



Infant, Toddler, & Preschool

***“Building the foundation for a lifetime of success
through quality early childhood education.”***

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STAFF HANDBOOK
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Section 1 - INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Riverhouse Children's Center

Dear Team Member,

Welcome to Riverhouse! We are absolutely thrilled to have you join our community of passionate, dedicated caregivers and educators. Riverhouse Children's Center is more than just a childcare facility—we are a nonprofit organization, a community hub, and most importantly, a second home for the children and families we serve.

Founded in 2002 by a small group of local parents with big dreams, Riverhouse has grown into a vibrant center that now serves up to 72 children daily, ranging from six weeks to five years old. In 2013, thanks to the hard work and generosity of our supporters, we moved into our beautiful facility on Florida Avenue—a space designed with intention and heart to nurture little learners.

Riverhouse is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who support the long-term vision of the center. While they help guide policy, budgeting, and strategic planning, it is our Executive Director and administrative team who are responsible for the day-to-day operations—and for supporting you in your work.

This handbook is here to help you get oriented and understand the guidelines and expectations that help keep our center running smoothly and safely for everyone. Please take the time to read it thoroughly. Once you've reviewed everything, you'll be asked to sign an acknowledgement form confirming your understanding.

We want to be transparent with you from the start: this handbook is not a contract, and your employment at Riverhouse is “at-will,” meaning that either you or Riverhouse may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause. Only the Executive Director has the authority to make any exceptions, and only in writing.

If you ever have questions—about anything in this handbook, about your role, or even just about how we do things—please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to support you, just as we support the children in our care.

Thank you for choosing to be part of Riverhouse. Your presence, energy, and compassion make all the difference in the lives of our children. We hope your time here will be filled with meaningful connections, professional growth, laughter, learning, and lots of joyful moments.

Welcome to the Riverhouse family!

Warmly,

Sarah Bishop

Executive Director

Statement from the Riverhouse Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has approved the policies and expectations in this Handbook, as the Board believes they appropriately set performance and workplace standards that will support the best interest of the School and its children. The Board believes that the School cannot operate to serve the best interest of children and families if the staff do not maintain professionalism and workplace collegiality. We also believe that every staff member is worthy of support and fulfillment at his or her workplace. We also believe that early childhood educators are some of the most important people in our children's lives. Therefore, we hope that the policies and standards in this Handbook encourage communication, growth, and gratification.

Riverhouse Board of Directors

Barrie Newberger King, Board President

A. Our Organization

1. Our Mission & Vision

Mission: Building the foundation for a lifetime of success through quality early childhood education.

Vision: We support all families by providing quality early childhood education in a center that supports healthier relationships for everyone and provides trauma-informed care in a fun and safe environment.

2. Leadership / Organizational Structure

Riverhouse Children's Center is governed by a Board of Directors. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board of Directors. The Assistant Director, Program Director and kitchen staff report directly to the Executive Director. Aides report both to their Lead Teachers and the Program Director. The Executive Director has the discretion to create a Leadership Team to serve as a consulting body regarding Riverhouse's culture, pursuit of strategic plans, and successfully fulfilling its mission. Participation in the Leadership Team is by invitation, and is voluntary; participation is compensated at the staff member's regular hourly wage.

3. Our Classrooms

Riverhouse Children's Center serves children from six weeks to five years of age within six classrooms. These classroom compositions can change according to varying care needs.

- Infant/Chickadees (6 weeks to approximately 6 months)
- Infant/Hummingbirds (6 months to approximately 12 months)
- Toddler/Sparrows (12 months to approximately 2 years)
- Older Toddlers/Blue Jays (Approximately 2 years to 3 years)
- Preschool/Falcons (3 years - 5 years)
- Preschool/Eagles (3 years - 5 years)

4. Calendar

Riverhouse is open year-round, but operates on a calendar that is mostly aligned with the local school district. During the summer Riverhouse is closed for everybody in accordance with the week of July 4th for summer vacation, and closed for families - but not staff - for a Teacher Work Week in August before the new school year. The purpose of Teacher Work Week is to complete mandatory training, review policies and procedures, and prepare classrooms for both a new group of children and the fall semester.

5. Assessment, Curriculum & Classroom Management

At our center, we use a developmentally appropriate approach to curriculum and assessment across all classrooms.

All classrooms implement The Creative Curriculum™ as our foundational teaching framework, supporting intentional, play-based learning experiences. While The Creative Curriculum™ serves as the core structure in all classrooms, we encourage our educators to remain responsive to the interests and curiosities of their students. Many classrooms choose to supplement with additional lessons, projects, and activities that reflect children's emerging interests and foster deeper engagement in learning.

For assessment, all classrooms implement the **Teaching Strategies GOLD** assessment tool to track growth, guide instruction, and ensure kindergarten readiness.

We utilize two philosophies and approaches for classroom management: **Conscious Discipline**, which cultivates emotional intelligence by teaching self-regulation, and **Trauma-Informed Care**, which recognizes and responds to the signs, symptoms, and risks of trauma to better support both children and the staff members who care for them. These approaches are key parts of our social-emotional curriculum.

6. Screen Time

In accordance with Colorado licensing regulations, children under 2 years old are not permitted to have **any** screen time. For children ages 2 and older, screen time is limited to no more than 15 minutes per day and will only include developmentally appropriate content, such as educational videos or short stories that support learning and healthy development. Screen use is never allowed during meals. Parents will be informed about any planned screen-based activities, and alternative activities will always be offered for children who are not interested.

B. Ethics Code

1. High Standards

Riverhouse will conduct its business honestly and ethically wherever operations are maintained. We strive to improve the quality of our services and operations and will maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment. Our directors and employees are expected to adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity.

2. Conflicts of Interest - General

We expect that officers, directors, and employees will not allow personal interests to conflict with the interests of Riverhouse, its clients, or affiliates, nor will they misrepresent Riverhouse or use their Riverhouse contacts to advance private or personal interests. The confidentiality of sensitive business information about Riverhouse or operations, or that of our customers or partners, is to be treated with discretion and only be disseminated on a need-to-know basis (see policies relating to privacy and conflict of interest).

Section II - Hiring and Orientation Policies

A. Discrimination & Harassment Prohibition

- 1. Equal Employment Opportunity** There shall be no unlawful discrimination or harassment against employees or applicants for employment because of race or color, religion or creed, sex or gender, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, military status, genetic information or other protected status. Equal employment opportunity, as required by law, shall apply to all personnel actions including, but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, upgrading, promotion, demotion, layoff, or termination.

2. Definitions of Terms

- a) **“Age”** as used above refers to the age group of 40 years and above as specified by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.
- b) **“Sex,” “Gender,” and “Sexual Orientation.”** Sex and Gender discrimination includes unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, pregnancy, and sexual harassment. Colorado law defines “sexual orientation” as “a person’s orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status or an employer’s perception thereof.”
- c) **“Genetic Information.”** Genetic information includes: 1) information about a person’s genetic tests; 2) information about the genetic tests of that person’s family members; 3) a person’s family medical history (i.e., the manifestation of a disease or disorder in a person’s family members, often used to determine if a person has an increased risk of getting a disorder, disease or condition in the future); 4) a person’s request for, and receipt of, genetic services
- d) **“Sexual Harassment”** occurs when an Employee is subjected to **unwelcome conduct based on sex or gender that is severe or pervasive** and: (1) which conduct is either an explicit or implicit condition of an individual’s employment; (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, e.g. salary increases; (3) or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Unprofessional conduct may rise to the level of sexual harassment if it is unwelcome, based on sex, and severe or pervasive. Unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances or propositioning, jokes of a sexual nature, unwelcome sexual comments about someone’s clothing or appearance, intimate stories about one’s sex life, sexually explicit photographs or drawings, unwelcome touching of a sexual nature, and adverse treatment based on gender. Unprofessional conduct may result in discipline or discharge, regardless whether it rises to the level of unlawful sexual harassment.
- e) **“Harassment”** on the basis of any protected status listed above is unlawful where it is unwelcome, severe or pervasive, and unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Slurs, derogatory statements or degrading treatment, jokes and stereotyping based on protected status are unprofessional and may result in discipline or discharge, regardless of whether they rise to the level of unlawful harassment.

3. **Treatment of Non-Employees** Employees shall not in the course or scope of their employment, unlawfully discriminate against, or harass, or engage in unprofessional conduct toward non-Employees (parents, families, vendors, or others) based on the non-Employee’s race or color, religion or creed, sex or gender, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, age of 40 or over, physical or mental disability, genetic information, military or other protected status. Such conduct may result in discipline or discharge.

4. **Responding to Unwelcome Conduct** If you find someone’s conduct sexually harassing, or harassing on another protected basis, do not encourage that person to continue by indicating that you like or approve of the conduct. Do not reciprocate by engaging in similar conduct. For example, don’t tell jokes that you wouldn’t want someone to tell you; don’t hug others if you don’t want them to hug you. Report any unwelcome conduct to your supervisor.

5. **Reporting Discrimination or Harassment** Any Employee who is subjected to or who observes conduct that the Employee honestly believes is in violation of this policy must report it to a Riverhouse administrator. This includes conduct by co-workers, supervisors, management, officers or directors, clients, suppliers or others encountered during the course and scope of your employment. It is the Riverhouse’s desire to maintain a professional working environment and to

prevent any unlawful discrimination or harassment in employment. Employees are strongly advised that they should not quit employment because of conduct that violates this policy rather than reporting such conduct. Please give Riverhouse a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct any violations of this policy. Upon receiving a report of conduct that may violate this policy, Riverhouse will investigate the circumstances and take appropriate action. Because of the need to investigate, Riverhouse cannot promise confidentiality regarding a reported violation of this policy.

- 6. Discipline/Discharge** An Employee engaging in any unlawful discrimination or harassment against another Employee shall be subject to disciplinary action that may include termination, demotion, or suspension. Employees may be disciplined or discharged for unprofessional conduct in violation of this policy, even if the conduct is not so severe or pervasive that it is unlawful conduct.
- 7. Cooperation/No Retaliation** Employees must cooperate fully during an investigation and must provide the investigator with honest and complete responses. No Employee shall be retaliated against for making a report that the Employee honestly and reasonably believes is in violation of this policy or the law, or for participating in an investigation. Any retaliatory conduct against the Employee must be reported using the above procedure for reporting discrimination and harassment. Riverhouse will investigate the circumstances and take appropriate action.

B. Accommodations

Riverhouse will make reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with known disabilities and Employees whose work requirements interfere with a religious belief, unless doing so would result in an undue hardship to Riverhouse or create a direct safety threat to the Employee or others in the workplace. Requests for reasonable accommodation must be directed to the Executive Director.

- 1. Disability Accommodation** Riverhouse complies with federal and state disability regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Qualified applicants or employees who inform Riverhouse that they have a physical or mental disability, which requires accommodation in order for them to perform the essential functions of their jobs should inform their supervisor of this so that we can together discuss what accommodations are available and appropriate.
- 2. Religious Accommodation** Riverhouse is dedicated to treating the religious diversity of all our employees equally and with respect. Employees may request an accommodation when their religious beliefs cause a deviation from Riverhouse's dress code, schedule, basic job duties, or other aspects of employment. Riverhouse will consider the request but reserves the right to offer its own accommodation to the extent permitted by law. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to, changes in current job conditions, a change in position, an exception to the dress code, paid/unpaid leave time, etc. Riverhouse will consider cost, the effect that an accommodation will have on current established policies and the burden on operations, including other employees, when determining a reasonable accommodation.

