

**PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

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<i>Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, is supported through federal, state, and county grants, charitable contributions, client fees, Medicaid and insurance reimbursement. State of New Jersey grants include funding from the Division of Child Protection and Permanency, the Division of Family Development, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Children and Families.</i>	



Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen welcomes you to our Child Care programs. Our programs were developed to respond to the wide range of needs presented by families in Middlesex, Morris, Somerset, and Warren Counties. Our commitment is to strengthen the family unit. All of our Child Care programs are licensed by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. Our programs strive for continuous quality improvement based on national standards in our field established by the National Afterschool Association (NAA) and the National Institute on Out of School Time (NIOST).

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen has multiple service areas including: Basic Needs, Child Care, Counseling, Immigration, Maternity services. Out of Home Placement, Shelters & Housing, Social Concerns, Unity Square, and Youth Services. All of our services are offered on a non-profit basis to any client regardless of race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation/preference, national origin, handicapped status or other protected classification.

### **Mission Statement Catholic Charities**

Driven by the social teachings of the Church, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen provides quality services to the poor, vulnerable and all people in need, and partners with families and communities to improve the quality of life.

### **Mission Statement Child Care Programs**

Believing that all children deserve the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential, our programs are dedicated to providing the highest quality of child care services to children and their families.

### **Our Values**

<u>Respect:</u>	We respect our families, staff, stakeholders, and the community.
<u>Excellence:</u>	We provide the highest quality of services to our families and the community.
<u>Flexibility:</u>	We recognize the need to be flexible to the changing needs of families, staff, and the communities we serve.
<u>Collaboration:</u>	We will work cooperatively with families, staff, community, and stakeholders to ensure that the whole is stronger than the parts.
<u>Culturally Sensitive:</u>	We are responsive to the individuality of our families, staff, and the community.

## ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at Catholic Charities Child Care Programs is open to children ages 2 1/2 to 13 years. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation/preference, disability or other protected classification; and without regard to a parent/guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation/preference, pregnancy, disability or other protected classification.



Parent/Guardian(s) can apply for enrollment of their child in Catholic Charities Child Care Programs by completing the enrollment application and paying the nonrefundable **annual** registration fee and deposit. **NEW! Families can enroll through our website on our web based forms (ProCare) for their child's programs under their specific school.** The current fee schedule and other documents are also available for reference for our specific services. **\*\*See more detailed ProCare instructions at the end of this manual as an addendum.**

**Parents must re-enroll their child(ren) every year for safety and Licensing purposes. Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis. Waiting lists may be initiated due to licensed capacity, available space for the program, or adequate staffing. Waiting lists may be initiated at the discretion of Child Care administration. Families will be put on a waiting list in the order they enrolled and will be contacted by our offices if a space becomes available.**

Families enrolling in our **summer programs** must complete a summer enrollment application prior to the start of the camp. Summer camp fees are charged biweekly for enrolled weeks. Additional fees for summer activities may apply.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed and submitted electronic enrollment application, registration fee, deposit, and immunization records (if applicable). A signed Parent/Guardian Handbook receipt should be submitted within 5 days of initial enrollment. If you are eligible for child care subsidies, additional paperwork will be needed. Enrollment links and fee schedules are available on our website at [www.ccdom.org/child-care](http://www.ccdom.org/child-care).

The enrollment application and fee agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration. Catholic Charities Child Care Programs reserves the right to close any location at any time due to low enrollment, in which case parent/guardian(s) will be given at least two weeks' notice to ensure adequate time to find a suitable replacement situation.

### School Calendar

School calendars are individual to each program. All Catholic Charities Child Care Programs located on school district property will operate according to that school's calendar.

### Early Dismissal

Catholic Charities provides Before and Afterschool Care services. Afterschool Care begins at the school's dismissal time and operates until regular closing time.

## Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parent/guardian(s) will be notified of the closing through their district's emergency procedures. If schools are closed for inclement weather, the programs are closed. If the school district has a delayed opening there will be **NO** before school program. If the school needs to close in the middle of the day, the district will notify parent/guardians and our after school program will not operate that day.

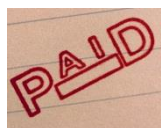
## Tuition

As part of the enrollment process, all custodial parents and/or legal guardians are agreeing to the stipulated fees at time of enrollment of their child in Catholic Charities Child Care Programs. Parent/Guardian(s) are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence is to be addressed by confirming the primary contact.

