



Family Day Care Program, Inc.
120 Mt. Hope Street – Roslindale, MA 02131
Phone: 617-323-6899; Fax: 617-323-5412

Family Child Care Parent Handbook

Educator Name:	_____
Educator Address:	_____
Educator Phone Number:	_____
Educator E-mail:	_____

Dear Parent,

As a licensed Family Child Care Educator, I would like to congratulate you on choosing licensed Family Child Care. You have made an important child care decision for you and your family. Family Day Care Program, Inc., The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and I invite you to join in a partnership with us to ensure a high quality child care environment. This parent handbook and enrollment packet outlines many of our policies and procedures that relate to the care of your child, as well as the information we are required to give to you when you enroll your child in care. This handbook will also acquaint you with some of the key EEC standards designed to ensure a safe, healthy and educational child care experience.

We encourage you to maintain an open dialogue with your Educator and our Agency, as communication between parents and Educators is the foundation for a solid working relationship, and a good child care experience. Before filling out your child care enrollment form, please read through the information contained in this parent handbook.

A Word from EEC

EEC is the agency that oversees the early education and care and after school services for families in Massachusetts. As the agency that licenses child care, EEC has quality standards for all licensed programs to ensure high educational value, as well as health and safety. Having a license means that the Educator has demonstrated that they meet the standards outlined in the EEC regulations.

To obtain your own copy of EEC Family Child Care Regulations, you may download them from the EEC web site at: http://www.mass.gov/Eeoe/docs/EEC/regs_policies/20090122_606_cmr.pdf

Enrollment/Capacity

Educator's licensed capacity is posted on their license. At any one time, an Educator can only care for the number of children that they have been licensed for, which may include their own children, depending on their ages. In addition, EEC regulations state that Educators cannot care for more than three (3) children under the age of two (2) without an assistant, with one of those children being at least 15 months old and walking unassisted. If you have concerns or questions about the number of children in care, please feel free to discuss them with your Educator or FDCP, Inc. Director of Operations by calling (617) 323-6899.

Use of Assistants

An Educator may have an assistant to help care for the child care children, provided they are approved by EEC. If and when an Educator uses an assistant, they will let you know ahead of time, and you will have an opportunity to meet the assistant that will be working in the program. An Educator may also use volunteers from time to time, and although they will not be directly responsible for the care of children in the program, they will be on the premises and assisting the Educator.

I am not currently utilizing an assistant.

The assistant(s) / volunteer(s) I am currently using in my program are:

Name	Certificate # (for assistants)
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Program Hours / Closures (See Attachment A)

Attached to this handbook is a parent / educator agreement that outlines the Educator's policies regarding hours of care and the Agency Closing Schedule by fiscal year. We will review this together and note any additional information that is specific to you and the care of your child(ren).

Sick Policy

An Educator can care for mildly ill children in their program, however there will be times when you will need to keep your children out of the program due to illness. If your child has a fever, diarrhea or vomiting, you should keep them out of care until those symptoms have resolved for 24 hours.

Substitution Policy

Substitute Care is available through the Agency. In the event that the Program will be closed, you can contact the FDCP, Inc. Substitution Coordinator at (617) 323-6899 to arrange substitute care for your child(ren).

Educator Vacations

Educator will give you 30 days notice prior to taking a planned vacation. Many families choose to vacation at the same time, to eliminate the need for substitute care. Other parents use the notice time to arrange back up care.

Educator Illness or Emergency

Should your Educator need to close the program unexpectedly due to illness or emergency, you will be contacted immediately. In this situation, the Agency will also be notified, and the Agency will make every effort to arrange substitute care. If an illness or emergency should occur while your child(ren) is in care, emergency coverage would be arranged and you would be promptly notified.

Plan for Meeting Potential Emergencies

EEC regulations require that your Educator have a plan for meeting potential emergencies that may occur either during child care hours or at any time if they may affect the operation of the program.

In the event of an evacuation emergency, your Educator will contact the local authorities to determine whether or not to evacuate the program, or to remain sheltered at the program.

The escape routes from each floor of the licensed child care space are as follows:

In the event that a child goes missing from the program, your Educator will do the following:

Should the program need to be evacuated in the case of a fire, natural disaster, loss of power, heat or hot water, or any other emergency situation, there will be an alternate meeting location. The designated meeting place(s) outside of the program for emergencies are:

If the program needs to be evacuated, your Educator will notify all parents, as well as the appropriate authorities (fire, police, etc.) and EEC. The method of doing that is as follows (cell phone, neighbor's phone, payphone, etc.):

Your Educator will ensure that no child has been left at the program after an evacuation by:

Children's Records

EEC regulations require your Educator to maintain an individual written record for every child in care. These records include the information that parents complete at enrollment, as well as progress reports, incident reports and other documentation regarding your child's care. Records are updated at least annually, but may be updated as frequently as is needed.