C. Conflicts of Interest

1. Employment of friend and relatives We will sometimes employ staff members' friends or relatives, but will strive to minimize any actual or potential conflicts that could compromise supervision, safety, confidentiality, security, and morale at Riverhouse.

2. Babysitting by staff As stated above, employees and directors should not have personal interests conflict with the interest of Riverhouse. If you choose to babysit or nanny for a family outside of your Riverhouse employment, hours, and location, you are acknowledging that this employment relationship is completely independent of and not governed by Riverhouse. As such you are assuming full responsibility

for any accidents, issues, or employment-related complaints that result from this outside employment arrangement. You are required to alert administrative staff of any outside employment with a Riverhouse family and will be required to sign a form acknowledging the above.

D. Job Descriptions

Riverhouse maintains a job description for each position. If you do not have a copy of a current job description you should request one from the administration. Job descriptions prepared by Riverhouse serve as an outline only. Due to the needs of business, you may be required to perform job duties not within your written job description. Furthermore, Riverhouse may have to revise, add to, or delete from your job duties according to organization needs. On occasion, Riverhouse may need to revise job descriptions with or without advance notice to the employee. Positions at Riverhouse do change, but typically include:

- Administrative: Executive Director, Assistant Director, Program Director
- Lead Teachers—Oversee a specific classroom and are directly responsible for supervising Teacher Assistants and Aides.
- Teacher Assistants—Support Lead Teachers by helping manage the classroom, providing instruction, and caring for students. Teacher Assistants may be assigned to a specific classroom but can also serve as floaters and assist in other classrooms as needed.
- Teacher Aides—Assist with classroom activities and help provide care under the supervision of Lead Teachers and Teacher Assistants. Aides may be assigned to a classroom or serve as floaters wherever support is needed. Aides cannot be left alone with children at any time.
- Substitute teachers - provides temporary coverage on an as-needed basis when regular staff are unavailable or when the center is understaffed.
- Kitchen Staff—Kitchen Manager and part-time Kitchen Aide(s)
- Maintenance and Custodial work may be done as part-time work or may be contracted out as determined by Riverhouse's needs and available personnel.

E. Training Program

Training in Early Childhood is offered in many ways:

- 1) online trainings with the Colorado SHINES **Professional Development Information System (PDIS)** - these are mandatory for all staff members - with other online trainings for Lead Teacher certification;
- 2) trainings done during Employee Work Days through the Early Childhood Council, by Riverhouse staff or qualified parents, or other outside presenters (e.g., First Aid and CPR);
- 3) informal observations and feedback in-house from Lead Teachers, administrative staff, or outside consultants and coaches, such as through the Early Childhood Council;
- 4) mini-trainings provided during staff meetings;
- 5) workshops or conferences for veteran staff;
- 6) Other: such as common staff readings, or a group video viewing and discussion

Each new employee is required by the State of Colorado to meet certain requirements to be qualified to work with children in a child care center. The following table ("Training List") outlines the basic requirements, most of which are obtained through online PDIS courses. PDIS is the online state qualification program and stands for "Professional Development Information System."

The online training with PDIS is the necessary **qualifications** required by Section 7.702 of Colorado's Rules Regulating Child Care Centers. Through PDIS you verify that you meet the requirements, provide the documentation, and thus become a qualified child care teacher.

Credentials are voluntary designations for a variety of Early Childhood professionals. **There are three types of Credentials:**

1. **Early Childhood Professional Credential 3.0** - a system for all Colorado early childhood professionals to document and quantify their professional growth and accomplishments. It defines and advances the profession. A teacher provides information about four components of their professional background: Formal Education, Experience, Ongoing Professional Development, and Demonstrated Competencies. A certain number of points are assigned for each component. This system helps define and advance the profession.
2. **Coaching Credential** - recognizes coaches who have the skills needed for effective coaching in the early childhood field who engage in regular reflection.
3. **Trainer Credential** - strengthens Colorado's early childhood training system by establishing professional standards and required skills for early childhood trainers.

A CDA (Child Development Associate Certificate) is a credential that is honored in all 50 states. A CDA takes approximately three to six months to complete, and involves the following:

- 120 hours of qualified professional development (online courses)
- 480 hours of work experience (approximately 3 months of full-time work)
- Passing a certificate exam
- Completing a Verification Visit

Riverhouse Professional Development Training List

August <i>(during Teacher Work Week)</i>	All Staff Required Trainings (<i>prior to new school year</i>) • First Aid & CPR - all teaching staff • Med. Administration Training - all administration & Lead Teachers • Intro. to Conscious Discipline & Trauma Informed Care - all teachers • ITERS or ECERS PDIS Training (depending on classroom) - Lead Teachers
Sept Staff Mtg	1hr. Professional Development Training - Facilitated by LPECC or Program Director
Oct. Work Day	1hr-3hrs Professional Development Training - Facilitated by LPECC or Program Director
Nov. Staff Meeting	1hr. Professional Development Training - Facilitated by LPECC or Program Director
Jan. Work Day	1hr-3hrs Professional Development Training - Facilitated by LPECC or Program Director
Feb & March Staff Meetings	Any of the trainings provided, as needed, or continuing education on PDIS
April Work Day	1hr-3hrs Professional Development Training - Facilitated by LPECC or Program Director
May Work Day	2hrs - Trauma Informed Care or Conscious Discipline - Available through PDIS or other approved venues
As hired	10 hrs. of basic child care training online with PDIS. These include:

	- <i>Standard Precautions, Emergency & Disaster Preparedness, Building & Physical Premises Safety/Storage of Hazardous Materials & Biocontaminants (all needed upon hiring)</i> - <i>Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect</i> - <i>Understanding the role of mandatory reporting of child abuse</i> - <i>Recognizing the Impact of Bias, & Introduction to the Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs</i> <i>If caring for children under 1 year of age: Infant Safe Sleep</i> <i>If caring for children under 3 yrs of age: Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma</i>
Professional Development Topics offered by LaPlata Early Childhood Council (LPECC)	- NAEYC Code of Ethics Training - Engagement Strategies - Positive Behavior Supports - Colorado Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines - Intro to Trauma Responsive Care - Embedded Learning Opportunities - Rules Regulating Childcare Centers

F. Required Documents

1. Proof of citizenship and right to work

All new hires and current employees are required by federal law to verify their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. You will be required to complete federal Form W-9 on the first day of employment. This form and verification of employment eligibility should be completed during the first three days of employment. If you are currently employed and have not complied with this requirement, or if your status has changed, please inform the Executive Director or Assistant Director.

2. Onboarding: Background checks, fingerprinting, & wellness exam

All new hires are required to undergo a background check and fingerprinting (which is done locally at the City of Durango's Rec Center). These are paid for by Riverhouse. New hires are also required to have a wellness exam which is called an "Adult Health Appraisal for Child Care."

Section III - WAGE AND HOUR POLICIES

An employee's pay depends on several factors, including, but not limited to: pay scales (based on an employee's qualifying education and experience), performance, and needs of the center. If you have any questions about your compensation, including matters such as paid time off, overtime, or paycheck deductions, please speak with the Assistant Director. If your performance reflects undesirable behaviors (being repeatedly late or absent, unauthorized overtime, lack of supervision, etc.) you will receive notice through a Record of Communication (ROC). If the behavior continues, you will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (a PIP) that outlines the specific concerns with a plan to improve. **Individuals who have received a ROC or PIP are not eligible for raises until an evaluation states that performance has improved to an acceptable level.** If an employee repeatedly cancels an evaluation, or states that they are not available to meet, that does not constitute administration's agreement that improvement has been made; such behavior or lack of productive communication might result in termination.

A. Paycheck Matters

1. Pay Period

The work week is defined Sunday-Saturday. The standard pay period is semi-monthly for all employees. Pay dates are the 7th and 22nd. Should any pay period fall on a holiday, you will be paid on the preceding workday. If a pay date falls on a Saturday, paychecks will be issued on Friday. If a paycheck date falls on a Sunday, paychecks may be issued on Monday. Special provisions may be required from time to time if holidays fall on paycheck dates. Please inquire with the Assistant Director if this type of date arises. **All checks will be issued as direct deposit, so all employees and new hires need to ensure they have a bank account to receive paychecks.**

2. Paycheck Deductions

Riverhouse is required by federal and state law to make certain deductions from your paycheck. This includes federal income tax, state income and unemployment tax, and FICA contributions (Social Security and Medicare) as well as any other deduction required under state or federal law such as the FMLI (Family & Medical Leave Insurance, deducted since January 1, 2023). The amount of your tax deductions will depend on your earnings and the number of exemptions you list on your W4 Form. If at any time you do not believe that your paycheck is accurate, please contact the Assistant Director. Deductions may also be taken for dental co-pays, as well as IRA contributions. Any questions about your paycheck should be directed to the Assistant Director or Executive Director.

B. Work Schedules

1. Posting of Work Schedules

Staff schedules are posted in the upstairs office each morning. We strive to keep stable teams in each classroom but due to staff shortages, you may be asked to work in another classroom different from your usual role. **Your work schedule includes attending both monthly staff meetings (usually on the first Thursday of every month) and teacher work days.** Depending on the reason, teachers who miss teacher work days and/or professional development days could be disciplined. You will be required to make up the training.

2. Staff meetings

Staff meetings are held once per month from 5 to 6:15 pm on the first Thursday of each month (except July, when it's the second Thursday). Staff meetings are mandatory for all teachers and administrators as they all involve both a mini-training, teambuilding, and staff feedback for administration. Staff meetings are compensated at a person's regular hourly rate. Repeated staff meeting absences will result in disciplinary action (a PIP), which makes an employee ineligible for raises until there's improvement..

3. Recording of Time Worked

Federal and state laws require us to keep accurate records of hours worked by nonexempt (hourly) employees. **You should clock in when you start work (after you've gone to the bathroom, checked your phone, etc.) and you should clock out when you stop work. Only Preschool Lead Teachers may clock in 15 min before the start of the work day (at 7:15). All other Leads and teachers who are opening should not clock in before 7:25 am.** Kitchen staff should not clock in before 7:15 am unless it's a special occasion (for example, Family Meals). All staff should aim to be clocked out by 5:15 pm each day and need permission to clock out after 5:30 pm.

Every nonexempt employee of Riverhouse is required to enter their hours worked accurately, including all lunch periods and any rest periods of more than 10 minutes. This means: **you need to clock out for lunch!** Employees are required to notify the Assistant Director of any pay discrepancies, or unrecorded or misreported work hours. Do not enter time punches of any other employee or request that they do so for you. Any changes to your time punch must be approved by the Assistant Director or Executive Director. Time punches are finalized on the 1st and 15th of the month.