ACH, check, money order, credit card (MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover) may be used to pay tuition. Receipts will be given for all tuition payments made by cash. All cash payments must be handed directly to our support staff located in our local offices. There will be a \$25.00 fee charged for tuition checks returned by the bank. Returned tuition checks will not be re-deposited. Parent/Guardian(s) will be responsible for re-issuing this payment via ACH, money order, credit card, or cash. If at any future time, the bank returns a second personal check, all future tuition payments must be made by certified check, money order, cash, or credit card.

Tuition does not include fees for field trips and/or extra-curricular activities.

Tuition payments for Catholic Charities Child Care Programs are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. If payment is not received there will be a \$25.00 late fee charged to your account. Non-payment of tuition by the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month is grounds for suspension or termination from the program.



Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Catholic Charities Child Care Programs; please discuss any financial hardships with the billing personnel immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the billing personnel and required to sign for the arrangement.

There is no credit or refunds given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illnesses, or closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, or unforeseen circumstances. **Tuition is based on a 180-day school year calendar and averaged to 10 equal, monthly payments. If termination results from non-payment, the child may not return to Catholic Charities Child Care Programs until previous balances are paid in full.**

## Tuition Assistance

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs works in collaboration with the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies in each county to assist those that may qualify for child care subsidies. Parent/Guardian(s) requesting subsidy must complete our enrollment form and the required paperwork through their CCR&R to see if they qualify. Parent/Guardian(s) receiving subsidy are also required to sign an E-Child Care agreement, accepting personal responsibility for the payment of their copay (if applicable) as well as their understanding of complying with all E-Child Care procedures. **All subsidized children must attend at least 80%**

**of the days the program is open and must consistently call or swipe in their child's attendance. \*Children are required to attend the program regularly for no less than one hour in order to maintain eligibility.** Other financial assistance through the state, military, local organizations are also accepted.

#### Discounts

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs offers a multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled five days a week during the same school year (it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to indicate this at the time of registration). The child with the highest tuition will be charged the full amount and the discount will be applied to the lesser tuition(s) amounts; each additional child's tuition is discounted at 10% per child.

#### Change of Enrollment Status and Withdrawal

**Parent/Guardian(s) who need to change the number of days or the enrollment status of their child who attends our program must contact the billing personnel between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the date you wish the change to become effective.** The change will become effective on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. Any changes are subject to a \$10.00 change of status fee. All changes need to be submitted in writing by the requestor via email, fax, or regular mail.

Parent/Guardian(s) who wish to terminate services are required to notify the billing personnel in writing no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> of the prior month to become effective the first of the month following notification. **If notification is not received by the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month, parent/guardian(s) will be billed full tuition. No refunds will be issued whatsoever for early withdrawal from programs.**

All notifications/letters and inquiries must be submitted to Child Care Billing at:

For **Somerset & Middlesex** Counties:

Catholic Charities

Child Care Services

PO Box 676

Perth Amboy, NJ 08862

(732) 934-2800

For **Warren/Morris** Counties/**Highland Park**:

Catholic Charities

Child Care Services

700 Sayre Avenue

Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

(908) 329-2029

#### Agency's Right to Refuse Enrollment in the Program

Inclusion/enrollment will be based on a first come first serve basis. Waiting lists will be maintained as needed to ensure compliance with licensing regulations.

#### METHODS OF PARENTAL NOTIFICATION/PRO CARE

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs recognizes the importance of communication between the school and the home. The child care programs shall send parents/guardians all notifications required by law, including notifications about their legal rights, and any other notifications that will promote parental understanding and involvement. Notices shall be sent at the beginning of the school year/initial enrollment and will be provided in person, in electronic form when

requested by the parent/guardian, or by any other method normally used to communicate with parents/guardians in writing. All child care programs have a designated email address and phone number for communication with enrolled families. Newsletters and a parent area are accessible at each child care location. Notifications can be provided in the family's primary language if requested.



Catholic Charities Child Care Programs are using a new software, Pro Care. This provides enhanced and improved communication between the parents and the programs. Parents will receive invites to link to their child's program and receive updates in the program. These features will include: messaging, newsletters, photos/videos, events, and the ability to edit family information and pay any outstanding balances.

## ARRIVAL PROCEDURES



Upon arrival at Catholic Charities Child Care Programs, the adult dropping the child off must escort them into the program or designated area and sign them into care either through the Pro Care app or on the Sign In sheet. Parent/Guardian(s) are required to notify the program's Site Supervisor of any special instructions or needs for the day.

