

Merced County Community Action Agency

Early Learning Preschool Programs



Parent Handbook

Amended August 2016

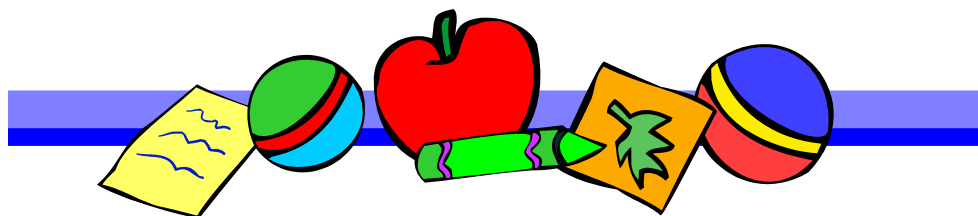


Table of Contents

Introduction	3	Program Policies	12
Statement of Purpose	3	Attendance Policy	12
Preschool Sites	3	Arrival and Departure	13
Licensure	4	Late Pick-up	13
Philosophy	4	Positive Behavioral Support	14
Program Requirements	4	Field Trips	15
Admission Priorities	5	Things from Home	15
Income Eligibility	6	Daily Health Screenings	16
Family Need	7	Medication	17
Physician’s Report	9	Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting	17
Immunizations	9	Days of Closure	17
Emergency Information	9	Evacuation Procedures	18
Program Goals	9	No Drug/Smoking Policy	18
Education Program	9	Family Fee Policy	18
Parent Involvement and Education	10	Termination of Services	19
Health and Social Services	11	Appeals Process	19
Community Involvement	12	Transportation	21
Nutrition	12	Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice	21
Program Evaluation	12		

Introduction

Welcome to the Merced County Community Action Agency (MCCAA) Early Learning Preschool Programs! On behalf of the children and staff at MCCAA Early Learning Preschool Programs, I would like to welcome you to our Preschool. We look forward to sharing our program and getting to know you and your child. You are important to us. Please feel free to share your ideas with us.

Statement of Purpose

MCCAA is a local non-profit organization that has been serving the needs of the low-income population through a variety of programs in Merced County since 1965. MCCAA changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. Our preschool programs provide children with developmentally appropriate early learning activities to prepare them for their elementary years. The mission of MCCAA Preschool Programs is to work within our communities to provide comprehensive, top quality services to participating children and families: **one child, one family at a time**. We currently have five preschool sites located throughout Merced County. We serve families with children 3-5 years of age who are not yet eligible for kindergarten. Our programs operate part-day and/or full-day, throughout the year. Families must meet income eligibility requirements for all programs, and those families requesting full-day care must also meet need requirements.

Preschool Sites

Delhi State Preschool

16249 Delhi Avenue, Building B
Delhi, CA 95315 (209) 668-6027

Merced Child Development Center

720 S. Highway 59
Merced, CA 95341 (209) 723-1046

Le Grand Early Learning Center

4140 Cook Street
Le Grand, CA 95333 (209) 389-4117

Stevinson State Preschool

19977 W. Third Avenue
Stevinson, CA 95374 (209) 669-8884

Los Banos Child Development Center

(Martin Luther King Jr. Building)
1624 San Luis Street
Los Banos, CA 93635 (209) 826-1011

Preschool Programs Administration

1235 W. Main Street
Merced, CA 95340 (209) 722-7129
Program Director: Adaluz Ramirez
aramirez@mercedcaa.org

Licensure

MCCAA Early Learning Preschool Programs are licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. The programs operate for children 3-5 years of age residing in Merced County. The facilities, staff, and programs meet the State guidelines as determined by Title 22 and Title 5 regulations. The program follows the Funding Terms & Conditions and Program Requirements for California State Preschool Programs as mandated by the California Department of Education.