4. Overtime Authorization

If you are a nonexempt employee (receiving an hourly wage), you may qualify for overtime pay. All overtime **must** be approved in advance, by the Executive Director. At certain times Riverhouse may

require you to work overtime. We will attempt to give as much notice as possible in this instance. However, advance notice may not always be possible. Working unauthorized overtime may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Overtime pay of one and one-half an employee's regular rate of pay or average pay rate (if you perform work at different pay rates during the relevant week) is paid for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. **PTO and training hours do not count as time worked for computing overtime.**

C. Attendance Policy

1. Notifying supervisors regarding absences or lateness

Teachers who know ahead of time that they will be absent or late to work should notify the Program Director as soon as possible. Those who report directly to the Executive Director should notify her as soon as possible. Riverhouse reserves the right to apply paid time off to unauthorized absences. Absences resulting from approved leave, vacation, or legal requirements are exceptions to the policy.

Absences or lateness are very serious at Riverhouse, due to the nature of our business. Repeated absences or lateness that demonstrate a pattern of unreliability may result in termination.

2. Job Abandonment

If an employee fails to show up for work or call in with an acceptable reason for the absence for a period of three consecutive days, he or she will be considered to have abandoned his or her job and voluntarily resigned from the organization. This does not restrict the employee's right to terminate their employment.

3. Terminating employment without notice

If an employee walks out on the job without notice, or simply doesn't show up for work without notice, they are jeopardizing the safety of children in the center and dramatically affecting the morale of the workplace as others are then need to fill in for them without notice. An employee should never assume that they know everyone else's schedule and assume that someone can fill in for them. If an employee does walk out on the job, or doesn't provide an acceptable reason for an absence of three consecutive days, they will be paid for hours worked and unused vacation time. They will not be considered for rehire.

D. Rest and Meal Periods

Riverhouse strives to provide a safe and healthy work environment and strives to comply with all federal and state regulations regarding rest and meal periods. **Staff who work over four hours are required to take a paid 10 minute break.** This will be provided by a coworker in the classroom or an administrator. Staff are not allowed to waive their rights for this break. It is possible that there will be times when a staff member does not get their 10 minute break because doing so would put child safety at Riverhouse in jeopardy.

State law requires a minimum of 30 minutes for a lunch break (we provide 60 minute breaks when possible). Employees scheduled for 9 hours shifts are required to take an hour meal break to avoid overtime accrual. Employees scheduled for ratio shifts are required to take a 30 minutes meal break, though they may choose to take up to an hour meal break. **Hourly employees are required to clock in and out for lunch breaks. It is requested that employees accurately observe meal and rest breaks.** If you know in advance that you may not be able to take your scheduled break or meal period, please let an administrator know; in addition, notify an administrator as soon as possible if you were unable to, or prohibited from, taking a break. If you decline to take a break, you are required to sign an Employee Meal Period Waiver Form. Please see an administrator to obtain the form.

Section IV - PERFORMANCE, DISCIPLINE, LAYOFF AND DETERMINATION

A. Performance Evaluations & General Information about Positions

1. **Informal Evaluations.** Job performance evaluations do not have to be formal or in writing. We ask Employees to be receptive to their supervisors' input, instructions, and constructive criticism, whether verbal or in writing, on a day-to-day basis.
2. **Formal Evaluations.** Formal written evaluations of job performance are done regularly. We strive to give full-time employees a written evaluation at six months, and then at a minimum of one per year. Changes in your level of compensation are not necessarily tied to the time of a formal evaluation and may be made at any time that Riverhouse directors deem appropriate as evaluations are sometimes pushed back due to the nature of our business.
3. **Promotions.** Promotions are made on an equal opportunity basis according to employees possessing the needed skills, education, experience, and other qualifications that are required for the job. Internal candidates may apply for any posted positions for which they qualify.
4. **Pay Raises.** Pay raises are based on: 1) an employee's level of education, 2) work experience, including time at Riverhouse, and 3) the needs of the center (for example, infant teachers may be paid at a higher rate). Time teaching in early childhood education and education through online courses, college courses, or in-person training are credited through the state's PDIS (Professional Development Information System) system.

B. Riverhouse Children's Center Pay Scales

The Steps on the y-axis (rows down the left side) reflect time teaching in early childhood education. People need to submit this to PDIS (Colorado's "Professional Development Information System") for it to be honored. (See Section 1E - Training Program for a PDIS explanation)

The x-axis (columns across the top) reflects education obtained. It may be obtained through one of the following three ways (although there are other programs as well):

- 1) **Colorado's PDIS System.** PDIS is a one-stop online resource for training related to early childhood care and learning. A minimum of 10 hours of PDIS is needed to be in a classroom.
- 2) **A community college, a 4 year college, or an accredited university - online or in person**
- 3) **The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™** guides early child care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children. It takes 120 hours to complete one's CDA. It is valid in all 50 states and is the common pathway to becoming a Lead Teacher.

How do I advance on the Riverhouse Pay Scale? Education and experience

1. **PDIS** advancement is up to the individual. You automatically receive a PDIS account when you are hired by a licensed childcare center, as a minimum of 10 hours of PDIS must be completed before a person is allowed to work in a classroom. Once you have that account, **you are free to take additional coursework—there really is no limit!**

New employees without a PDIS account are paid \$15 an hour for the first 10 hours of work they do on PDIS –work that is required for employment.

2. **Employees may apply for Riverhouse to pay for CDA certification.** We accept approximately four individuals per year for this program. Upon completion, you will be reimbursed. In order to keep the full reimbursement, you are required to stay at Riverhouse for at least two years. If you

leave Riverhouse in one year or less after completion, you will have to repay the entire amount. If you leave in 1-2 years after completion of your CDA certification, you will have to repay half of the reimbursed amount.

3. Riverhouse will assist employees in receiving scholarships and/or tuition waivers for **Early Childhood Education college courses** through state community colleges; although these opportunities are frequently available, they are not guaranteed.
4. The rate of increase for educational attainment is higher than for job retention; this indicates the greater importance placed on achieving higher levels of education in order to develop a highly professional workforce.
5. **Increases in salary based on time on the job are calculated by hours worked rather than years**, as many positions are part-time, or less than 40 hours per week.
6. **Colorado Pay Transparency Amendments went into effect on Jan 1, 2024:**
(see Amendment to this handbook). These require Riverhouses to make available to all employees: job opportunity notifications with all pay and benefits information, application deadlines, post-selection information about the selected candidate, and information about how employees may demonstrate interest in similar job opportunities. **Google “Colorado INFO #9”** for the complete amendments, or see the laminated form in the lounge, or call 303-318-8441.

Chart A –Teachers and Teacher Aides

HOURS worked at Riverhouse (vertical column)	PDIS Level 1	PDIS Level 2	PDIS Level 3	CDA certification or PDIS Level 4	Assoc Degree or PDIS 5	BA
Step 1 (< 600 hrs) Approx 0-4 mo	\$16	\$16.50	\$17	\$17.50	\$18.00	\$19
Step 2 (601- 900 hrs) Approx 4-6 months	\$16.50	\$17	\$17.50	\$18.00	\$18.50	\$19.50
Step 3 (901-1,799 hrs) Approx 6 to 12 months)	\$17	\$17.50	\$18	\$18.50	\$19.00	\$20.00
Step 4 (1,800 - 2,999 hrs) Approx 1 - 2 yrs	\$17.50	\$18	\$18.50	\$19.00	\$19.50	\$20.50
Step 5 (> 3,000 hrs) Approx >2 yrs	\$18	\$19	\$19.50	\$20.00	\$20.50	\$21.50

Chart B–Lead Teachers (must be qualified through PDIS as Level 2 or higher OR have submitted)

HOURS Worked at Riverhouse	Level 2 or > 2 yrs experience at another center	PDIS Level 3	CDA Or PDIS Level 4	Assoc Degree Or PDIS 5	BA	BA + 10 hrs addt'l credits in EC
Step 1 (< 600 hrs) Approx 0-4 mo	\$17.50	\$18	\$18.50	\$19	\$19.50	\$20.50
Step 2 (601- 900 hrs) Approx 4-6 mo	\$18.00	\$18.50	\$19	\$19.50	\$20.50	\$21
Step 3 (901-1,799 hrs) Approx 6 -12 mo	\$18.50	\$19	\$19.50	\$20	\$21	\$21.50
Step 4 (1,800 - 2,999 hrs) Approx 1 - 2 yrs	\$19.00	\$19.50	\$20	\$21	\$21.50	\$22
Step 5 (> 3,000 hrs) Approx >2 yrs	\$20.00	\$20.50	\$21	\$22	\$23	\$23.50

CHART C - SUBSTITUTE PAY or Floater Position

HOURS worked at Riverhouse	PDIS Level 1 or 2	CDA or PDIS Level 3 or greater	Assoc degree in Education or Human Services	BA in Ed or Human Services	Master's Degree in Education or Human Services
Step 1 (< 500 hrs) Approx 0-4 mo	\$17	\$18	\$19	\$20	\$21
Step 2 (501- 725 hrs) Approx 4-6 months	\$17.50	\$18.50	\$19.50	\$20.50	\$21.50
Step 3 (726-1,200 hrs) Approx 6-12 months	\$18	\$19	\$20	\$21.00	\$22.00
Step 4 (1,201 - 2,400 hrs) Approx 1 - 2 yrs	\$19	\$20	\$20.50	\$21.50	\$22.50
Step 5 (> 2,400 hrs) Approx >2 yrs	\$20	\$20.50	\$21	\$22.00	\$23.00

C. Professional Development

Childcare workers are required to have a minimum number of hours on the state's PDIS system. The Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS) is a one-stop online resource for training related to early care and learning. In addition, employees are required to be certified in CPR and First Aid, and to become knowledgeable in regard to Riverhouse's discipline model, our classroom curriculum and assessments, and other basic training. For these purposes, Riverhouse reimburses all staff without PDIS training \$15 an hour for taking the first 10 hours of required PDIS courses to be completed prior to the first day of work at Riverhouse.

Certification in First Aid/CPR is a requirement (either at the center or at an independent location). Riverhouse pays for your fee to take this course in August during the Teacher Work Week.

If Riverhouse has an all-staff training that is required Professional Development for all teachers, all teachers will be reimbursed at their regular hourly rate for every hour they are actually in

training. They are not compensated for lunch breaks or transportation to and from the professional development if it is off-site.

In addition to doing the required training, many employees choose to pursue additional classes, qualifications, or training programs on their own. Riverhouse policy in regard to these trainings is as follows:

1. Riverhouse does not compensate for tuition, or pay tuition, for college courses. We do sometimes receive scholarships or discounted rates that we pass on to employees if possible.
2. If an employee is pursuing a CDA, Lead certification, or similar training, during work hours, so that a substitute needs to be paid to cover that employee's shift, Riverhouse will pay for the employee's substitute coverage, but will not pay the employee for time spent doing the training unless we have received a special grant or allocation specifically for this purpose.

