What a Fantastic Place to be!

2026-2027

Moody Early Childhood Center



The Family Handbook

Rev. 8/26

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Program Philosophy

Mission Statement

Moody Early Childhood Center provides a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate program that fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child-friendly environment. MECC fosters innovation, embraces teamwork, strives for excellence, respects and supports families, commits to service at all levels, respects and appreciates diversity, actively listens and seeks to understand, communicates openly and productively, uses resources creatively and responsibly and abides by the NAEYC code of ethics.

At Moody Center, we will:

- Be a fun, safe, creative learning center for Galveston children from newborn through Prekindergarten 4.
- Prepare children academically, emotionally and socially for kindergarten.
- Have a highly qualified staff experienced in, and committed to, the very best early childhood education
- Welcome families and community partners into the life of the center.
- Give every child a strong foundation to do his or her best in school and in life.

Moody Early Childhood Center strives to be nationally recognized as an outstanding childcare center.

Vision Statement

The vision of Moody Early Childhood Center is to ensure that Galveston children, regardless of their families' economic status, enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Motto

"Giving all Galveston children the opportunity to soar"

Handbook

Welcome to Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC). Thank you for selecting MECC as your child's Early Childhood Center. We are the first in-district charter school in the state of Texas serving infants 6 weeks old through Prekindergarten and have created this "Parent Handbook '' to introduce you to the Philosophy and Culture of our school. Most of the answers to your questions can be found in the handbook. If your question is not answered in the handbook, do not hesitate to call a Moody Early Childhood Center and speak with our Office staff, Family Advocates, or Administration at (409) 761-6930. Our handbook is reviewed yearly by Moody Early Childhood Center Board of Directors and any changes made to our policy will be shared with parents immediately with notifications going out via ProCare and/or emails. Our policies and procedures are in accordance with the minimum standards posted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas Rising Star, and NAEYC. You can access a copy of the minimum standards by contacting The Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing Department at 512.834.3195 or at their website.

Accreditations

Moody Early Childhood Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and accredited school through the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Charter School Association, and Texas Rising Star as well as is working toward additional state and national accreditations. We strive to ensure that our program meets and/or exceeds all requirements.

Administration and staffing

Executive Director

Karin Miller, Executive Director/Executive Director for Moody Early Childhood Center, is an education veteran with more than thirty years of classroom and administrative experience.

Inspired by her own kindergarten teacher, Ms. Miller began her career as a preschool and kindergarten teacher. After twelve years in the classroom, she moved into program management.

She was an early childhood specialist and federal programs coordinator for Brazosport Independent School District. There she managed district coordinators for all federal programs and established curriculum and staff development for early childhood, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and adult education programs.

Karin has extensive experience in school administration, policies, and procedures through her years as assistant superintendents for special programs at Cleveland Independent School District and supports services at Texas City ISD.

Karin holds a Master of Science degree in educational management from the University of Houston - Clear Lake and a Bachelor of Science degree in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University. She has continued her education with several special training programs, certifications, and professional affiliations.

Parent Concerns/Complaints

At MECC, we encourage our families to discuss any concerns as soon as possible in order to ensure a positive outcome. If issues arise in the classrooms, please talk to the classroom staff. If the classroom staff is the concern of your complaint, please let the front office know and they will call a member of our administrative team to assist you. If you have any questions or concerns about the tuition, policies or procedures of the center, please feel free to email Christian Salgado, the Director of Education, at christiansalgado@moodychildhoodcenter.org with your concerns and he will assist you. If the issue isn't resolved to your satisfaction, email Christian and he will send you the resolution paperwork and schedule the meeting with the appropriate administrator. The process begins with the Personnel and Compliance Manager. If they are unable to resolve the complaint/concern, the issue then moves to the Chief Operations Officer. The final hearing of the concern will be with the Executive Director. There is no further appeal after the Executive Director.

Accommodating Families and Children

Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) is committed to providing an inclusive environment that respects and supports children and families of all languages, cultures, backgrounds, and abilities. MECC makes reasonable efforts to accommodate individual needs through translated communications, culturally responsive classroom activities, individualized learning strategies, and appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities or special care needs.

Families are encouraged to share their child's unique needs, home language, and cultural preferences with staff. MECC works collaboratively with families and appropriate professionals to identify accommodations that support each child's participation, development, and success.

Staff hiring

When hiring teachers and administrators for our programs, we value diverse education and life experiences. We look for staff members who have a passion for working with young children and their families. All of our staff meet or exceed the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requirements, and our teachers meet state certification standards. They also are trained in CPR/ First Aid for infants, children and adults.

The foundation of our team is built upon staff members who:

- Are knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices for early childhood learners.
- Are prepared to share their life experiences, talents, and interests.
- Enjoy the outdoors and have a personal connection to the natural world.
- Are professional, creative and passionate individuals experienced in fostering the whole child.

Teacher-student ratios

We believe in the importance of maintaining high standards regarding staff to student ratios. We also believe that the process of developing meaningful relationships with children is best achieved in small groups. Therefore, we strive to maintain a staff ratio as follows:

0-11 months	1 adult: 4 children
12-23 months	1 adult: 5 children
24 -30 months	1 adult: 6 children
30 -35 months	1 adult: 8 children
3 years+	1 adult: 10 children

Curriculum

At Moody Early Childhood Center, we are deliberate in choosing activities and educational settings that give all our children the opportunity to soar. We believe children learn best through meaningful relationships, purposeful play, hands-on exploration, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Our goal is to nurture the whole child by providing a safe, engaging environment where every child can grow socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and academically while developing a lifelong love of learning. We have chosen Frog Street Curriculum ® for every age group. The curriculum provides a comprehensive scope and sequence that intentionally builds children's knowledge and skills throughout the year. Teachers implement the curriculum through daily lesson

plans, small- and large-group instruction, learning centers, classroom routines, outdoor learning, and individualized experiences designed to meet the needs of every child.

Infant

Designed around the latest scientific early brain development research, Frog Street Infant curriculum is designed to build strong foundations for little ones ages 0-17 months. This child-centered program includes activities that:

- Equip caregivers to nurture the little ones in their care.
- Optimize key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Are designed with intention and purpose and organized around five developmental learning areas: language, physical/motor, social-emotional, and cognitive.
- Feature Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® strategies to enhance social and emotional development.

In our Infant classrooms, teachers implement the curriculum through responsive caregiving, daily routines, sensory exploration, language-rich interactions, music, movement, and individualized learning experiences that support each child's unique developmental pace.

Toddler

Our Toddler program is designed around the latest scientific early brain development research. This program focuses on enhancing the simple joy of childhood. Caregivers help children build self-confidence and foster curiosity through exploration. Our teachers provide a warm nurturing environment, safe for each child to discover the world around them.

- Frog Street Toddler, created by Dr. Pam Schiller, incorporates Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® and includes activity choices specifically created for children ages 18-36 months. Activity choices:
- Are organized around five developmental domains: language, social-emotional, cognitive, and physical/motor.
- Offer differentiated instruction options to meet the needs of all learners.
- Can be infused into daily routines, such as diaper changing, transitions, and outdoor play.
- Are designed with intention and purpose to move children forward in their development.

Teachers implement the Toddler curriculum through intentional play experiences, learning centers, classroom routines, outdoor exploration, and small- and large-group activities that encourage independence, language development, problem-solving, and social-emotional growth.

Prekindergarten

According to early childhood brain research, the cognitive, physical, and social skills of most rapidly developing three and four-year-olds are significantly different from other ages. Frog Street offers activities developed in accordance with early brain development research that incorporates activities that includes all developmental domains. In addition to developmentally appropriate literacy and foundational math activities, Frog Street incorporates Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline activities to ensure all aspects of a child's development are met. Activities:

- Easy-to-use activities developed in accordance with early brain development research.
- A well-rounded scope of activities that includes all developmental domains.

- Individualized/differentiated instruction and activities to target each student at their own learning level.
- Intentional instruction that optimizes key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Social and emotional emphasis featuring Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline®.

Teachers implement the curriculum through intentional daily lesson plans that include teacher-led instruction, learning centers, guided practice, purposeful play, small-group instruction, and ongoing observation to individualize learning experiences and prepare children for kindergarten success.

Afterschool Program

MECC offers a program that is engaging for both our teachers and the children participating in the extended day program. We integrate extension activities from the Frog Street curriculum, which is a comprehensive, researchbased program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines, with targeted STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities to encourage creativity and hands-on learning.

The cornerstones of the program:

- Extensive integration of theme, disciplines, and domains.
- Social and Emotional development including Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline ®.
- Differentiated instruction.
- Joyful approach to learning.

Evening Care

If enrollment warrants need, MECC may offer evening care for children whose parents work night shifts. The evening care children will receive the same high-quality program as the children have during the day. MECC will maintain age-appropriate activities, with homework assistance, and enrichment activities, while providing meals, snacks, and a scheduled rest time every evening.

Technology Use in the Learning Environment

MECC complies with best developmental practice and adheres to state regulations regarding the use of technology in each learning environment. Students under the age of 2 will not be exposed to screen time and media. Students 2 years of age and older may participate in developmentally appropriate technology and/or media experiences for no more than one hour per day, with classroom use remaining limited and purposeful. All technology and media used in the classroom must support educational goals, be age-appropriate, and be free from advertisements and violent content. Technology may only be used during planned instructional activities and will not be used during meals, snacks, or rest time. MECC staff are trained to integrate technology intentionally into students' learning and play. All classroom technology activities must be included in the classroom lesson plans and receive prior administrative approval.

Classroom Goals

Moody Early Childhood Center has classroom goals to ensure quality care for the children. Striving to meet the goals that we set is important to us. Each age group will build upon the previous goals.

Infant

1. To ensure the safety of all of our children during all routines and activities and to be alert and attentive at all times. We constantly make certain that all play areas are safe, secure and we provide a healthy environment.
2. To provide an attractive environment for the children with age-appropriate activities that stimulates the use of the five senses.
3. To provide physical activities that support large and small muscle development while supporting social and emotional growth through positive guidance and interactions.

Toddler

Moody Early Childhood Center has designed an environment to meet the overall needs of toddlers enrolled in our program. With the use of age-appropriate activities and interactions, the following goals should be met before the child enters Pre-K.

1. Shows pride in new accomplishments.
2. Feels safe away from parents.
3. Demonstrates initiative and independence.
4. Can influence others.
5. Helps clean-up.
6. Displays an interest in communication.
7. Can sit well in a chair.
8. Uses a crayon and/or paintbrush.
9. Attempts self-care, such as putting on own clothing and washing hands.

Pre-K

The Pre-K learning environment at Moody Early Childhood Center is designed to develop children using ageappropriate experiences. Because each child has his or her own individual needs, expectations may vary; each child is challenged but not hurried. Ideally, the following goals help to establish a baseline of goals that should be met by the time a child enters kindergarten.

1. Will try new activities.
2. Has self-confidence.
3. Desire to learn.
4. Listens attentively.
5. Demonstrates self-control.
6. Focuses on tasks.
7. Tries to problem solve independently.
8. Participates in clean up.
9. Takes care of own toileting needs.
10. Stands up for own rights.
11. Resolves conflicts peacefully.
12. Courteous and polite.
13. Has age-appropriate vocabulary.
14. Recites jingles and rhymes.

15. Displays good balance.
16. Builds with blocks.
17. Throws/catches a ball.
18. Demonstrates knowledge of colors, letters, shapes, and numbers.
19. Recognizes own name (written).
20. Knows birthday, telephone number, and street address.
21. Knows age.

Observations, Developmental Assessments, and Assignments

We value your child's experiences. When your child starts at Moody Early Childhood Center, we encourage scheduling time to meet with the teacher to discuss ways to make the transition to school easier for your child and your observations of their development or sending the teacher a message through ProCare. In addition, the center will provide you with feedback from ongoing observations, monthly developmental milestone checklists, and assessments throughout your child's time here. Developmental milestone checklists are completed monthly to monitor your child's growth and help identify potential developmental delays. The completed checklists and assessment results will be sent home and discussed with you. If a developmental concern is identified, MECC will partner with your family and provide referrals to appropriate community resources or early intervention services when necessary. This will help us target our care to best meet your child's needs, academically and socially.

Parents are encouraged to maintain ongoing communication with their child's teacher and may request a parent conference at any time during the school year. Likewise, teachers may request conferences whenever additional collaboration would benefit the child's development.

Formal parent-teacher conferences are held twice annually, with schedules determined by the child's program:

- Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K3 and Pre-K4): Parent-teacher conferences are held in September and February, in accordance with the school district's calendar.
- Infant and Toddler Program: Parent-teacher conferences are held in September/October and February/March each year.

During these conferences, families will have the opportunity to review their child's progress, developmental milestones, assessment results, classroom experiences, and individualized goals. Teachers will share observations and assessment data during conferences and discuss strategies that families can use at home to support continued growth and learning.

