

# Employee Handbook

August 2018

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## **1.01 INTRODUCTION**

This Employee Handbook contains information about the employment policies and practices of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., Inc. Except where otherwise indicated, the policies described in this Handbook apply to all persons employed by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. other than temporary employees.

These policies represent a clarification of policies within Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and establish the basic terms of your employment. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. has designed this Employee Handbook to inform you of important policies which you will be expected to follow. This Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and inconsistent verbal or written policy statements. Except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s owner, in writing, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provisions of this Employee Handbook, with or without notice. All such revisions, deletions or additions must be in writing and must be signed by the Owner. No oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook.

The policies set forth in this Employee Handbook are not intended to create and do not constitute a contract of employment. Nor is this Employee Handbook intended to create a contract guaranteeing that you will be employed for any specific time period. Your employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is strictly on an "at will" basis.

Please take the time to read this Employee Handbook in order to familiarize yourself with its contents. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. hopes that this Employee Handbook will better enable you to understand your responsibilities as an employee. If you have questions about any the director policy, please discuss them with the Owner.

This Employee Handbook refers to current benefit plans maintained by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions if you have specific questions regarding the benefit plans. Those documents are controlling.

If there are discrepancies between any employment contract and the Employee Handbook, the provisions of the employment contract are controlling.

## **1.02 PHILOSOPHY**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. believes education involves the whole child – emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically. We believe in the uniqueness, worth and dignity of each individual. We believe self-esteem is basic to all learning.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. follows the Montessori Method, named for Dr. Maria Montessori. Dr. Montessori was Italy's first female physician and she studied how children learn in the early 1900s. She concluded that children's minds are like sponges, and they learn more between the ages of 0 and 6 than they will learn the rest of their lives.

The Montessori setting is a prepared environment in which children learn through an individualized approach. The children are divided into three-year age spans, providing a setting in which they can learn from each other. The children learn to motivate themselves and become self-directed as they work at their own pace. No child is stifled and no child is pushed to move on before he or she is ready. This process helps develop a life-long love for learning.

Under the guidance of a certified Montessori teacher, the children are given the freedom to move about the classroom and choose their own activities. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is equipped with full range of Montessori materials that encourage manipulation, questions, discovery and knowledge about the world.

## **1.03 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is committed to equal employment opportunity. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on any legally-recognized basis including, but not limited to: veteran status; uniform service member status; race; color; religion; sex; age; national origin; physical or mental disability or handicap; pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition; height; weight; familial status; marital status or genetic information.

Employees may discuss equal employment opportunity related questions with the Owner.

## **2.01 AT WILL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP**

By joining or continuing employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., each employee agrees to follow the official owner policies which may be in force at any given time. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the same right enjoyed by each of its employees to end the employment relationship at any time and for any reason with or without cause or prior notice. All employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is strictly on an "at will" basis. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. disclaims the creation of any implied or express guarantee of employment and no employee of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is authorized to orally guarantee employment for any given length of time or cause Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to assume any greater employment obligation than provided in this policy. Only a written employment agreement which includes a specific term of employment, and which is signed by the Owner of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., shall bind Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to employ a person for any given length of time and then only in accordance with the provisions of the employment agreement. In the event of a conflict between this and any other personnel policy or practice of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., this policy shall control.

## **2.02 OPEN DOOR POLICY**

In order to ensure that decisions affecting the employment status of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s employees are made consistent with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' responsibilities under various statutes which protect employees, in order to provide employees with a means of presenting their employment concerns to the management of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., and in order to resolve any problems, questions, disputes or grievances an employee may have about their assignment, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. has instituted an Open Door Policy.

An employee who has a concern about an employment question or a problem with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. should discuss it with his or her immediate supervisor. If the concern cannot be resolved fully at this level or if there are special circumstances involved which make it difficult to speak to the immediate supervisor, the employee should refer the problem to his or her manager. Should the problem still remain unresolved, the employee should refer the matter to the Owner who will render Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' final decision.

## **2.03 EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES**

A member of an employee's immediate family will be considered for employment by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., provided the individual possesses the required qualifications for employment. An immediate family member of an employee will not be hired if, in his or her hired position, the position would create a direct or indirect supervisor/subordinate relationship. Additionally, immediate family members of an employee cannot be hired if the business relationship could or would create either an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender of the individuals involved. These criteria will also be considered when assigning, transferring, or promoting an employee.

For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" includes the employee's spouse, brother, sister, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, and any other member of the employee's household.

If a relative relationship is established after employment between employees who are in a reporting situation described above, it is the responsibility and obligation of the parties involved in the relationship to disclose the existence of the relationship to management. The individuals concerned will be given the opportunity to decide who is to be transferred to another available position. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will decide who is to be transferred or, if necessary, terminated from employment.

Should one of the above situations occur, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. would attempt to find a suitable position within Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to which one of the employees shall transfer. If accommodations of this nature are not feasible, the employees will be permitted to determine which of the two shall resign.

The director reserves the right to take prompt action if an actual or potential conflict of interest arises involving relatives or individuals involved in a dating relationship who occupy positions at any level (higher or lower) in the same line of authority that may affect the review of employment decisions.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no line of authority or reporting involved, the employees may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment. Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.

## **2.04 EMPLOYMENT OF FORMER EMPLOYEES**

Former employees who separated from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. in good standing may be considered for re-employment. Former employees who resigned without a minimum of 2 weeks written notice or who were dismissed for unsatisfactory performance or misconduct will not be considered for re-employment. An employee eligible for rehire under this policy will be considered a new employee from the date of re-employment unless the break in service has been for a period of less than 60 days.

## **2.05 IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT**

In compliance with the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), as amended, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is committed to employing only individuals who are authorized to work in the United States. Each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. If an employee is authorized to work in this country for a limited time period, the individual will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility prior to expiration of that period to remain employed by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Owner. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

## **2.06 CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK**

It is the policy of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to conduct a criminal history background check and a Child Abuse and Neglect clearance on all applicants prior to an offer of employment. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. follows the State of Michigan requirements for obtaining this. Please see the director for more information.

## **2.07 EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is licensed by the State of Michigan, Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs ("LARA"). LARA regulations, other state laws and federal laws require that each employee have the following forms in their personnel file on the first day of work:

- Application with references
- Federal and State Withholding Tax Forms
- I-9 Employment Eligibility Form
- Tuberculosis Test
- Receipt of Employee Handbook and Employment At-Will Statement
- Criminal Clearances (fingerprints)
- Disciplines and Knowledge of Child Abuse Forms
- Staff Training Orientation Form
- Any other forms required by LARA

## **2.08 RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENT**

Employees who resign or retire must provide to the director with at least two weeks written notice in advance of the last day of work.

Additionally, all resigning employees must complete a brief exit interview prior to leaving. All Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. property, including this Employee Handbook, must be returned upon termination. Otherwise, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may take action to recoup any replacement costs and/or seek the return of the director property through appropriate legal recourse.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. does not provide a "letter of reference" to former employees. Generally, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will confirm upon request the employees' dates of employment, salary history and job title.