D. Riverhouse CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Child Supervision

- a) **Be visible at all times**—To protect Riverhouse staff and volunteers, and the children we serve, staff should avoid when possible being alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in such a way that other staff can see them. When there is only one child left to be picked up at the end of the day, that child should be taken to the upstairs office for supervision.
- b) Staff shall **never leave a child unsupervised** in the building or outside.
- c) **Restroom supervision**—Staff will make sure the downstairs restroom is not occupied by adults before allowing the children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the hallway while children are out of the classroom to use the facility. This policy allows privacy for the children, protection for the staff (not being alone with a child), and helps manage children's appropriate bathroom behavior. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or other off-site location.
- d) **Staff must comply with the state and Riverhouse's Nurse Consultant's infant safe sleep policy.** Infants must be placed on their backs. If an infant moves to a different sleep position, they must be adjusted to a safe sleep position (on back). The staff must do crib b checks every 10 minutes to ensure safe sleep. Our safe sleep policy is reviewed regularly by our Infant Teachers and Aides, including a signed copy acknowledging that they have read it and it has been discussed with a Supervisor.

2. Child Abuse

Staff shall not abuse children in any way. The definitions of abuse are as follows, but are not limited to the following. Any deliberate or mindless harm or neglect to a child is not allowed.

- a. Physical abuse—striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, grabbing to discipline, pressing a child down (e.g, to lay on a cot), restraining and any other show of force
- b. Verbal abuse—humiliating, degrading, threatening, and so on;
- c. Sexual abuse—touching or speaking inappropriately
- d. Mental abuse—shaming, withholding kindness, threatening a child, and so on
- e. Neglect—withholding food, water or basic care including not changing a dirty diaper
- f. **Lack of mindful judgment** - this includes giving children access to adult items (water bottles, keys, staplers, etc.) just because they desire to be given an item, or feeding them food or ice cubes or beverages that are not on the Riverhouse menu for the day.

No type of abuse or neglect, ***including unchecked anger directed at a child***, will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal. If a staff member is frustrated with a child it is expected that they will 1) take a breath and remember that a child's emotional needs come first, 2) walk away, asking another staff member to take over, 3) take a break, and 4) reflect with a supervisor on options for the future if a similar interaction were to happen again. Conscious Discipline is our philosophy.

3. Appropriate Guidance

Staff are to use appropriate guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than comparison and criticism. Staff are expected to help children name their feelings, and validate the feelings. Examples: Instead of "Why are you hitting?" say, "You're angry and frustrated. But hands are for holding, not hitting. I'll help." Or, if a child doesn't want to do an activity, say "You wish we weren't going inside right now. I know you feel sad. Do you want to hold my hand, and we can do something together?" Reflect what they're feeling. Be empathic. Re-direct. Stay positive!

Age-appropriate expectations, lessons, and environments minimize the need for discipline.

Physical restraint is used only when necessary to protect the child or other children from immediate harm. It must then be immediately shared with administration, documented in writing, and shared with the parent(s) or caregiver(s).

4. Health checks

Staff will conduct a visual health check of each child upon his or her arrival each day noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, and so on. Questions or comments may be addressed to the parent or child in a non threatening way. Staff will document any questionable marks or responses.

5. Non-Discrimination

Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, gender identity, race, religion, culture, and economic level of the family, and regardless of any physical or mental disability.

6. Children's Autonomy

Staff will respect children's rights to not be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and will respect children's right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered in a bathing suit.

7. Transportation of children

Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles unless hired by a child's parent in a caretaking capacity and the parent authorizes the staff member to do so.

8. Field Trips

At Riverhouse, we value providing enriching experiences for children through walks and field trips, while maintaining compliance with all licensing regulations and ensuring children's safety and well-being. This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for each program:

Infant Program - Infants are not permitted to leave the facility at any time. This restriction is in place to ensure full adherence to licensing requirements regarding diapering procedures, sanitation practices, and age-appropriate napping schedules.

Toddler Program - Toddlers may participate in walks within the immediate vicinity of the center. Walks must not exceed 2 hours in duration to maintain required diapering and toileting protocols.

Preschool Program - Preschool classrooms may engage in both walks and field trips. Outings must be reasonably timed, taking into account children's toileting needs, scheduled meals, and rest periods. Off-site field trips must be scheduled, and parents must be notified 24 hours in advance.

General Guidelines for All Programs - Child-to-staff ratios must be maintained at all times. Name-to-face headcounts must be conducted before departure, during the outing every hour, and upon return to the center. Staff must carry a mobile phone and have an established plan for emergencies. Children must wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity and weather. Notifying administrative staff and families is required no less than 30 minutes before any group leaves campus.

9. Prohibitions

Riverhouse staff are not allowed to do the following:

- a) Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs, or be under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter drugs, during working hours;
- b) Smoke or use tobacco in the presence of children or families during working hours;
- c) Possess or use of any type of weapon or explosive device. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, air rifles, bb guns, paintball guns, bows, hunting knives, swords, hunting slingshots, and martial arts weapons;
- d) Use profanity, make inappropriate jokes, or share intimate details of one's personal life;
- e) **Give gifts to children** that are not part of the classroom make-up (e.g., treasure box that is available to all students) or given to each and every child (e.g., a book at Christmas);
- f) **Spend their own money for classroom supplies, decorations, etc.** If Riverhouse needs something for the building or the children, please let an administrator know.
If staff bring in their own personal items of significant value (worth over \$20) they should label the item(s) and inform the administration so these items can be inspected for safety. Admin keeps a list of teachers' personal items on files that we can differentiate between Riverhouse and employee property.

10. Staff shall do the following:

- a) Be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect the children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
- b) Portray a positive role model for children by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- c) **Report to a supervisor any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct, including personal time on a cell phone while in the classroom with children. Lead Teachers who fail to do this will be cited for failure to supervise staff and failure to keep children safe, and are at risk for termination.**
- d) Read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse, and attend trainings on the subject as instructed by administration.

11. Release of children—Under no circumstance should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with Riverhouse), or to proper authorities as per court order.

12. Unacceptable Conduct in the Workplace

Purpose. The list below contains examples of conduct that are considered below minimum standards and unacceptable. **This list is not all inclusive and does not, in any way, change the fact that employment with Riverhouse is at will.** This means that Riverhouse has the right to terminate employment for reasons not listed or because of a reason not related to the Employee (such as a need to cut hours).

Non-Exclusive List. Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- **Rudeness, insolence, harassing, or offensive behavior toward a parent, caregiver, supervisor or fellow employee**—This includes raising one's voice, making accusations of ill intent, using swear words, or blaming comments. If you have a complaint or concern, write it down and make an appointment to discuss it with an administrator.
- **Careless or poor-quality work, as in cleaning a classroom;**

- **Taking unauthorized leave**, or failing to return at the end of an authorized leave, lunch period, or break; **(authorization comes from administration only)**
- **Refusal to work a different shift**, or to perform any reasonable work request;
- **Unexcused or excessive absenteeism or tardiness**;
- **Sleeping or loafing** on the job (being away from the children when you're supposed to be interacting or supervising children);
- **Being on your cell phone when you're supposed to be supervising children** (Riverhouse classroom business is conducted through iPads);
- **Failure to meet job performance standards**;
- **Insubordination**; you are expected to speak respectfully to your supervisors;
- **Agitation** against Riverhouse or other Employees that is, or may be, harmful to morale or work performance and is not protected concerted activity;
- **Speaking negatively about an administrator while on the job**; employees are expected to take their issue(s) either to the administrator in question, or to the Executive Director if they believe the administrator is being unreasonable, unfair, or unethical;
- **Damage to Riverhouse's or co-worker's property** or doing something that could endanger the life, health or well-being of anyone associated with Riverhouse;
- **Divulging of confidential information** in violation of the policies in this handbook or that could or does damage the Riverhouse's interests;
- **Failure to observe safety or other work rules**;
- **Falsification of records or reports**;
- **Removal or attempted removal of Riverhouse's property** from the premises without prior and proper authority;
- **Off-the-job use of non-medically prescribed intoxicating beverages to a degree resulting in interference with job performance** or the Employee smelling of alcohol on the job;
- **On-the-job use or possession of intoxicating beverages**;
- **Possessing or using illegal drugs** or controlled substances at any time while employed by Riverhouse unless the use is in accordance with a prescription provided by a licensed medical provider to the Employee and the possession or use is otherwise legal;
- **Theft, fraud, or other act of dishonesty**;
- **Incarceration** after conviction of a violation of any law or incarceration that interferes with performance of job duties;
- **Loss of license, certification, credential, or other professional designation that is essential to job performance** or otherwise makes the Employee unqualified for the job;
- **Assaulting or threatening to assault another person**; engaging in horseplay on the job or on the premises; engaging in any act of violence or threat of violence toward any other Employee, supervisor, client or person that results in concerns about the Employee;
- **Possessing a firearm or other weapon** (see list on page 21) on Riverhouse's premises or at anytime while on duty or while acting within the course or scope of employment;

12. Criminal Activity or Arrests

Involvement in criminal activity, whether on or off Riverhouse property, may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of employment. Disciplinary action depends upon a review of all factors involved, including whether or not the employee's action was work-related, the nature of the act, the intent of the act, or circumstances which adversely affect attendance or performance. Any disciplinary action is not dependent upon the disposition of any case in court. Any disciplinary action taken will be based on information reasonably available. This information may come from witnesses, police, or any other source as long as the administration has reason to view the source as credible.

13. Use of Riverhouse Credit Cards

Each employee in the possession of a Riverhouse issued credit card will adhere to the strictest guidelines of responsibility for the proper protection and use of that card. Business purchases over \$100,

by anyone other than the kitchen manager or Assistant Director, must receive prior approval from the Executive Director.

All sales receipts generated by use of the Riverhouse credit card must be turned in to administration immediately. Purchases are restricted to approved business related expenses. Any unauthorized purchases made with a Riverhouse issued credit card will be the cardholder's responsibility. Any such purchase will be reimbursed to Riverhouse by the employee within 3 days and may result in termination. Lost or stolen Riverhouse issued cards should be reported immediately to the Executive Director.

Section V - WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

A. Eligibility Employees who suffer job-related injuries or an occupational disease may be entitled to workers' compensation benefits for medical expenses and lost wages, in accordance with State law. Occupational diseases are caused by an unsafe environment (poor air quality, chemicals, etc.) or from repetitive stress injuries (such as carpal tunnel).

B. Verbal Report Employees must verbally report the injury or disease to an administrator immediately. Alcohol and Drug testing may be required if the Employee's own actions or omissions could possibly have caused the accident that led to injury. Failure to report the injury and to timely submit to testing, if required, could result in discipline or discharge.

C. WARNING:

IF YOU ARE INJURED ON THE JOB, WRITTEN NOTICE OF YOUR INJURY MUST BE GIVEN TO Riverhouse WITHIN TEN WORKING DAYS AFTER THE ACCIDENT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-43-102(1), and HB22-112, COLORADO REVISED STATUTES. DELIVER THE NOTICE TO ONE OF RIVERHOUSE'S ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: PROGRAM DIRECTOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR. IF THE INJURY RESULTS FROM YOUR USE OF ALCOHOL OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, YOUR WORKERS' COMPENSATION DISABILITY BENEFITS MAY BE REDUCED BY ONE-HALF IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8-42-112.5, COLORADO REVISED STATUTES.

