they will be given a visitor pass sticker. It must be filled out and worn the entire time a visitor is present in the center.

A visitor pass sticker does not need to be used during a pick up as they are only here for a short time. This will be used for tours, state visitors and guests that will be here for an extended period of time.

If someone is roaming the building without a visitor pass, contact a director and they will instruct the visitor to return to the lobby to receive their visitor pass.

How does the visitor pass sticker work?

**The visitor pass sticker has 4 lines for information that must be filled out. Visitor name, the initials of the child they are visiting, the time they entered the building and the date of the visit.**

What if the visitor is not here to see a child?

**The line that says child initials will have an X on it.**

When should someone receive a visitor pass sticker?

**Anyone that will be in the building for a tour, interview, well check visit, all types of therapy, maintenance repairs, licensing specialist, parent engagements, etc.**

When should someone not receive a visitor pass sticker?

**Anyone that is picking up their child(ren).**

What should staff do if someone has been here for a while without a sticker?

**Call for a director and they will have the guest go back to the lobby and receive a sticker.**

Does this take the place of the sign-in/sign-out sheet?

**No, this does not take its place. It is a visual for all staff to know the visitor is approved to be in our center.**

**Personal Property**

All personal property must be kept away from children due to possible dangerous contents, such as medication, nail files, nail clippers, scissors, mace, etc. A cabinet out of reach of children is designated in each classroom as the location to keep purses and personal items for each staff member. Keep the cabinet locked at all times.

**Weapons on Premises**

We strive to provide a safe, nonviolent facility for everyone. Dangerous weapons and firearms (as defined by law and or by the Company) are not permitted on Company property at any time.

Dangerous weapons will be confiscated.

## **Employee Communications**

### **Employee Monthly Meetings**

In order to keep communication channels open, we implement a once-a-month school-wide staff meeting. Employees receive communications about the agenda and discussion topics every month.

### **Employee Annual Trainings**

The following annual trainings are completed, but not limited by the specified topics:

- Employee/Parent Handbook Updates
  - Includes Annual Code of Conduct Training
- FUN-SHINE EXPRESS Curriculum
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- ITER's & ECER's
- LMC and Colorado State Policy and Procedures
- Trauma Training

### **Media Inquiries**

Employees are not allowed to speak to reporters on behalf of the Company. Employees should refer any inquiries from reporters or other members of the media seeking a statement on behalf of the company to their supervisor or an executive of the Company.

### **Paid Planning**

One of our goals at LMC is to provide lead teachers with *at least* one hour of paid planning time each week. We also hope to eventually have paid planning time for the lead and the aid in the room giving them time to plan together. This goal will be made possible with proper staffing.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

LMC participates in parent/teacher conferences to ensure that parents/guardians are getting the best feedback on their child(rens) development and progress. These are conducted by the lead teacher in the classroom 2 times annually in April and October.

### **Suggestions**

Employees are encouraged to bring forward their suggestions and ideas about making the Company's Little Mountain Climbers a better place to work and enhancing services to its clients. Any employee who sees an opportunity for improvement is encouraged to discuss it with the Company. Executives of the Company may help bring ideas to the attention of the people in the organization that will be responsible for possibly implementing them. All suggestions are valued.



**Closing Statements**

Effective communication plays a crucial role in fostering favorable working conditions and relationships. It is imperative for employees to remain informed about changes in procedures, policies, and overall information within the organization. Additionally, conveying ideas, suggestions, personal goals, or any issues that impact collaboration with the company is equally significant.