Additional conferences may be scheduled throughout the school year at the request of parents, teachers, or administration to address concerns, celebrate achievements, or collaborate on strategies that support the child's continued development and success.

If behavioral or developmental concerns arise, teachers and administrators will partner with families to develop positive strategies that support the child's success. Discussions regarding challenging behaviors will focus on the child's developmental progress, classroom expectations, and program goals. Families will be kept informed of their child's progress, interventions being implemented, and recommendations to support continued success both at school and at home.

Please note, we will take parent requests under advisement; however, we cannot promise any particular teacher for your child. Per TEXAS DEPARTMENT FOR PROTECTIVE SERVICES, children are assigned to classrooms by age. MECC strives to keep students in the same classroom for up to a year, based on age and mastering developmental goals. When it is time for your child to move to the next classroom, Moody Early Childhood Center will notify you and develop a transition plan for the child. Teachers will discuss the decision to move your child's classroom prior to any transition. In all instances, when a child transfers to another educational setting, we will work to ensure a smooth transition.

Logistical information

Hours of operation

Moody Early Childhood Center is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, year-round except for observed holidays and professional development days.

Infant and Toddlers

Infant and Toddlers will enter from the Avenue L entrance and may arrive at 7:00 a.m. Academics begin at 9:00 a.m. No student will be allowed to enter after 9:00 a.m. without a doctor's note.

Pre-K Students

Pre-K students may enter through Avenue K and may arrive as early as 7:45 a.m. Staff will be outside to assist getting your student out of your vehicle from 7:45-8:15 a.m. If you need to park, you will enter through the Avenue L entrance. After 8:15 a.m., parents must enter through the doors on Avenue L to sign the tardy binder before students may go to their classrooms. Classes begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. and are released at 3:55 p.m.

Breakfast will be served from 7:45 a.m.- 8:15 am in the classroom. All food must be finished or thrown away by 8:15 a.m. and car riders arriving after 8:15 a.m. will not be served breakfast. Breakfast is not permitted in the classrooms after 8:15 a.m. Children participating in the MECC after school program remain on campus after the school day ends and can stay until 6:30 p.m. Parents picking up extended day students must enter through the Ave L entrance.

Students participating in the evening care program may arrive at 1:30 p.m. Students staying in evening care who attend public school must arrive by 5:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Parents picking up extended day students must enter through the Ave L entrance.

Tuition

Tuition is based on a 12-month calendar. Parents are encouraged to pay full tuition prior to the first day of school but may choose to pay in monthly or weekly installments.

Tuition rates are determined using a sliding scale based on total household income. Each family's tuition amount is calculated according to the current tuition schedule and any applicable financial assistance or scholarship programs. Families may contact the Front Office or the Director of Administrative Services to determine their tuition rate and discuss available tuition assistance options.

- Monthly payments will be due by the first business day of the month for the following month.
- Weekly payments are due by the close of the business day on Monday each week.
- Parents have the convenience of using our 'Pay Online' option using the link included on your electronic invoice.
- Tuition is based on enrollment not attendance.
- Illness: Refunds or credits will not be issued for illnesses (including COVID)
- Vacations: (For students in the Infant & Toddler program only), refunds or credits will not be issued for vacations that are less than 2 weeks in duration. For vacations for 2 weeks or more:
    - Parent/guardian must give a note to the Director of Administrative Services at least 2 weeks prior to a vacation.
    - Tuition may be reduced to half price for the time the child is on vacation.
- There will be no credits or refunds for students enrolled in the PreK program.
- Holidays: Refunds or credits will not be given for holiday closings.
- Inclement weather closings: Refunds or credits will not be given for inclement weather closings.

Moody Early Childhood Center accepts cash, credit or debit cards, money orders, and cashier's checks.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Moody Early Childhood Center; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Business Office or your Family Advocate immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the Business Office.

Late payment fee

Weekly Tuition: Payments are due by the close of the business day on Monday. Payments not received by the close of day will incur a late fee of $20.00 that will be added to the tuition payment.

Monthly Tuition: Payments are due by closing on the first business day of each month. Payments not received by the close of day will incur a late fee of $20.00 that will be added to the tuition payment.

Parents who are late on payment will be counseled on their options. Students will not be able to return on Wednesday if they are behind on their payment, and we will begin to fill their spot with another family (see withdrawal procedure below). In addition, repeated late payments may be grounds for withdrawal.

Scholarships

Moody Early Childhood Center offers Scholarships to qualified families when funds are available. The prospective family will need to fully complete an application including documentation they have applied to Workforce Solutions, a class schedule, and/or three months of recent income statements. A tuition amount will be set if funds are available.

Scholarship Eligibility Requirements:

Each month, Moody Early Childhood Center Scholarship Committee will meet to review the family's economic status, attendance, child(ren) growth and development, as well as Workforce Solutions status, parent's meeting dates with their Family Advocate, and Family Engagement activities. Each family's status will be brought to review every three

months based on the scholarship approval date. Following the scholarship review process, tuition may incur an increase, decrease, or stabilize.

Childcare Subsidies

Moody Early Childhood Center accepts childcare subsidies. Families that receive subsidies must have the Texas Workforce Commission Case Manager call the Business Office to authorize care before the child(ren) can start care.

Families that receive subsidies must also meet with a Moody Early Childhood Center Family Advocate before the child(ren) may start care. If a Co-Pay is authorized by Texas Workforce Commission, parents are required to fulfill their obligation with Texas Workforce Commission and pay their co-pay by Monday at the beginning of the month or we will have to report non-payments to Texas Workforce Commission. Parents of a subsidized child(ren) must complete all required paperwork on time to continue enrollment at Moody Early Childhood Center. Parents must contact Texas Workforce Commission in the event a family is unable to pay the co-pay designated by Texas Workforce Commission.

Why timely pick-up matters

Transitions are particularly difficult for children during early childhood. Arriving on time helps to ensure that your child will be able to transition in and out of the classroom with ease and reinforces the successes of the day. Please be considerate and pick your child up in a timely manner. If you would like to stay and chat with other parents after the school day is over, please do so outside. This helps us ensure that all the students still waiting to be picked up are safe and accounted for. We must provide constant care for our students, so if you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment rather than having a conference during pick up or drop off.

Late pick up policy and fees

Policy:

Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) closes promptly at the end of each program day. Parents and guardians are expected to pick up their children on time. Timely pick-up is essential to ensure appropriate staffing, maintain licensing compliance, and support the safety and well-being of all children.

MECC reserves the right to withdraw a student from the program immediately due to an **excessively late pick-up, extraordinary circumstances related to a late pick-up, or repeated late pick-ups**. The determination of whether a late pick-up is excessive or whether extraordinary circumstances warrant immediate withdrawal shall be made at the sole discretion of MECC Administration.

An invoice for late pick-up fees will be issued within five (5) business days of the incident or added to the family's next tuition invoice. Payment of all assessed late fees is required for the child to continue attending the program.

Pre-K:

Classes end at 3:55 p.m. and it is imperative that students are picked up in a timely manner. Families more than 15 minutes late must pick up the student in the office. The late charge will be $5.00 for every minute/child for the first infraction and will increase by $5.00 a minute/child for any additional incident.

Cases in which children are repeatedly picked up late will be referred to our Family Advocate; failure to pick your child up on a continuous basis could be viewed as neglect.

Infant, Toddler, and Extended Day:
Parents picking up children after 6:30 p.m. are considered late. Families will be charged late fees when they are late picking up their child. The late charge will be $5.00 for every minute/child for the first infraction and will increase by $5.00 a minute/child for any additional incident.

Holding fee

Infant & Toddler: Moody Early Childhood Center provides a "future date of enrollment" option for families. A fee of $75.00 will be required to hold a slot for your child to attend. Spots can be held for up to two (2) months. Priority will be given to siblings of children currently enrolled in Moody Early Childhood Center. When all spaces are full, children are placed on the waiting list. As spaces come available, and there are no presently enrolled children ready to move up, the next child on the waiting list (based on the date of application) who fits enrollment criteria will be notified. At that time parents can either accept the open slot by paying the full tuition or decline the slot in which case the spot will go to the next child of the appropriate age on the waiting list. Due to these factors and the number of names on the waiting list, MECC cannot guarantee or predict a start-date at the time of application.

To be placed on the waiting list. A registration form must be completed and submitted to the Register Office. A $75.00 non-refundable holding fee is required. When the child is accepted for enrollment, the $75.00 registration fee will be applied to the first week's tuition.

Additional expenses

All parents should anticipate occasional, small expenses throughout the year; these may include but are not limited to field trips, photos, and special projects.

School closures

As much as possible, Moody Early Childhood Center will follow the Galveston Independent School District for inclement weather closings. However, as your children's safety and learning experience is paramount to us, on occasion inclement weather or pandemic may cause the limitation or cancellation of school hours independent of the public-school system. In case of closure, we will always do our best to notify you as far in advance as possible. Delays and cancellations will be posted via Procare and sent to parents by email. If the school should need to close early due to weather, you will be notified by phone, email, and/or ProCare.

Calendar

School closures and holidays are provided in a calendar to families, in the appendix of this handbook, are posted on the website at www.moodychildhoodcenter.org, and included in Procare.

Withdrawal policy

Infant and Toddlers

If you choose to withdraw your child from Moody Early Childhood Center, you must fill out a 30-Day Notice of Withdrawal form (available upon request). You will be responsible for all final payments through the end of the notice period. No refunds will be issued.

*Center administration reserves the right to give verbal notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

Enrollment and Admission

Enrollment requirements

Children are admitted to Moody Early Childhood Center regardless of sex, race, color, religion, political, affiliation, national origin, or opinions. The parent must participate in an intake session with the registrar in order to complete all admission forms before a child may begin attending MECC. Enrollees must meet immunization and health requirements set by Texas DFPS Minimum Standards.

In order to enroll in the Infant and Toddler program at MECC, your child must:

- Be at least six weeks old and not turn 3 years old before September 1st.
- Be current on all immunizations.
- Submit all required documentation and complete the appropriate paperwork.

In order to enroll in the Pre-K program at MECC, your child must:

- Be 3 years old on or before September 1st
- Be current on all immunizations.
- Submit all required documentation and complete the appropriate paperwork.
- Must be a Galveston resident. Transfers will be considered if space is available.
- If your child is older than the ages we serve, our office staff can help find the appropriate program for your child.

Forms

- Parents are asked to submit and regularly update all forms provided to them in the welcome packet.
- Parent and Emergency Contact Information
- Per licensing requirements, all families must list at least one emergency contact that is not a parent/guardian.
- Infant & Toddler: Parent and emergency contact information and pickup authorization can be updated at any time by filling out the Student Information Change form at the front desk.
- Pre-K: Parent and emergency contact information and pickup authorization must be updated via Skyward Family Access. For assistance, please contact the front desk.

Court Orders

In cases where the child is the subject of a Court Order (i.e.: Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protective Order) Moody Early Childhood Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments. All Court Orders on file with Moody Early Childhood Center will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with Moody Early Childhood Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Moody Early Childhood Center cannot, without a Court Order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, and a conflict arises, Moody Early Childhood Center staff will contact the local police.

For the safety of the child, please provide Moody Early Childhood Center with all amended and updated Court Orders. Once presented with a Court Order, Moody Early Childhood Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of Moody Early Childhood Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Court Order to be violated. Moody Early Childhood Center will report any violations of these Orders to the court.

For enrolled families

Communication/Notifications

We use Procare, a safe and secure software to create daily reports and share information with parents by text and email. We can share daily reports, photos, videos, notes, reminders, and updates about each child's experiences throughout the day. Staff utilize Procare to communicate children's daily activities, learning experiences, developmental progress, and classroom participation with families. Written reports describing each child's experiences are communicated through Procare throughout the day. When physical documentation, such as artwork, assessments, developmental checklists, or classroom projects, is provided, it is either sent home in the child's folder with a notification to the family through Procare or presented to the parent at pick-up. We'll let our parents know what we're working on in school so that they can extend the education at home. We'll send emails out to our parents or notify all parents by text message of school closings or other urgent messages.

Read more about Procare . You can also download Procare Parent app for iPhone, iPad, or Android:

ANDROID LINK: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kinderlime.dev&hl=en_US&pli=1

IPHONE AND IPAD LINK: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/procare-childcare-app/id1309822135

Why attendance matters

As with arriving on time, attending consistently establishes an important routine for your child. Good attendance is a habit that children need to form. If they don't do so early, attendance suffers later. Plus, we want to maximize the fun learning experiences of every child. Interactive and instructional playtime begins at 8:15 a.m. for our PreK students and at 9:00 a.m. every day for our Infants and Toddlers. To ensure all students have ample time to learn and explore during the day, we need the students to be here on time and ready to learn.

Attendance

Infant and Toddler: Regular attendance is an important element of your child's success here at Moody Early Childhood Center. Academics begin at 9:00 a.m. and children must arrive before 9:00 a.m. to attend school. After 9:00 a.m., they must have a doctor's note to attend. Please speak with your child's teacher or Attendance Coordinator if an extended absence is anticipated.