D. Treatment Riverhouse has the right to require that Employees are treated by a local treating physician selected from a list of physicians designated by Riverhouse. Failure to use a physician from the designated list may result in loss of medical benefits. Contact one of the administrative staff to arrange an appointment with the designated treating physician.

E. Limited Duty The treating physician may recommend that an injured Employee return to work on limited duty. In such an event, Riverhouse may require the Employee to return to work performing duties within the medical restrictions even if such work is different from the Employee's regular job duties. An Employee's refusal of limited duty may result in termination of temporary disability benefits and is a basis for discipline or discharge, except that if the Employee is entitled by law to FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) leave, refusal of limited duty for FMLA leave will not be a basis for discipline or discharge.

Section VI - ALCOHOL AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

Purpose The use of controlled substances and the misuse of alcohol increase the risk of accidents and jeopardize the safe work environment for Employees, customers and the public in general. The goal of Riverhouse is to provide a safe and healthy workplace. Therefore, Riverhouse is committed to an alcohol and drug-free workplace to promote the safety and well-being of its Employees, customers and the public affected by the conduct of Employees during the course and scope of their employment.

A. Alcohol and Controlled Substances Prohibited

The following conduct by Employees is prohibited on any premises owned, leased or used by Riverhouse for performing Riverhouse's services, or any place while Employee is performing services for Riverhouse:

1) alcohol possession or use, 2) the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance, 3) having detectable amounts of alcohol or controlled substances in the Employee's system, or 4) smelling of alcohol on the job, regardless of whether Employee is under the influence.

B. Definitions

For purposes of this Section VI, "Drugs" or "controlled substances" means a controlled substance listed in Schedules I through V of 21 U.S.C. 812 and as further defined by federal regulations (21 CFR Section 1300.11 through 1300.15). This list includes but is not limited to cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP). It does not include over-the-counter medications taken in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, or drugs prescribed by a physician for the Employee when taken in the manner, combination and quantity prescribed, unless possession or use is illegal.

C. WARNING ABOUT MARIJUANA

Although the Colorado Constitution has decriminalized use of marijuana, Colorado does not require Riverhouses to accommodate the use of marijuana by their employees. Further, use of marijuana is still illegal under federal law. Riverhouse prohibits marijuana use by Employees on the job, prior to the job, or on breaks. Be responsible with recreational alcohol and drug use, and don't let it affect your job.

D. Notification of Conviction

Any Employee who is convicted of a drug-related crime for any violation occurring within the course or scope of employment by Riverhouse, must notify Riverhouse of the conviction no later than five (5) days after such conviction. "Conviction" means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violation of federal or state criminal drug statutes. Notice of such conviction should be given to the Administrator. Sanctions will be imposed on any Employee so convicted. Within thirty (30) days after receiving notice of the conviction, Riverhouse will take appropriate disciplinary action against the Employee, up to, and including, termination. Sanctions may be imposed if Riverhouse has reasonable suspicion of a violation of this policy, regardless of whether the Employee is convicted or criminally prosecuted.

E. Basis for Testing

Testing will be required as a condition of employment under the following circumstances:

1. **Reasonable Suspicion Testing.** If the administration has reasonable suspicion that an Employee is in violation of the drug/alcohol policy, the Employee may be required to submit to testing for alcohol and/or controlled substances. Some of the circumstances that might provoke reasonable-suspicion testing are: evidence of repeated errors on the job, sleeping on the job, slurred speech, uncharacteristic appearance or behavior, or unsatisfactory attendance patterns. Reasonable suspicion for testing may also exist if other individuals have first-hand knowledge relating to an Employee's violation of this policy and report this to the Riverhouse.
2. **Consequence of Violation.** Any violation of this policy will likely result in immediate termination.
3. **Refusal to Submit to Testing.** The following behavior constitutes a "refusal" to take a test:
 - a. Express refusal to take the test.
 - b. Failure to provide sufficient quantities of breath or urine to be tested without a valid medical explanation for the failure, or engaging in conduct that clearly obstructs the testing.
 - c. Tampering with, or attempting to adulterate, the specimen or collection procedure.

- d. Not reporting to the collection site in the time allotted.
- e. Leaving the scene of an accident without a valid reason and not submitting to testing.

Refusal to submit to required testing is considered a violation of this policy and the consequences will be the same as though there has been a positive test result.

3. **Testing Facility.** Testing will generally be by urinalysis. Results of blood tests or Breathalyzer (for alcohol) may also be relied upon; testing will be performed by an approved testing facility.

4. **Employment at will.** Nothing in this policy changes the fact that all employment with Riverhouse is at will and can be terminated at any time by the Employee or Riverhouse, with or without cause, or prior notice. Nothing in this policy requires Riverhouse to test before terminating an Employee for violation of this policy.

Section VII - GENERAL POLICIES

A. Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers

1. **Reasonable Time.** Riverhouse shall provide reasonable unpaid break time or permit an Employee to use paid break time, meal time, or both, each day to allow the Employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for up to two years after the child's birth.
2. **Space Accommodation.** Riverhouse will provide a room or other location in close proximity to the work area, where an Employee can express breast milk in privacy. At Riverhouse, there are choices such as the staff lounge (which can be locked), or an infant room, or an office room area.

B. Cell Phone Policy

In accordance with Colorado state regulations (8 CCR 1402-1, Section 2.327), staff must refrain from the personal use of electronic devices—including, but not limited to, cell phones and portable electronic devices—while responsible for the care and supervision of children.

However, the use of cell phones and classroom iPads for **work-related purposes**, such as accessing Brightwheel to communicate with families, record attendance, or document child activities, is permitted. Staff must limit device use strictly to these professional functions during work hours.

Personal device use for calls, texting, social media, or other non-work purposes is only allowed during scheduled breaks and in designated staff areas. Emergency exceptions must be approved by the administration.

Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action for both the offending employee and any supervisors, such as Lead Teachers, who knew about this violation but failed to report it; repeated violation will result in termination of employment.

C. Problem Solving Procedure

We strive to provide a comfortable, productive, legal, and ethical work environment. To this end, Riverhouse wants you to bring any problems, concerns, or grievances you have about the workplace to the attention of an administrator. To help manage conflict resolution we have instituted the following problem solving procedure:

If you believe there is inappropriate conduct or activity on the part of Riverhouse, administration, its employees, customers, or any other persons or entities related to Riverhouse, bring your concerns to the attention of an administrator at a time and place that will allow the administrator to properly listen to your concern. Most problems can be resolved informally through dialogue between you and an administrator.

If you have discussed this matter with an administrator before and do not believe you have received a sufficient response, or if you believe an administrator is the source of the problem, we request you present your concerns to the Executive Director. Please indicate what the problem is, those persons involved in the problem, efforts you have made to resolve the problem, and any suggested solution you may have. There is a form for this available in the upstairs office.

D. Outside Employment (Moonlighting)

Outside employment should not create a conflict of interest or affect the quality or value of your work performance or availability at Riverhouse. Riverhouse recognizes that employees may seek additional employment during off hours, but expects, in these cases, that any outside employment will not affect job performance, work hours, scheduling, alertness on the job, or otherwise adversely affect the employment relationship. All regularly scheduled outside employment by Riverhouse full-time staff should be communicated to the administration. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in discipline up to, and including, termination. (See Section 1, C2 about babysitting).

E. Exit Interview

You may be asked to participate in an exit interview when you leave Riverhouse. The purpose of the exit interview is to provide management with greater insight into employee relations and to improve Riverhouse for others. Your cooperation in the exit interview process is appreciated.

F. Personal Appearance / Dress Code

At Riverhouse, we expect all staff to present themselves in a manner that reflects professionalism and is appropriate for an active, child-centered environment. You are expected to maintain personal hygiene habits that are generally accepted in the community, including clean clothing, good grooming and personal hygiene, and appropriate social behavior. Clothing should be comfortable, clean, and allow full participation in daily activities with children, including sitting on the floor, outdoor play, and messy crafts.

General Guidelines:

- Wear clothing that is modest, practical, and allows for ease of movement.
- Clothes should be clean, in good repair, and free from offensive language or imagery.
- Avoid wearing strong perfumes, essential oils, or scented products, as they may cause allergic reactions in children or staff.
- Jewelry and accessories should be minimal and secure to prevent hazards (e.g., no dangling earrings, long necklaces, or large rings that children can grab).
- Infant staff (Chickadee and Hummingbird rooms) are required to wear a scrub top over their clothing.

We aim to balance professionalism with the physical demands of caring for young children. If you're unsure about a clothing choice, please check with an administrator.

G. Off Duty use of Riverhouse Property or Premises

Employees may not use Riverhouse property for personal use, or Riverhouse property for use while off premises, without the permission of the Executive Director. The exception to this is exempt (salary) employees who may use computers and other technical equipment. If you need to make a personal copy, you may use the copy machine for 10 or fewer copies in a month's time, without permission. For anything larger, please check with the Executive Director.

H. Security

Every employee is responsible for helping to make this a secure work environment. Upon leaving work, lock all desks, offices, and doors protecting valuable or sensitive material in your work area and report any lost or stolen keys, passes, or other similar devices to your supervisor immediately. **We request that you immediately advise administration of any known or potential security risks and/or suspicious conduct of employees, ex-employees, customers, or guests of Riverhouse. Safety and security is the responsibility of every employee and we rely on you to help us keep our premises secure.**

I. Third Party Disclosures

From time to time, Riverhouse may become involved in news stories or potential or actual legal proceedings of various kinds. When that happens, lawyers, former employees, newspapers, law enforcement agencies, and other outside persons may contact our employees to obtain information about the incident or the actual or potential lawsuit. If you receive such a contact, you should not discuss the matter with the caller but refer the call to the Executive Director, and then immediately advise the Executive Director that the contact was made. If you have any questions about this policy or are not certain what to do when such a contact is made, please contact the Executive Director.

J. Personnel and Medical Records / PII (Personal Identifying Information)

Riverhouse maintains a personnel file for every employee. Every effort will be made to keep your personal information confidential. Access is on a “need-to-know” basis only. This includes, but is not limited to, supervisors and others in management reviewing the file for possible promotion, transfer or layoff.

If an employee wishes to review his or her personnel file he/she/they may do so after giving Riverhouse reasonable notice. Inspection must occur in the presence of the Executive Director. All requests by an outside party for information contained in your personnel file will be directed to the Executive Director, who is the only person authorized to give out such information.

If your Personal Identifying Information is breached, either digitally or in hard copy, the following steps will be taken: law enforcement will be identified, access codes will be changed, forensic experts will be contacted to help determine the source of a digital breach, and we will consult with legal counsel. All possible steps will be taken to mitigate the damage and ensure it does not happen again.

K. Employee Privacy and Right to Inspect

Riverhouse property, including but not limited to, lockers, desks, phones, computers, tablets, iPads, desks, workplace areas, vehicles, or machinery, remains under the control of Riverhouse and is subject to inspection at any time, without notice to the employee, and without the employee’s presence. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in any of these areas. We assume no responsibility for the loss of, or damage to, any employee property maintained on Riverhouse premises including that kept in offices or desks.