Philosophy

The philosophy of the MCCAA Early Learning Preschool Programs is derived from the following Standards of Conduct:

- We respect each child's individuality and uniqueness.
- We believe that growth takes place in orderly sequences, one stage following another.
- We believe that development of the whole child depends on appropriate physical, mental and social nourishment supplied by the home, school, and community.
- We believe that play, both formal and organized, is significant to intellectual growth.
- We believe it is important for a child to have a pleasant childhood and a good beginning toward a successful life.
- We believe that the family is the primary influence on the child's development and must be a direct participant in the program.

In order to realize these philosophies, our staff applies the theories of development to each and every child by assessing developmental levels, preparing a developmentally appropriate environment, and guiding children through play activities in a manner that promotes confidence, competence, and learning.

Program Requirements

Our programs admit well, ambulatory preschool children, ages 3 to 5 years who do not yet qualify for kindergarten. We include and welcome children with special needs.

To determine eligibility for MCCAA Early Learning Preschool Programs, the family will be invited to an intake interview appointment. During this interview, thorough documentation

is required including: birth records of all children in the household, proof of residency, documentation of all countable income, and required forms for each eligible child. When determining family size, documentation must be provided for each parent or adult counted in the household who is responsible for the care and welfare of the child(ren). If applicable, the applicant must self-certify single household and absents parent status on sections I and V of the application for services. Every family must meet the income eligibility guidelines. For families requesting full day services, a verification of need will also be required. The intake appointment is the time to see the center, meet the teacher, and get your questions answered about the early learning program.

Birth record for each child counted in the family size.

The number of children shall be documented by providing one of the following documents, as applicable:

1. Birth certificates;
2. Court orders regarding child custody;
3. Adoption documents;
4. Records of Foster Care placements;
5. School or medical records;
6. County welfare department records; or
7. Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent.

Admission Priorities

First priority – 4 or 3 year old children referred by Child Protective Services

Second priority – eligible 4 year old children

- Children enrolled in the program as 3 year olds
- Four year old children whose families have the lowest income ranking

Third priority – eligible 3 year old children

Age Eligibility

1. “CSPP eligible three-year-olds” who, regardless of their chronological age, will have their third birthday on or before September 1, of the fiscal year they are being served.

2. “CSPP eligible four-year-olds” who, regardless of their chronological age, will have their fourth birthday on or before September 1, of the fiscal year they are being served.

3. “CSPP eligible five-year-olds” who will have their fifth birthday on or before September 1 of the fiscal year they receive services, and who were receiving full-day services as a CSPP eligible four-year-old on or before June 30, may remain in a CSPP program until the child begins kindergarten, but no later than September 30.

Income Eligibility

Families enrolling in this State funded program must show documentation of total countable income for each adult counted in the family size. Eligibility will be based on where families are placed on the current Family Fee Schedule according to both the gross monthly family income and the family size. Some families will be required to pay family fees for services.

The parent is responsible for providing documentation of the family’s total countable income and the contractor is required to verify the information, as described below. The parent(s) shall document total countable income for all the individuals counted in the family size.

Upon establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility for services, a family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for not less than 12 months, shall receive those services for not less than 12 months before having their eligibility or need recertified, and shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for at least 12 months. Education Code (EC), Section 8261(h)(1).

Eligibility:

1. Family has a child who is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, or receiving child protective services through the county welfare department
2. Family is homeless
3. Family is a cash aid recipient
4. Family is income eligible

Parental Responsibility to Report family income changes:

Parents are required to report when their family income exceeds the 85% dollar amount for their family size.

When family income exceeds the identified 85% of SMI for the family size, the contractor must dis-enroll the family and issue a Notice of Action (NOA) citing the family has exceeded the 85 percent of the SMI adjusted for family size.

Management Bulletin 17-09 Recertification Schedule of Income Ceilings (85 percent SMI) for Recertification Child Care and Development Programs

Family Size	Family Monthly Income	Family Yearly Income
1-2	\$4,894	\$58,724
3	\$5,270	\$63,235
4	\$5,922	\$71,065
5	\$6,870	\$82,436
6	\$7,817	\$93,806
7	\$7,995	\$95,938
8	\$8,172	\$98,070
9	\$8,350	\$100,202
10	\$8,528	\$102,334
11	\$8,705	\$104,466
12	\$8,883	\$106,598

Documentation of Family Need for Full-day Preschool only

Upon establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility for services, a family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for not less than 12 months, shall receive those services for not less than 12 months before having their eligibility or need recertified, and shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for at least 12 months *Education Code (EC), Section 8261(h)(1)*.