PreK: Regular attendance is an important element of your child's success here at Moody Early Childhood Center. Academics begin at 8:15 a.m., therefore, children arriving after 8:15 a.m. will be marked tardy, and parents must pick up a tardy slip in the office before taking their child to class. Children arriving at class without a tardy slip will be sent back to the office.

Attendance – Absences & Tardies

Regular school attendance is extremely important to your child's education; therefore, parents should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Students arriving at school after 9:30 will be counted absent for the day. Parents should report all student absences to the Front Office by sending a Procare message or by emailing the child's teacher and/or the Director of Administrative Services as soon as possible.

The State of Texas recognizes the following as valid reasons for absence:

- Illness of the child
- Sickness or death in the family
- Weather or road conditions making travel dangerous
- Religious holy days (please submit a written request prior to the absence)
- Days of suspension
- Participation in court proceedings
- Other unusual circumstances deemed appropriate by the campus principal

All absences are counted against the student's attendance record. Pre-K students are subject to compulsory school attendance while they are enrolled in school. On enrollment in pre-K, a child must attend school. After excessive tardies and/or five absences, families will be required to meet with Moody Early Childhood Center's Attendance Team to discuss an improvement plan to ensure consistent attendance.
Three Day Rule: When returning after an absence, students are required to bring a note signed by his or her parent/guardian describing the reason for the absence. Also, MECC now accepts parent absence notes via Skyward. If the note is not submitted to the school office within three days of the absence, the student's absence will be considered unauthorized or unexcused. MECC does not accept absence notes after three days.

Ten Day Rule: Once your child has been absent a total of 10 days, throughout the school year, a doctor's note will be required in order to excuse his/her absences. Additionally, MECC reserves the right to complete an administrative withdrawal if a student is absent for 10 consecutive school days and the center is unable to establish contact with the parent/guardian or any emergency contacts on file.

Dress Code

Your child's attire should be age appropriate. Clothing should never display inappropriate pictures or wording. Underpants should always be covered. If a child is wearing a dress, they must have shorts or bloomers underneath.

Also, should spaghetti straps be worn, they must fit correctly. If they constantly slip off and expose the child's chest, a T-shirt will be placed on the child unless alternate clothing is provided, at which time we will have the child changed. Clothing malfunctions can often produce unnecessary inappropriate conversations.

Children are required to wear their shoes throughout the entire day per childcare licensing regulations. This rule is aligned with our new shoe policy: Shoes should be comfortable and provide adequate protection for the feet during outdoor play. We ask that children wear rubber-soled tennis shoes to enable them to participate freely and safely in physical activities. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, crocs are not allowed, as this type of shoe is a safety hazard.

Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed, as they are a distraction, and they may be lost or broken while at school. Earrings that are anything other than a stud are not allowed. Earrings larger than a stud are a safety hazard to the child wearing them, as well as the other children around them. We ask that no toys, money, gum, candy, and cosmetics be brought to the center.

Infant and Toddler: Children should wear comfortable age-appropriate clothes that can be worn for multiple activities. Please dress your students in clothes that they can easily handle themselves when going to the bathroom (if potty trained). Dress your student appropriately for the weather. Long sleeves and long pants or sweat suits are appropriate when it is chilly and short sleeves and short pants or skirts when it is warm.

PreK: PreK students are required to wear our school uniform. The PreK uniform consists of a navy-blue polo shirt and your choice of pants/shorts/skirts with closed-toed shoes. All dress code requirements as stated above apply.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

All children should have at least one complete set of clothing that is to be kept in the classroom or backpack in case of accidents, spills, etc. The clothes should have the child's name on it and should be seasonally appropriate. Parents of children using diapers are asked to provide diapers and wipes.

Labeling

Please label all clothing and other belongings with your child's name. Accidents happen and it's easy for clothes to get mixed up.

Accidents

Your child will occasionally have accidents. Please keep an extra change of clothes, including socks, underwear, and shoes in a large Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name in your child's cubby every day. You will need to replace the clothing in the bag once they have been used. If your child does have an accident, we will send the soiled clothes home in a labeled plastic bag at the end of the day.

Breastfeeding

Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care and breastfeeding moms are welcome at all times on campus! They are provided with a comfortable padded rocker in a private room on the stage, or in the child's classroom, or are welcome to use the couch in the Executive Director's office. Every opportunity will be made to give our moms the level of privacy that she feels comfortable.

For moms having difficulty or challenges with breastfeeding, please talk with your Family Advocate for additional support and help.

Supplies

Please refer to the supply list in the enrollment packet for all needed supplies.

Physical Activities/Outside Activities

Active play time is absolutely vital: it is recommended that children get a minimum 60 minutes a day of rigorous physical activity in combination indoor/outdoor activities to stay strong, promote muscle development, and maintain a healthy weight. MECC utilizes PE, nature walks, and classroom activities to provide structured physical development learning opportunities, and unstructured recess time on the various playgrounds for students to experience free play.

Animals/Class Pets

Our students have the unique opportunity to view the center animals both inside and outside our facility on the playgrounds. Students are not allowed to handle or feed the animals, but if they come in contact with them, they are encouraged to immediately wash their hands. These animals are taken care of by MECC staff who ensure good hygiene and handwashing after handling or coming into contact with an animal and items used by the animals and are checked by a veterinarian annually or in the event they appear ill or injured.

Inclement Weather

Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) focus is on the safety of our students and staff. There is an unsafe threshold for outdoor activities. Decisions to cancel outside activities for our students are not exclusively based on temperature; heat index and wind chill factor can be a driving force which can create unsafe temperatures for sustained outside activities. The totalities of all environmental factors are considered in making the determination to allow for outside activities. In the event outside activities are canceled, students will be given additional time in the gym, in the motor lab, movement activities in the classroom, or an movement/observation walk throughout the building.

Summer/Hot Weather

MECC wants to keep all staff members and students in our care and review multiple resources. Caring For Our Children, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education is a collection of national standards that represent the best practices, based on evidence, expertise, and experience, for quality health and safety policies and practices for today's early care and education settings.
In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers recommendations such as avoiding taking children outside for long periods of time if the heat index is greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Prolonged outdoor exposure on extremely hot days can cause children to overheat quickly. Heat stroke in children can occur without proper hydration or rest.
If temperatures exceed 90 degrees, stay in the shade and keep an extra eye on the children.

If the heat index reaches 100-degree, it's best to stay inside.

Winter/Cold Weather

Children are more at risk from the cold than adults. Because their bodies are smaller, they lose heat more quickly. Outside activities in temperatures or wind chills below 32° Fahrenheit should be avoided. At these temperatures, exposed skin begins to freeze within minutes.

Outside activities will be canceled if there is any precipitation and the temperatures or wind chill is below 60° Fahrenheit. Outside activities will be canceled if the temperatures or wind chills below 50° Fahrenheit.

Your child's first day

Please bring the following to school on or before your child's first day:

- All required enrollment packet forms.
- Backpack.
- Extra set of clothing (including socks, underwear and shoes).
- Infant and Toddlers: bottles, milk/formula, and diapers if appropriate. (Bottles must be made ready for use.)

Adjustment to Moody Early Childhood Center

Starting school is a big step for most kids. Some children are excited to participate, and they easily acclimate to class. Other children are nervous at first but quickly 'warm-up' as they are engaged in activities. Still others may have a longer adjustment period as they gradually become comfortable with a new environment and expectations. Occasionally a child who is eager at first may have difficulty later upon realizing the change is a permanent one. There is no right way for a child to "adjust" to school. Our expectations are open-ended, and we understand children will acclimate in their own unique way, and we will provide support and encouragement to help each child adapt to our program.

As a parent/guardian, you have a unique insight as to how your child reacts to new settings. There are many ways to prepare your child for class, such as talking about it one week before school starts. "Next week you'll be going to Moody Early Childhood Center! Won't that be fun?!" As your child asks questions, answer them honestly. "You're going to meet friends, sing songs, make art, go on adventures and learn new things — you will have lots of fun!" Try to address the upcoming change in as natural a way as possible and acknowledge your child's feelings about it.

When you drop your child off, assure him or her that you will be excited to hear all about the day when it is time to be picked up. You might even give your child a challenge: "While you are in class today, pick your favorite thing to tell me about — I can't wait to hear about your day!" If your child is experiencing a very difficult transition, please share your concerns with the teacher so that she can help provide a smooth and happy experience.

Saying goodbye

Figuring out the best way to support your child at drop-off can be an anxiety-inducing process for parents as well as children. It is important to recognize that if a child does not know when the parent is leaving, there can be constant stress waiting for that moment and he/she may never fully settle. If you or your child is concerned about saying goodbye, we are more than happy to work with you to make a plan ahead of time. The most important thing is to tell your child exactly what will happen and then follow through decisively. Planning and practicing a routine the night before can be comforting for everyone involved. Let them learn how to let go and find their rhythm, make

friends, and discover their favorite school-time activities while also communicating your confidence that they will do fine. It can be difficult to walk away on that first day of school, but in doing so you will assure your child that it is all right for them to do the same, adjust, and join in with their peers. A quick, direct exit from the classroom will provide secure boundaries for your child and signal to them that you are confident they are going to be happy and safe. If your child is upset when you leave, just relax and know that children usually calm down and are participating before a parent reaches the parking lot. Please feel free to call at any time to check on your child by calling the front office or messaging the teacher on ProCare.

Parent participation

Open door policy

Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.

For all classrooms, families may drop by to visit at any time. This is a special time, both for your child and the staff. To ensure as smooth of a transition as possible, we ask that you refrain from visiting during the first month of school. All visitors will need to check in to obtain a visitor's ID badge before entering classrooms. While visiting Moody Early Childhood Center we ask that parents observe and encourage their child to adhere to school rules and routines. If you wish to visit for an extended period, please arrange time with your child's teacher to avoid scheduling conflicts or multiple visitors. Also, if your child is having a difficult time with adjustment, we may ask for you to refrain from visiting the classroom beyond the first month until they have successfully made the adjustment. Our Family Service Department will be happy to meet with you and your child to make a smooth transition. We do ask that if you plan to bring friends or other family members you specify that in advance.

Please, also remember that drop-off and pick-up times are very busy periods of time for the facility. For safety reasons, we highly discourage Prekindergarten pickup after 2:00 p.m. unless your child has a doctor's appointment. Also, these periods are not the best times to discuss your child's progress or growth especially if he or she is standing with you. Therefore, conferences may be held at any time throughout the year, at either the request of the parent or the teacher. Parent meetings will be held at various times throughout the year. These include both social and educational events.

How to get involved

We always appreciate parents who can help provide observations from home, as well as those who can assist with cooking projects, join us for a walk, read a story, or share something special about themselves with the class. Please discuss these possibilities with your child's teacher. For the safety of our children, all adults volunteering and interacting with other students at Moody Early Childhood Center (including parents), must undergo a background check, training, and must always wear a visitor's ID badge, and always be under the supervision of regularly scheduled teaching staff at all times. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Family Engagement activities
- Photography
- Reading to students
- Marketing assistance

- Musical presentations
- Work Parties
- Cultural Celebrations
- Chaperoning
- Birthday Celebrations
- Holiday events
- School programs

MECC strives to host at least one family engagement event, community event, or parenting class each month. All families are encouraged to participate in these opportunities throughout the year.

Notifications will be sent out via Procare that outlines important dates and upcoming events at the center. An archive of these various resources will be stored with the parent resources for your reference. Each of these resources are also placed on the bulletin board in the front office as well as on the Parent news board in each classroom.

MECC values the feedback of our families as an important part of our continuous improvement efforts. Each year, families are invited to complete a written parent satisfaction survey regarding our programs, communication, family engagement opportunities, and overall experience. Parent feedback is reviewed by administration and, when appropriate and feasible, is incorporated into program planning, policies, and center operations.

Communication

An open line of communication enriches the educational experience of our students and is an essential element for building partnerships. Your input and observations are important to us. We are always happy to schedule time to discuss academic, social, emotional, or developmental questions either by phone, e-mail, or in person. Please keep the lines of communication open with us and let us know of any significant events in your child's life. Visitors, work trips, moving, new babies, divorce, illness or death can affect children in class. When we are informed about these changes, we are better equipped to offer support and encouragement to your child.

To keep you informed (and well supplied with pictures of your child!) and notify you of any center closures, policy changes, etc., we use the ProCare system to communicate ASAP with parents. We encourage you to sign up and use it regularly.

Parent Code of Conduct

Moody Early Childhood Center requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect at all times. One of the goals of Moody Early Childhood Center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Moody Early Childhood Center but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the Center. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on the property thereafter. Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

Cell Phones

Every moment you spend with your child can help develop a positive relationship. In order to facilitate parentchild, and parent-teacher interactions cell phones are not permitted to be used inside the building. Please complete your calls/text/emails prior to entering or after leaving the building.