L. Employee Suggestions

We welcome suggestions for continued improvement and welcome your ideas for better ways to do your job or meet customer needs. Discuss your ideas with your lead teacher or an administrator, or submit a note in the suggestion box. We also encourage you to offer any suggestions derived from seminars, magazines, or other outside sources of information you believe would add value to Riverhouse.

M. Riverhouse Social Events

Riverhouse holds social events for employees. Please be advised that your attendance at these events is voluntary and does not constitute part of your work-related duties as an employee. The dress code does not apply to these after hours social events.

N. Recycling/Energy Conservation Policy

Please make an effort to turn off any lights, equipment, faucets, and other energy sources when not in use. Please promptly report any leaks and/or items needing repair. We have recycling bins in the center for paper [cans, plastics, etc.]; please use them. All sensitive or confidential material should be shredded or otherwise destroyed before being discarded.

O. Personal Data Changes

It is your obligation to provide the Riverhouse with all of your current contact information, including current mailing address and telephone number. Please inform Riverhouse of any changes to your marital or tax withholding status. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings.

P. Child Care Workers as Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse

Public or private school employees are mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect. This means that should you suspect that a child has been mistreated, harmed, or abused in any way, you are required by Colorado statute (Stat. § 19-3-304) to report it. If you report in good faith, you are immune from any civil or criminal penalties for making a report (Stat. § 19-3-309). To report child abuse in Colorado, the hot line is: 1-844-264-5437. You must also report immediately any concerns about potential abuse to Riverhouse's Executive Director.

Section VIII - Email, Internet, & Social Media Use

A. Email and Internet Policy

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, vendors, partners, or associates, and any others accessing and/or using Riverhouse's system through onsite or remote terminals.

B. General Provisions

The internet system, and all data transmitted or received through the system, are the exclusive property of Riverhouse. No individual should have any expectation of privacy in any communication over this system. Any individual permitted to have access to Riverhouse's system will be given an email and/or Internet address and/or access code, and will have use of the system, consistent with this policy.

Riverhouse reserves the right to monitor, intercept, and/or review all data transmitted, received, or downloaded over the system. Any individual who is given access to the system is hereby given notice that the Riverhouse will exercise this right periodically, without prior notice and without the prior consent of the employee.

Riverhouse's interests in monitoring and intercepting data include, but are not limited to: protection of Riverhouse proprietary and classified data; managing the use of Riverhouse's computer system; preventing the transmission or receipt of inappropriate materials by employees; and/or assisting the employee in the management of electronic data during periods of absence. No individual should interpret the use of password protection as creating a right or expectation of privacy. In order to protect everyone involved, no one can have a right or expectation of privacy with regards to the receipt, transmission or storage of data on the Riverhouse Email/Internet system.

C. Social Media

Riverhouse understands that social media is widely used. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. As such, we have established the following guidelines for appropriate employee use of social media.

1. Social Media Definition

In the world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Riverhouse, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

2. Guidelines

Carefully read these guidelines, the Riverhouse Ethics Policy, and the Discrimination & Harassment Prevention Policy, and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, slander, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may result in termination of employment.

Always strive to be fair and courteous to fellow co-workers, parents, caregivers, and any other people who work on behalf of Riverhouse. It is expected that you will deal with personal conflicts with co-workers with maturity and professionalism even if you're upset with them. If you are having a conflict with a co-worker that you feel you cannot resolve on your own, please report the conflict to administration so they may assist you in resolving the matter. Failure to make a good faith effort to resolve a conflict (such as refusing to meet with an administrator about an issue) could result in disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Colorado child care licensing prohibits posting of any personal information or photos of children on social media or advertising without written parental consent. This rule applies to staff personal use of social media as well. When posting online via social media or other platform, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as unkind or threatening or intimidating, that disparage customers, members, associates or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation, use of obscenities, or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or Riverhouse policy.

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors - true or not - about Riverhouse, fellow associates, members, customers, suppliers, or people working on behalf of Riverhouse or competitors.

Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to the Riverhouse's website.

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on Riverhouse-provided equipment unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Riverhouse Internet Policy. In other words - you should never be on Facebook during work time unless you are posting a Riverhouse job, or are an administrator posting to Riverhouse's FB site. Do not use Riverhouse email addresses to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Riverhouse prohibits taking negative action against any associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any associate who retaliates against another associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy, or for cooperating in an investigation about a violation of this policy, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Section IX - BENEFITS

Benefits that are available to eligible full-time employees include: **1) Paid Sick Leave, as required by Colorado's Healthy Families and Workplaces Act (HFWA), 2) Paid Vacation Leave, 3) School Closures Pay, 4) Health Care Benefit, 5) Dental Insurance, 6) Retirement Plan, 7) Employee Tuition Subsidy, and 8) Non Discretionary and Discretionary Bonuses.** All benefits are not available to all employees as there are differences of eligibility for **full-time vs part-time employees** and benefits that are dependent upon duration of time employed. Full-time is considered to be 30 hours a week or more; if it's full-time for a limited time (such as a long-term sub) full-time shall be at least 30 hours a week for at least 30 days, otherwise the person is deemed to be part-time). This section also discusses policies regarding unpaid sick leave and unpaid personal time off.

A. Definition of Exempt vs. Nonexempt Employees & Regular and Casual Employees

1. Regular Employee – A “Regular” Employee is one who is hired to work for an indefinite period of time, on a regular basis, either full-time or part-time, and who is considered a regular member of the workforce.

2. Casual Employee – Employee hired for a limited period of time, a specific project, or on a fill-in or as-needed basis, or to work less than 20 hours per workweek. Casual Employees are not entitled to any benefits except those required by law (e.g. unemployment insurance, workers' compensation insurance, jury duty leave, voting leave, and sick leave at the rate of 1 hour for every 20 hours worked).

3. Exempt Employee—An “Exempt” Employee is not entitled to overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Exempt Employees are paid a guaranteed salary each pay period for all hours worked.

4. Non-exempt Employee—A “Non-exempt” Employee receives overtime premium for work hours in excess of: a) 40 per workweek, or b) 12 hours in a workday, or c) 12 consecutive hours of work. Most employees at Riverhouse are regular, non-exempt employees.

B. Paid Sick Leave

1. Riverhouse Accrued Paid Sick Leave (HFWA)

The Colorado Healthy Families and Workplaces Act (HFWA) requires Colorado employers to provide sick leave to their employees: accrued leave at the rate of 1 hour for every 30 hours worked.

- Paid sick leave is accrued on an ongoing basis, starting with the Employee's first 30 hours worked (usually the first week of work). In four weeks a full-time Employee will earn approximately 4 hours of paid sick leave.
- Paid sick leave must be paid for time off work, and at the same pay rate the employee earns during time worked.
- Paid sick leave can't be counted against employees as absences that may lead to firing or other negative action.
- Up to 48 hours per year (approximately 7 full-time days) can be accrued, and can be rolled over into the next year. More than 48 hours cannot be accrued. In the event of separation, accrued sick leave hours are not reimbursed by Riverhouse. However, if an employee is rehired within six months of termination, any unused sick days are reinstituted.

- Riverhouse requires documentation for accrued paid sick leave for absences of four or more consecutive days, as per the state law.

According to the state of Colorado, accrued paid sick leave can be used for a wide range of health and safety needs:

- Inability to work due to a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition.
- Obtaining preventive medical care (including vaccination), or medical diagnosis/care/treatment.
- Needs due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or criminal harassment including medical attention, mental health care or other counseling, legal or other victim services, or relocation.
- Care for a family member who needs the sort of care listed above.
- Effective Aug. 7, 2023: Bereavement, or financial/legal needs after a death of a family member; or
- Effective Aug. 7, 2023: Due to inclement weather, power/heat/water loss, or other unexpected event, the employee must either evacuate their residence, or care for a family member whose school or place of care was closed.

Since January 1, 2022, all employers in the state, regardless of size or industry, are fully covered by HFWA. HFWA covers all employees (part-time, seasonal, temporary, etc.), excluding only federal government employees and some railroad employees.

2. **Public Health Emergency Leave (PHE)**

The federal government's and State of Colorado's public health emergency declarations for COVID-19 expired on May 11, 2023.

Chart to show accrual of Paid Sick Leave hours:

30 hours of work	1 hour of paid sick leave
60 hours of work	2 hours of paid sick leave
120 hours (approx 3 weeks for ft staff)	4 hours of paid sick leave
160 hours (approx 1 month of ft work)	5 hours of paid sick leave
12 months of work	48 hrs of paid sick leave (average of 4 per month)

3. **Caring for Yourself**

Riverhouse is a childcare center. Sickness abounds with children, especially during the winter months. We ask that you prioritize self-care in this job. Get enough sleep. Eat well. **Wash your hands often**, both at work and away from work. You are always free to wear a mask if desired.

As with the children at Riverhouse, we apply CO Department of Public Health "How Sick Is Too Sick?" public guidance document to staff.

(<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/communicable-diseases/infectious-disease-guidelines-schools-childcare>)

If you have more serious symptoms such as a fever, sore throat, or other symptoms indicating an illness or an infection, we ask that you alert the administration as soon as possible. It may be suggested that you see Riverhouse's doctor for a diagnosis so we may inform coworkers or families about a particular

disease. Absences greater than 3 consecutive work days require a doctor's note prior to return to work. For the time you are off work, assuming you have worked for Riverhouse for 120 hours, you will have 4 hours of paid sick leave. If you are absent for more time than you have accrued (see chart above), the additional time will be unpaid time off due to sickness. It is recommended that you save your Sick PTO hours for when you absolutely need it.

4. Use & Maximum Accrual of Sick Paid Leave

You may not accrue more than 48 hours of sick paid leave in a calendar year.

An employee may not use more paid sick leave than the employee has accrued.

An employee may not trade, sell, donate, or transfer their paid sick leave balance to another employee.

A separated employee does not receive pay for their accrued, but unused, paid sick leave. It is forfeited.

C. Unpaid Sick Leave

If you are sick with a regular illness, your absence will be paid as long as you have accrued enough sick leave. After you have used the hours you have accrued, your sick leave will be unpaid.

D. FAMLI LEAVE ACT

FAMLI benefits officially became available on January 1, 2024. Covered Colorado workers may receive up to twelve weeks of leave per year to:

- Care for a new child, including adopted and fostered children.
- Care for themselves, if they have a serious health condition.
- Care for a family member's serious health condition.
- Make arrangements for a family member's military deployment.
- Address the immediate safety needs and impact of domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

Those who experience pregnancy or childbirth complications may receive an additional four weeks for a total of 16 weeks per year. A new amendment to the FAMLI law allows for an additional 12 weeks of paid leave for parents with newborns in the NICU, effective for claims filed on or after January 1, 2026. Both Riverhouse and employees contribute premiums to the program. Premium contributions began in January 2023. If you wish to apply for FAMLI go to this link :

<https://famli.colorado.gov/individuals-and-families/my-famli> or get a FAMLI fact sheet from the administration. You will not be penalized, nor will you lose your job, if you apply for FAMLI.

