



# SUMMIT

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## EARLY LEARNING

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NURTURE • EDUCATE • SUPPORT

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

August 2019



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# WELCOME

SUMMIT Early Learning, Inc. is committed to providing high-quality early care and education services to children and their families. As part of the SUMMIT Early Learning team, each staff member plays an integral role in creating and sustaining services that are welcoming of all children and families, consistent with research-based practices, and compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and requirements.

As an employer, SUMMIT Early Learning values the contributions of each and every employee. The Board of Directors and SUMMIT Early Learning Management Team are committed to treating staff with respect, fairness, and consistency. We encourage staff to engage in innovative thinking, open communication, and strong teamwork.

Your employment is regulated by the SUMMIT Early Learning policies and procedures; local, state, and federal laws and regulations; and other requirements set forth by our funding sources.

**The General Terms and Conditions** of your employment are as follows:

1. **Employee** is expected to devote his/her services, skills, and abilities to his/her employment under the terms and conditions, regulations, policies, and procedures of the agency.
2. **Employee** is expected to promptly and faithfully perform all services pertaining to employment as assigned by the agency.
3. **Employee** is expected to follow the SUMMIT Early Learning Policies and Procedures Manual and its amendments and other organizational operating policies, guidelines, and regulations as set forth by the Board of Directors, the Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council, the chief executive officer (CEO), and federal, state, and local laws, statutes, ordinances, and funding sources.
4. Subject to the above, **Employer** agrees to pay **Employee**, as stated in the Letter of Employment wages and salaries based on the current established salary and wage scales.
5. **Employer** agrees to provide **Employee** with benefits over the months of employment period according to policies stated in the SUMMIT Early Learning Policies and Procedures Manual.

To attain and sustain the above goals and practices, SUMMIT Early Learning has developed manuals to ensure that each staff is aware of his/her role and responsibilities as an employee, the practices and procedures that employees are required to follow, and resources for employees when they have questions or concerns.

- **Employee Handbook** provides an overview of the terms of employment and the expectations and requirements of SUMMIT Early Learning employees. The content of the Employee Handbook applies to *all* employees. It is the responsibility of each employee to be familiar with and follow the associated detailed procedures found in the Policies and Procedures Manual.
- **Policies and Procedures Manual** provides detailed policies and procedures that guide implementation of the contents of the Employee Handbook. Additionally, it includes policies and procedures applicable to general organizational structure, program planning, management, Human Resources (HR), Fiscal, Early Care and Education, and Transportation. A copy is provided to new employees and available at all work/center sites.
- Revisions to these manuals occur on a continuous basis, especially as federal and state regulations and laws change or are reinterpreted. Employees will be informed in writing of any changes approved by the Board and Policy Council after the printing of this manual.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

“Building the Future through Early Care and Education, One Family at a Time”

## **HISTORY**

SUMMIT Early Learning evolved from an agency called Union County Child Development, Inc., which was incorporated on March 14, 1969 as a private non-profit corporation organized to administer preschool educational programs. In 1981, the name of this organization was changed to Snyder Union Mifflin Child Development, Inc. due to the expansion of services into the counties of Snyder and Mifflin. In November 2018, the agency’s name was changed again – to SUMMIT Early Learning, Inc. as a rebranding and to remove the limitations of that name on counties served. Today SUMMIT Early Learning provides a variety of services to preschool and school-age children and their families in central Pennsylvania.

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **EMPLOYMENT AT WILL**

The Employee Handbook is not a contract, and no employee has any contractual right to the matters set forth in this handbook. Your employment is “at will.” You are free to voluntarily sever your employment. SUMMIT Early Learning retains the right to terminate your employment with or without cause as deemed necessary.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

### **Employment Practices**

An open and equitable personnel system has been established and will be maintained. Personnel policies, procedures, and practices prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), genetic information, and veteran status. Employment opportunities are provided for applicants with disabilities, and reasonable accommodations are made to meet the physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants or employees (including those with LEP).

### **Employee Recruitment Advertising**

Recruitment advertising is provided in languages other than English, as identified in our annual Community Assessment. We offer materials in languages other than English, as needed.

### **Complaint of Discrimination**

Any client/student (and/or guardian) served by SUMMIT Early Learning, or any employee of SUMMIT Early Learning, who believes she or he may have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the offices listed below.