Employees who have resigned must inform the director of any address changes during the calendar year in which termination occurs so that their tax information will be sent to the proper address.

### **3.01 FULL-TIME/PART-TIME DEFINITION**

Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws. NONEXEMPT employees are paid hourly and entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are paid salary and excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's EXEMPT or NONEXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by the director management.

Full-time employment is defined as working no less than 37.5 hours per week on a regular basis. Part-time employment is defined as those employees working less than 37.5 hours per week. An employee's classification is determined when hired and will remain in effect until officially changed and notified in writing. Temporary changes in the number of hours worked do not officially change an employee's classification.

Regardless of an employee's classification, all employment relationships with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. are at will.

### **3.02 VOLUNTEERS**

It is the policy of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to encourage volunteers to work in the childcare facility. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will require a criminal history record check for all volunteers who work over 4 hours per week. Also, before a volunteer may have contact with children at the center, the volunteer may be required to provide the center with documentation from the family independence agency that he or she has not been placed on the central registry for substantial abuse or neglect. The volunteer must be able to perform the physical requirements attendant to such work so as not to negatively affect either the health of the children or quality of their care. A volunteer under the direction of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will be required to review and familiarize him or herself with the policies and procedures of this handbook. The volunteer's name, address and telephone number must be submitted to the director. A volunteer will not be considered in determining staffing requirements unless the volunteer meets the full qualifications of a caregiver.

### **3.03 PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES**

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. of any changes in personnel data. Home addresses, home and cellular telephone numbers, personal email addresses, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. P.O. boxes will not be accepted as the sole address of the employee. A record of each employee's home address, telephone number and personal email address must be in his or her permanent employee file.

### **3.04 RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES WITH PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS**

All staff are required to maintain their professional certifications, credentials and licenses or other job requirements in good standing. Failure to do so may result in termination or a reduction in functional responsibility and salary. Employees must submit a copy of their credentials at the time of employment or when any credential status changes. All employees are required to be aware of their educational requirements and responsible to keep them current.

### **3.05 TRAINING AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

All employees must complete necessary training required by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and the State of Michigan. Documentation of attendance at training will be kept in each employee's personnel file. All employees will be required to attend all regular and special staff meetings and special in-service training sessions that may be held by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Documentation of in-service attendance will be kept on file. The training required by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and the State of Michigan are:

- New Staff Orientation and Training
- CPR (according to LARA rules)
- First Aid (according to LARA rules)
- Blood-borne Pathogen Training
- Safe Sleep for Infants
- Shaken Baby Syndrome
- At least 16 additional hours each year relevant to child care in approved training which must include:
  - Child Development Training
  - Prevention & Control of Infectious Diseases
  - Prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

- Administration of Medication
- Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning (2x/year)
- Handling of storage of hazardous materials
- Recognition and reporting of child abuse and/or neglect
- Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Any other training required by LARA

### **3.06 MANDATORY EMPLOYEE DISCLOSURES**

Employees are expected to timely disclose the following personal information to the Director:

1. Any charge of, plea or conviction for, any felony or crime involving fraud, bribery, perjury, forgery, extortion, wrongful taking of property, counterfeiting, or involving theft or dishonesty.
2. Any Child Abuse or Neglect convictions.
3. The receipt of notice of a regulatory complaint, proceeding or investigation involving the employee.
4. The naming of the employee in any investment-related consumer complaint, arbitration or civil litigation.
5. The revocation or suspension of any professional licenses.

Employees must make such disclosures within 72 hours of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the need for disclosure, or face discipline, up to and including termination.

### **4.02 HOLIDAYS**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. closes for major holidays. Holidays are not paid.

### **4.03 WORKERS= COMPENSATION**

On-the-job injuries are covered by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s workers' compensation insurance policy. If an employee is injured on the job, no matter how slightly, he or she should report the incident immediately to the director. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period of time could jeopardize an employee's claim. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. asks for the assistance of its employees in alerting management to any condition which could lead or contribute to an employee accident. Additionally, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will attempt to provide a reasonable accommodation, which is medically necessary, feasible and does not impose an undue hardship on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. as prescribed by applicable federal, state or local law.

Neither Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

### **4.04 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

Bereavement leave, if taken, is unpaid.

### **4.05 JURY DUTY AND WITNESS APPEARANCES**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will not pay employees who are called for and serve on jury duty. Employees must provide the director with a copy of the summons, subpoena or other court document immediately. Employees should make arrangements with the director as soon as they receive their summons, subpoena or other court document. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. expects employees to return to their job if they are excused from jury duty during their regular working hours.

### **4.06 UNPAID TIME OFF FROM WORK**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may permit an employee to take time off from work without pay. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may grant such unpaid time off from work at its sole discretion. An employee understands that the employee's position may not be available upon return. If a position is available, it may not be the same days, hours or shift.

## **5.01 WORKING HOURS**

Each employee is expected to be at work on time as scheduled. Dependability and regular attendance are essential to the operations of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. which has a strict child to student ratio to follow, and therefore expects employees to be prepared to work as scheduled. Employees are expected to make appointments outside their work hours if possible. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s normal business hours are currently Monday-Friday 7am-6pm.

Various factors such as child to staff ratios, and other staffing needs may necessitate variations in starting and ending times and in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to assign employees, from time to time, to a job and location other than their usual job assignment. It is important that employees understand that as a term of employment, employees must be available to assist Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. in providing the services the children require in the routine course of a day.

No employee is permitted to deviate from their assigned work schedule by coming in early, working late, working through lunch, etc., without the prior written approval of his or her supervisor. Similarly, no employee is permitted to work overtime without the prior written approval of his or her supervisor.

## **5.02 SCHEDULING, OVERTIME AND CLOCKING OUT**

The work hours of different employees may vary. Each employee will receive a schedule of hours, which he or she must work. If you do not receive a work schedule or if at any time you have scheduling problems, you should contact the director.

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal and state laws require Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Nonexempt employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. Nonexempt employees should not be doing work more than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled starting time nor should they stay more than 5 minutes after their scheduled end time without expressed, prior written authorization from their supervisor. Employees are expected to begin working at their start time, not walking in at their start time. Employees who punch in late, or punch out early 3 times in a pay period, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Overtime work must always be approved in writing before it is performed.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is the employees' responsibility to review their time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded.

## **5.03 PAYDAYS**

All Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. employees are paid on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of every month. The paycheck is for the previous pay period.

Your pay is a confidential matter between you and Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Protect that confidence. If you feel there is an error in your pay, or if there is anything about your pay, which you do not understand, please contact the director or owner.

Employees may have pay directly deposited into their bank accounts if they provide advance written authorization to the director. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. makes direct deposits.

Employees who separate from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will receive their final check on the next regularly scheduled payday if they have returned all company property (keys, uniforms, etc.) by such time.