Swearing/Cursing

Parents must be responsible for their behavior at all times. No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on Center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff and immediate dismissal of students will result for parents who are aggressive or hostile towards staff.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, Moody Early Childhood Center will not assume the risk.

Smoking

For the health of all Moody Early Childhood Center employees, children, and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking area of Moody Early Childhood Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking area.

Interactions

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Moody Early Childhood Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Daily schedule

Though Moody Early Childhood Center opens at 7:00 a.m., our core curriculum hours for the infant and toddler program are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and are 8:15 a.m. to 3:55 p.m. for our PreK students. A copy of the week's schedule and activities will be made available on Procare. After 4:00 p.m., enrichment activities will be provided for infants and toddlers and after 3:55 p.m. for PreK students attending the extended day program.

Arrival/Drop off procedure

Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.

All children must be signed in by the parent or guardian each day using Procare. Parent kiosks are available throughout the center, and QR codes are posted at designated entrances for your convenience. MECC staff are not authorized to sign children in on behalf of parents or guardians.

Infant and Toddlers: To access MECC, please use the Avenue L entrance. Please note, only parents and those designated as an emergency pickup by the families will be allowed to enter our building without an escort. Parents

must park in the designated spaces and turn off their vehicles when they arrive. All children should be escorted into the building by a parent or guardian. Children should arrive at school with clean clothes (not pajamas), diapers, hair, face & hands, including fingernails cut, and ready for the day. A small animal to soothe students during naptime can stay in cubbies for students 18 months and up. We ask that children wear rubber-soled tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, and crocs are not allowed as this type of shoe is a safety hazard. Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed because they can become a choking hazard.

PreK: Pre-K students may enter through Avenue K or 21st St and may arrive as early as 7:45 a.m. Staff will be at the door to greet and meet your student from 7:45-8:15 a.m. Please note, only parents and those designated as an emergency pickup by the families will be allowed to enter our building without an escort. If you need to park, please turn off your vehicle and enter through the Avenue L entrance. After 8:15 a.m., parents must enter through the doors on Avenue L to get a tardy slip before students may go to their classrooms. Classes begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. and are released at 3:55 p.m. Students are considered tardy after 8:15 a.m. and need to be escorted into the office on the Ave L by a parent or guardian to pick up a tardy slip. Children should arrive at school in their uniform, with clean hair, face & hands, including fingernails cut, and ready for the day. We ask that children wear rubbersoled tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, and crocs are not allowed as this type of shoe is a safety hazard. Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed because they can become a choking hazard and easily broken or lost while playing. Toys from home are not allowed. Students will not be able to enter the classrooms after 8:15 a.m. with breakfast from home.

All children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival. Infants and Toddlers will use the sink in the classrooms. Children in PreK Afterschool, and Evening Care, will use the restrooms closest to their classrooms. While this has always been a preferred habit, MECC would like to make sure it becomes a consistent positive habit. In addition, if your child (Prek) arrives after 8:15 a.m. we would like you to walk them to their classroom after they have washed their hands. This is extremely important to the children and will aid in Parent/Teacher communication.

Pick-up/check-out procedure

All children must be signed out by the parent or guardian each day using Procare. Parent kiosks are available throughout the center, and QR codes are posted at designated entrances for your convenience. MECC staff are not authorized to sign children out on behalf of parents or guardians.

No child will be allowed to leave Moody Early Childhood Center without being accompanied by those designated as primary caregivers on his/her enrollment form as an Authorized Person, or, after that, in writing, by using our Authorization for Release of a Child form. Giving a note or verbal permission to your child's teacher is unacceptable.

Infant & Toddler: Parent and emergency contact information and pickup authorization can be updated at any time by filling out the Student Information Change form at the front desk.

Pre-K: Parent and emergency contact information and pickup authorization must be updated via Skyward Family Access. For assistance, please contact the front desk.

Please let us know if someone other than yourself will be picking your child up. Please inform them to have their proper identification when they arrive, as this will be required. If they are not on the list and/or fail to provide proper identification (state ID), your child will not be released.

Both parents on the birth certificate will have parental rights for pick up unless there is a court document precluding one's parent's rights. Upon receipt of a valid court order signed by a judge that prohibits a parent from removing the named child/children from the child-care center, MECC must immediately comply with the court order until there is a subsequent court order that revokes the primary order, or the court order expires. MECC must maintain a copy in the child's file.

Infant and Toddlers: If you are picking up your child early, please let the office know if you will be bringing your child back after your appointment. When you pick up your child, you must park and turn off your vehicle and then sign them out using the classroom logbook and Procare.
PreK: If you must pick up your child before 3:55 p.m., you need to park and turn off your vehicle, then go to the office Ave L to sign your child out. Students will not be allowed to leave after 2:30 p.m. unless a doctor's note is provided upon return. Regular Pre-K dismissal begins at 3:55 p.m. at the Avenue K and 21st Street entrance and concludes promptly at 4:10 p.m. Parents or authorized pick-up individuals should remain in the designated dismissal area during this time. If you arrive after 4:10 p.m., you must report to the Main Office on Avenue L to sign your student out using Procare and the office sign-out log before your child will be released. After school, parents must enter office Ave L and go to his or her student's classroom and sign them out.

Napping/Rest time

Moody Early Childhood Center will comply with licensing requirements for Sections 746.501(9) and 747.501(6) for the safe sleep policy.

It is required that all children under the age of five and in care for more than 4 hours have rest time.

Infant and Toddlers: Children under the age of 18 months will sleep in a crib or cot and may not sleep with covers or toys. We will provide children over the age of 18 months with a cot and cover for naps. A toddler can bring a small blanket or stuffed animal from home to have at naptime. Children that are not sleeping after ½ hour rest can get up to have quiet play, like books, puzzles, coloring, etc. If a child falls asleep, he/she will be allowed to sleep for the entire naptime. However, the total rest period will not exceed three (3) hours.

In order to reduce the risk of SIDS the following rules will be applied:

1. All infants under one year of age will be placed on their backs to sleep.
2. When an infant is able to roll over from back to belly, they will be put down on their backs but will be allowed to adopt whatever sleep position they prefer.
3. No pillows or blankets are allowed in any infant rooms.
4. Infants will not be allowed to sleep in a restricted device, such as a swing or bouncy seat.
5. Infants and Toddlers will not be put down with bottles.
6. Pacifiers will be removed from an infant's crib once they have fallen asleep.
7. The infant's head will remain uncovered at all times.

8. If your child is asleep when arriving we will wake them in order to keep them on schedule.

If you have any questions about this or need further information, please ask or call the SIDS alliance at 1-800221SIDS or Back to Sleep Campaign at 1-800-505-CRIB.

PreK: Students will be given a rest period. Children who are not sleeping after ½ hour rest can have quiet playtime, like books, puzzles, coloring, etc. If your child falls asleep, they will be allowed to sleep for the entire naptime, however; the total rest period will not exceed three (3) hours.

Staff Food Safety Policy

General Food Safety Requirements

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before handling food and ensure children wash hands before eating.
- Use gloves when serving food or drinks and change gloves between tasks.
- Sanitize tables, chairs, countertops, and food-contact surfaces before and after meals.
- Prevent cross-contamination by using separate utensils and keeping food off un-sanitized surfaces

Safe Food Handling and Serving

- Serve foods at safe temperatures (cold below 41°F; hot above 135°F).
- Dispose of perishable food left out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if hotter than 90°F) or with expired dates.
- Portion meals using clean utensils. Do not allow children to share food, bottles, or cups.
- Label bottles and infant food with name and date; follow each infant's Feeding Plan.
- Never microwave bottles; use approved bottle warming methods.
- Discard any unfinished formula or breast milk after one hour of feeding.
- Training cups should be labeled and washed/sanitized after use.

Storage and Expiration Requirements

- Refrigerate perishable items immediately and store dry goods properly.
- Label open boxes/bottles with time and date.
- Check all food items for expiration dates daily.
- Discard any expired food immediately and notify administration if replacements are needed.

Documentation of Meals and Intake

- Record types and quantities of food and drink consumed by each child at all meals and snacks.
- Document special feeding needs, modifications, allergies, or adaptive feeding supports used.
- Enter all required feeding information into ProCare before the end of each day.

Additional Requirements

- Verify that any food brought from home is labeled, safely packaged, and stored properly.

- Follow allergy lists and individualized care plans; do not serve allergen-containing food to affected children.
- Supervise children closely during meals to prevent choking and ensure safe eating practices.

Compliance

- Failure to follow this policy may result in retraining or disciplinary action. Consistent adherence is required to protect children and uphold program safety standards.

Mealtime philosophy

Moody Early Childhood Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and provides all necessary food and beverages throughout the day, for children 12 months and older. Parents have the right to decline school provided meals. If a parent chooses to do so, a Parent Declination Form must be completed and kept on file with the front office. Food from home is allowed, with Department Administrator approval. Students with a documented medical dietary need or approved religious, cultural, or ethical food preference must have the appropriate documentation on file before meal modifications can be made. We approach diverse family values around food in the same way we support the individuality of each child. Meals are a time for coming together as a community and sharing the observations of the day. Parents who would like their child to brush their teeth after snacks and meals should send a toothbrush.

MECC promotes healthy habits through positive mealtime experiences and nutrition education. As a participant in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), we serve nutritious meals and snacks using a four-week rotating menu that meets USDA nutrition guidelines. Throughout the year, families have access to health and nutrition resources through their Family Advocate, including information on oral health, healthy screen time practices, and the benefits of fresh, nutritious foods. MECC also provides annual professional development for staff on nutrition, food safety, and health best practices, while partnering with community resources such as WIC and the Teen Health Clinic to support family wellness.

Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided for all children eating solid food through the Galveston ISD Child Nutrition Department.

PreK: Breakfast is served 7:45-8:15 a.m. Food will not be served after 8:15a.m., and all food must be finished or disposed of by 8:15 a.m. Breakfast is not allowed in the classrooms, so as not to interfere with instructional time. If you would like for your child to participate in our breakfast program, please make sure your child arrives before 8:15 a.m. Please refer to Procare for your child's snack and lunch schedule.

Infants: We ask that parents supply all milk, breast milk, and formula for bottle-feeding children as well as baby food for those working up to solid table food. Bottles should be brought to the Center labeled with the child's full name and the date they were prepared /expressed, and "ready to feed" to ensure the caregivers can offer the oldest milk first. Bottles will be refrigerated and warmed with water by the teachers. Extra formula/milk not taken will be disposed of after 2 hours. Empty bottles will be rinsed and placed in your child's diaper bag.

Toddlers: Breakfast is served 8:00-9:00 a.m. Food will not be served after 8:30 a.m., and all food must be finished or disposed of by 9:00 a.m. If you would like your child to participate in our breakfast program, please make sure your

child arrives before 8:30 a.m. Students will not be allowed to bring in outside food for breakfast after 9:00 a.m. Please refer to Procare for your child's snack and lunch schedule.

Until children are able to eat the meals provided by the Center, parents are required to supply formula and baby food. A feeding schedule will be completed each month. When your child is making the transition to table food, we will offer appropriate selections from the daily menu. Milk and fruit juice will also be available.

We will begin transitioning out of pacifiers and bottles in the 6-11 month rooms, and out of cribs and sippy cups in the 12-17 month room. Bottles, pacifiers, and sippy cups will not be allowed in the subsequent older rooms unless physician's deem necessary.

Allergies

If your child has an allergy or food restriction or special diets, documentation must be on file with Moody Early Childhood Center. For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan" form, detailing any allergies, or food allergies, the child suffers from at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered.

This form must be completely filled out by your child's Physician as well as the Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s) and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide Moody Early Childhood Center with a copy of any additional Physician's Orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy. This form can be obtained from the Business Office.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases Moody Early Childhood Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan" form, provided Moody Early Childhood Center to exercise reasonable care in taking such actions. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with Moody Early Childhood Center Medication Policy.

Potty Training

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, we ask you begin teaching at home. We will follow through and encourage your child while they are in our care. Daily communication between the parent and day care provider is very important. We will assist in potty training with the understanding that it will only be successful if we work together. Your child will not learn if they do not do it while in our care and at home.

We use a low-key approach with lots of praise. Please realize that this should be your child's accomplishment and not yours or ours.

Clothing should be easy to manage to encourage self-help skills. Buckles, belts, onesies, and suspenders when in a hurry to use the bathroom may create a problem and we ask that you do not dress your child in these types of clothing.

We also require that each potty-training child bring training pants or pull-ups.

We also require additional clothing in case your child has an accident.

Setting limits

Behavior policy

If negative behavior occurs in the preschool, staff will address and seek to resolve it directly with the child. It is important that parents, teachers, and administration work together, but the consequences and problem-solving need to be immediately tied to the behavior. Our policy is as follows:

- Hurting another child or throwing a tantrum leads to being away from the group until the child is calm enough to rejoin the activity.
- Abuse of an activity or object leads to a loss of the privilege of using that object or material for a specific length of time
- Repeated unprovoked hurting of another child and/or using object as weapons to injure staff or children leads to a conference with the parent, teacher, and our Department of Family Services to determine additional interventions.
- Biting is subject to the same behavior actions as hurting another child and repeated, unprovoked hurting of another child.