The family need will be determined by documentation of one of the following activities for each adult in the home. Each adult counted in the family size must have a need for child care services.

- **Employment** – When the basis for need is employment, means of verification may include but is not limited to: Pay Stubs, Record of Wages, Proof of Self-Employment,

and/or Tax Returns, as well as completed Employment Verification Form. Verification must include, name of business, address, telephone number, days and hours worked, duration of employment, signature of supervisor, and a signed consent to release employment information.

- **Vocational Training** leading directly to a recognized trade, para-profession, profession or education degree - When the basis of need is training, child care services may be authorized for six years from initiation of services. Twenty four semester units or its equivalent after the attainment of a Bachelor's Degree. Parents must identify a vocational, occupational, or educational degree and occupational goal. Student's must maintain and report satisfactory progress to the agency. When the student fails to meet satisfactory programs, the student may be offered an additional training period to meet satisfactory progress. Verification with school or training schedule, proof satisfactory progress, or mid semester adequate progress, and successful completion with a grade point average of 2.0 each semester is required
- **Seeking employment** - When the basis for need is seeking employment, participant may be approved to seek employment for not less than 6 months, working days, and for less than thirty hours per week.
- **Parental incapacitation** - written document signed by licensed practitioner verifying the number of hours per day that care is required. Documentation shall include; a statement that the participant is incapacitated and incapable of providing care and supervision for the child. The documentation must identify the extent to which the participant is incapable of providing care and supervision. Child care cannot exceed 50 hours per week.
- **Homeless, Seeking permanent housing for family stability** - When the basis of need is seeking permanent housing, participant may be approved to seek permanent housing for less than thirty hours per week for consecutive working days, Monday to Friday for less than 30 hours per week, no more than 29.5 hours per week, excluding federal holidays.
- **CPS or At Risk of Abuse or Neglect** - When the basis of need is CPS or At risk of Abuse or Neglect, a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency, or emergency shelter is required. The written referral from shall include a statement that the child is at risk of abuse or neglect and that the child care services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk. CPS shall certify that the child is receiving protective services and that child care is a necessary part of CPS plan. CPS may receive services for up to 12 months. At risk for up to 3 months. Families with at risk children may be exempt from paying fees for up to three months and families with children receiving CPS may be exempt from paying fees for up to 12 months, if the legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter specifies in the referral that it is necessary to waive the family fee

Recertification of eligibility and need will take place each program year at intervals not to exceed 12 months.

Physician's Report

The center must receive a written Physician's Report for each child within 30 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. The physicians report must state that the child is in good enough health to be around other children in group care, and must include:

- A record of any infectious or contagious diseases that would preclude care of the child by the program staff
- Results of a test for tuberculosis (TB test) or a physician's documentation that no risk factors are present
- Identification of the child's special problems and needs, if any
- Identification of any prescribed medications being taken by the child
- Ambulatory status
- Signature of a licensed physician

Immunizations

Due to California State Law, children entering MCCA Early Learning Preschool Programs should have a minimum of 4 DPT, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, 2 Hepatitis A, and 1 MMR and at least 1 HIB (both must be on/after the first birthday), 1 Varicella or history of chicken pox, and 1 negative TB test. Only children who have up-to-date or complete immunizations may attend class.

Emergency Information

Every child must have current emergency information on file. This will enable us to reach you at any time in case of an emergency. If your child becomes ill or gets injured at the preschool site, contacting you immediately is crucial. Please be sure we have correct information for you and others on your pick up list. If all emergency contact numbers are not working numbers child will not be able to attend class until valid numbers are provided. **Up-to-date information must be available to the center at all times.**

Program Goals

Education Program

The preschool programs are designed to meet each child's individual early learning needs. They also aim to meet the needs of the community served and its ethnic and cultural characteristics. Parents and staff will work together to ensure that the needs of each child are met.