- **SUMMIT Early Learning, Inc.**, 14 S. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Mifflinburg, PA 17844
- **U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services**, Office for Civil Rights, Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg., 150 South Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111
- **PA Human Relations Commission**, 333 Market Street – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101
- **Department of Human Services, Bureau of Equal Opportunity**, Rm. 223, Health and Welfare Bldg., P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105

## **CLIENT RELATIONS**

Clients are our organization’s most valuable asset. Every employee represents SUMMIT Early Learning to our clients and to the public. The manner in which we perform our jobs presents an image of our entire organization to our clients and the community at large. Clients base their opinions of all of us by how they are treated by each and every employee. Nothing is more important than being respectful, courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention given to clients.

Our personal contact with the public, our manners on the telephone, and the communications we send to clients are a reflection not only of ourselves, but also of the professionalism of SUMMIT Early Learning. Positive client relations not only enhance the public's perception or image of SUMMIT Early Learning, but also pay off in increased grants and contracts.

As a requirement of your employment, all employees of SUMMIT Early Learning are expected to interact respectfully, courteously, and promptly with our clients.

Employees who fail to have appropriate client relations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The SUMMIT Early Learning Confidentiality Policy has been adopted to ensure confidentiality and protection of individual rights of privacy for children, families, and employees of SUMMIT Early Learning. The individual dignity of children, families, and employees shall be respected and protected at all times in accordance with all applicable laws.

Employees will not disclose confidential information, belonging to or obtained through their affiliation with SUMMIT Early Learning, to any person, including their relatives, friends, former employees, and business and professional associates unless SUMMIT Early Learning has authorized disclosure. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law.

Employees must be diligent in their efforts to maintain confidentiality and should be aware that there are job-related consequences for violations of confidentiality and rights of privacy. An employee's responsibility to maintain confidentiality regarding information learned about children, their parents/guardians, families, and other employees extends 24 hours per day, seven days per week regardless of how or where the information was attained. Detailed policy and procedures are found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

### **Violation of Confidentiality Policy**

Any employee/volunteer who violates the Confidentiality Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition to job-related consequences, the employee/volunteer may face possible civil liability for their actions.

## **CIVILITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

The basis for civility is the demonstration of respect, using courtesy, politeness, and good manners. Incivility, by contrast, implies rudeness and disregard for others in a manner that violates norms for respect. Incivility creates an unpleasant work environment where people simply stop doing their best. Victims of incivility sometimes take out their frustrations on clients and customers, creating a ripple effect. Absenteeism climbs and productivity plummets.

# EMPLOYMENT

## EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Employees will be notified of the Employee Classifications into which their position fits via the job description and in their Employment Letter.

SUMMIT Early Learning reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to change an employee classification at any time without prior notice.

1. **Full-Time Employee:** A person who is regularly scheduled for at least 30 hours per week.
2. **Part-Time Employee:** A person who is regularly scheduled for less than 30 hours per week.
3. **Long-Term Temporary (Temp):** A person employed between four and 12 months during one employment year.
4. **Short-Term Substitute Temporary:** A person employed for a daily and/or weekly period to fill a vacancy created by the absence of an employee for less than four months. Short-term temps are not eligible for benefits.
5. **Exempt:** Employees not eligible to receive overtime pay. Their salary covers all hours worked. Exempt employees are paid to perform a job regardless of the number of hours required to accomplish all aspects of the job as outlined in the job description.
6. **Non-Exempt:** Hourly employees are eligible to receive overtime pay pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act. Non-exempt employees are paid for the hours worked to complete their job as outlined in the job description.

## RECRUITMENT/TRANSFERS

Positions are posted on the agency website. Regular status employees in good standing may apply for any vacant position within SUMMIT Early Learning for which they are qualified and will receive the same consideration as any applicant for the position.

This policy is not a guarantee that a current employee (or parent) will be promoted/transferred or hired to fill the vacant position. SUMMIT Early Learning strives to employ persons who are the best qualified to fill the needs of the agency in accordance with the qualifications and essential job functions listed on the job descriptions.