**All authorized persons must be 16 years of age or older to drop off children in the program.**

**If a family intends to use "drop-in" services in the afterschool program, the parent/guardian(s) must notify the school office in writing that day. In addition, it is also suggested that parents contact the program's site phone or email/message the site to communicate the same.** We ask this of parent/guardian(s) so we can help ensure the safety and well-being of your family. Please note that "drop-in" services are **not** available in some of our Hillsborough Before and/or Afterschool Care programs due to enrollment limits.

## Notification of Absence

Parent/Guardian(s) who know in advance that their child will be late or absent are required to notify the site/school so that we can maintain accurate attendance and proper ratios. Failure to sufficiently inform the school or program of your child's absence may result in a subsequent fee.

If your child is ill, we request that parent/guardian(s) notify Catholic Charities Child Care Programs employees to the nature of the illness so that we may track any illnesses which may occur in our programs. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the program's Site Supervisor so they can then inform additional parent/guardian(s) that a communicable disease is present. With regards to the Catholic Charities Child Care Programs Confidentiality Policy and your child's privacy, only the communicable disease information will be shared with the enrolled families. Parent/guardian(s) are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based on your decision to disclose the reason for your child's absence from school.

## CHILD RELEASE PROCEDURES / PICK UP PROCEDURES

Parent/Guardian(s) or persons designated on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list are required to sign a child out of care on the sign-out sheet or via the Pro Care system. **All individuals must be prepared to display a valid form of identification for the purposes of the child's safety. Anyone picking up a child in the program must be 16 years of age or older.** After doing such, they are then solely responsible for supervising their child while at the program-children are not allowed to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other programs and/or playground. We ask that parent/guardian(s) handle all business issues prior to signing out their child.



Upon pick-up, parent/guardians or persons designated on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list will be informed by the Site Supervisor of any incidents that may have occurred that day. The Site Supervisor will be able to briefly discuss the matter; however, if a parent/guardian wishes to discuss the incident further, we ask that they schedule a meeting for a later date.

### Emergency Contacts/Alternate Pick-up:

We encourage parent/guardian(s) to include any and all persons who may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from Catholic Charities Child Care Programs on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list when enrolling. In an emergency situation the child's parent/guardian(s) will be called first; if they cannot be reached, staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached. It is imperative that listed individuals are in close proximity to the program, as they will be contacted in emergency purposes only.

Should the staff contact a parent/guardian who is unable to pick-up their child, it is then the parent/guardian's responsibility to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list. Consistent failure of the parent/guardian(s) to make such arrangements may result in dismissal from the program. If a parent/guardian is faced with an extreme emergency, and no previously identified contacts are available to pick-up their child, the parent/guardian may email the site email address or message the program through Pro Care or the site cell phone to communicate an additional authorized contact after speaking with the site staff. This individual must come to the program prepared to answer questions relative to the child(ren) they are picking-up (i.e. birthdate) and have an ID available for verification purposes.

All changes and/or additions to the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list must be requested via email to the billing staff in advance. Additions to authorized pick-ups take 24 hours to update in the Pro Care system. Only custodial parent/guardian(s) have the right to make changes or additions to this form.





### **Late Pick-up:**

It is required that parent/guardian(s) pick-up their child by the close of the program (verify time of close with site). All measurements of time are to be according to the clock on site (the school wall clock or site cell phone). **For each minute a parent/guardian is late for pick-up, a fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged.** In the event in which a parent/guardian is fifteen (15) minutes late to pick up their child, a call will be made to the other parent/guardian. If no one responds to

the call within (30) minutes, a person listed on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list will be contacted. If no satisfactory arrangements can be made for the child's authorized release, and no authorized person has arrived to pick-up the child within one (1) hour from the program's closing, **BY LAW, THE STAFF MUST CONTACT THE CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE AT 1-877-NJ ABUSE.** It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that someone, either a parent/guardian or emergency contact, is available to pick-up the child on time. Consistent lateness may result in termination.

### **Persons Appearing to be Impaired at Pick-up:**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs staff will contact the other custodial parent/guardian, local police, and/or DCP&P should a parent/guardian appear to be emotionally and/or physically impaired upon their arrival to pick-up their child. The parent/guardian's right to immediate access does not permit the agency from denying a custodial parent/guardian access to their child even if the parent/guardian is or appears to be impaired. However, Catholic Charities Child Care Program staff will use all reasonably lawful efforts to delay the impaired parent/guardian from leaving the facility while they contact the other parent/guardian, the local police and/or DCP&P.

Any other authorized person who appears to be emotionally and/or physically impaired and attempts to pick-up a child will be denied access to the child. Catholic Charities Child Care Programs staff will contact the child's parent/guardian(s), local police and/or DCP&P to notify them of the situation.