Issues may arise when a student's behavior becomes a safety and/or learning environment issue. Our goal at MECC is to work with both the student and their family to manage these behaviors. We do not suspend or expel students for behavior, However, we may ask you to work with your child for a day or two to help manage the behavior. We will require parents to attend meetings with our team to ensure everyone is working together for the success of the student. For significant behavior issues causing safety concerns, we will contact you at the number provided. If you are unable to answer, we will contact emergency contacts, and may send a Family Advocates to your home or place of employment if no one is available to be reached by phone. MECC complies with the discipline guidelines in the Texas Education Code for school-aged students, however infant/toddlers may be unenrolled if parents refuse to work with their students or participate in meetings to help make MECC a safe learning environment for all.

Discipline and Guidance

The goal of discipline is to develop self-regulation. Our early childhood program fosters an environment in which children learn to respect others and their surroundings. We teach and encourage children to use problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Other discipline techniques we employ are

- Prevention - Children are explained the rules of the classroom frequently so that all know the guidelines.
- Teacher shadowing – The Child works one on one with a teacher and mimics positive behavior.
- Redirection- We offer alternatives to children engaged in undesirable behavior by presenting a different activity.
- Positive modeling – We ask a child to stop and think about his/her behavior to enable the child to work at self-control.
- Gentle reminders- We explain to the child the inappropriate behavior and show him/her the appropriate way to handle the situation.
- Discipline will be fair, consistent, and appropriate for the age and maturity of the child. Physical punishment, such as spanking, is strictly prohibited. Any cruel and unusual discipline that is frightening or humiliating is never used.
- Every effort will be made to help parents and children resolve difficulties that may arise in the program. Steps toward resolution include:
- Community resource connections and referrals for your child and family to help with issues at school and home.
- Scheduling a conference with the parent/teacher/ and our Department of Family Services.
- Developing a written plan of action agreed upon by parent, teacher, and Family Advocate.
- A referral to assess if there seem to be developmental or behavioral concerns.

Celebrations

Birthdays and holidays

Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.

Here at Moody Early Childhood Center, excitement and adventure abound. We celebrate each child's special day. You are welcome to bring a special store-bought snack, but please do not feel obliged! We like to emphasize that your child's life is the most important treat of the day. Please check with your teacher beforehand to make sure there are no dietary restrictions that need to be met and avoid excessive sweets. Muffins, fruit, yogurt, bubbles or stickers are great! If you choose to bring a treat, please provide for all children in the class. Parents are invited, but we understand scheduling often gets in the way of your ability to attend. No pressure!

If you are planning a birthday party for your child outside of school, please do not have invitations passed out at school unless all students in the class are invited. We will not be able to provide students' full names or addresses.

Staying healthy

Note: MECC will follow the Pandemic Plan located in the Appendices in the event of an outbreak.

MECC likes to ensure that students are healthy when they arrive and when they leave the school, so we conduct daily health checks each morning as students arrive. Daily health screenings are an essential part of a school program that ensures the health and safety of the children in our care and our teachers. These health checks help identify sick children early, allowing us to take appropriate steps to keep them comfortable and prevent the spread of illness to the other children or staff.

Sick child policy

Parents are required to keep children home if they exhibit any symptoms of illness as listed below. We understand the difficulty of this for working parents, but per the Texas Department of State Health Services this must be done to maintain a healthy environment for everyone.

Parents are asked to not give their child medicine to lower their fever prior to coming to school. If your student has a temperature of 100 or higher, please keep them home from school. Parents are also asked to not put medication in a child's bottle or sippy cup.

Parents are obligated to report any communicable disease or condition (i.e., conjunctivitis, head lice, chickenpox, etc.) to the staff so that we can alert other parents as soon as possible, in order to prevent the spread of symptoms.

Students who miss three or more days of school due to illness will need a doctor's note to return.

As required by the Texas Department of State Health Services, please keep your child home if he/she has any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100+: Must be 24 hours fever free without fever-reducing medication before returning.
- Diarrhea: (2 loose stools within 24 hours): Must be 24 hours diarrhea free before returning.
- Vomiting: (2 episodes of vomiting within 24 hours): Must be 24 hours vomit free before returning.
- Severe coughing with a runny nose and colored mucus.
- Rashes: (un-identifiable or non-typical rash). Must have a doctor's note before returning.
- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis): Redness to the white of the eye, swelling of the eyelid and/or area surrounding the eye, with creamy discharge: Must be treated for 24 hours with improving symptoms before returning.
- Change of color of skin or eyes (may be signs of hepatitis). Yellowish hue to the color of skin or eyes: Must have a doctor's note before returning.
- Unable to participate in normal activities including outdoor play.
  Head Lice or Nits: Must be treated and have no lice or nits before returning. Scabies:
  Must be treated before returning.
- Ringworm: Must be 24 hours past the first dose of treatment before returning.

If your child becomes ill while at the Center, you will be called to pick-up your child as soon as possible. If you have a permission slip for your child to be seen at the Teen Health Pediatric Clinic, staff will take your child to see the Physician's Assistant.

A student may not return to school the following day if sent home with contagious symptoms. A student must be fever, diarrhea, and vomiting free for 24 hours, or on medication for 24 hours (1 calendar day) before returning to school after illness. Families will be notified if their student has been exposed to a known outbreak of contagious disease. Please note the MECC Pandemic Plan will be implemented in the case of any future pandemic. Procedures listed in the Pandemic Plan are based on CDC recommendations and will supersede MECC's policy for normal operations.

Illness at school

We will follow this procedure if a child becomes ill while on campus:

- If a child exhibits possible symptoms of an illness, we will move the child away from others and have them lie down quietly and rest. The on-site nurse will be on-hand for consultation.
- If your student becomes ill while at school, you will be called and/or messaged via the student management system (ProCare) to pick up your student as soon as possible, within the hour.
- If you would like for your student to be seen by the Physician Assistant with Teen Health Center here on MECC campus, she can be reached at 409-761-6950 to schedule an appointment.
- If your student has an appointment scheduled, staff is able to escort them to the Teen Health Center office. (Be sure to complete the consent form for Teen Health Center during enrollment, if you would like to utilize this incredible free resource during the school year.)
- If primary contacts cannot be reached, a relative or emergency contact will be called to pick the student up.
- In the case of minor injury, the student's primary contacts will be notified and an Incident Report will be completed.
- In the case of a head or eye injury, the primary contact will be notified by phone.
- In the case of an emergency involving serious illness or injury, 911 and primary contacts will be called.
- Staff members will follow the same exclusion criteria as students.

Get-Whale Room

MECC has a special room for students who do not feel well, but do not meet the mandatory exclusion criteria. If your child becomes ill at school, or during the evening and you would like to see if they qualify to stay in the GetWell Room, please contact our school nurse for criteria and availability.

Medication policy

Illness at school

Medications will be administered only with a Medication Authorization form signed by the student's parent or guardian. These authorization forms are required for all types of medications, including non-prescription medications such as non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers, sunscreen, lip balm products, lotions, and ointments, etc.

Please follow the procedures below:

- Prescription medications must be in the original prescription bottle/package with the following information on the prescription label: student's full name, prescriber's name, prescription name, prescription number, pharmacy name and phone number, instructions for administration, dosage needed, administration time(s), and dates for medication use. The prescription label must be current and legible.**
- Non-prescription medications must be in the original container with the student's first and last name and the date it was brought to school written on the container.**
- Medication will only be administered to the limit of the instructions on the label.
- All medications will be dispensed by the school nurse or clinic assistant, except for over-the-counter medications such as diaper cream, sunscreen, and bug repellant. Prescription diaper ointments will be administered either by clinic staff or classroom staff at diaper/pull up changes.
- Medication administered by the school nurse or clinic assistant will be locked in a cabinet or in the refrigerator as required for proper storage.

Before we can administer any prescription or non-prescription medication to your student, you will need to do the following:

- Keep them home for 24 hours after the 1st dose and monitor for possible allergic reactions.
- Sign a Medication Authorization Form and outline procedures for providing and applying the item.
- Bring prescription and non-prescription medications following the criteria listed above.**

Nonprescription medications may include but are not limited to:

- Antihistamines,
- NON-aspirin fever reducing/pain reliever
- Decongestants
- Anti-itching ointment or lotions
- Diaper rash ointments or lotions
- Sunscreen
- Cough syrup
- Teething gels
- Insect repellant
- Non-prescription medications that need to be taken differently than indicated on the labels or for more than 5 consecutive days, will require a note from a physician.
- If you would like to have medications in the locked medicine cabinet in the Nurse's Office to have on hand in case it is needed during the school day, please let us know.
- If your student will be on long term daily or "as needed" prescription medications, a note from their doctor will be required to put in student files.
- If you do not bring your student's prescription medication at drop off, you will be asked to bring it to the school or take the student home to give the required medication.
- If your student has a chronic condition, such as asthma or a food allergy, the student will need an Asthma Action Plan or Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan on file with guidelines from their doctor on management of their chronic condition.
- We have a medication log that you can review at any time to see when your student was given their medications. In addition, you will find medication administration documented in "Daily Activity" under "Medication" in the student management system.
- Medications that are no longer being used or have expired will be sent home.

- Prescription inhalers, nebulizers, epi-pens, and other prescription medications can be kept here in the locked medicine cabinet to be used as needed or as required.
- Please inform administration and the school nurse at transportation if your student has a health condition that requires extra caution or care during the school day by filling out your student's Health Services form, providing documentation from a physician or the child's IEP, and scheduling a meeting to discuss your student's unique health needs.

Immunizations and hearing/vision screenings

We require that all children be vaccinated. Families must submit a vaccination record prior to the start of school and update them periodically as additional vaccinations are due. Families have the right to choose not to vaccinate their children for personal, philosophical, or medical reasons and may submit a waiver; however, for the safety of the other children at Moody Early Childhood Center, we cannot enroll a child who is not current on their appropriate vaccinations or have a plan submitted by their physician to remedy their shot delinquency.

The State of Texas requires all children age 4 and older to receive hearing and vision screenings. Some of our children are not of the required age, we do not provide screenings for all children; however, if parents or teachers are concerned about developmental hearing or vision issues the school nurse may be tapped to coordinate screenings for the child.

HIV/AIDS and blood-borne pathogens awareness

Every staff member is required to attend an HIV/AIDS / BBP awareness course. We will follow the Texas Guidelines when working with bodily fluids. All staff members will use universal precautions when exposed to bodily fluids with universal precautions, including:

- Using gloves or some other barrier when dealing with a bleeding wound.
- Washing hands thoroughly after dealing with blood or bodily fluids, even if gloves were used.
- Disposing of bloodied gloves, tissues, etc., by sealing in two plastic bags and placing in a waste receptacle.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all exposed surfaces.

Tuberculosis policy

MECC requires that all staff receive TB testing. PreK students also must complete a form prior to enrollment.

Unassigned Epinephrine Injectors

MECC does not have unassigned epinephrine injectors on site. If a child is in need of epinephrine, they must have a prescription and an injector provided by the caregivers.

Medical Emergencies

MECC will notify 911 and the family in the case of emergencies regarding an allergy or medical emergency.

Additional policies

Children with Special Care Needs

Moody Early Childhood Center will provide children with special care needs with the accommodations recommended by a health-care professional or a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early intervention program. We will utilize any recommended adaptive equipment that has been provided to the center for a child's use. We believe in early intervention and ensure that a child who receives early intervention services or special education services can receive those services from a qualified service provider at our location, with parental request and approval. We will ensure that activities integrate children with and without special care

needs and that our staff will adapt equipment and procedures and vary methods as necessary to ensure that we care for any child with special needs in a natural environment.

Procedures for Supporting Inclusive Services for Children with Special Care Needs

1. Enrollment and Individualized Care Planning

- During enrollment, families are asked to share any medical, developmental, or behavioral care needs of their child.
- Staff will review information provided by the parent/guardian and consult with the child's healthcare provider (with written consent) if needed.
- An Individualized Care Plan (ICP) for students enrolling in the infant/toddler program or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for prekindergarten students will be developed in collaboration with the parent/guardian, licensed health professionals, and teachers to ensure appropriate accommodations and supports.
- The ICP will include: ○ Description of the child's special care needs. ○ Required accommodations, equipment, or adaptive devices.
  ○ Medication or treatment schedules. ○ Emergency response procedures (allergies, seizures, asthma, etc.). ○ Communication methods to support language, sensory, or developmental needs.

2. Staff Training and Responsibilities

- All staff working directly with the child will receive training on the child's ICP before the child begins attendance.
- Training will include:
- Safe and respectful handling techniques.
- Medication administration and health-related tasks (per physician's instructions).
- Use of adaptive equipment or assistive technology.
- Strategies to support inclusion in daily routines, play, and learning.
- Substitute staff will be briefed on essential procedures prior to being left alone with the child.