## **5.04 PAY ADVANCES**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. does not provide pay advances on unearned wages, paid time off or any other benefit to employees.

## **5.05 PAYCHECK DEDUCTIONS**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is required by law to make certain deductions from employee paychecks each pay period. Such deductions typically include federal and state taxes and Social Security (FICA) taxes. Depending on the benefits, which employees choose, there may be additional deductions. All deductions and the amount of the deductions are listed on employee pay stubs. These deductions are totaled each year for employees on their Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement.

When an employee's wages are garnished by a court order, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is legally bound to withhold the amount indicated in the garnishment order from the employee's paycheck. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will, however, honor federal and state guidelines, which protect a certain amount of an employee's income from being subject to garnishment.

If questions or concerns about any pay deductions arise, employees may discuss and resolve them with the office.

## **5.06 COMPENSATION REVIEW**

Because Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. values an employee's input as a member of the Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. team, and as an individual, we are constantly reviewing business conditions productivity, quality, work efficiency, attendance, and other factors, to determine whether, and in what amount, adjustments in compensation are to be made for employees. Such compensation adjustments are at the sole discretion of the Owner of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

## **6.01 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The safety of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. employees, children and visitors on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. premises is of major importance. Employees, who see an unsafe condition or safety hazard in their working area or anywhere else on the director premises, should immediately report it to their supervisor.

For the protection of its employees, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. must enforce all safety rules and regulations. It is the responsibility of each employee to know and adhere to all rules contained in Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s safety publications. Always obey all safety rules. Violation of any of the rules will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Supervisors will advise their employees of the specific safety rules, which may be unique to a particular job. If Employees have any questions regarding safety rules, they should contact their supervisor.

Employees are expected to practice excellent hygiene at all times. Children may be susceptible to diseases and may even be carriers of various diseases, which are easily transmitted when poor hygiene is practiced. Employees must master the safety procedures necessary to avoid either contracting or spreading the disease. If an Employee has special medical risks or problems, he or she must educate himself or herself on how to deal with the special risks.

Evidence that all staff and volunteers and each volunteer who has contact with children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks is free from communicable tuberculosis, verified within 1 year before employment or volunteering, shall be kept on file at the center.

When staff exhibit the following symptoms, they should contact the director immediately and stay home from work:

- Thick, colored discharge from nose or eyes
- Persistent and productive cough
- Red or runny eyes with persistent sneezing
- Fever (must be fever-free without the use of fever reducers for 24 hours before returning to school) Fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken orally
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea and persistent abdominal pain. (Loose bowels three or more times in a 24-hour period)
- Nausea and vomiting (children must be vomit-free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Headache and pain/stiffness of the neck
- Swelling and tenderness of glands, especially around the face and neck.

- Sore and crusts on the scalp, face, or body (particularly if red, swollen and /or draining)
- Any skin eruptions, rash, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- Pink eye – redness of the eye and/or a thick yellow drainage.
- Lice or Nits –must be nit free for 2 days
- Flu-like symptoms

All accidents, injuries and personal or property damage accidents regarding employees, children or visitors on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' premises or at work sites off premises should be reported immediately by employees to their supervisor. In the event of an Employee injury that requires medical attention, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will arrange to send the Employee to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s selected physician or clinic.

Employees should not try to handle an emergency situation by themselves. Employees should never touch an injured person unless they are fully qualified and certified to perform first aid and are extremely confident of the correct action to take. Please summon help and try not to move the injured person.

## **6.02 SECURITY**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. cannot always prevent thefts, accidents and other undesirable occurrences. Consequently, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. asks for the assistance of its employees in helping it protect its employees and property.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. assumes no responsibility for the personal property of its employees. Employees should not leave their personal valuables unattended. If employee property is stolen, or if the director property is stolen, employees should advise their supervisor as soon as possible so that an appropriate investigation can be undertaken at once. Also, if employees see someone who does not appear to belong in their area or any other suspicious circumstance, they should immediately advise their supervisor so that he or she can investigate or refer the matter to the proper person.

## **6.03 ACCESS TO THE PREMISES**

Employees requiring access to the premises during non-scheduled hours must obtain prior written approval from their supervisor. A supervisor prior to entry on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. premises must also authorize all visitors and guests of employees. Administrative personnel must escort such persons at all times. It is the responsibility of each employee to refer unauthorized visitors to the office. Employees may be held personally liable for any damage to the director property caused by their visitors and guests.

In order to protect the safety and security of employees, children and Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s premises, sharing of building alarm codes or passwords to other employees or third parties is strictly prohibited.

## **6.04 PERSONAL ACTIVITIES**

In keeping with the business environment that Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. seeks to maintain in its facilities and offices, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. asks that employees respect this environment by keeping their personal affairs separate from their work.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. recognizes that personal problems do occasionally affect an employee's ability to work. In such cases, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. encourages its employees to discuss this kind of problem with their immediate supervisor in order to minimize the impact that these problems may have on their performance.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. expects that employees will not invite friends or relatives into Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' facilities and offices or conduct personal business while on the job. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. also expects that employees will keep their personal calls to a minimum.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' address shall not be used for the receipt of personal mail.

### **Personal Telephone Calls**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' telephone lines are for business purposes only. Although the occasional use of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s telephones for a personal emergency may be necessary, routine personal calls should be kept to a minimum while on the job.

Employees are prohibited from using personal cell phones and other electronic devices while on duty.

## **Solicitation and Distribution**

In order to avoid unnecessary annoyances and work interruptions, solicitation by an employee of another employee is prohibited while either person is on working time. Employee distribution of literature, including handbills, in work areas is prohibited at all times.

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. bulletin board is prohibited. Bulletin boards are reserved for those notices that are in compliance with Section 8.20 of this Handbook.

Trespassing, soliciting or distribution of literature by non-employees on these premises is prohibited at all times.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action against the offending employee(s), up to and including termination of employment.

## **6.05 SMOKING**

Smoking, the use of chewing tobacco or any other tobacco products is not permitted on the school premises.

## **6.06 MEAL PERIODS**

All employees are provided with one meal period of 60 minutes in length each workday during which they work 8 hours in a single day (8 hours work +1 hour break = 9 hours total for the day). Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.

Employees may not skip or work through meal periods or move meal periods to the end of their shift in order to leave early without the prior written approval of their supervisor. Employees must clock out for their meal break and punch back in when they return. Employees may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, for violations of this policy.

## **6.07 OVERTIME**

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees will be given the opportunity to volunteer for overtime work assignments. However, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to enforce mandatory overtime when necessary. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employees who refuse to work. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

No employee is permitted to work overtime without the prior written approval of his or her supervisor. Employees who work overtime without receiving prior authorization from their supervisor, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

Employees will not be paid for overtime work unless they record such hours on time sheets and submit same to the office by the pay period end day, after sign-off by their supervisor. Only actual hours worked count toward computing weekly overtime. If you have any questions concerning overtime pay check with the office.