E. Temporary Disability Leave

Riverhouse recognizes that temporary disability may prevent employees from coming to work for a period of time. In such cases, Riverhouse may grant a temporary disability leave to reasonably accommodate the needs of the employee while also considering the needs of Riverhouse. If a leave is granted, any extensions will be subject to the same considerations. Employees requesting temporary disability leave must document their request in writing. If appropriate, and not prohibited by law, Riverhouse may require that the request be accompanied by a doctor's statement identifying how the temporary disability limits the employee's ability to work and the estimated date of return.

If the employee's expected return date changes, the employee should notify Riverhouse as soon as possible. Before returning to work, employees may be required to submit written medical certification of their readiness to work, including any restrictions. Upon returning to work, if employees qualify, they will be reinstated to their former position or one that is substantially the same, depending upon the availability of any position at that time.

The leave will be unpaid, but employees can use any available paid sick leave or other

accrued paid time off while on temporary disability leave.

F. Paid Personal Time Off (PTO) aka “Vacation Time”

Paid time off for the purposes of personal time or vacation time is different for exempt vs non-exempt (hourly) employees. Exempt employees are on salary as their work is executive, or administrative. They do not qualify for overtime pay as they are not paid by the hour. They are exempt from receiving overtime. Non-exempt means you are eligible to receive overtime (see page 30).

1. PTO - Exempt Employees

Exempt (salaried) Employees accrue PTO once they begin full-time employment. Accrual rates increase after being with the organization for certain periods of time. If an exempt employee does not work full-time (40 hours or more per week), then the accrual will be in proportion to the amount of time they do work - e.g. a 30 hour salaried job would accrue at 75% of the rate below. When an employee reaches the maximum accrual hours per year, they stop accruing until they use some of the balance and the balance drops below the cap. Full-time Salaried Accrual is 6.154 hrs bi-weekly [Max 160 hrs (approx 4 wks) / year]. The five weeks during which the school is closed are paid for salaried employees, and exempt employees do not need to use PTO during that time.

2. PTO - Non Exempt (Regular Hourly) Employees

All full time non exempt employees start accruing PTO after they have worked 90 days at Riverhouse. See the table below for the accrual rate based on length of employment. When an employee reaches the maximum accrual hours per year, they stop accruing until they use some of the balance and the balance drops below the cap.

Full-time Regular Hourly Employees Accrual Bracket

First year of employment (beginning after 90 days)	Accrual rate of .025 per hour worked (approximately 5 to 6 workdays, or one week paid vacation per year) Prorated based on the total number of hours worked each month.
Years 2-4	Accrual rate of .042 per hour worked (approximately 8 to 10 workdays, or 2 weeks paid vacation, per year) Prorated based on the total number of hours worked each month.
Years 4+	Accrual rate of .065 per hour worked (approximately 13-15 days vacation days per year). Prorated based on the total number of hours worked each month.

G. Unpaid Time Off

What do you do if you want to take more time off than what you have accrued?

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on our level of staffing, the time of year, and our ability to cover your shifts just like requests for paid time off. However, these are expectations for employees:

1. **Give at least 1 week notice** if it is an emergency that is not involving the hospitalization, impending death, or death of an immediate family member.

2. **Do not request non-urgent time off the last two weeks in August or the first two weeks in September** (when the new classrooms have just formed), or just before or after one of our weeks in which the Center is closed. **These should be considered BLACK OUT periods and require both an extreme situation and the permission of the Executive Director.**

3. **When requesting time off**, please consider: periods longer than one week are difficult both for the children we care for and for your Riverhouse co-workers. Exceptions will be made for emergencies or very rare events, but the following criteria needs to be met:

- give at least 2 weeks notice of the impending trip or leave so coverage may be arranged
- Riverhouse needs to have adequate sub coverage from subs that have the required credentials

4. **All employees have the essential job duty of reliable attendance.**

H. School Closures

Riverhouse Children's Center is closed for five full weeks out of the year due to alignment with the local school district calendar - one week for Spring Break, one week over the 4th of July for Summer Break, one week for Thanksgiving, and two weeks at Christmas and New Year's.

1. Exempt Employees (Salaried) and/or Administrative Staff:

All salaried or administrative employees are expected to perform the necessary duties needed to keep the center operating smoothly through the breaks including, but not limited to: upkeep of the facility, hiring of new employees, managing staff schedules, and depositing funds. All duties for each break must be designated in writing and the designation of duties agreed to by the Executive Director by the last working day before the break. A copy of this agreement will be shared with the RH Board President.

2. Salary and Wages Paid During Scheduled Breaks:

All full-time, non-exempt staff who have worked at Riverhouse for 210 hours (approximately six weeks) prior to each of the five scheduled week-long breaks are eligible to be reimbursed at the rate of 50% of their regular pay. (This does not include the following one-day holiday breaks: MLK, Jr Day; President's Day; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Labor Day.) Thus, if an employee typically is scheduled to work 36 hours a week, he or she would be reimbursed for 18 hours of work. If an employee is hired in September, he or she must have worked 210 hours to be eligible for the Thanksgiving Break closure pay. In addition, if an employee puts in their resignation notice, they will not be paid for a week that Riverhouse is closed within that resignation period, unless they return and work at least 30 hours after the break week; these hours can not include vacation hours or sick time hours, but are actual hours of productive work.

3. Snow Day Closures

Riverhouse compensates staff for their scheduled shifts on snow day closures. Snow days are announced as early as possible on the day of the closure. Please note there are days that the Durango School District will have a snow day, and Riverhouse may have only a two hour delay, or vice versa. We do not have the bus routes of public school, but we do take staff safety into account, so we may open with a two hour delay in order to allow roads to be cleared or to warm up.

H. Health Care Benefit

Riverhouse Children's Center has a contract with Durango Primary Care, and offers free healthcare to full-time employees. Part-time employees may pay half of the actual cost of the benefit (cost varies based on age). Direct primary care offers adult preventative visits, sick and urgent care visits, as well as management of chronic conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure. There is no cost to the employee for the office visit, although at times there may be minimal cost for medications or special

needed tests. **Direct Primary Care is not a replacement for health insurance** that covers more serious, or catastrophic, healthcare needs. It is typical for people to have both health insurance and to utilize direct primary care. Durango Primary Care also offers wellness visits that are required for teaching staff within their first 30 days of employment. DPC is located at 575 Rivergate Lane, Suite 95, and they provide services in Spanish as well as English. Employees should request this benefit from the Assistant Director if they wish to receive it.

I. Dental Insurance

Full-time employees are eligible for free dental insurance starting the first of the month, after they have completed the four-week onboarding period. Part-time employees may agree to pay 50% of the monthly premiums to receive dental insurance. Employees must request this benefit from the Assistant Director if they wish to receive it.

J. Retirement Plan

The state of Colorado requires all businesses with 15 or more employees to offer a retirement plan. Starting in July 2023 Riverhouse offers a retirement plan to all eligible employees. Those who earned \$5,000 with Riverhouse in the previous year, or are salaried employees, are eligible to sign up during the annual enrollment period. The annual enrollment period is November 1 - December 31st, with the benefit to start on January 1st of the next year. Thus, all new hires who are employees earning an hourly wage in 2025 are eligible starting January 1, 2026. This plan is optional for all employees.

The retirement plan is a Simple or Roth IRA (employee's choice) offered through American Funds/Capital Group. It is a matching fund; Riverhouse will match up to 3% of the employee's wages. In addition, there is an annual \$25 fee per participant and a one-time setup fee of \$25 per person, both of which are paid for by the employee. An advisor fee is .005, or 50 cents on every \$100 accrued.

Each year, during or prior to the enrollment period, an American Funds representative will provide information about the plan options. They will also be available by phone or email for any employee who wishes to contact them at any other time with questions. Riverhouse contracts with a payroll department, and all deductions related to this plan will be done through the payroll department. When an employee leaves Riverhouse, they will be able to transfer their retirement account. Again, if you are interested in this plan, please see the Assistant Director..

K. Continuing Education Policy and Tuition Assistance

We believe in the continuing education of our employees. We especially pride ourselves in helping employees attain Lead Teacher status by obtaining their CDA credential.

The **Child Development Associate** (CDA) Credential™ is a widely recognized credential in early childhood education administered by the Council for Professional Development. The CDA Credential guides early child care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children.

If you are interested in attending an external training or class and would like Riverhouse to cover the cost, funding may be available and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Approval must be granted by both the Program Director and the Executive Director.

Once approved, a written agreement will be created outlining that Riverhouse will reimburse the employee for the full cost of the training upon successful completion of the course. This ensures the organization receives the intended benefit of the professional development investment. **If the training is not completed, the employee will not be eligible for reimbursement.**

If a staff member submits a written request for Riverhouse to pay the training fees upfront, this may be accommodated with the understanding that **\$50 will be deducted from each paycheck** until the full cost

is repaid. **If the training is not completed**, the **full remaining balance** of the training cost will be deducted from their next paycheck.

L. Employee Child Care Tuition Assistance

Full-time employees (30 hours a week or more) are eligible for 50% off of the cost of child care tuition for one child. For two or more children, an employee is eligible for a tuition subsidy benefit of 25% for each additional child. Employees are not guaranteed a slot but are moved to the top of the RH waiting list. Even this action can mean a wait of several months for certain classrooms. We reserve the right to revoke any child subsidy status based on change of employment.

M. Bonuses

Modest non-merit based bonuses to full-time regular employees and regular part-time employees may be given at the end of the year provided that Riverhouse finances allow for this benefit. Amount of bonuses will be determined according to the following factors: time employed, full-time vs part-time, and an Employee's position at the center. According to the US Department of Labor, discretionary bonuses may also be given at the Executive Director's discretion, provided that sufficient funds exist, to employees for "overcoming a challenging or stressful situation," "to employees who make a unique or extraordinary effort," "for an employee of the month," or "for referral bonuses."

Section X - Statutory (Required) Leaves of Absence

A. Purpose The following leaves are required by law. This policy is intended to comply with the legal requirements. Therefore, if the laws upon which these policies are based are changed, the policies are automatically changed to comply with the revised laws.

B. Jury Duty If you are served with a summons to jury duty, you must inform the Program Director by the next regular work day and provide a copy of the summons. You will receive leave for jury duty. Non-exempt Employees will be paid their regular wages, up to \$50 per day, for the first three days of jury duty that they would otherwise have been scheduled to work. Thereafter, any pay they receive for jury duty is paid by the governmental entity. Riverhouse has no obligation to pay wages for jury duty unless the Employee provides the Riverhouse with a juror service certificate confirming the Employee's jury duty during that period. Employees are expected to return to work on any day or for a portion of a day they are released from jury duty.

C. Voting Leave Employees who are registered, eligible electors entitled to vote in an election shall be entitled to two hours off, with pay, for the purpose of voting on the day of the election during the time the polls are open, if they apply for the leave of absence prior to the day of election and if they have less than three hours between the time of opening and the time of closing of the polls during which they are not required to be on the job for Riverhouse. Riverhouse may specify the hours during which the Employee may be absent.

D. Military Duty Employees will be allowed leave of absence for military duty in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws. Employees must present official documentation of the military duty prior to the leave and upon returning from leave. Military leave for Non-Exempt Employees is without pay. Exempt Employees will be paid their salary, unless no work is performed for Riverhouse during the pay period, and are subject to reduction for wages received from the Military for the same period.