3. Inclusive Daily Practices

- Children with special care needs will participate in activities alongside their peers to the fullest extent possible.
- Teachers will provide modifications such as:
- Visual supports, simplified directions, or alternative communication systems.
- Adaptive seating, utensils, or mobility supports.
- Additional time and assistance for transitions and activities.

- Classrooms will maintain accessible and safe environments, ensuring pathways are clear and materials are adapted when necessary.

4. Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures

- Emergency plans for each child with special care needs will be posted discreetly in the classroom and included in staff binders.
  Staff will conduct regular practice drills to ensure readiness for emergencies such as evacuation, shelterinplace, or medical events.
  Medication and medical supplies will be stored securely, easily accessible to trained staff, and administered only by designated personnel.
- Parents will be notified immediately of any health incidents and incident reports will be completed per Texas Minimum Standards.

5. Collaboration with Families and Professionals

- Families are recognized as partners and will be included in decision-making related to their child's care.
- Regular communication will be maintained through daily reports, meetings, or conferences.
- When appropriate, staff will collaborate with outside professionals (therapists, early interventionists, school district representatives) to support consistent strategies across settings.

6. Review and Updates

- The ICP will be reviewed at least every six months and the IEP will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:
- The child's needs change.
- Parent/guardian requests modifications.
- Healthcare professionals provide updated instructions.
- Staff will document observations, progress, and any modifications to ensure continuous improvement in services.

Field trips, water activities, and transportation

Parents must complete the required sections of the enrollment forms discussing transportation, field trips, and water activities. By signing the contract and enrollment form you are giving your child permission to participate in all activities at the Center.

Infant and Toddlers: MECC does not transport children enrolled in the infant/toddler program for field trips.

PreK: We will have additional notification forms and permission slips regarding field trips and activities going on throughout the school year. It is your responsibility as a parent to check your child's folder and Procare for notifications of events. For your child's safety, the student will not be able to attend the event if a permission slip is not signed.

Child abuse reporting

As required by Texas State Law, suspected child abuse and/or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS). Employees are responsible for submitting reports. Under the law, employees do not notify parents when CPS

has been called about possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation except on the recommendations of CPS or police personnel.

All Moody Early Childhood Center staff receive initial and recurring annual training on identifying the signs of child abuse and reporting procedures. Additionally, our Department of Family Services has ongoing relationships with the Texas Department of Family Services as well as other agencies that assist families in crisis, including Family Services Center. Moody Early Childhood Center will assist to increase employee and parent awareness of prevention techniques for child abuse and will coordinate with appropriate community organizations to periodically host Family Information nights that may highlight the prevention strategies, warning signs that a child may be a victim of child abuse or neglect, factors indicating a child is at risk, actions that the parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should take to obtain assistance and intervention, including procedures for reporting.

If you have questions about the signs of child abuse, please consider our Department of Family Services as a resource. Additionally, if you feel a child is a victim of abuse or neglect, you may contact the abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or visit the Texas Department of Family Protective Services at www. TxAbuseHotline.

Anti-harassment

We are committed to providing an environment where staff and families are treated with respect. We will not tolerate harassment by staff, families, vendors or visitors. Harassment takes many forms, and can include unwelcome comments, slurs, jokes, innuendoes, cartoons, pranks or other verbal or physical conduct that creates an uncomfortable working environment.

Grievance procedure

We recognize parents as the first and most important influence in their child's life, and that a positive working relationship between the parent and Moody Early Childhood Center is of primary importance. If a grievance occurs that cannot be satisfied by discussion with the staff, families are advised to contact their teacher, first. If it cannot be resolved by the teacher, the Education or Family Advocate shall be notified for further assistance. Should further support or discussion be required, or if the grievance is related to registration, tuition, or other business office matters, the Director of Administrative Services shall be notified for further assistance. If necessary, the grievance process will culminate with a meeting with the Personnel and Compliance Manager, Chief Operations Officer and/or Executive Director.

Licensing

Parents may review a copy of minimum standards in the front office or by visiting https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protectiveservices/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf . Parents may review Moody Early Childhood Center's most recent licensing inspection by inquiring in the business office or contacting the Chief Operations Officer directly.

You can view more information regarding the Department of Health and Human Services on their website at https://www.hhs.texas.gov/. The local licensing office is located at 123 Rosenberg St, Galveston, TX 77550 and phone number is (409) 763-0277.

To file a report on abuse or neglect call 1-800-252-5400 or visit www. TxAbuseHotline.

Gang-Free Zone

Moody Early Childhood Center is in a 'Gang-Free Zone'. This means that any criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity within 1,000 feet of our center are subject to harsher penalties under the Texas Penal Code. Moody Early Childhood Center will report any and all criminal activity within the 'Gang-Free Zone'. Moody Early Childhood Center will post all policies and notices associated with being a gang-free zone in the main office.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

MECC reviews its Emergency Operations Plan annually. Due to security concerns regarding publicly posting this plan, MECC maintains a copy in the Main and Administrative Office for parents/caregivers' review.

1. **Emergency Drill Safety for All Students**
   Our Center values the safety of every child. We follow all state-required drills (fire, severe weather, lockdown, lockout), ensure safe participation for all children, and maintain documentation for review. If your child has an IEP or Section 504 plan, the plan will include any accommodation needed for drills or emergencies. Your child's IEP/504 team will provide this information to school safety staff. You may be invited to discuss these accommodations. Please review your child's plan with their teachers and campus lead to stay informed.

2. **Communication & Notifications**
   In case of policy changes and emergencies/significant threats, we will notify you promptly via ProCare, text, phone, and/or email. Contact the front office if your family contact information changes to update your information.
3. **Training Commitment**
   Our educators and safety team complete ongoing training to uphold inclusive emergency protocols. We welcome parent feedback to continually improve safety practices.
4. **Event Requiring Center to Close**
   In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, Moody Early Childhood Center will notify families via Procare. Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. If the staff is unable to reach the parents, the people listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick-up arrangements can be made. If there is a reason that children need to be moved from the childcare center to another safer location, all employees are trained to assist children in the designated location when deemed safe to do so by administration and law enforcement officials. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person of the pick-up location.

Confidentiality

Moody Early Childhood Center respects the privacy of every child and family and holds confidential all records regarding your child's personal information. All records will be kept secure in the children's file in the office. Only the Executive Director and lead staff have access to these records. Moody Early Childhood Center will always seek your permission to share information with other professionals.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

MECC complies with the 26 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) minimum standards Sections 744.501(7), 746.501(a)(7), and 747.501(5). A copy is signed by all employees, parents/caregivers, household members, and volunteers.

Section 1 – Discipline and Guidance Policy

Discipline must be:

1) individualized and consistent for each child;
2) appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
3) directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:

1) using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior;
2) reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
3) redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
4) using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1) corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
2) punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
3) grabbing or pulling a child;
5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
6) humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
7) subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
8) placing a child in a restrictive device for time out;
9) withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with 746.2803(4)(D); and
10) requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Section 2 – Additional Discipline and Guidance Measures

Only applies to Before or After School Program (BAP) or School Age Program (SAP) that operates under 26 TAC Chapter 744.

A program must take the following steps if it uses disciplinary measures for teaching a skill, talent, ability, expertise, or proficiency:

- make sure the measures are considered commonly accepted teaching or training techniques;
- describe the training and disciplinary measures in writing to parents and employees and include the following information:
  (A) the disciplinary measures that may be used, such as physical exercise or sparring used in martial arts programs;
  (B) what behaviors would warrant the use of these measures; and
  (C) the maximum amount of time the measures would be imposed;
- inform parents that they have the right to ask for more information; and
- make sure that the disciplinary measures used are not considered abuse, neglect, or exploitation as specified in Texas Family Code Section 261.001.

Safe Sleep Policy

Safe Sleep Policy

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Moody Early Childhood Center will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

- Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non full-size cribs [Sections 746.2409 and 747.2309].
- For infants who are younger than 12 months old, cribs play yards should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib or play yard include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys and animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)]. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing [Sections 746.2429 and 747.2329].
- Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)].
- Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult [Sections 746.3407(10) and 747.3203(10)].
- If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing such as footed sleepers (insert type of sleep clothing that will be used, such as sleepers or footed pajamas) as an alternative to blankets [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)].
- Place only one infant in a crib to sleep [Sections 746.2405 and 747.2305].
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal [Sections 746.2415(b) and 747.2315(b)] or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk [Sections 746.2401(6) and 747.2315(b)].
- If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2426 and 747.2326].
- Our child care program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers) [Sections 746.3703(d) and 747.3503(d)].
- Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [Sections 746.2403 and 747.2303].
- If an infant can roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally [Sections 746.2427 and 747.2327].
- Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [Sections 746.2428 and 747.2328].

Privacy Statement

HHSC values your privacy. For more information, read our privacy policy online at: https://hhs.texas.gov/policies-practices-privacy#security.

Video and Audio Monitoring Policy

The Moody Early Childhood Center (MECC) recognizes that maintaining the safety and security of students, staff and school property is best implemented with a multifaceted approach. To the extent technology provides tools to

maintain safety and security, the use of technology such as video surveillance cameras is supported by the Executive Director.

Video surveillance may be utilized in and around school property. Cameras may be equipped with audio recording capabilities as well. Video surveillance shall be in accordance with applicable laws pertaining to such use. The school also shall comply with applicable law related to maintaining video recordings.

The Executive Director is directed to develop regulations governing the use of video surveillance in accordance with applicable law and school policy.

Exclusions
Video and Audio monitoring is not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Recording of teacher instruction for purposes of completing a licensed personnel performance evaluation is not intended to be covered by this policy and shall not be permitted except as provided by state law. Recording of students for purposes of their educational programming is also not intended to be covered by this policy. LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. §12329 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) 34 C.F.R. §99.1 et seq. (FERPA regulations) C.R.S. 2472-113 (limit on retention of passive surveillance records)

Placement and notification

- Video/Audio surveillance equipment may be installed in and around the MECC building where there is a legitimate need for video surveillance, as approved by the Executive Director.
- Video/Audio surveillance equipment will not be used or installed in areas where the public, students and/or staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.
- Video/Audio surveillance equipment may be in operation 24 hours per day on a year round basis at any and all times, whether or not school is in session and whether or not the facilities or buildings are in use.
- Video monitors shall not be located in an area that enables public viewing.
- Conduct and comments in publicly accessible places on school property (e.g. school hallways, cafeterias, libraries, customer service contact points, etc.) may be recorded by video and audio devices.
- The school shall notify students, staff and the public that Video/Audio surveillance systems are present. Such notification will be included in staff and student handbooks.
- Specific notification will not be provided when a recording device has been installed or is being utilized in a school vehicle or building.

Use
The use of video surveillance equipment on school grounds as well as the use of video surveillance equipment on school vehicles shall be supervised and controlled by the Chief Operations Officer. Staff and students are prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with or otherwise interfering with video recordings and/or video camera equipment. Violations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action shall be consistent with applicable MECC policies and regulations and may include, but not be limited to, written reprimand, suspension, demotion or termination for staff, depending upon the nature and severity of the situation. The Chief Operations Officer will review the use and operations of the video surveillance system with the school on a periodic basis. Video recordings may be used as evidence that a student, staff member or other person has engaged in behavior that violates state law and/or MECC policy.

Storage/Security

The school shall provide reasonable safeguards including, but not limited to password protection, well-managed firewalls and controlled physical access MDF/IDF rooms to protect the video/audio surveillance system from hackers, unauthorized users and unauthorized use.

Video/audio recordings will be stored for a minimum of 30 school days after the initial recording. If the Chief Operations Officer knows no reason for continued storage, such recordings will be erased.

Video/Audio recordings held for review will be maintained in their original form pending resolution of the incident. Recording media will then be released for erasure, copied for authorized law enforcement agencies, or retained in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.

To ensure confidentiality, all video storage devices that are not in use will be stored securely in the Chief Operations Officer's office. All storage devices that have been used will be numbered and dated. Access to the storage devices will be limited to authorized personnel.

Video/audio recordings held by MECC as student education records and/or personnel records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.

Viewing Requests

- Requests for review of video recordings that are considered a student education record or personnel record will be as follows:
- All viewing requests must be submitted in writing. Requests for viewing will be limited to those parents/guardians, staff and/or school officials with a direct interest in the recording as authorized by the Chief Operations Officer. Only the portion of the recording concerning the specific incident at issue will be made available for viewing.
- Requests for viewing may be made to the Chief Operations Officer within 6 school days of the date of recording.
- Approval or denial for viewing will be made within 1 school day of receipt of the request and so communicated to the requesting individual.
- All parents of children in the classroom will be notified in advance prior to viewing.
- Recordings will be made available for viewing within 3 school days of the approval of the request.
- Prior to a parent/guardian viewing the video, an affidavit stating that they have not committed any crimes against juveniles must be signed.
- Actual viewing by 3rd parties will be permitted only at the Chief Operations Officer's Office unless otherwise required by law.
- All viewing will include the designated school administrator or designee.
- Parents may not retain a copy of any part of the footage viewed.
- To the extent required by law, a written log will be maintained of those viewing video recordings including the date and location of viewing, reasons for viewing, date the recording was made and the viewer's signature.
- Recordings will remain the property of MECC and may be reproduced only in accordance with applicable law and MECC policy.
- Due to the time and labor intensiveness of viewing video footage, random viewing requests will not be permitted.
- If law enforcement or regulatory agencies become involved, MECC will no longer be able to show video footage of incidents or personnel under investigation.