Recognizing the power to learn rests in the child, we focus on active learning practices. The adult's role is to support and guide children through these active learning adventure and experiences. Children participate in indoor and outdoor play and are introduced to the concepts of life skills, literacy, colors and numbers, oral language, and school readiness. Children are encouraged to express their feelings and to develop self-confidence and the ability to get along with others.

Our preschool curriculum consists of daily learning activities based on Frog Street Press, Creative Curriculum for Preschool and the California Preschool Learning Foundations and Curriculum Frameworks. The curriculum is developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate for all children. We encourage respect for the feelings and rights of others. Our curriculum encourages children to learn from play and promotes child development in multiple learning domains including:

- Approaches to Learning-Self Regulation
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy Development
- English-Language Development
- Cognition, Including Math and Science
- Physical Development
- History-Social Science
- Visual and Performing Arts

A Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) will be completed on each new child within 60 calendar days of enrollment and every 6 months. The teaching staff will complete the DRDP assessment, use it to plan curriculum, and share a summary of the results with the parent at a parent conference.

The program refrains from religious practice and instruction.

Parent Involvement and Education

Parents are the most important influence in a child's development. They are the child's first teacher. Parent involvement contributes to the program's success. The program assures that parents give input and are partners in making decisions that affect their child's experience in the program. Parents are required to follow the policies of the program, participate in parent conferences, regularly attend parent meetings, and participate in special events of the program. Our preschool programs achieve its highest success when parents are involved. We promote parent participation in the following ways:

- A mandatory orientation for parents that includes topics such as program philosophy, program goals and objectives, program activities, eligibility criteria and priorities for enrollment, fee requirements, and due process procedures.
- At least two (2) individual conferences with the parent(s) each year.
- Monthly parent meetings with program staff.
- An open door policy that encourages parents to participate in the daily activities whenever possible.
- A Parent Group that supports the program staff on issues related to services to families and children.
- Daily sharing of information between staff and parents concerning the child's progress.

Parents who have special skills, hobbies, interests, or information are encouraged to talk with the teachers so that a time can be arranged to share with the children.

Parents/volunteers will need to provide proof of a negative TB test. California State Law also requires all individuals volunteering to provide proof of Measles, Pertussis and Influenza vaccinations. There is an opt-out option only for the Influenza vaccination in which an individual must provide a written statement opting out of the Influenza vaccination. All documentation of vaccinations must be provided before volunteering.

Parents are strongly advised to participate in the classroom and attend parent meetings.

At least once per year parent group leaders from each site will meet with the Program Director to participate in a program self-study.

Health and Social Services

The preschool programs emphasize the importance of early identification of health problems and social service needs. Staff members work with families to connect them with health providers in their community for ongoing health maintenance. We strive to follow up with parents to ensure that the needs have been met. Our programs support our families' health and social service needs by:

- Identifying the needs of the child and the family for health or social services.
- Referring a children and/or family to appropriate agencies in the community based on their identified health or social service needs.
- Conducting follow-up procedures with parents to ensure that their needs have been met.

ASQ-3/ASQ-SE: Every child that enters program will be given an (ASQ-3/ASQ-SE) Ages and Stages Questionnaire that the parent will complete with the child. The ASQ-3 assessment tool is designed to screen young children for developmental delays and to help determine if a child is in need of further evaluation. The ASQ-SE assessment is designed to assess cognitive, communicative and motor development. This tool helps to identify the need for further social-emotional behavior assessment. If a child scores at risk a follow-up assessment and or referral is made so that the child will receive the services they need to reach their full potential.

Community Involvement

Our preschool programs ask for support from the community including the solicitation for donated goods and services. We provide information to the community regarding the services available. We may utilize media or other forms of communication in the community.

Nutrition

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is available to all children. Our preschool programs include a nutrition component that ensures that the children have nutritious meals and snacks during the time in which they are in the program. Our meals and snacks are culturally and developmentally appropriate for the children being served and meet the nutritional requirements specified by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus are posted monthly and available to parents. No child is discriminated against on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the USDA.