## **6.08 EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will generally follow the Novi Public Schools and Walled Lake Public Schools closing policies if weather or other emergencies cause the closing of schools. An All School email and/or text will be sent out notifying families and staff as to the closed status. Also check the Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. website at [www.noviwoods.com](http://www.noviwoods.com). Staff will call families for the timely notification of the closing.

In the event a decision is made during the day to close the school, employees who are at work will be paid for the time spent at work only. Employees may use any available time off to make up any difference.

If an emergency closing is not authorized, employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off.

## **6.09 BUSINESS EXPENSES**

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable business expenses including mileage reimbursement and any other business related occurrences. The employee's immediate supervisor must approve all business expenses in advance.

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor. Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may not be used for personal use without prior approval.

Employees should submit completed business expenses (receipts) within 30 days.

## **6.10 COMPUTER & INTERNET USAGE**

Computers, computer files, the e-mail system, and software furnished to employees are Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. property intended for business use. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization or for non-business purposes.

The computer and Internet are intended for business use only. Use of the computer or Internet for any non-business purpose, including but not limited to, personal communication or solicitation, purchasing personal goods or services, gambling and downloading files for personal use, is strictly prohibited.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s policies against sexual and other types of harassment apply fully to Internet usage, including the use of text and instant message programs. Violations of those policies are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Therefore, employees are also prohibited from displaying, transmitting and/or downloading sexually explicit images, messages, ethnic slurs, racial epithets or anything which could be construed as harassment or disparaging to others. Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

Consistent with applicable federal and state law, employee computer files and the time spent on the Internet may be tracked through activity logs for business purposes. Employee computer files are the property of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., which may review it at its sole discretion. All abnormal usage will be investigated thoroughly.

Employees learning of any misuse of the computer, emails or the Internet shall immediately notify the Director or Owner.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **6.13 EMPLOYEE MONITORING**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may, at its discretion, monitor all employee work areas and communications, including, but not limited to, computer, e-mail and telephone usage. Such monitoring may include video surveillance of employee work areas.

## **6.14 WORKPLACE SEARCHES**

To protect the property and to ensure the safety of all employees, children and Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to conduct personal searches consistent with state law, and to inspect any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, brief cases, lunch boxes or any other possessions or articles carried to and from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s property. Inspection may be conducted at any time at the discretion of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

Employees working on or entering or leaving the premises who refuse to cooperate in an inspection, as well as employees who after the inspection are believed to be in possession of stolen property or illegal substances, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, if upon investigation they are found to be in violation of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s security procedures or any other the director rules and regulations.

## **6.15 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

Violence by an employee, or anyone else, against an employee will not be tolerated. All employees, including supervisors and voluntary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a child, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

If employees receive or overhear any threatening communications from another employee or outside third party, they should report it to their supervisor or the Office Administrator. Do not engage in either physical or verbal confrontation with a potentially violent individual. All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. If an employee encounters an individual who is threatening immediate harm to an employee or visitor to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' premises, they should contact an emergency agency (such as 911) immediately.

All reports of work-related threats will be kept confidential to the extent possible, investigated and documented. Employees are expected to report and participate in an investigation of any suspected or actual cases of workplace violence.

Violations of this policy, including the failure to report or fully cooperate in Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. investigations, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

## **6.16 CONCEALED WEAPONS**

Possession, use or sale of weapons, firearms or explosives on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. premises is forbidden under the Michigan Firearms Act. This policy applies to all employees, including but not limited to those who have a valid permit to carry a firearm.

Employees who are aware of violations or threats of violations of this policy are required to report such violations or threats of violations to their supervisor immediately.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **7.01 MILITARY LEAVE**

Employees who are required to fulfill military obligations in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States or in state military service will be given the necessary time off and reinstated in accordance with federal and state law, including the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Military Leave will be unpaid, except where state law dictates otherwise. Exempt employees may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws. Accrued PTO time may be used for this leave if the employee chooses.

Military orders should be presented to the office, and arrangements for leave made as early as possible before a departure. Employees are required to give advance notice of their service obligations to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. unless military necessity makes this impossible. Employees must notify the office of their intent to return to employment based on requirements of the law.

Employees on military leave for up to 30 calendar days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws.

Additional information regarding military leaves may be obtained from the Administrator.

## **8.01 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is subject to a high degree of public visibility and scrutiny and is therefore concerned about (1) maintaining its good reputation, and (2) how its employees represent Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. in the community. This Code of Conduct defines the ethical and professional standards by which all employees should conduct their work and structure their relationship with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and other employees. Each employee is expected to observe the standard of conduct outlined in this Code. Circumstances not specifically covered by this Code of Conduct should be resolved in accordance with the general principles outlined herein. The Code of Conduct requires the written self-disclosure of any circumstance, which the employee believes may lead to a violation of the Code.

It is expected that employees will conduct themselves in a professional, ethical manner at all times, avoid situations which may have questionable outward appearances reflecting adversely upon Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. or impair in any way the performance of their official responsibilities on the job, and refrain from using their position with or relationship to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. for personal gain or to the detriment or embarrassment of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc..

It is also expected that employees will conduct themselves in a professional manner as to all their interactions with each other, and that they will treat each other with respect, consideration and courtesy at all times.

### **General Guidelines and Standard of Conduct**

Employees are expected to perform their jobs for the benefit of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and must be aware of their responsibilities:

**Ethical Responsibilities to Children** Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in settings that are safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child. We are committed to supporting children's development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We are also committed to promoting children's self-awareness, competence, self-worth, resiliency, and physical well-being.

**Ethical Responsibilities to Families** Families\* are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's wellbeing, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development.

**Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues** In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility to colleagues is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the workplace.

**Ethical Responsibilities to Community and Society** Early childhood programs operate within the context of their immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. As individuals, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide the best possible programs of care and education for children and to conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. employees may not engage in activities with any "Outside Business Organization" (as that term is defined in this policy) or that does or seeks to do business with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. which (1) may result in a personal benefit to the employee at the expense of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., or (2) may influence the employee's decisions on matters involving Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and the outside business organization. Examples of such prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- a. Direct or indirect ownership of any outside business organization by employees or their family members, without disclosure and prior written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.;
- b. Acceptance of compensation, commissions, fees or other goods or services valued at more than \$100 from any outside business organization without disclosure and prior written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.;
- c. Use of non-public, privileged or confidential information of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. for the personal gain of an employee or his or her family members or the disclosure of such information to any person not expressly authorized to receive it;
- d. Acceptance of an offer to serve as an officer, director, partner, consultant or employee of any outside business organization without disclosure and prior written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.; and
- e. Borrowing money from any outside business organization, except loans or advances from banks or other bona fide financial institutions which are offered at prevailing commercial rates.

For the purpose of this Conflict of Interest provision, the following definitions shall apply:

"Family Members" includes an employee's spouse, any relative who is a dependent of the employee, and any other person who lives in the employee's household.