Qualified employees may be considered for a transfer to the same position at a different work site based on the needs of the team and agency, work experience, and Performance Evaluations. At the discretion of the CEO, a very similar position transfer may be considered in a transfer situation. Lateral transfers do not carry any salary adjustments or provisional period and do not require Board of Directors or Policy Council approval. Employees with less than 12 months of employment may be denied a transfer.

All applicants must complete an agency application, submit proof of qualifications, and complete and/or submit all other paperwork as required by SUMMIT Early Learning, funder, and/or licensing regulations.

Postings for job vacancies must be approved by the CEO prior to distribution by the HR Department.

### **Restrictions on Current Employees**

Staff on provisional status may not be considered for another position, unless approved by the CEO. Transportation staff may not be considered for a position in a non-transportation position until they have had their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for 12 months if the agency provided CDL training. Transportation employees with a valid CDL upon employment are not restricted.

## **EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES**

It is the responsibility of the CEO or HR Director to provide employment references for persons currently or previously employed at SUMMIT Early Learning. Supervisors may write references for former employees and college students that interned in our programs, but the written reference must be submitted to the CEO or HR Director for approval.

### **Providing References for Clients**

Coordinators or Program Managers may provide a reference (verbal or written) for a parent for a variety of needs such as housing or employment, but it must be submitted and approved by the Family & Community Engagement Director or Home Visiting Coordinator.

## **HEALTH ASSESSMENTS**

Employment at SUMMIT Early Learning is contingent upon receipt of the completed Health Assessment in which a licensed health care provider indicates fitness for duty. All employees will be required to obtain a Health Assessment and a read TB test prior to the first day of employment. The agency utilizes specific occupational health services for pre-employment physicals. Thereafter, employees (except office employees) will be required to obtain a biennial Health Assessment, and the agency will reimburse up to \$65 for the exam.

Employees may be required to submit additional Health Assessments/Certifications as needed to reasonably accommodate an employee's disability, to determine eligibility for leave, or to return to work from any medical/disability leave.

Health Assessments will be maintained as a part of the employee's medical information file, which is a part of her/his HR file.

Detailed physical and mental abilities for each position are listed on the job description. These essential job functions will be discussed at the time of hire and from time to time during employment. SUMMIT Early Learning reserves the right to amend and change these essential job functions at any time based on the needs of the agency. Employees will be required to acknowledge, with their signature, the essential job functions prior to employment and at other times during their employment.

Employees who fail to provide the required Health Assessment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **CLEARANCES (CERTIFICATIONS)**

State law mandates that all new employees have current State Police and Child Abuse clearances (now called “Certifications”). State law and licensing regulations stipulate that the certifications show that the employee has no open accusations or convictions of child abuse and/or neglect. State law and licensing regulations further set guidelines regarding the convictions and arrests that may and may not appear on the clearances. New employees must also have an FBI background check completed upon employment.

Employees are offered employment contingent upon an acceptable criminal background check. She/he must provide at least one current criminal certification to HR for review and approval prior to employment. Employees who submit their own clearance applications must present the remaining two certifications immediately upon receipt from the background check entity, but no later than 90 days after employment. Failure to immediately submit certifications to HR will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. These documents will become a part of the HR file.

Newly hired employees, consultants, or contractors do not have unsupervised access to children until the completion of all required background checks.

SUMMIT Early Learning requires the complete background check for each employee be obtained at least once every five years. At its sole discretion, SUMMIT Early Learning may require employees to resubmit clearance applications at any time during their employment.

All current and new employees are also required to complete an online three-hour Mandated Reporter Training. Upon completion of the online training, the employee will print the certificate of completion and submit it to HR.

Details and procedures can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

## **ASSIGNMENT**

Employees will be assigned to a position for which they are qualified, based on the needs of the agency, in an effort to provide services of the highest quality and efficiency and to maintain compliance with Department of Human Services (DHS) regulations, Head Start Performance Standards, and other funding sources, as applicable. SUMMIT Early Learning will make employee assignments at its sole discretion. An employee’s assignment includes position, pay, scheduled hours, and location.

SUMMIT Early Learning reserves the right to change an employee’s assignment at any time to continue to meet the needs of the agency and to maintain compliance with DHS regulations and Head Start Performance Standards, or other funding source requirements/guidelines. Employees are given as much notice as possible when changes to their normal work schedule are made. Employees who refuse re-assignment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

New employees are scheduled for an appointment with HR upon hire. At this meeting they will receive general agency information, review benefits, register for payroll, etc. The employee's supervisor will meet with the new employee to review policies and procedures pertinent to the work site and position, such as hours, breaks, job description, etc. The employee's supervisor will also plan with the employee additional orientation procedures specific to the department and position.