Program Evaluation

Annually the program conducts a self evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the services provided. Staff, parents, administrators, and board member are involved in this process.

Program Policies

Attendance Policy

Children are required to attend the preschool program according to the contracted hours and schedule established to meet the family needs. In the event of an absence, the family must report the absence to the school staff by 9 am each day. The nature of the absence will be required.

Excused absences: In order to be excused, absences must be documented as:

- Illness of the child or parent
- Family emergency - not to exceed 10 days per fiscal year because of illness of sibling, bereavement of immediate family member, or family catastrophe
- Court ordered visitation - a copy of the Court Order must be in the child's file
- Best Interest of the Child days – not to exceed 10 days per fiscal year for any of the following reasons: family needs, out of town visit by immediate family, or vacation

Unexcused absences: All other reasons not listed above will be considered unexcused. Any child who has in excess of five days of unexcused absences per fiscal year may be dropped from the program.

Families planning to disenroll from the preschool program **must** give the site two weeks notice. The site supervisor will issue a Notice of Action documenting the final day of services. During this two week period, children will be in attendance.

Arrival and Departure

Children **must** be signed in and out each time they enter and leave the classroom. A full signature is required with the time of arrival and departure. Children will only be released to persons listed on the pick-up sheet with picture identification. No child will be released to any individual who, deemed by the teacher and site supervisor, cannot adequately care for the health and safety of the child.

It is illegal to leave children unattended in vehicles. Children cannot be left alone even for a short period of time in a vehicle parked in front of or around one of our centers.

Late Pick-up

It is the parent's responsibility to call the site when he/she will be late picking up the child past their scheduled time. The site will log each late pick up. More than three late

occurrences will be a reason for a conference with the parent and could lead to the termination of services.

If a child has not been picked up at the center's closing time, and all authorized pick up contacts have been called, we will wait one hour before making a call to Child Protective Services or a law enforcement agency to place the child into protective custody.

Positive Behavioral Support

Our Positive Behavior Support program is based on the philosophy that:

- Every child has the right to learn
- Every teacher has the right to teach

Our Preschool teacher's model expected behavior and use positive methods of behavioral support which encourage self-control, self-directions, self-esteem and cooperation among the children. By setting reasonable expectations we help a child understand what is expected of him/her. Our goal is to give the children the security of knowing we care enough to prevent them from hurting themselves or other and provide each child with a happy first experience in school by encouraging success and minimizing failure. In case of disruptive behavior occur the following procedure will be implemented:

Children will be helped through negative behavior episodes so that they may be successful in our program. When children need guidance and support, each will be talked to by the teachers in a way he or she can understand. Positive support techniques will be used.

- Children may be re-directed into something else, or take a short time away from an activity but will be given a chance to return to try again.
- Children will be encouraged to use words to describe his or her thoughts and feelings.
- Directions will be given to children in a positive manner.
- Parents will be notified of children's behavior as it is necessary for classroom success.
- Parents will be called to pick up child if child is violent towards staff, students or school property.

Our program believes that every child is entitled to a safe environment. In cases where a child continues to use inappropriate behavior the following steps will be taken:

Step 1: **Verbal warning**- Child will be verbally warned and redirected if needed.

Step 2: **Parent will be called-** and informed of child's inappropriate behavior and asked to talk to child if necessary.

Step 3: **Parent/ Teacher Conference-** Parent/Teacher Conference will be scheduled and a behavior plan put in place that both the teacher and parent will be included in.

Step 4: **Referral-** If behavior has still not improved a discussion about possible referral will take place and referral made if needed.

Step 5: **Termination of Services:** If the child's inappropriate behavior continues and none of the actions previously taken have improved, a meeting with Program Director, Teacher and Parents will be scheduled to determine if our program can adequately meet the needs of the child. As a last resort child may be dropped from program if inappropriate behaviors continue and pose a danger to the health and safety of the children, as our program may not be equipped to meet that needs of that child.