"Outside Business Organization" includes any person, partnership, firm, corporation or other entity that supplies or seeks to supply to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. any goods or services or transacts or seeks to transact any business with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. or its Lessees.

"Direct or Indirect Ownership" includes any ownership interest in an outside business organization, even if an intermediary acting for the benefit of an employee or family members of an employee holds the ownership interest.

### **Outside Employment and Activities**

Employees of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. shall conduct their personal affairs in such a fashion that their duties and responsibilities to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. are not jeopardized and/or legal questions do not arise with respect to their association or work with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.. The employee may engage in outside activities unrelated to the performance of assigned responsibilities, for compensation or otherwise, provided that such outside activities will not interfere with the performance of assigned duties or create a conflict with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. as defined in this Code of Conduct. Such outside activities should not exploit the employee's association with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. or cause harm to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Outside activities should not be conducted during scheduled hours of work without disclosure and prior written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

Employees are prohibited from providing outside services for any children enrolled in the program. Such prohibited services including, but are not limited to, tutoring, babysitting, serving as a nanny, transporting children or any other service provided directly to a child or his or her parents.

No facilities, equipment, supplies, secretarial or other employee services furnished by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may be used in pursuit of an outside activity without disclosure and prior written approval of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

### **Confidential Information and Falsification of Records**

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. As an employee of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., you may have access to certain confidential information pertaining to children enrolled in the program and the business of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Personnel records
- Children's personal information
- Children's health records
- Children's family situations
- Salary information
- Payroll records
- Lists of enrolled children
- Vendor contracts
- Pricing information
- Financial information

Protecting Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s information is the responsibility of every employee, and all employees share a common interest in making sure it is not improperly or accidentally disclosed. The employees are expected to maintain the information they receive pertaining to children or information, which is of a non-public or confidential character in the strictest of confidence and may not disclose such information to any person not expressly authorized to receive it. Information pertaining to children enrolled in the program should never be divulged in any manner or for any reason outside of the direct functions of their job responsibilities.

The obligation to maintain confidentiality is a condition of employment and the responsibility for not disclosing confidential information received during the course of employment continues after employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center,

Inc. ceases. All employees are required to sign a “Non-Disclosure Agreement” as a condition of their employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

Falsification of the any records is prohibited. Records relating to the school activities and transactions may not be altered, changed, amended, removed, mutilated, or destroyed without prior authorization.

Should a breach of confidentiality occur for any reason, it is the obligation of an employee aware of such breach to immediately notify his or her supervisor or another appropriate person in writing.

### **Social Media Sites**

It is a breach of confidentiality to post pictures of children in our program to social media sites. Doing so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Damaging or discouraging statements regarding our school or program, school, families or students may violate policy or school regulations. The following are guidelines for education professionals to consider when using social media sites:

- Do not accept parents of your students as friends on personal social networking sites. Decline any parent-initiated friend requests.
- Do not initiate friendships with parents of your students
- Remember that people classified as ‘friends’ have the ability to download and share your information with others

### **Writings, Publications and Public Statements**

Employees shall not author or publish any work (e.g., writings, videotapes, audiotapes, computer programs, etc.), which is the director Intellectual Property (as described in Section (f)) without obtaining Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.’ prior written approval and being subject to its conditions.

Employees shall not author any non-company work on company time, or use any the company facilities, Intellectual Property, trade secrets, or resources for such purposes without first obtaining prior written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. Employees shall disclose to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. all other non-Novu Wood’s works prior to first publication.

Employees shall not make any public appearances, speeches, or statements, in person or through broadcast or printed media, relating to the company or its business. Only an authorized spokesperson may give any information to the media.

### **Innovations, Inventions, Patents and Grants**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. shall own and Employees shall assign all innovations, inventions, improvements, marks, grants and designs (all referred to as “Intellectual Property”) suggested by an activity which employees may do for or on behalf of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., related to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.’s business, or developed during the hours of employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. or using any the director facilities, trade secrets, or resources.

Employees shall make and maintain written records on and promptly and fully disclose to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. all such Intellectual Property. During and after termination of employment, Employees shall perform all acts useful or necessary to assist Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., as it may elect, to file patent, design, mark, and copyright applications in the United States and foreign countries to protect or maintain rights in the Intellectual Property.

Employees may seek to obtain written approval from Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to develop and market such Intellectual Property, but in no event shall an employee develop and/or market such Intellectual Property without written consent to do so by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.

### **Reporting Illegal and Unethical Activity**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. strives to ensure that all its employees conduct their activities in conformance with applicable laws and the highest ethical standards. However, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is not always aware of all of the actions of its employees. Therefore, any employee who, during the course of employment, believes that he or she has been requested or required to engage in an illegal or unethical act, or to engage in otherwise improper activity which would constitute a violation of this Code of Conduct, must report that fact immediately, in writing, to the Director or Owner who will promptly undertake to investigate the allegations and take remedial action, if necessary. If such a report is made

in good faith, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will protect the reporting employee from any retaliation or other detrimental impact upon his or her employment. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. hopes that its employees shall give it the opportunity to correct improper or unethical activities.

## **Recording Devices in the Workplace**

Except as otherwise provided for in this policy, no employee may photograph, tape, or otherwise record any person, document, conversation or communication, or activity that in any way involves Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. or employees of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., any child enrolled in the program or any other individual with whom Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is doing business or intending to do business in any capacity (for example, vendors, suppliers, consultants, attorneys, or independent contractors). The authorized copying of documents in the ordinary course of business for the benefit of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is not prohibited by this policy.

Photographing, taping, recording under this policy includes taking still or video pictures (film or digital), or recording of any conversation or communications, regardless of whether the conversation or communication takes place in person, over the telephone, or via any other communications device or equipment, and regardless of the method used to tape or record (for example, tape recorder, video recorder, mechanical recording, or wire-tapping equipment), and regardless of where the conversation or communication takes place, i.e., whether on or off Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' premises. Taping or recording also includes photographing or recording digital images through cameras of any kind (for example, camera phones, PDA cameras, or concealed cameras). Limited exceptions will apply where an individual who has been provided advance written authorization for the activity by an authorized member of the director management is conducting the photographing, taping, or recording.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action against the offending employee(s), up to and including termination of employment. Where the conduct engaged in is illegal, violators may also be subject to prosecution under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

## **Guidelines Regarding Misconduct**

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow the Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times. If an individual's behavior interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of a department, corrective disciplinary measures will be taken.

Disciplinary action may include a verbal warning, written warning, and suspension with or without pay and/or discharge. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. in its sole discretion will determine the appropriate disciplinary action. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. does not guarantee that one form of action will necessarily precede another.

The following examples are illustrative of the type of misconduct, which will lead to disciplinary action, including discharge. These examples are not all inclusive, but are meant only as a guideline to employees:

### **Minor Infractions:**

- Absenteeism & Tardiness
- Substandard work performance not resulting in harm to the reputation of the program
- Insubordination, including refusal to obey instructions of supervisors and refusal to accept changes in work assignments.
- Leaving the school premises or work location without permission during working hours.
- Refusal to work reasonable amounts of overtime when properly advised and instructed, or failure to report for overtime work after accepting such an assignment.
- Abuse of lunch or other break periods.
- Conducting personal business on work time.