## **CHILD CARE CURRICULUM MODEL**

Our curriculum model is designed to use evidence practices that ties in with the NJ Student Learning Standards and uses a SEL approach to activity facilitation as we seek to develop the CASEL Core Competencies of Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making. Our programs will additionally be incorporating activities from the Second Step Curriculum this school year.

Research indicates, the most effective programs use S.A.F.E. practices: sequential training, active learning, focused time on skill development and is explicit in defining the skills. We draw from these practices in our activity implementation approach as we teach, model, practice, apply and reinforce skills.

On a weekly basis our Aftercare Site Supervisors submit a theme-based schedule that incorporates all the required 'Activity Center' enrichment areas and can choose from the optional activities (see below). Supervisors are provided with specific grade level learning standards to

emphasize and are given designated websites they can use to complete their lesson plan template. The advantage of this approach is that it enables each site to customize lessons based on the needs and interests of the children.

a. Required Weekly Activity Centers

- Readers are Leaders (Literacy)
- Be Fit (Health & Fitness)
- Creative Expression (Art, Dance, Music)
- Be Your Best (Social Competency)
- Diversity Appreciation (Cultural Diversity)
- S.T.E.M. Explorers (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

b. Optional Weekly Activities

- Leadership Development (Provide children with opportunities to be Peer Leaders)
- Problem Solvers (Conflict resolution and anger management curriculum with service learning component)
- Reading Challenges (A designated reading area for children that offers reading challenges)
- Fun Fridays (Children plan and develop the Friday activities)
- Clubs (Older children lead activity-based clubs for the younger aged children)
- Enrichment Partners (Sites can bring in outside enrichment providers)
- Community Service (Site can participate in community service activities)

## **Incorporating SEL into Facilitation**

Our SEL approach uses the CASEL 5 competencies as a framework and seeks to teach children the skills they need so they can:

- Improve their communication skills
- Develop and maintain positive relationships
- Effectively manage their emotions
- Set and achieve goals
- Become independent problem solvers

Each of our before and afterschool programs operate with the Super S.T.A.R.S. Pledge that outlines our behavior expectations of the children that participate in our programs. All of the children are expected to be able to recite the pledge and our staff is trained to use it as a behavior management strategy:

**S** I will Speak positively  
**T** I will Take responsibility and make good decisions  
**A** I will Always act safely and ask permission to leave the room  
**R** I will Respect everyone and our space  
**S** I will Set a good example for others

## **POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our discipline policy seeks to teach attitudes by demonstrating and encouraging the kinds of attitudes that make for harmony, understanding, and tolerance. It teaches control of impulses by clearly limiting and discouraging destructive behavior, and by offering acceptable substitutes as well as opportunities for discussion. We hope to accomplish this through the following steps:



1. Emphasizing the positive behavior rather than the negative.
2. Preventing discipline situations whenever possible.
3. Increasing the child's feeling of self-worth so that he/she feels stronger and in better control of him/herself.

### **The following steps are used in a discipline situation:**

1. Verbal discussion with the child; opportunity to fix the problem.
2. Redirection to another area, if needed.
3. Think Sheet or Positive Discipline Record will be completed with the child if the problem is not resolved. The child and staff member will together decide on a better solution that helps the child to return to an activity and be more successful. Consistent use of this approach has proven to be effective in helping children gain self-control.

### **Steps if behavior persists:**

1. If behavior warrants 3 Positive Discipline Records (with parent signature), documentation will be submitted to the Program Director for review. Next step decisions will be made on a case by case basis.
2. Uncontrollable or violent behavior may warrant a phone call to the parent to pick child up. An immediate suspension may also be necessary but, will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
3. If behavior is still consistently not appropriate, a parent conference may be scheduled with CCDOM staff and parents to explore possible other interventions.
4. If behavior still persists, child may receive a minimum of a one day suspension or be terminated from the program.

### **Termination of services:**

The program will work hard to offer strategies to help each child be successful in the program. We reserve the right to terminate services when all strategies have been used and the child is still unable to adjust to the program expectations.

1. A child can be terminated if the staff and Child Care Area Director feel the child is at risk of harm to either: him/herself, other children and/or program staff.
2. In the event of an impending termination, parents will be contacted and informed of the termination date.

3. Referrals may also be made to other county services. In the event of termination, we will offer referrals if requested.
4. Violent/aggressive actions will not be tolerated so, in situations when there is on-going aggressive behavior a termination date will be determined by the Program Director.