As a parent, you have access to the records maintained for your child, and you have the right to add information or to request that information in your child's record be changed or deleted. You also have a right to receive a copy of your child's record; however there may be a reasonable fee for that copy.

Please let us know about any questions you have regarding your child's record.

Maintaining a Safe Environment

EEC has a number of licensing standards related to safety in a Family Child Care Home. Most of these standards outline common safety precautions such as making dangerous materials inaccessible to children, covering outlets, having a first aid kit, practicing evacuation drills, gating stairs, windows, or heating elements, posting emergency numbers, and maintaining a clean, hazard-free indoor space. Also, the outdoor space must be safe and hazard free and there should be no access to a busy street, water, construction materials, rusty or broken play materials, debris, glass, or peeling paint.

Lead Poisoning Prevention

All Family Child Care Educators are required by EEC to provide parents with information regarding the risks of Lead Poisoning. The following are some facts that all parents should know about lead and lead poisoning:

- Lead poisoning is caused by swallowing or breathing lead. Lead is poison when it gets into the body.
- Lead can stay in the body for a long time. Young children absorb lead more easily than adults. The harm done by lead may never go away. Lead in the body can:
 - Hurt the brain, kidneys, and nervous system
 - Slow down growth and development
 - Make it hard to learn
 - Damage hearing and speech
 - Cause behavior problems
- Most of the lead poisoning in Massachusetts comes from lead paint dust in older homes. Many homes built before 1978 have lead paint on the inside and outside of the building.
- When old paint peels and cracks, it creates lead paint chips and lead dust. Lead dust also comes from opening and closing old windows.
- Lead dust lands on the floor. Lead gets into children's bodies when they put their hands and toys in their mouths. Children can also breathe in lead dust. Children between the ages of 9 months and 6 years are most at risk.
- Important: Home repairs and renovations also create lead dust.
- Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. A lead test is the only way to know if your child has lead poisoning. Ask your doctor to test your child for lead. Some children may have:
 - Upset stomach
 - Trouble eating or sleeping
 - Headache
 - Trouble paying attention

As mentioned earlier, if your child is over nine (9) months of age, you will need to provide documentation to me that your child has been screened for lead poisoning. Most children will be screened annually until either age three (3) or four (4), depending on where the child lives.

Your Educator is required to disclose to you if they are aware of any known sources of lead in their home. Information regarding known sources of lead in the home is as follows:

For more information on lead poisoning, you can visit <http://www.mass.gov/dph/clppp> or call the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (800) 532-9571.

Supervision

Supervision is critical to keeping children safe. Your Educator and any assistants in the program will appropriately supervise children in order to ensure their health and safety at all times. They will use good judgment and consider several factors in determining the appropriate level of supervision for children including age, developmental needs, behavioral characteristics, the nature of activities and the space we are using, as well as the number of caregivers present at any given time. If you have any questions about how your Educator supervises the children in the program, feel free to ask Educator or contact the Director of Operations at Family Day Care Program, Inc.

Safe Sleep

Supervision of children is equally important during the times that a child is sleeping at the program, particularly when that child is an infant. EEC has very specific regulations around safe sleep practices. All infants are placed on their backs to sleep, unless a child's physician orders otherwise (such an order must be given to me in writing). Educator must check on children every 15 minutes during naptime. If your child is less than six months old, they will directly supervise them during naptime for the first six weeks they are in care. For more information regarding Safe Sleep, please feel free to review the 'Family Child Care Policies' section of www.eec.state.ma.us.

Curriculum and Progress Reports

All Family Child Care Educators must carry out a routine that is flexible and responds to the needs and interests of children in care. The routine must include things such as; meeting the physical needs of children in care, sixty minutes of physical activity every day, child-initiated and Educator-initiated activities and daily outdoor play, weather permitting. Additionally, the Educator must develop a curriculum that engages children in developmentally appropriate activities by planning specific learning experiences. The curriculum must include things such as; learning self-help skills that foster independence, opportunities to gain problem solving and decision making competencies and leadership skills and opportunities to learn about proper nutrition, good health and personal safety. The Educator is also responsible for providing an environment that promotes cultural, social and individual diversity.

In addition, progress reports must be completed periodically for all children in care. For infants and children with identified special needs, the Educator will be completing progress reports every three months. For toddlers and preschoolers, those reports are completed every six months, and school age children will have a yearly progress report completed for them.

Your Educator will be sharing your child's progress reports with you, as well as offering an opportunity to meet and discuss your child's progress. Feel free to ask about curriculum and progress reports and how they are implemented in the program.

Child Guidance

When it comes to interactions and the guiding of children's behavior, the goal of all Educators is to maximize the growth and development of children, as well as keep them safe. My Child Guidance Policy is as follows:

Medication Administration

EEC has regulations requiring Educators to have a policy regarding the administration of medication to children in care. As a licensed Family Child Care Educator, they are also required to take medication administration training. The following guidelines are common to all programs that are licensed by EEC:

Prescription Medication

- Prescription medication must be brought to the program in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per day and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.