Minor Infractions may be handled by advising the employee of the substandard performance and assisting the employee in improving performance. If infractions are not corrected by the employee, progressive discipline may begin. The director will be included in all steps of the progressive discipline process. Progressive discipline is:

1. Verbal reprimand: this will be documented in writing and a copy will be given to the employee. No copy of this documentation will be placed in the employee's personnel file. It is intended for reference and proof of oral reprimand should further disciplinary action be necessary.
2. Written reprimand: a copy of the written reprimand will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
3. Further disciplinary action will involve meeting with the owner and the director in an effort to resolve the problem.
4. Suspension without pay: documentation of suspension will be placed in personnel file

## 5. Dismissal

### Major Infractions:

- The commission of any crime.
- Dishonesty, including:
  - Theft, unauthorized use or misappropriation of the property of an employee, or Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.
  - Falsification of personnel or other the director records.
  - Misuse or unauthorized removal from the director premises of any records, information or property.
  - Bribery, fraudulent or unethical conducts of any nature.
  - Failure to punch out when leaving the director premises to conduct personal business.
- Consumption or use of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, either while on the Company premises or while engaged in work off premises.
- Possession of guns or weapons of any kind on the Company property, work locations or in the Company owned vehicles.
- Fighting on the Company premises or while working off premises.
- Negligently or willfully damaging the Company property or equipment.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves complete discretion regarding the imposition of disciplinary action for any misconduct. Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to undermine the at-will relationship between Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and its employees.

### **Use of the School Property**

All employees are responsible for the proper care of equipment and all Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. property. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will assume responsibility for breakage of the school equipment during normal use, but employees who lose or misuse the school equipment will be subject to disciplinary action and may be held liable for costs. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is not responsible for personal belongings or equipment.

### **8.02 HIPAA COMPLIANCE**

It is imperative that employees maintain the confidence of a child's information, which they receive during the course of their work, understand that they are a crucial part of protecting the privacy rights of others and comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"). Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. prohibits the release of any protected health information ("PHI") to any employee of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. who does not require such information to conduct his or her job. Employees must keep the PHI of children, whether in electronic, oral, written, or photographic form, strictly confidential since federal and state laws, which prohibit its unauthorized use or disclosure, protect such information. Discussions and disclosures of PHI should be limited to the minimum necessary needed for the recipient of such information to perform his or her job. Acceptable uses of PHI within Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. include, but are not limited to, internal audits, quality assurance and billing.

Employees must comply with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s HIPAA Privacy Program and other PHI policies and procedures at all times. Employees must immediately alert their supervisors and Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s HIPAA Privacy Officer in the event that they become aware of any intentional or inadvertent breach of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s HIPAA Privacy Program, other PHI policies and procedures or any confidential individually identifiable information. Employees are required to return all PHIS in their possession upon their separation of employment for any reason whatsoever. All employees are required to sign a "PHI Confidentiality Agreement" as a condition of their employment.

Employees who violate Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s HIPAA Privacy Program, other PHI policies, the PHI Confidentiality Agreement or who improperly use or disclose PHI will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

### **COMPUTER SOFTWARE LICENSING**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. purchases or licenses the use of various computer software programs. Neither Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. nor any of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' employees have the right to duplicate this computer software or its related documentation.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. does not condone the illegal duplication of software. Employees must use the software in accordance with the license agreement. This policy applies not only to individual desktop computers and laptops but to local area networks as well.

Employees learning of any misuse of software or related documentation within Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. shall notify a member of management. Employees who reproduce, acquire or use unauthorized copies of computer software will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

#### **8.04 ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE POLICY**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. has a vital interest in ensuring a safe, healthy and efficient working environment for its employees, their co-workers and the children enrolled in the program. The unlawful or improper presence or use of controlled substances or alcohol in the workplace presents a danger to everyone. For these reasons, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. has established as a condition of employment and continued employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. the following substance abuse policy.

Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of illegal substances and alcohol in the workplace while on the director paid time, on the director premises or while engaged in the director activities. Employees are also prohibited from reporting for duty or remaining on duty with any alcohol in their systems. Employees are also prohibited from consuming alcohol during working hours, including meal and break periods.

Employment with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is conditioned upon full compliance with the foregoing substance abuse policy. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to require that prospective employees submit to appropriate drug testing at the time of application and Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. further reserves the right to require that any employee submit to testing on a regular and/or random basis or if a reasonable basis exists to conclude that the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on the job. An employee' refusal to submit to a drug test may result in his or her discharge.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. further reserves the right to take any and all appropriate and lawful actions necessary to enforce this substance abuse policy including, but not limited to, the inspection of the director issued lockers, desks or other suspected areas of concealment, as well as an employee's personal property when Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. has reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee has violated this substance abuse policy.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with the Director or Owner without fear of reprisal.

#### **8.05 MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS**

A negative TB test, performed within one year prior to employment is required to begin employment.

#### **8.06 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities, which may include providing reasonable accommodation where appropriate. In general, it is an employee's responsibility to notify the Owner of the need for an accommodation. Upon doing so, the Owner may ask an employee for his or her input on the type of accommodation, which he or she believes, may be necessary, or the functional limitations caused by his or her disability. Also, when appropriate, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may need an employee's permission to obtain additional information from his or her physician or other medical or rehabilitation professionals.

#### **8.07 NON-HARASSMENT POLICY**

As part of the Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. policy of equal opportunity employment, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. prohibits the harassment of one employee by another employee, supervisor or third party because of his or her: veteran status; uniform service member status; race; color; religion; sex; age; national origin; physical or mental disability or handicap; pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition; height; weight; familial status; marital status and/or genetic

information. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. also prohibits illegal discrimination against its employees on the same bases. Harassment of third parties by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' employees is also prohibited.

The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the personal morality of employees. It is to assure that in the workplace, no employee harasses or discriminates against another for any prohibited reason.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing.

Any employee who feels that he or she is a victim of unlawful harassment or discrimination should immediately report the matter in the manner set forth in Section 8.09 of this Handbook. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against an employee because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy.

Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **8.08 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is against Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. policy and is unlawful under state and federal law. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. firmly prohibits sexual harassment of any employee by another employee, supervisor or third party. Harassment of third parties by Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' employees is also prohibited. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the morality of employees. It is to assure that in the workplace, no employee is subject to sexual harassment.

Since the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued rules and regulations defining what constitutes sexual harassment, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. endorses and adopts the following policy.