## **SUSPENSION & EXPULSION**

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to suspend or expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to suspend or expel a child from a CCDOM program:

### **CAUSES FOR SUSPENSION / EXPULSION**

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Failure to consistently follow rules, policies and procedures.
- Persistent refusal to follow instructions from program staff.
- Engaging in an act of violence.
- Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
- Inability to adjust to program routine, schedules and activities.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ angry outbursts.

### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S SUSPENSION / EXPULSION**

- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff.
- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.

### **SCHEDULE OF SUSPENSION / EXPULSION**

- If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally about the child's or parent's behavior warranting a suspension or expulsion. A suspension or expulsion is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center.
- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the suspension or expulsion period.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return to the center.
- Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

### **A CHILD WILL NOT BE EXPELLED**

If a child's parent(s):

- Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.

- Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center.
- Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent sufficient time to make other child care arrangements.

### **PROACTIVE ACTIONS THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO PREVENT SUSPENSION / EXPULSION**

- Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate of activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to suspension or expulsion.

The Program Director, program staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.

### **Bullying**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs do not accept any form of bullying in our programs. Any forms of bullying will coincide with the above discipline and suspension/expulsion policies.

#### ***NJ CAP Bullying Definition***

***“Bullying happens when someone who acts stronger or more powerful takes away a person’s rights by hurting, scaring or making the person feel weak.  
It can happen more than once and may get worse.”***

Some types of bullying behavior may include:

- Calling someone inappropriate names, humiliating or teasing
- Threatening to hurt someone physically or emotionally
- Spreading rumors about someone or passes on confidential information
- Referring to someone’s race or religion in an unkind way
- Making unwanted physical contact (hits, trips, pushes, etc.)
- Excluding someone on purpose or tries to separate them from their friends.

For further information and education on bullying:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/>

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/overviewAnnotation.pdf>

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In order to most appropriately and safely care for your child, confidential information will only be shared with employees of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs on a “need to know” basis.



Confidential information about faculty, other parent/guardian(s) and/or children will not be shared with parent/guardian(s), as our agency strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information about a child will only be disclosed to third parties when the parent/guardian(s) of the child has given written authorization for such disclosure or where otherwise provided for by law. Parent/Guardian(s) will be provided a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs, the persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any parent/guardian who shares any information considered to be confidential or pressures employees or other parent/guardian(s) for information that is not necessary for them to know will be deemed in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Staff to Child Ratios**

The New Jersey Office of Licensing requires a 15:1 child to staff ratio for all school-age programs. A 10:1 child to staff ratio is required for early learning programs for ages 2 1/2 to 5.

### **Incident/Accident Reports**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during program hours, a staff member will complete an internal Incident Report. The Site Supervisor will briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up. Upon request, the program can provide a written description of the incident. However, if you feel it is necessary to further discuss the incident, please contact administrative personnel.

### **Dispensing Medication/Special Health Needs**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs will only dispense over-the-counter and prescription medication. Parent/Guardian(s) are required to submit the Special Care Plan for all medications to be dispensed to the program completed by the health care provider. The form and medication are to be given to the Site Supervisor.

Prescription medication must be in original, labeled containers and accompanied by a doctor's script with explicit dosage and administration instructions. We will only give medication to the child for which the medication is prescribed. One doctor's note/script per course of treatment is required.

Parent/Guardian(s) are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date.

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs will dispense over-the-counter medications on an as-needed basis and in accordance with the recommended dosage per the label on the container. These include:

- Antihistamines
- Cough suppressants
- Decongestants
- Non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers

- Topical preparations (i.e., sunscreen)

Medication must be provided by the parent/guardian in its **original, unopened container**. Epi pens must be in their original box with the child's name and prescription. **A special care plan or documentation from a health care provider is required.** If two epi pens are required, both the care plan and documentation from a health care provider will be needed. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE REQUIREMENTS.**

Prior to administering over-the-counter medication, staff will contact a parent/guardian or person listed on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list to inform them of our need to administer the medication. Staff will also inform the parent/guardian or emergency contact person if it is necessary for the child to be picked up due to illness. **If a child requires more extensive medical treatment or medication, the program will consult with the parent/guardian to assess the program's capabilities of meeting the needs on a case by case basis.**

### **Infection Control**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs seek to provide a safe environment for all staff, children, and families in our programs. Our Child Care Programs continue to work within the guidelines of the Department of Children & Families, the school district and the local health departments. Parents are asked to abide by the guidelines and follow all precautions put into place.

Within each program, child care staff and those attending will abide by all NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) and licensing requirements. Any changes to programming or procedures will be communicated to enrolled families.