- The program will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
- The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form before the medication can be administered.

Non-prescription Medication

- The program needs written parental authorization to administer oral non-prescription medication. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication form, which allows the Educator to administer the non-prescription medication. The statement must be renewed on a weekly basis.
- In the case of unanticipated non-prescription medication that is used to treat mild symptoms (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen), the program must still have written parental authorization, however it must be reviewed annually.
- The Educator will make every attempt to contact the parent prior to the child receiving the non-prescription medication unless the child needs medication urgently or when contacting the parent will delay appropriate care unreasonably.

Topical Ointments and Sprays

- Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, diaper rash ointment and insect repellent will be administered to the child with written parental permission. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medication.
- When topical ointments and sprays are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, the Educator will follow the written procedure for non-prescription medication which includes the written order of the physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization for Medication form signed by the parent.

All Medications

- The first dose must be administered by the parent at home in case of an allergic reaction.
- All medications must be given to the Educator directly by the parent.
- All medications will be stored out of the reach of children. All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
- The Educator will be responsible for the administration of medication. In her absence, the designated person will be _____.
- The program will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to unbroken skin) which will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dose, and the name of the person administering the medication. This completed record will become part of the child's file.
- All unused medication will be returned to the parent if possible, or disposed of in accordance with Department of Public Health guidelines.

Additional policies regarding medication administration are as follows:

Oral Health

Proper oral health begins at home, and I will be reinforcing good oral health practices with your child each day. If your child is in care for more than 4 hours per day, or he/she will be receiving at least one meal while in care, the Educator is required to assist your child with tooth brushing at the program.

- [] I would appreciate it if you would provide me with a toothbrush and toothpaste for your child, which I will store in a safe and sanitary manner at the program.
- [] I will be providing tooth brushing materials at the program.

Parent Notifications

We are required by EEC regulations to notify you of certain information about my family child care home. These notifications include, but are not limited to:

- an injury to your child;
- allegations of abuse or neglect regarding your child;
- if another educator will be caring for your child;
- the administering of first aid to your child;
- whenever a communicable disease has been identified in the program;
- children being taken off the child care premises;
- the existence of firearms in my home;
- if there are any changes in my household composition,
- prior to any pets being introduced into the program;
- whenever special problems or significant developments arise.

Mandated Reporting

As a licensed Educator in Massachusetts, we must operate our program in a way that protects children from abuse and neglect. As such, all Educators are mandated reporters (under M.G.L. c.119 s51A) and must make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) whenever they have reasonable cause to believe a child in the program is suffering from a serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon the child, or from neglect, no matter where the abuse or neglect may have occurred or by whom it was inflicted.

What I Need From You

The first day your child attends child care, the Educator will need a copy of the attached Family Child Care Enrollment Packet. Without these completed documents, which must be updated annually, they cannot care for your child. The reason for this is so I have all the important information and phone numbers they will need in order to provide the best possible care for your child.

Medical Information

Medical information about your child must be given to me within one (1) month from the day your child begins care. There are three (3) pieces of medical information I will need:

1. A statement from a physician or health care professional that says that your child received a physical exam within the past year;
2. Evidence that your child has been immunized as recommended by the Department of Public Health;
3. If your child is nine (9) months of age or older, a statement from a physician or health care professional which says that your child has been screened for lead poisoning.

Please note: Your child's immunization record must be updated and given to me in accordance with the Department of Public Health's immunization schedule. Also, your child's lead screening report must be updated as required by Department of Public Health Regulations. This report must also be given to the Educator. If your child is school age, we can accept a written statement that the required information is on file with the child's school.

Communication and Staying Involved

It is important to keep an open dialogue with your child's Educator, and to maintain an active role in your child's care. Feel free to visit, not just at pick up and drop off time, but at a variety of times during your child's day—it's your right as a parent. Please also make sure to follow-up with your Educator if you have any questions about the program or your child's care. Feel free to contact the Director of Operations at Family Day Care Program, Inc. at (617) 323-6899 if there are any further questions or concerns.

We look forward to working with your family and providing a great experience for your child(ren)!

ATTACHMENT A---PARENT / EDUCATOR AGREEMENT

Program Name: _____ **Name of Child(ren):** _____

Program Address: _____

Program Hours / Closures

My normal hours of operation:

The hours your child will be receiving care are as follows:

If for any reason the program will be closed, I will notify you by:

Additional schedule information (holidays, training days, etc.) is as follows:

FDCP, Inc. Holiday Closures:

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Professional Development
- Patriots Day
- Memorial Day
- Professional Development

By signing this, you are documenting that we are in agreement about the hours your child will receive care, and the rates you will be paying for that care. You are also stating that you understand my policies regarding late fees, termination, and any other issues documented above.

Parent Signature Date

Educator Signature Date