E. Civil Air Patrol Mission Leave Any Employee (except Casual Employees hired only on a temporary basis), who is a member of the Civil Air Patrol, Colorado Wing, and who is called to duty for a Civil Air Patrol Mission is entitled to an unpaid leave of absence for the time when the Employee is engaged in the mission, not to exceed a total of 15 work days in any calendar year. Leave is allowed only if the Employee returns to his or her job as soon as practical after being relieved from service for the Civil Air Patrol Mission. The Employee satisfying these and all statutory requirements set forth in

CRS §28-1-102 through §28-1-106 shall be entitled to return to the same or a similar position.

F. Emergency Volunteer Service Leave Any Employee (except Casual Employees hired only on a temporary basis), who is a “Qualified Volunteer” called to service by a “Volunteer Organization” for the purpose of assisting in a “Disaster” as these terms are defined by CRS §24-32-2202 through §24-32-2228, is entitled to an unpaid leave of absence for the time spent assisting, not to exceed a total of fifteen work days in any calendar year. In order to be eligible for this leave, the Employee must comply with all requirements of these statutes, including, without limitation, providing Riverhouse with proof that he or she is a Qualified Volunteer. Leave is allowed only if the Employee returns to his or her job as soon as practical after being relieved from Emergency Volunteer Service.

Section XI - Safety & Loss Prevention

A. General Safety Policy

It is the responsibility of every employee of Riverhouse to maintain a healthy and safe work environment. Please report all safety hazards and occupational illnesses or injuries to your supervisor immediately, and complete an occupational illness or injury form as needed. Failure to follow Riverhouse’s health and safety rules can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

B. Smoking

1. **Smoking Prohibited by Statute.** The Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act prohibits smoking inside any place of employment and in any entryway. In compliance with this Act, Riverhouse prohibits Employees from smoking inside the Riverhouse’s facilities and outside the facilities within 20 feet of any entryway to the facilities. Riverhouse, however, actually requires smoking to be done at least 40 feet from any entrance, due to the vulnerable nature of our clientele.
2. **Outside Smoking.** Any Employee who smokes outside shall not leave debris (cigarette butts, wrapping paper, matches, etc.) on Riverhouse’s property or adjacent properties.

C. A Safe & Peaceful Workplace (Policy against Violence)

The safety and security of our employees, residents, vendors, contractors, and the general public is of essential importance. Threats or acts of violence made by an employee against another person’s life, health, well-being, family, or property will not be tolerated. Any act of intimidation, threat of violence, or act of violence committed against any person on Riverhouse property is prohibited.

1. The following definitions apply:

- Intimidation: A physical or verbal act toward another person, the result of which causes that person to reasonably fear for his or her safety or the safety of others.
- Threat of violence: A physical or verbal act which threatens bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.
- Act of violence: A physical act, whether or not it causes actual bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.
- Weapons: No staff shall possess or have control of any firearm, deadly weapon, or prohibited knife, as legally defined, while on Riverhouse property.

2. The following acts are prohibited:

- a) Any act or threat of violence made by an employee against another person’s life, health, well-being, family, or property.
- b) Any act or threat of violence made directly or indirectly by words, gestures, symbols, or email.
- c) Use or possession of a weapon on the Riverhouse’s premises.

3. Need to Report

It is a requirement that employees report to their administrative supervisor, in accordance with this policy, any behavior that compromises Riverhouse's ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need to know.

D. Confidentiality

As a condition of employment, Riverhouse employees are required to protect confidential information. Employees may come into contact with customer lists, financial information, or other confidential information. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, personally identifiable information, education records, a child's full name, date of birth, social security number, attendance, learning or developmental profile, Parent/guardian names, contact info, employment information, any medical records, allergies, or incident reports, enrollment status, and payment details. Access to this information should be limited to a "need to know" basis and should not be used for personal benefit, disclosed, or released without prior authorization from an administrator.

Unauthorized disclosure of other confidential information, may result in the discipline or termination of any employee, as well as subject the employee to civil liability. ***Employees may not disclose or communicate, in any manner, directly or indirectly, information about the Riverhouse, its operations, clientele, or any other information, that relates to the business of Riverhouse, including, but not limited to, the names of its customers or clients, its marketing strategies, operations, or any other information which would be deemed confidential, information about another employee, a customer or client list, or other form of proprietary information of Riverhouse.*** If you believe you must disclose confidential information, you may do so only after obtaining prior authorization from the Executive Director. Any breach of this provision, or of any other confidentiality and nondisclosure obligation, is a material breach of the terms of employment.

E. Positive Family and Community Relations

We strive to provide the best services possible to our families and to the community. You are expected to treat every parent, caregiver, and visitor with the utmost respect and courtesy. You should never argue or act in a disrespectful manner towards a visitor or parent/caregiver. If you are having problems with someone, or someone is treating you disrespectfully, please notify your supervisor immediately. If a parent or visitor voices a suggestion, complaint, or concern regarding our services, please inform your supervisor. Lastly, please make every effort to be prompt in following up on parent's questions. Positive relations will go a long way to establishing Riverhouse as a leader in its field.

Section XII - Summary of Key Critical Things to Know

<u>At-Will</u>	Your employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. Likewise, we respect your right to leave Riverhouse at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause. However, RH strives to give feedback to employees with an opportunity to correct issues, when appropriate. Similarly, RH asks that employees provide at least two weeks' notice if the employee decides to separate, so undue stress is not placed on co-workers or children in the classroom.
<u>Organizational Structure</u>	The Executive Director is accountable to the Board of Directors. The other administrators are accountable to the Executive Director. Lead Teachers are accountable to all administrative personnel. Aides are accountable to their immediate supervisors (Lead Teachers) and admin staff. The Executive Director directly supervises the kitchen staff and any other non-teaching staff.

<u>Attendance</u>	All employees have the essential job duty of reliable attendance. Your attendance is expected unless you are truly ill, or have asked for time off in advance. Riverhouse relies so heavily on attendance because repeated absences are a serious problem for the children and your co-workers. If you do not come to work without a prior request, or have repeated personal matters that interfere with your ability to be reliable at work, your job may be terminated out of necessity to fill staffing requirements/needs. Attendance is also required at monthly staff meetings and teacher work days.
<u>New Hire & Professional Development</u>	All 10 hours of required PDIS must be finished prior to your first day of work. If they are not, you will not be scheduled for work. When new hire paperwork is turned in, background checks are scheduled. Wellness checks must be completed within the first 30 days of employment. Payday is twice a month, on the 7th and 22nd unless these days are weekend days or holidays, then payday is usually the day prior. Additional mandatory training is required throughout the year to maintain proper credentials.
<u>Workmen's Comp</u>	If you are injured on the job, it is a requirement that you inform administration within 10 days of the injury.
<u>Overtime</u>	You are entitled to overtime pay if you work more than 40 hours a week. If you wish to work overtime it must be approved (there's a form) in advance. It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not work more than 40 hours a week or to notify administration about the possibility. Repeated overtime incidents (not requested by the Administration) will result in disciplinary action.
<u>Child Safety</u>	You are required to know what loving and supportive care is: Safe Sleep for babies and Conscious Discipline for older children. Time outs, harsh voice tones, name calling, and grabbing a child to move them are all expressly forbidden at Riverhouse.
<u>Confidentiality</u>	As a condition of employment, Riverhouse employees are required to protect confidential information. Employees may come into contact with customer lists, financial information, or other confidential information (see pp. 37-38). Unauthorized disclosure of other confidential information, may result in the discipline or termination of any employee, as well as subject the employee to civil liability.
<u>Cell Phone Use & Productivity On-the-Clock</u>	Cell phones are expressly forbidden during the hours that children are in the room with you. Refrain from using them except during breaks. If you are waiting for children to arrive in the morning, please work on cleaning, arranging classroom materials, or planning lessons. The same is expected for nap times. When you are on the clock, you are not to be on your phone unless you are accessing Brightwheel or working on documentation. (See page 25)
<u>Time Off</u>	Employees have both paid sick time off (Sick PTO) and paid time off (PTO). Please use your sick time for times when you are actually sick. <u>Do not request non-urgent time off during the Teacher Training Week or during the last two weeks in August or the first two weeks in September. These are BLACK OUT periods and require the permission of the Executive Director.</u>

<u>Outside Employment</u>	Outside employment should not create a conflict of interest or affect the quality or value of your work performance or availability at Riverhouse. All regularly scheduled outside employment by Riverhouse full-time staff should be communicated to the administration.
<u>Safety & Child Abuse</u>	It is your responsibility to understand both the definitions of child abuse, and the steps to take if you are frustrated or angry with a child. (see page 14). You are also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Just telling an administrator is NOT sufficient. (see page 28, Section P)
<u>Dress Code</u>	We aim to balance professionalism with the physical demands of caring for young children. Please dress comfortably and maintain personal hygiene habits that are generally accepted in the community, including clean clothing, good grooming and personal hygiene, and appropriate social behavior. If you're unsure about a clothing choice, please check with an administrator.
<u>FAMLI Leave</u>	As of January 1, 2024 Colorado employees have the opportunity to request FAMLI leave (see page 32).
<u>Lunch Breaks</u>	In the State of Colorado labor laws require employees to get at least a 30 minute lunch break, uninterrupted and duty free. (It is not paid). You must sign an Employee Meal Period Waiver Form if you do not take your 30 minute break.
<u>Cleaning Terms</u>	It is critical that you know the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting. Sanitize objects and surfaces that come in contact with mouths (toys, infant feeding supplies, countertops, and other surfaces that touch food). Disinfecting is stronger; it kills remaining germs on surfaces (regular cleaning with soap & water does not).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW of Riverhouse Employee Handbook

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to read the Handbook in its entirety. I agree to comply with the rules, policies, and procedures set forth herein, as well as any revisions made to the Employee Handbook in the future. I also understand that **if I violate the rules, policies, and procedures set forth herein that I may be subject to discipline**, up to and including termination of my employment.

I understand that the policies outlined in this Employee Handbook are guidelines that could require changes from time to time. I understand that Riverhouse retains the right to make decisions involving employment as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to Riverhouse in general. I understand that **this Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements** made by any staff member, including supervisors, the administration, and Board members.

I understand that except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by the Board President of Riverhouse, Riverhouse reserves **the right to revise, delete, and add** to the provisions of this Employee Handbook at any time without notice. I understand that no oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook. I understand that this Employee Handbook does not create a contract guaranteeing that I will be employed for any specific time period. I understand nothing in this handbook is created to infringe on any available legal rights.

I understand that this Employee Handbook refers to **current benefit plans** maintained by Riverhouse and that I must refer to the actual plan documents and plan descriptions as these documents are controlling. If I have questions about the content of this Handbook, I know I can ask the Executive Director.

I acknowledge that one of the Riverhouse administrative staff has verbally gone over the Summary sheet of the handbook. In no way is this to be interpreted as a replacement for reading the entire handbook, but it is a way to ensure that the Riverhouse administration knows, without any doubt, that certain key policies and procedures are known to the employee, whether or not they have read the entire handbook.

Employee's Printed Name

Signature

Date

Riverhouse Administrator's Printed Name

Signature

Date