1. It is against the policies of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. for any employee, male or female, to engage in actions, which sexually harass another employee by:
  - a. Making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, a condition of the employee' continued employment, or
  - b. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee, or
  - c. Stating or implying that a particular employee' advances in employment have resulted from the granting of sexual favors or the establishment or continuance of a sexual relationship, or
  - d. Stating or implying that a particular employee' deficiencies in performance are attributable in whole or in part to the sex of that person, or
  - e. Commenting on particular characteristics associated with a particular sex, or
  - f. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment by such conduct.
2. Examples of unwelcome sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, threatening adverse employment actions if sexual favors are not granted; promising preferential treatment in return for sexual favors; unwanted physical contact; and/or sexually offensive remarks, including the following kinds of prohibited behavior:

Verbal: sexual advances, propositions or threats; continuing to express interest after being informed the interest is unwelcome; sexual innuendoes; suggestive or insulting comments or sounds, including whistling; sexual jokes or teasing of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual' body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; any other abuse of a sexual nature.

Visual: display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or letters; leering; obscene gestures; sexually suggestive or offensive graffiti.

Physical: unwanted physical contact, including offensive touching, pinching, brushing the body, impeding or blocking movement; unwanted sexual intercourse or other unwanted sexual act; sexual assault or battery.

The above list is not meant to be exhaustive, but is included to provide examples of prohibited action.

Sexual harassment of an employee will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. There will be no adverse action taken against employees who, in good faith, report violations of this policy or participate in the investigation of such violations.

Any employee who feels that he or she is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report the matter in the manner set forth in Section 8.09 of this Handbook. All complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated as confidentially as possible.

## **8.09 HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of illegal harassment or discrimination should report the alleged act immediately in writing. A form for filing a complaint may be obtained from the Owner.

The employee should initially register any complaint with his or her supervisor and the office. If the employee is uncomfortable presenting a complaint to his or her supervisor, the employee should present their complaint only to the office. If the employee is also uncomfortable presenting a complaint to the office, the employee should present his or her complaint to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s Owner.

Upon presentation of the complaint, an impartial investigation of the complaint will be undertaken in as discreet a manner as possible. Any supervisor, agent or other employee who has been found, after investigation by the director, to have harassed another employee in violation of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.'s policy, will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. not only prohibits illegal harassment and discrimination, but also strictly prohibits any retaliation against an employee who, in good faith, has registered a complaint of such harassment or discrimination. Any supervisor, agent or employee of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. who, after investigation, has been determined to have retaliated against any employee for making a complaint of illegal harassment or discrimination in good faith will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge. Retaliation against witnesses in any investigation of a complaint of illegal harassment or discrimination is also strictly prohibited. If an employee believes he or she has been retaliated against for exercising his or her rights under this policy, or for testifying as a witness, the employee should use the same complaint procedure as set forth above.

## **8.10 NON-FRATERNIZATION POLICY**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. desires to avoid misunderstandings, actual or potential conflicts of interest, complaints of favoritism, possible claims of sexual harassment, and the employee morale and dissension problems that can potentially result from romantic relationships between managerial and supervisory employees of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. as well as between managerial/supervisory employees and its other employees.

Accordingly, managers/supervisors are strongly discouraged from fraternizing or becoming romantically involved with any non-managerial/supervisory employee of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., or any other employee whom he or she manages or supervises. Additionally, all employees, both managerial/supervisory and non-managerial/supervisory, are discouraged from fraternizing or becoming romantically involved with other employees, when, in the sole opinion of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc., their personal relationships may create a conflict of interest, cause disruption, create a negative or unprofessional work environment, or present concerns regarding supervision, safety, security, or morale.

Any manager/supervisor fraternizing and/or becoming romantically involved with a non-manager/supervisor must immediately and fully disclose in writing the relevant circumstances to the Director so that a determination can be made as to whether the relationship presents an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest. Any non-management employee fraternizing and/or becoming romantically involved with another non-management employee must also immediately and fully disclose in writing the existence and circumstances of the relationship to the Director so that a determination can be made as to whether the relationship presents an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest. If an actual, perceived or potential conflict exists; Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may take whatever action it deems appropriate according to the circumstances, up to and including position modification, transfer or discharge. Failure to timely disclose fraternization, a romantic relationship or any material facts may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

It is not Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc.' intention to dictate choices made in an employee's personal life with this Policy. Employees must understand, however, that Courts and other employees are holding companies to higher standards to insure a fair, conflict free work place.

All employees should also remember that Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. maintains a strict policy against unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment and retaliation. Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will vigorously enforce this policy consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

### **8.11 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

In order for Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to operate efficiently and provide the absolute best services to its clients, prompt and regular attendance is absolutely essential. Tardiness and absenteeism not only cause disruption in the director operations, but also result in unnecessary inconvenience for those who must fill in for the late or absent employee. Prompt attendance is also required of each employee.

Personal issues requiring time away from work, such as doctor's appointments or other matters should be scheduled during non-working hours if possible.

In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. Employees who experience a non-pre-approved/scheduled absence must call and speak directly to their supervisor, their manager or the Owner. Messages may not be left on the voice mail system - employees who only leave voice messages will be subject to discipline. In absences of more than one day, the employee must telephone daily. The employee's supervisor may also contact the employee during the day to check on their progress.

An employee who is absent for 2 consecutive days may be required to obtain a doctor's statement confirming the employee's illness and stating when the employee will be able to return to work. An employee who is absent for 2 successive workdays without contacting Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned and removed from the payroll.

Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or not, is unacceptable. Each situation of excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### **8.12 PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

A good business appearance contributes to the ability of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to project a business-like, professional image. Employees are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal cleanliness and present a neat, professional appearance at all times. Your dress and appearance should be appropriate for the environment of your assigned job. If required, name tags and identification badges must be worn. All employees should be constantly aware they are a reflection of the organization at all times.

Employees are prohibited from wearing torn or damaged clothing, extremely short shorts, flip-flops, sweatpants and other clothing items inappropriate for the child care setting. Employees are encouraged to consider the dress code as workday casual. Footwear for men and women should be appropriate for the position in which the staff person works. Comfortable soft-soled walking shoes are encouraged. For all employees there is a strict prohibition on excessive visible body piercing. Visible tattoos are not allowed. Cosmetics, colognes and fragrances must be kept to a minimum, so as to prevent discomfort and/or allergic reactions from children and co-workers. Jewelry must be conservative in nature and should not compromise health, sanitation or safety. Requests for modification to the dress code are available for persons observing seriously held religious beliefs.

### **8.13 GIFTS**

Parents of children enrolled with Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. may give gifts to certain staff members on certain holidays and events. While these gifts are acceptable, compensation for services rendered to the children is limited strictly to the financial agreement established in the Parent Contract. Employees are not permitted to borrow money from parents, guardians or other family members of children under any circumstances.

### **8.14 VISITORS**

No visitors other than parents or guardians of enrolled children or government officials are allowed in the facility without advanced written permission from the Company. Visitors other than parents or guardians of enrolled children or government officials must have prior authorization to visit. This applies to former employees as well as strangers. It is the responsibility of each employee to refer unauthorized visitors to the director.