### **Children with Allergies**

For the safety of your child, parent/guardian(s) are required to list all allergies on the Enrollment Form. If your child requires medication to be given during the time they are in the program then a special care plan completed by a health care provider detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which the child suffers needs to be submitted to the Site Supervisor on the first day of enrollment in the program. **Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Dispensing Medication procedures.**

### **Foods**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs will provide a healthy morning and afternoon snack for all children enrolled in School Age Child Care programs meeting USDA requirements, including water, fruit juice and/or milk.

We do not permit children to share or exchange food items.



Parent/Guardian(s) are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in breakfast, lunch or snack time for behavioral reasons.

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Our programs are required to limit foods that are high in solid fats, added sugar, trans fats and sodium in accordance with minimum Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) standards. Sugar sweetened or artificially sweetened beverages will not be allowed.

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs prohibits any food item in glass containers, as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff.

### **Procedures for Communicable Disease Management**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs follow all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work-Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide. A list of communicable diseases and the associated reporting policies can be referenced at [www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable\\_disease\\_magnet.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf).

Parent/Guardian(s) are required to pick-up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent/guardian is reached, but cannot pick his or her child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent/guardian's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick-up by someone listed on the child's Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list. **The staff will not continue to call those listed on the Emergency Contact list once a parent/guardian is reached.** If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the Additional Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Contact list until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease including COVID-19. Further, they will not be permitted to return until they are no longer contagious.

Children must be cleared and have no symptoms in order to return to the program. Catholic Charities Child Care Programs reserves the right to refuse a child's return if the staff believes the child is too ill to participate.



It is the policy of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs to inform parent/guardian(s) when there is a possible exposure to a communicable disease within the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur 3 or more times in a 24 hour period of time. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.



### **Lice Procedures**

If a child within the Catholic Charities Child Care Programs is determined to have any form of head lice, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to immediately pick up their child and his/her belongings from the program. Parents should ensure their child is promptly treated with the appropriate medication; further, they should ensure all belongings that were removed from the program are washed before being returned to the program. It is understood that several treatments may be necessary to remove all forms of head lice. Following the confirmation of lice, the program will take the necessary precautions to ensure the program is sanitized and safe for the children. Parents should inquire with the school nurse on treatment/returning to school.

### **Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, any person having reasonable cause to believe a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect is required to immediately report this information to the State Central Registry Hotline, (Toll-Free at 1-877-NJ ABUSE/1-877-652-2873). Employees of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs are not required to discuss their suspicions with parent/guardian(s) prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, a person can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. Catholic Charities Child Care Programs employees take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.

### **Fire/Emergency Drills**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs conduct monthly fire drills. Parent/Guardians, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as to ensure the effectiveness of the plans.

During a fire drill or real fire/emergency situation, parent/guardian(s) may not sign their child in or out of the program. Parent/Guardian(s) must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building. If the program is having a real fire/emergency situation, parent/guardian(s) will be required to wait until the Site Supervisor has accounted for all children before they may sign out their child.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the Site Supervisor will inform the Program Director that the school will be closing. All other parent/guardian(s) or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone/Pro Care messaging of the situation. All children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.



### **Alternate Safe Location**

Should the administration of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the program is too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to a designated, alternate safe location. Once the children are

assembled here, the staff will begin contacting parent/guardian(s) or emergency contact persons for pick-up. Children must be picked up within 45-minutes of the telephone call.

### **Lockdown Procedure**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs will follow the school district lockdown procedures when emergency situations result in requiring the school building to institute a lockdown. Parent/Guardian(s) will be notified immediately; however, they may not be able to pick up their child during a lockdown. Two lockdown drills will be conducted annually in each program.

### **Firearms and Weapons**

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunitions and/or weapon while on program property. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

### **ITEMS FROM HOME/PERSONAL ITEMS**

Due to the risk of damage, preventing infection, sharing issues, and loss, children are encouraged to leave all personal items (examples include but are not limited to: toys, cell phones, air pods, and electronic devices, etc.) at home, unless specifically requested by the program's Site Supervisor for use as part of the curriculum or for school purposes (ex. Chromebooks, etc). If parent/guardian(s) choose to allow their child to bring in any items, they must remember the program is not responsible for its loss or damage. Parents/Guardians are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child.



### **Cell Phones/I Watches**

All students are required to keep their cell phones in their backpack at all times. Students are not permitted to use their cell phones during program hours. This includes I watches as well. If a student is found using their phone a staff member will ask the student to put it away. If this request is not followed, the cell phone will be held by the Site Supervisor until that child is picked up that day. Parents/Guardians who wish to contact their child must utilize the program phone or site email/messaging.