Parent's Rights

Parents have Parental Rights as stated in Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code (HRC) Section 42.04271. These rights include the following:

Rights of Parent or Guardian

A parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

(1) enter and examine the child care facility during the facility's hours of operation without advanced notice;

(2) review the child care facility's publicly accessible records;

(3) receive inspection reports for the child care facility and information about how to access the facility's online compliance history;

(4) obtain a copy of the child care facility's policies and procedures;

(5) review, at the request of the parent or guardian, the facility's:

(A) staff training records; and

(B) any in-house staff training curriculum used by the facility;

(6) review the child care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;

(7) inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's or guardian's child, provided that:

(A) video recordings of the alleged incident are available;

(B) the parent or guardian of the child does not retain any part of the video recording depicting a child that is not their own; and

(C) the parent or guardian of any other child captured in the video recording receives written notice from the facility before allowing a parent to inspect a recording;

(8) have the child care facility comply with a court order preventing another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the parent's or guardian's child;

(9) be provided the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;

(10) file a complaint against the child care facility by contacting the local Child Care Regulation office; and

(11) be free from any retaliatory action by the child care facility for exercising any of the parent's or guardian's rights.

Parents must sign a form acknowledging these rights upon enrollment. A copy of this document is listed below.

Notice Informing Individuals About Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Requirements

Moody Early Childhood Center complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Moody Early Childhood Center does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Moody Early Childhood Center:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
- Qualified sign language interpreters.
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats).
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
- Qualified interpreters.
- Information is written in other languages.

If you need these services, contact Antonio Ford, Chief Operations Officer. If you believe that Moody Early Childhood Center has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. with: Antonio Ford,

Chief Operations Officer, 1110 21st Street, Galveston, TX 77550, Telephone (409) 761-6930, Fax (409) 750-7177, Email antonio@moodychildhoodcenter.org. If you need help filing a grievance, Antonio Ford, Chief Operations Officer, is available to help you. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW Room
509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html.

Environmental Health & Safety Policy

MECC is committed to providing a healthy environment for every child, family member, and staff member. We actively work to prevent exposure to harmful chemicals and other environmental hazards inside and outside of our facility.

Environmental hazards include, but are not limited to:

- Harmful chemicals and strong fragrances
- Mold and mildew
- Unsafe drinking water
- Excessive noise, heat, or cold
- Radon or radiation
- Friable materials such as asbestos, fiberglass, silica, or lead paint Our commitment is to protect the

  children and adults in our building, we will:

- Use only non-toxic and fragrance-free cleaning and classroom products.
- Prevent exposure to hazardous building materials, fumes, and unsafe air quality.
- Monitor and fix moisture problems, mold, or mildew immediately.
- Maintain safe indoor temperatures and noise levels.
- Provide safe drinking water at all times.
- Only perform building repairs, painting, and maintenance when children are not present, unless approved as safe by licensed professionals.

To reduce allergic reactions, asthma, headaches, and chemical exposure, we:

- Use unscented, non-toxic cleaning supplies and soaps.
- Do not allow perfumes, scented lotions, body sprays, or essential oils inside the facility.
- Do not use aerosols or air fresheners.
- Use non-toxic, certified-safe art supplies only.

We use products that are:

- EPA Safer Choice cleaning products
- Unscented hand soap and sanitizer
- Non-toxic art materials labeled AP Certified Non-Toxic

We protect indoor air quality by:

- Running ventilation systems during the day.
- Maintaining clean air filters.
- Not allowing idling vehicles near entrances or playgrounds.
- Immediately responding to strong odors, fumes, or respiratory irritants.

To keep children safe, we:

- Do not use hazardous chemicals or materials when children are present.
- Test and remediate potential hazards (like asbestos, lead paint, or mold) using licensed professionals.
- Block off areas under repair until they are safe and cleared for use.
- Only approved potable water sources are used for drinking and food service.
- Water fixtures are cleaned daily and sanitized regularly.
- If a water safety concern arises, we will switch to alternative sources until cleared as safe.
- Classrooms are kept between 68°F and 82°F.
- Loud machines and noise sources are avoided near classrooms.
- Outdoor play is adjusted during extreme weather based on child safety guidelines.

We will notify parents and staff if:

- A potential environmental hazard is identified.
- A room or area must be closed for safety.
- Remediation or cleaning work needs to take place.

All safety records and product lists are available upon request.

Families and staff can support this policy by:

- Avoiding scented personal care products when entering the building.
- Reporting unusual odors, leaks, or health concerns right away.
- Not bringing cleaning chemicals from home.

I, _____, have been informed about and know how to receive a copy of the
Parent Name

Moody Early Childhood Center Parent Handbook which includes a list of the Parental Rights, have been given instructions and encouraged to download the ProCare app, and know that additional handouts are located on the MECC website.

I acknowledge that I can talk to the office if I have any questions or if I would like to receive a printed copy of any of these documents.

_____

Print child's name

_____ _____

Parent Signature Date

Cameras in Classroom

While at school, the safety and security of your child(ren) is always our number one priority. As a way to ensure this, the school district has installed security cameras in your child(ren)'s classroom. This letter is written to advise you that the cameras are located in our self-contained classroom(s) as added protection for your child. Please note that no cameras are placed in areas where students, staff, or community members have a reasonable expectation of privacy, e.g., a bathroom or a locker room. Student security is the main purpose for the cameras. However, recordings may be used in disciplinary proceedings. In addition, matters captured by the cameras may be referred to local law enforcement, as appropriate. For more information, view Board Policy EHBAF- Special Education: Video/Audio Monitoring (School Safety and Security) or Texas Education Code -EDUC 29.022. You may access this information using the QR codes below. School district and campus administrators and the Galveston ISD police Chief are the only personnel who will have access to these cameras or recordings.

Please feel free to contact your school principal with questions regarding the cameras.

TX Education Code 1

Animal Care, Housing, and Child Safety Policy

1. Purpose

Moody Early Childhood Center permits animals on the premises only when they can be housed and cared for without creating an unsafe, unsanitary, or unhealthy condition for children, employees, visitors, or the animals. This policy establishes requirements for animal approval, no-contact controls, enclosures, signage, daily care, sanitation, veterinary oversight, emergencies, and records.

2. Scope

This policy applies to every animal located at or brought to the Center, temporarily or permanently, including animals housed in cages, aquariums, terrariums, hutches, coops, outdoor pens, or other enclosures. It also applies to visiting-animal programs, animal-related field trips, and animal-care supplies or waste on Center property.

No employee, family member, contractor, visitor, or outside organization may bring an animal onto Center property without the Center Director's prior written approval.

2.1 Service Animals and Disability-Related Accommodations

Requests involving a service animal or another disability-related accommodation will be evaluated individually under applicable law and a written safety and accommodation plan. This program-animal policy will not be used automatically to deny lawful access or an individualized accommodation. The Center will coordinate with the family, appropriate professionals, licensing representatives, and legal counsel as needed while protecting children from avoidable contact and maintaining sanitation and supervision.

No-Child-Contact Rule

> **Children may observe animals only. Children may not touch, hold, handle, carry, feed, groom, pet, or otherwise have direct contact with any animal.**

Children also may not:

- Open, unlatch, reach into, climb on, lean over, or place objects into an enclosure.
- Touch animal food, water, bedding, waste, toys, bowls, cages, tanks, pens, cleaning equipment, or other animal-care supplies.
- Assist with feeding, cleaning, water changes, grooming, transportation, medication, or any other animal-care activity.
- Enter a staff-only animal area or cross a protective barrier.

This Center-wide no-contact rule is stricter than the Texas minimum standard and applies to every species. Texas rules specifically prohibit children from having contact with chickens, ducks, reptiles, and amphibians. The Center's rule also covers those animals, their enclosures, and all items used in their care.

Approval and Parent Notification

Before an animal is placed at the Center or participates in a temporary or visiting program, the Director or designee must:

1. Identify the species, number of animals, proposed location, enclosure, care requirements, and responsible employee.
2. Determine whether the animal can be safely housed without child contact.
3. Review allergy, asthma, infection-control, bite, escape, ventilation, sanitation, and emergency risks.
4. Confirm that appropriate barriers, latches, protective netting or mesh, signage, and cleaning procedures are in place.
5. Provide written parent notice that identifies the types of animals located at the center and states that children may observe but may not touch or handle it.

Parent notice may be provided through the parent handbook, enrollment materials, written electronic communication, or a separate animal notice. The Center will retain a copy of the notice. Temporary or visiting animals require notice before the activity unless emergency circumstances make advance notice impossible and the Director documents the reason.

Enclosures, Barriers, and Signage

5.1 Enclosure Requirements

All animals must remain in a secure, clean, species-appropriate enclosure unless a trained and designated adult is moving the animal for veterinary care, emergency relocation, or enclosure maintenance. Each cage, aquarium, terrarium, hutch, coop, pen, or other enclosure must:

- Be structurally sound, escape-resistant, and appropriate for the species.
- Have a secure lid, gate, door, or other closure with a lockable or child-resistant safety latch when appropriate.
- Be positioned or anchored to prevent tipping, falling, shifting, rolling, or being pulled over.
- Prevent children from reaching through, under, over, or around the enclosure.
- Include protective netting, mesh, covers, guards, or a secondary perimeter barrier when needed.
- Protect children from bites, scratches, pinching, pecking, stings, allergens, waste, contaminated water, and animal-care equipment.
- Permit safe access by authorized employees without requiring the animal to be moved through an occupied child-care area whenever reasonably possible.

Aquariums must have fitted lids and be placed on stable, load-rated stands. Electrical cords, pumps, heaters, filters, lights, and water-treatment supplies must be secured and inaccessible to children. Outdoor pens must have secure gates and fencing, protective netting or covers when needed, and adequate separation or a secondary barrier where children could otherwise reach the enclosure.

5.2 Signage

Every animal enclosure and animal-care area must display clear, age-appropriate signage. Signs must remain visible, legible, securely attached, and appropriate to the animal and hazard.

ANIMAL AREA - STAFF ONLY

DO NOT TOUCH, FEED, OR OPEN

WASH HANDS AFTER ANY CONTACT

Additional warnings must be posted when appropriate, including "NO CHILD CONTACT - POULTRY, REPTILE, OR AMPHIBIAN AREA." Signage does not replace secure latches, barriers, protective netting, adequate separation, active supervision, or placement beyond children's reach.

Location and Separation

Animal enclosures, food, bedding, medication, cleaning supplies, and waste may not be located in or directly adjacent to:

- Food, bottles, or formula preparation areas.
- Food storage, meal service, or dining areas.
- Diaper-changing areas, toilets, or children's handwashing sinks.
- Infant floor-play, sleeping, or napping areas.
- Emergency exits, evacuation routes, doorways, or required clear paths.
- Areas where an enclosure could create a climbing, tripping, electrical, water, or falling-object hazard.
- Locations where odor, dander, feathers, bedding, waste, or contaminated water could enter ventilation systems or contaminate children's materials.

Animal food, medication, bedding, waste supplies, and cleaning products must be labeled, closed, stored separately from human food and children's supplies, and inaccessible to children.

Daily Inspection, Care, and Maintenance

> **Animals and their enclosures must be checked and maintained every day, including weekends and holidays when animals remain on the property.**

A trained and designated employee must complete a daily inspection that includes:

1. The animal's appearance, behavior, activity, appetite, and signs of illness, injury, stress, or aggression.
2. Availability and cleanliness of species-appropriate food and water.
3. Appropriate temperature, ventilation, lighting, filtration, bedding, shelter, and other environmental conditions.
4. Cleanliness of the enclosure and prompt removal of waste, uneaten food, standing water, excessive algae, soiled bedding, and contamination.
5. Evidence of insects, rodents, wild animals, parasites, mold, objectionable odors, or other unsanitary conditions.
6. The condition of the cage, tank, pen, fencing, lid, door, latch, lock, netting, guard, and secondary barrier.
7. The stability of aquariums, stands, electrical equipment, cords, and water systems.

8. The presence and condition of required signs.
9. Confirmation that the animal and all animal-care items remain inaccessible to children.
10. Any corrective action, veterinary consultation, repair, cleaning, or relocation that is needed.