Children will learn to respect people, property, and the rights of others. They will be responsible for helping pick up materials and supplies, and cleaning up after themselves. Independent skills will be taught and enforced. Helping others will be encouraged. Children will gain self-control, confidence, and independence while being supportive and encouraging of others. No one will be permitted to physically or verbally assault children, parents, or staff members.

Physical punishment is never used for any reason. No child will be left alone without adult supervision.

There are some behaviors that may result in an automatic sending child home: hitting, kicking, biting, or running out of classroom.

Field Trips

Our preschool programs may include short field trips within walking distance of the site; for example, to the local Post Office, Fire Department, or County Fairgrounds. Permission slips will be issued to parents prior to any field trip. Parents are encouraged to attend and help to supervise the children during field trips. Children should be dressed comfortably, including appropriate footwear.

Things from Home

The teaching staff provides a wide variety of experiences for the children throughout the year. Some of these experiences are outdoors, some are messy, and some require easy

body movement. Children should be dressed appropriate for playing and discovery. Loose fitting clothing appropriate to the season and shoes that fit, are necessary. For safety reasons absolutely NO backless shoes (thongs, flip-flops, slip-ons, etc), cowboy boots, and slippers are permitted. Tennis shoes are preferred.

Parents are required to bring a change of clothing for the child in case of accident or spillage. Please bring pants, top, underclothing, and socks labeled with the child's name and place them in his/her cubbie. Children must leave personal toys at home, except on teacher approved show-and-tell days.

For children in full day programs, please bring a clean crib-sized sheet and small blanket for rest time at the beginning of each week. Cots or mats will be provided. Please take home the bedding at the end of each week for laundering.

The program is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal items brought from home.

Daily Health Screenings

State guidelines require each child to be screened daily to determine whether the child is well enough to be in school. Children not found to be well will be sent home. Your child needs to be kept home when he/she has any of the following:

- Fever of 100 degrees axillary (under the arm).
- Eye drainage, discharge, redness and/or burning
- Bronchitis and/or croup
- Skin rashes
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Severe cold or flu symptoms
- Head scratching (Lice)
- Severe breathing difficulties
- Any condition that inhibits a child's ability to participate in the daily classroom routine

Your child may return to school after being **free** of the contagious symptoms of these illnesses for at least 24 hours. Some illnesses may require a physician's diagnosis and clearance before return. In the case of head lice, the child may not return until they are free of all lice and nits.

Guidelines require that the site must verify the child's absences if they are not at school. Please call to notify the site by 9:00 am if your child is not coming to school and verify the

reason for the absence. If your child has missed five consecutive days of school because of illness, you must provide documentation from a physician allowing your child to return to school.

Outside play is an important part of our daily activities. If your child is too sick to play outside, then he or she should not be brought to school that day.

Medication

If prescription medications are required during school hours, the parent/guardian must complete Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication form with signature giving the staff directions and permission to administer medication. All medication must be in the original container with a prescription label naming the child, physician, name of medication, date prescribed and clear dosage instructions. Prescription medication may only be given to the child named on the bottle. Nonprescription medication can be given with written approval from the parent/guardian.

Please notify the teacher if you have given your child medication prior to bringing him/her to the school that day.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

MCCAA Preschool Program staff members are mandated reporters. They are required to report all suspected child abuse and neglect to a child protective service or law enforcement agency immediately by phone and in writing within 36 hours.

Days of Closure

All sites will be closed for the following 12 holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents Day
- Cesar Chavez Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday – Thursday and Friday
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Each site will close early on the last Friday of each month for staff support, activity planning for preschool classes, curriculum planning, DRDP documentation and cleaning.

There will be two or three days per year designated as staff inservice days. Parents will be notified of these days of closure in advance.

Evacuation Procedures

Fire and earthquake drills are held regularly. If there is a need to evacuate one of our buildings, the relocation site and emergency phone number will be posted on the front door.

No Drug/Smoking Policy

Smoking and drug use on the premises of a licensed child care center are prohibited. Smoking within 100 feet of the outdoor playground is also prohibited.

Family Fee Policy

The fee rate is determined by the State and adopted each year. Rate changes will be effective the month following the release of new fees.