### **Technology and Social Media**

All Catholic Charities Before and After School programs follow the school district's policy limiting the use of electronics (i.e., cell phones, hand held devices, video games, etc.). Catholic Charities Before and After School programs are licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families and are mandated to the following:

*The use of a television, computers, I pads, and other video equipment shall be limited to educational and instructional use, shall be age and developmentally appropriate, and shall not be used as a substitute for planned activities or for passive viewing. Children shall not be inactive for more than 30 minutes.*

Children shall not have access to social media (networking) sites while in the program. Additionally parents are not to post anything on social media of other children in the program.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS**

Parent/Guardian(s) of an enrolled child are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in the care of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Catholic Charities Child Care Programs must be provided with a **certified copy**, which is clean of handwritten notes. In the case where both parent/guardian(s) are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, parents must provide a copy of the most recent custodial calendar which details the pick-up days for each parent. The calendar must be signed by both parents.

**In the absence of a court order** on file with Catholic Charities, **both** parent/guardian(s) shall be afforded equal access to their child, as stipulated by law. Catholic Charities Child Care Programs cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent/guardian by request of the other parent/guardian, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent/guardian does not want the other parent/guardian to have access to their child, Catholic Charities Child Care Programs suggests the parent/guardian keep the child with them until a court order is issued; our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent/guardian's right to immediate access. Catholic Charities Child Care Program staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.



## **PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS**

Parent/Guardian(s) are invited and encouraged to participate and volunteer at their child's program. Opportunities to do such include attending special events or summer field trips (parent/guardian is responsible for any entrance or ticket fees); providing on-site enrichment presentations; or reading in the programs.

Any parent/guardian who volunteers in the program will be required to fill out any necessary paperwork. Any person, including parent/guardian(s), with disqualifying criminal convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the programs or attend field trips.

Parent/guardian(s) with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. Parent/guardian(s) with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements) will not be permitted to volunteer until express written permission from the custodial parent/guardian has been received.

Parent/Guardian(s) are afforded the opportunity to visit the program and/or meet with billing and administrative staff prior to registering as a means of becoming better oriented with the operations of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs. Program staff can attend the “Back to School Nights” and/or Kindergarten Orientations to inform district families of the services Catholic Charities Child Care Programs provide; families are able to gather information about the agency, program enrollment information, as well as flyers describing the activities and enrichment offered.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs require the parent/guardian(s) of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy and respect at all times.

**Parent/Guardian(s) who violate the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct will not be permitted at the program thereafter.**

### **Swearing/Cursing**

No parent/guardian or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property/program locations at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. At **NO** time shall inappropriate language be directed towards members of the staff.

### **Inappropriate Interactions**

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

### **Physical punishment or verbal abuse of your child or other children at Catholic Charities Child Care Programs**

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs does not support nor condone corporal punishment of children and such acts are not permitted in our child care facilities. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parent/guardian(s) to verbally abuse their child. We welcome parent/guardian(s) to discuss a behavior issue with the staff and seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parent/Guardian(s) are prohibited from physically and/or verbally addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. If a parent/guardian should witness a child that is not their own behaving inappropriately, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, parent/guardian(s) must direct their concern to the program’s Site Supervisor. Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent/guardian to seek out another parent/guardian to discuss their child’s inappropriate behavior. If we are to witness verbal or physical abuse by anyone as mandated reporters we will report it to the proper authorities. Under no circumstances, is a parent to approach a child for the purpose of investigating, threatening or disciplining. All

matters of concern with children in the program should be brought to the attention of the Site Supervisor.

### **Smoking/Smoking Type Products**

For the health of all Catholic Charities Child Care Programs' employees, children, and associates, **all** forms of smoking is prohibited in the building or on the school grounds of all Catholic Charities Child Care Programs.



### **On-site Safety and Security**

Parent/Guardian(s) are required to follow all health and safety procedures set forth in this Manual at all times.

We need to ensure unauthorized individuals are not permitted into the program. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite; however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Catholic Charities abides by each school district's security procedures to ensure continuity and the upmost safety. Immediately report any breaches of security to the program's Site Supervisor so the proper parties/school administration may be notified.

### **Parental Use of Technology and Social Media**

Parents/Guardians may not use a personal camera or mobile phone to take photographs/video at the program unless they are only taking images of their own child. All children may not be allowed to be photographed in the program and require the consent of the custodial parent/guardian. Parents/Guardians must not post information about the program, staff, management, or families on any matters relating to the service on a social media site. Additionally, parents are encouraged to follow the agency grievance procedure and should not use social media outlets to harass/bully/defame others.