## **8.15 RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. maintains a strict policy regarding the release of children to parents, guardians or others. No child in the care of this child care program should be released to anyone other than those individuals the child's parents or guardian have identified on the signed Child Information Card (emergency card). The list of authorized individuals is maintained and periodically updated by the parents or guardian. Absolutely no child should be released to any person who is not on the child release card. Prior to releasing a child to someone unknown to an employee, the employee must verify the person's identify by viewing a driver's license or state issued photo identification. The Director must handle any unauthorized releases, special release arrangements or otherwise questionable releases. Parents and guardians are aware that any all-temporary or permanent modification to the children release instructions must be communicated in writing.

## **8.16 INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS**

In the event of a serious injury; any accident or illness that requires hospitalization; incidents that involve seriously hostility, any hospitalization, any attempts at self-inflicted harm or harm to others and any instances of destruction of property staff shall do the following:

1. Immediately inform the Director and/or Owner.
2. Complete a written incident or accident report.
3. The Director shall make a reasonable attempt to contact the child's parents or guardian by telephone. If a message is left, write down the time and name of the person who received the message. This responsibility may be delegated to a staff person.
4. Within 48 hours, the Director must send a copy of the incident and accident report to the child's parent(s) or guardian and the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Licensing Consultant.

The Director shall immediately investigate the cause of an accident or incident that involves a child, staff person or visitor.

An accident record or incident report shall be prepared for each accident or incident that involves a child, staff person or visitor. For purposes of this section, "Incident" shall mean a seizure or a highly unusual behavior episode.

## **8.17 ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

This childcare facility prohibits abuse and neglect of children in any form, whether verbal, physical or otherwise. Only positive forms of discipline such as redirection will be used at this facility. Conduct such as hitting, punching, slapping, dropping objects upon, or otherwise impermissibly or inappropriately touching a child or using verbal threats or tones of voice that denigrate or demote a child are considered abuse and neglect and will be grounds for immediate dismissal. As a licensed childcare provider, we must report abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities whenever we have a reasonable suspicion of it occurring. It is our policy that any employee that has a reasonable suspicion of any child abuse or neglect immediately inform the Owner orally and in writing. This does not, however, detract from the obligation of the employee to report such abuse or neglect to child protective services.

## **8.18 DISCIPLINE**

The Montessori Philosophy stresses respect for the child, respect for others and respect for the environment. When a child interferes with the rights of others the teacher will talk to him respectfully in a positive manner. We encourage the children to verbalize their feelings using words and offer acceptable ways of expressing those feelings. Sometimes it is necessary to give the child time to think about his behavior and then he can rejoin his group. We do not practice punishment or reward, as these are of no value in teaching self-discipline. Children are never deprived of meals, snacks, rest or toilet use as a means of discipline.

Non-severe and developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used when reasonably necessary to prevent a child from harming himself or herself or to prevent a child from harming other person or property. Positive developmentally appropriate discipline will be used when necessary to reinforce appropriate behavior. Staff shall never make a child feel a lack of self-esteem or self-worth. There is no form of physical punishment that will be deemed acceptable.

We at Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. believe that the best form of discipline evolves from having the following components in each classroom:

- Consistent, knowledgeable and professional teachers.
- A clear and positive set of classroom rules developed with participation from the children.
- A consistent and predictable daily routine/schedule.
- A well-organized classroom equipped with an adequate amount of developmentally appropriate materials
- Developmentally appropriate expectations for children.
- Positive redirection
- Logical and appropriate consequences
- Staff who model appropriate behavior
- Staff who teach children problem solving techniques
- Staff who treat children as individuals and respect their needs, desires and feelings.
- Staff who acknowledge when children are making good choices.
- Teamwork and communication with parents.

Employees shall use developmentally appropriate positive methods of discipline, which encourage self-control, self-esteem, and cooperating. Employees shall not:

- Hit, spank, shake, bite, pinch or inflict other forms of corporal punishment;
- Restrict a child's movement by binding or tying him or her;
- Inflict mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child;
- Deprive a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use;
- Confine a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle.

Other non-severe and developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used only when reasonably necessary to prevent a child from harming him or herself or to prevent a child from harming other persons or property.

## **8.19 FACILITIES**

The general appearance of our facilities is a direct reflection on our individual pride in our workmanship, our job and us. There is a place for everything and everything should be in its place. It is everyone's job to keep all of our facilities, our equipment and our work areas neat and clean.

Parents and guardians often visit us. If your classroom appears neat, orderly and efficient, our visitors will carry away a favorable impression of our organization.

## **8.20 BULLETIN BOARDS**

Information regarding changes in working schedules, overtime, safety, the director policy and other matters related to employment and notices that are posted as required by law are posted on Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. kitchen door. Any important employee notice will be sent via email, text, timeclock note or a letter will be left in the employee's mailbox. A posted statement is considered as sufficient notice and it is the employee's responsibility to be aware of items so posted.

## **8.21 SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS PRIVACY**

To ensure to the extent practicable the confidentiality of the employee's social security numbers (SSNs), no employee may acquire, disclose, transfer or unlawfully use the social security number of any employee except in accordance with this policy. The release of employee SSNs to external parties is prohibited except where required by law or authorized by the employee in writing. Internal access to employee SSNs is restricted to employees with a legitimate business need for the information.

Except where permitted by state or federal law, Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. will not: 1) publicly display all or more than four sequential digits of an employee' SSN; 2) use all or more than four sequential digits of an employee' SSN as the primary account number for an individual; 3) visibly print all or more than four sequential digits of an employee' SSN on any identification badge or card; 4) require an individual to use or transmit all or more than four sequential digits of their SSN to gain access to an Internet web site or computer system or network unless the connection is secure, the transmission is encrypted, or a password or unique pin is also required to gain access; 5) include all or more than four sequential digits of an employee' SSN in or on any document or information mailed or otherwise sent to an individual if it is visible on or without manipulation from outside the envelope or packaging; or 6) include all or more than four sequential digits of an employee' SSN in any document or information mailed to a person.

Employee social security numbers may be collected in the ordinary course of business for the purpose of identity verification or to administer benefits and in accordance with state and federal laws.

Any documents, which include employee SSNs that are discarded, are to be shredded.

Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

For more information about this policy, please contact the Office Administrator.

## **8.22 EXPENDING THE COMPANY FUNDS AND ENTERING CONTRACTS**

Employees may not commit Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. to any unauthorized expenditure. All purchase orders must be filled out and approved by the Director or Owner before any item is purchased.

Other than employees specifically responsible for enrolling new children, employees may not enter into any contracts or binding agreements of any kind on behalf of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. without the written approval of the Director or Owner.

Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. reserves the right to recover monies involved in any unauthorized purchase. Any breach of this policy will be regarded as a very serious matter and result in discipline up to and including discharge.

## **9.01 NOTES**

This handbook is the property of Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. and must be returned to Novi Woods Montessori Center, Inc. upon leaving employment.