For full – day. Families will be assessed either a flat monthly full-time fee or part-time fee, based on hours of care certified for the month, income, and family size. Families with a certified need of less than 130 hours per month will be assessed a part-time fee while families with a certified need of 130 hours or more per month will be assessed a full-time fee. The agency can charge a part-time fee or the cost of care fee (calculated by multiplying the days of enrollment by the rate), whichever is less, depending on the number of hours of certified enrollment for the month. The Standard Reimbursement Rate may be used to determine actual cost of service for center-based programs. The assessment of the family fee is based on a family fee schedule issued by the California Department of Education.

The family fee is paid prior to service each month. No adjustment is made for excused nor unexcused absence. The Family Fee is assessed based on the family's child enrolled for the longest period of child care. Family **fees shall be considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due.** A Notice of Action shall be issued for delinquent family fees.

- Family fees are to be paid one week in advance. Bills will be issued during the last week of the month for the following month of service. Fees will be due on the first day of each month. No credits will be given for absent, sick or vacation days.
- A fee credit may be applied to the family's subsequent fees during a billing period if the parent is paying for other child care services. Receipts or cancelled checks are required by the program to substantiate the payment of other child care fees. No carryover for fees will be permitted beyond that month.
- If the parent pays by personal check and the check is returned for insufficient funds, the parent will be required to pay in cash the owed fees with any bank charges. All future payments for services will be handled in cash only.
- Family fees are considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due. If fees are not received by the 8th of each month, Notice of Actions will be issued to terminate services for delinquent fees. If fees are received by the end of the notice period, a Notice of Action will be issued reinstating services.
- Parents planning to disenroll from the program will be required to give two weeks notice and pay family fees for the entire month. No refund of fees will be issued.
- For a recipient of services who is determined ineligible due to fraud, the recipient will be required to reimburse the program for the cost of services.
- Fees not paid will be cause for termination.

When Families Voluntarily Request a Reduction of Family Fee

When a family voluntarily requests a reduction to their family fee by reporting a change such as family income, days and hours of care needed, or family size, the contractor must reassess the family fee as described above. The parent must provide documentation to support the reported change. The family fee reduction takes effect on the first of the month following the receipt and approval of the required supporting documentation. **This documentation may not be used to make any other changes to the family's service agreement.**

Termination of Services

Reasons for the termination of services may include, but are not limited to:

- Falsification of records
- Failure to meet timelines for health requirements
- Failure to notify center immediately of changes in income, employment, training, contract hours, residence, telephone number or family size
- Failure to submit required documentation
- Delinquent fees
- Failure to comply with attendance and all other center policies

Appeals Process

A parent who does not agree with an action of the agency as stated in the Notice of Action may appeal the intended action. All steps must be followed in the appeals process to assure that the appeal will be considered. The appeal process is outlined in full on the back of each Notice of Action as is as follows:

Step 1: Complete the appeal information on the back of the NOA to request a local hearing.

Step 2: Mail or deliver your local hearing request within 14 days of receipt of the NOA.

Step 3: Within ten (10) calendar days following the agency's receipt of your appeal request, the agency will notify you of the time and place of the hearing. You or your authorized representatives are required to attend the hearing. If you or your representative does not attend the hearing, you abandon your rights to an appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

Step 4: Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or deliver to you a written decision.

Step 5: If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 14 calendar days in which to appeal to the Early Education and Support Division (EESD). Your appeal to the EESD must include the following documents and information: (1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believe the agency's decision was incorrect, (2) a copy of the agency's decision letter, and (3) a copy of both sides of the NOA. You may either fax your appeal to 916-323-6853, or mail your appeal to the following address:

California Department of Education

Early Education and Support Division

1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
Phone: 916-322-6233

Transportation

Parents are responsible for the transportation of children to and from the preschool program site. No transportation is provided by the program or staff.

Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice (UPC)

Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding the Name of Agency and Early Learning and Support program alleged violation of a statute or regulation that the California Department of Education is authorized to enforce. This includes allegations of unlawful discrimination. Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with:

California Department of Education
Early Education and Support Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court.