The employee must record the date, time, initials, findings, and corrective action on the daily animal-care log. Any broken latch, damaged enclosure, torn netting, water leak, electrical hazard, escape opening, or other safety defects must be corrected immediately. Children must be removed from or denied access to the affected area until the hazard is corrected.

Cleaning, Waste Disposal, and Hand Hygiene

Only trained and designated adults may clean an enclosure or handle animal food, water, bedding, waste, equipment, or supplies. Whenever practical, cleaning and maintenance will occur when children are not present in the immediate area.

- Children must remain behind the established barrier and may not participate.
- Disposable gloves and any other appropriate protective equipment must be used.
- Waste must be placed directly into a closed, leak-resistant container.
- Cleaning must avoid splashing, spraying, or spreading contaminated water, bedding, feces, feathers, dander, or other material.
- Enclosures and equipment must be cleaned and disinfected with a product appropriate for the species and used according to its label and veterinary guidance.
- Animal equipment may not be washed in food preparation, bottle-preparation, classroom, or children's handwashing sinks.
- Aquarium or enclosure water may not be emptied into a food-preparation or children's sink.
- Dedicated animal-care equipment must be cleaned, labeled, and stored separately.
- Cleaning chemicals must be secured and inaccessible to children.

Employees must wash their hands with soap and running water immediately after touching an animal, enclosure, bowl, cage, tank, pen, bedding, food, waste, water, cleaning equipment, or other animal-related item. Gloves and hand sanitizer do not replace required handwashing.

If a child has accidental contact with an animal or animal-related item, staff must prevent further contact, wash the child's hands and any affected skin immediately with soap and running water, notify the Director, and complete any required parent notification or incident report.

Veterinary Care and Records

> **Moody Early Childhood Center contracts with a local Texas-licensed veterinarian to provide annual wellness examinations or health visits appropriate to the animals and species maintained by the Center.**

Veterinary care must also be obtained whenever an animal shows illness, injury, abnormal behavior, parasite infestation, or another health concern. The annual veterinary review should address, as applicable:

- General health and fitness for continued placement in a child-care environment.

- Required and recommended vaccinations.
- Parasite prevention, testing, and treatment.
- Nutrition, housing, and environmental conditions.
- Zoonotic-disease risks and infection-control measures.
- Behavioral, bite, scratch, or escape risks.
- Sanitation and cleaning procedures.
- Any species-specific care, permit, testing, or handling recommendations.

The Center must maintain the veterinary annual wellness or health documentation; required statements of health; current vaccination records; applicable registrations, licenses, or permits; treatment and medication records; and/or written veterinary restrictions, recommendations, or return-to-placement clearances.

Illness, Injury, and Abnormal Behavior

An animal must be immediately removed from children's areas or isolated behind a secure barrier when it displays:

- Lethargy, diarrhea, vomiting, loss of appetite, or abnormal behavior.
- Unexplained aggression, fear, or repeated attempts to bite, scratch, peck, or escape.
- Coughing, sneezing, nasal or eye discharge.
- Open sores, skin lesions, feather or hair loss, or visible parasites.
- Difficulty walking, swimming, breathing, eating, or drinking.
- Sudden or unexplained weight loss.
- Signs of pain, injury, neurological symptoms, or severe stress.
- Unexplained death of another animal in the same enclosure.
- Any condition identified by the veterinarian as a possible health or zoonotic-disease risk.

The Director or Animal Care Coordinator must promptly contact the Center's veterinarian. The animal may not return to its usual location until the veterinarian determines that it is safe. When a reportable or suspected zoonotic illness is identified, the Center will follow veterinary instructions and make any required report to public health, animal-control, licensing, or other regulatory authorities.

Unfamiliar, Stray, Wild or Dangerous Animals

The Center will keep its building, grounds, entrances, and playgrounds free of unfamiliar, stray, wild, and potentially dangerous animals. Before children enter an outdoor play area, an employee must visually inspect the area for:

- Stray or unfamiliar animals.
- Snakes, bats, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, alligators, or other wildlife.
- Animal waste, dead or injured animals, nests, burrows, hives, or evidence of intrusion.
- Damage to fencing, gates, protective netting, or other barriers.

Children must be moved away from the area and may not approach, chase, capture, feed, or touch the animal. Employees should not attempt to capture a wild or potentially dangerous animal unless specifically trained and equipped. City of Galveston Animal Services or emergency services must be contacted as appropriate.

Escape and Enclosure Failure

If an animal escapes or an enclosure is breached:

1. Move children immediately to another secured area and verify attendance.
2. Close the affected room or area and prevent entry.
3. Do not allow any child to assist with recapture.
4. Permit only a trained adult to attempt recapture when it can be done safely.
5. Contact Animal Services, the veterinarian, or emergency services when assistance is needed.
6. Inspect and repair the enclosure and barriers before returning the animal.
7. Document the incident and determine whether parent, licensing, veterinary, or public-health notification is required.

Bite, Scratch, Saliva, or Other Exposure

The Center will treat any accidental bite, scratch, peck, sting, or contact between animal saliva and a person's eyes, mouth, broken skin, or open wound as a health and safety incident. Staff must:

1. Separate the person from the animal without creating additional risk.
2. Wash the affected area promptly with soap and running water and provide appropriate first aid.
3. Call 911 when the injury or medical condition is serious or urgent.
4. Notify the child's parent or guardian immediately and obtain medical evaluation as appropriate.
5. Complete the Center's incident documentation.
6. Secure and isolate the animal without releasing, moving, euthanizing, or disposing of it contrary to veterinary or animal-control instructions.
7. Promptly report a potentially rabies-transmitting bite or scratch to the City of Galveston Animal Services Unit and make any other required report.
8. Follow all quarantine, testing, medical, veterinary, public-health, and licensing instructions.

Staff Training and Assignment of Responsibility

The Center Director will designate an Animal Care Coordinator and at least one alternate. Only trained and authorized employees may provide animal care. Training must cover:

- The Center's no-child-contact rule.
- Enclosure, anchoring, latch, barrier, netting, and signage requirements.
- Daily inspection, care, cleaning, and documentation.
- Species-specific feeding and environmental needs.
- Waste disposal, disinfection, protective equipment, and handwashing.
- Recognition of illness, stress, abnormal behavior, aggression, and zoonotic-disease risks.
- Allergy and asthma precautions.
- Bite, scratch, exposure, escape, enclosure failure, evacuation, and emergency procedures.
- Veterinary, Animal Services, emergency, licensing, and public-health contact procedures.

Employees must immediately report a damaged enclosure, missing sign, illness, behavioral concern, sanitation problem, escape risk, or policy violation to the Director.

Local and Emergency Contacts

Immediate medical or public-safety emergency	911
City of Galveston Animal Services Unit	409-765-3702
Contracted veterinarian	Name: Dr. Jason Suazo Phone: (979) 266-7080

The City of Galveston Animal Services Unit responds to animal-bite cases, dangerous or injured animals, animal welfare complaints, and violations of municipal animal rules. After-hours assistance is limited; call 911 for an immediate threat to human life or safety.

Recordkeeping

The Center will keep an animal compliance file readily available for administrative and licensing review. The file will include:

- Current animal inventory and enclosure locations.
- Names of responsible employees and training records.
- Parent notices.
- Veterinary contract, wellness records, health statements, vaccination records, and treatment records.
- Applicable registrations, licenses, and permits if needed.
- Enclosure and barrier assessments and repair records.
- Illness, escape, bite, scratch, exposure, and corrective-action reports.
- Communications with the veterinarian, Animal Services, public health, or Child Care Regulation.

Compliance, Removal, and Annual Review

An animal must be removed temporarily or permanently when required records are missing or expired; safe barriers cannot be maintained; the animal presents an allergy, infection, sanitation, behavioral, bite, or escape risk; daily care cannot be reliably provided; the veterinarian recommends removal; or continued presence conflicts with this policy or applicable law.

Human life and child safety take priority during every emergency. Children will never be assigned responsibility for feeding, evacuating, transporting, capturing, or rescuing animals.

The Director will review this policy and the animal inventory at least annually and whenever a new animal or species is proposed, the enclosure or location changes, a bite or escape occurs, the veterinarian recommends a change, or applicable law or agency guidance changes.

Allergy Response And Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan

Purpose

MECC is committed to protecting the health and safety of children with known allergies and responding appropriately to any suspected allergic reaction. This policy establishes procedures for prevention, recognition, and emergency response to allergic reactions and anaphylaxis for both children with documented allergies and children experiencing a first-time allergic reaction.

Definitions

Allergic Reaction: An immune system response to an allergen that may include skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, or neurological symptoms.

Anaphylaxis: A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction requiring immediate emergency intervention.

Known Allergy: An allergy documented by a healthcare provider and supported by a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (FARE Form), physician orders, or other medical documentation maintained in the child's file.

Unknown Allergy: A suspected allergic reaction in a child without a documented allergy history.

Prevention Procedures

1. For Children with Documented Allergies
   a. MECC shall maintain:
      - A completed FARE Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan.
      - Physician-signed medication authorization and treatment orders.
      - Current parent/guardian emergency contact information.
      - Prescribed emergency medications on site, if ordered.

   b. Allergy information shall be shared with staff responsible for the child's care while maintaining confidentiality.
   c. Allergy alerts shall be posted in approved staff-accessible locations.
   d. Staff shall review allergy information before serving meals, snacks, or participating in special events involving food.
   e. Substitute staff shall be informed of allergies before assuming classroom responsibilities.
2. Staff Training
   a. All staff shall receive annual training on:
      - Recognition of allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
      - Emergency response procedures.

- Use of epinephrine auto-injectors.
- Emergency communication procedures.

b. Training documentation shall be maintained by administration.

Recognizing Allergic Reactions

Mild to Moderate Symptoms May Include:

- Itching
- Hives or rash
- Redness or swelling of the skin
- Runny nose
- Mild stomach discomfort
- Mild nausea

Severe Symptoms (Anaphylaxis) May Include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Repetitive coughing
- Swelling of lips, tongue, mouth, or throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Hoarse voice
- Pale or bluish skin color
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Loss of consciousness
- Repeated vomiting
- Severe abdominal pain
- Rapid progression of symptoms involving multiple body systems

Emergency Response Procedures for Children with Known Allergies

Step 1: Assess Symptoms

- Remain with the child.
- Have another staff member notify the school nurse immediately.
- Follow the child's physician-authorized Allergy Emergency Care Plan.

Step 2: Administer Emergency Medication

- If the child's care plan directs epinephrine administration, administer immediately.
- When symptoms suggest anaphylaxis, epinephrine shall be administered without delay according to physician orders and staff training.

Step 3: Activate Emergency Medical Services

- Call 911 immediately after administering epinephrine or whenever anaphylaxis is suspected.
- Notify administration.
- Notify the school nurse and pediatric clinic if available.
- The pediatric clinic and school nurse may assist with care but shall not delay activation of EMS.

Step 4: Monitor the Child

- Keep the child under constant supervision.
- Monitor breathing and responsiveness.
- Position the child according to symptoms:
    - Lying flat with legs elevated when possible.
    - On side if vomiting.
    - Seated only if breathing difficulties require it. ● Do not allow the child to walk unassisted.

Step 5: Parent Notification

- Contact parent/guardian immediately after emergency measures are initiated. ● Continue attempts until contact is made.

Emergency Response Procedures for Children Without Known Allergies

If a child with no documented allergy develops symptoms consistent with an allergic reaction:

1. Immediately notify the classroom supervisor and school nurse.
2. Assess severity of symptoms.
3. For mild symptoms:
    - ○ Remove suspected allergen exposure.
    - ○ Observe continuously.
    - ○ Contact parent/guardian.
    - ○ Refer to the school nurse for assessment.
4. For severe symptoms or suspected anaphylaxis: ○ Call 911 immediately.
    - ○ Notify the school nurse and administration.
    - ○ Follow standing medical orders, nursing protocols, or applicable Texas law regarding emergency stock epinephrine, if available and authorized. ○ Notify parents immediately.
5. The pediatric clinic may assist in evaluation and treatment when available; however, emergency medical services shall not be delayed while waiting for clinic staff.

Post-Incident Procedures

Following any allergic reaction:

1. The responding staff member shall complete an Incident Report before the end of the workday.
2. Administration shall review:
    - ○ Cause of exposure, if known.
    - ○ Response actions taken.
    - ○ Need for corrective measures.

3. Parents shall receive written documentation of the incident both via ProCare and Incident Report.
4. For newly identified allergies:
    - Parents shall be encouraged to seek medical evaluation.
    - A physician-completed Allergy Care Plan shall be obtained before the child's return when appropriate.

Medication Storage

1. Emergency allergy medications shall:
    - Be readily accessible.
    - Be stored according to manufacturer instructions.
    - Remain unlocked or immediately accessible during emergencies as permitted by law and licensing requirements.
2. Expiration dates shall be monitored regularly by the school nurse or designated administrator.

Annual Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually by administration and the school nurse and updated as needed to reflect current medical guidance, licensing standards, and best practices.