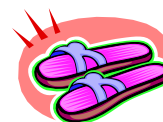
### **DRESS CODE**

#### **Dress Code for Children**

Children may be engaged in activities that are messy and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.



Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months in order to participate in outdoor activities. Flip flops and open-toe sandals are not appropriate for children to wear during activities that are athletic in nature.



Catholic Charities Child Care Programs is not responsible for lost or damaged articles of clothing.

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is not provided by Catholic Charities. Child Care staff are not permitted to transport any children in their personal vehicles at any time. Any transportation provided by Catholic Charities is coordinated with a contracted bus company.

## FIELD TRIPS

Catholic Charities Child Care Programs occasionally supplement the in-class curriculum with off premise field trips during the school year and in the summer programs. Parent/Guardian(s) are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip and all pertinent trip information including destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost and mode of transportation will be sent to parent/guardian(s) in advance. A field trip permission slip will accompany the notification paper; it should be completely and accurately filled out, signed and returned to the Catholic Charities Billing Office one week prior to the trip. All trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend.

If parent/guardian(s) wish to attend the trip with their child, they should discuss this matter with the program's Site Supervisor and/or Program Director. Parent/Guardian(s) are always invited and welcomed to attend field trips. However, they are not permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on a Catholic Charities Child Care Program sponsored trip without prior written consent.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip and you wish for your child to go on the trip, please discuss this with the program's Site Supervisor and/or Program Director **at least one week prior** to the date of the trip. Your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained with his/her addition, there is no limit on the number of purchased tickets for the trip, and there is sufficient space on the bus. An additional day of care fee, as well as the cost of the trip and signed permission slip, will be due **prior** to the date of the trip.

## STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY CLIENTS

The staff of Catholic Charities Child Care Programs are prohibited from being employed by any client. Parent/Guardian(s) are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment paid or unpaid.

**Department of Children and Families**  
**Office of Licensing**  
**INFORMATION TO PARENTS (Revised May 2019)**

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. Our center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, our center must secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our programs are required by the State Child Care Center Licensing Law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our programs. Look for it when you are at the program.

To be licensed, our programs must comply with the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers* (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food, and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/ community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our programs must have on the premises a copy of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers* and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask your Site Supervisor. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at: <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers*. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our program may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1(877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention too.

Our program must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the program.

Our program must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.





Our program must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the program. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our program.

Parents are entitled to review the program's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the program, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our program. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the program during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at <https://childcareexplorer.njccis.com/portal/>

Our program must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our program must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our program must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the program's space.

Our program must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the program in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the program. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the program should discuss their interest with the Site Supervisor, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the Site Supervisor or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our program must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the program, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our program is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes that Catholic Charities Child Care Programs are not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of the Law and Public Safety for information about filing a LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).



Our program is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's product list, ensure that items on the list are not at the program, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the program or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to [www.state.nj.us/dcf/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/).

## Addendum- Pro Care Software

We are excited to notify you of some new additions to our child care software, Pro Care that we hope will make your experience smoother. One of the most important updates includes a Parent Engagement addition that will enable families to:

- *Receive notifications, text messages, and important alerts*
- *See upcoming events and special enrichment presenters*
- *Receive newsletters from the program*
- *Sign their child in or out of the program (either through a designated PIN or QR code)*
- *View and pay any outstanding balances*

Program staff will be piloting this Parent Engagement feature over the summer in the anticipation of utilizing it for the upcoming school year.

### **What You Need To Know**

- You will receive an “Invite” to sign up. You can sign up via the web or download the app for free. **\*\*We encourage families to download the app for easier access even if you sign up originally via the web\*\***
- When you receive the invite you will choose sign up, then parent
- Enter the 10 character code
- Once registered you will have access to the features above
- To download the app, go to the App Store/Google Play on your phone and search for Procure.



The icon looks like 3 circles overlapping.

- You may adjust your notifications if you only want certain information

We hope that these features will improve on our communication with families and share with you all of the great things going on in the Catholic Charities Child Care programs!

If you have any questions regarding the Parent Engagement App, please refer to the following link with more details:

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.procaresoftware.com/pdfs/connect/Procure+App+Parent+Guide+to+Sign+In-Out.pdf>

If you have any additional questions that are unclear, please email us at [Childcare1@ccdom.org](mailto:Childcare1@ccdom.org) for Somerset County or [childcare2@ccdom.org](mailto:childcare2@ccdom.org) for Warren/Morris counties.

Thank you as always for your support and we look forward to seeing you this upcoming school year!