## **PROVISIONAL PERIOD**

Employment will be considered provisional when an employee is initially hired or placed in a new position (see below for specified periods). During the provisional period, SUMMIT Early Learning will evaluate the provisional employee's performance to determine if he/she meets the standards set by SUMMIT Early Learning policies and applicable program standards outlined in the job description.

There will be a six-month provisional period for positions that are at Level H and above on the Salary Scale. There will be a three-month provisional period for all other positions.

On rare occasions, the provisional period may be extended by approval of the CEO. In all cases of requests to extend an employee's provisional period, the supervisor must submit a Performance Evaluation, the reason for extension, and the length of extension that is recommended, which may be no more than three months. Requests for extension may not be submitted after the provisional period concludes.

Upon successful completion of the provisional period, the supervisor will recommend retention of the employee to the CEO or HR Director. The recommendation must be accompanied by a completed final provisional Performance Evaluation. Upon approval the employee will attain regular employment status.

If the employee is not recommended for regular status, the employee will be terminated no later than the last day of the provisional period or any extension thereof.

Employment may be terminated at any time during the provisional period with or without cause.

All required employment documentation must be provided by the employee prior to acquiring regular employment status.

## **IDENTIFICATION BADGES**

Every regular employee will be issued a photo identification badge, which is to be worn whenever working at any SUMMIT Early Learning site. If an ID badge becomes lost or damaged, an employee should contact the HR Department to arrange for a replacement. A replacement ID badge will be provided if there is a change in name.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

It is essential that SUMMIT Early Learning personnel records be accurate at all times. To avoid issues with benefit eligibility, tax liability, or our ability to communicate with employees, SUMMIT Early Learning requires that employees promptly notify their supervisor or HR of any change in name, home address, telephone number, number of dependents, or any other information pertinent to employment.

## NON-FRATERNIZATION POLICY

Employees of SUMMIT Early Learning are prohibited from fraternizing with any client of SUMMIT Early Learning. Detailed procedures and guidelines can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual, section titled “Professional Boundaries.”

Clients of SUMMIT Early Learning shall be provided with the best possible quality service. Employees shall treat clients, vendors, co-workers, and the public with courtesy, appropriate distance, and respect.

Attending a “social event” or a “private gathering” with a client of SUMMIT Early Learning shall occur only when approved by the supervisor. If an employee has a relationship with a family prior to the family being a client, that relationship can continue with adjustments made to maintain confidentiality. The employee shall disclose the existing relationship to his/her supervisor to determine if work assignments should be adjusted.

Employees should abstain from any intimate physical contact and/or romantic involvement with clients. Employees should also avoid any unwelcomed advances and intimate acts made by clients. Direct supervisors should abstain from any intimate contact or romantic involvement with their supervisees.

Employees must immediately report to their immediate supervisor or CEO any action by a client or employee that would be considered a violation of this policy, including unwelcomed advances or attempts at intimate acts made by clients or co-workers.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## NEPOTISM

For the purpose of this policy, immediate family shall include any of the following persons:

Husband	Mother-in-Law	Niece
Wife	Father-in-Law	Nephew
Mother	Son-in-Law	Brother-in-Law
Father	Daughter-in-Law	Sister-in-Law
Sister	Step-Child	Grandmother
Brother	Step-Parent	Grandfather
Daughter	Aunt	Granddaughter
Son	Uncle	Grandson
Any person residing in the employee’s immediate household		

Family members of current employees may be a valuable source of qualified applicants; however, members of the same family will not be permitted to work in the same department and/or classroom.

No person shall hold a position while she or he or a member of her/his immediate family serves on a board or a committee of the agency if that board or committee has authority to order personnel actions affecting her/his position.

No person shall hold a position over which a member of his/her immediate family exercises supervisory authority.

## **FORMER EMPLOYEES**

Former employees are not permitted on SUMMIT Early Learning property without prior permission. Current employees may not discuss any matters related to SUMMIT Early Learning with a former employee. Professional codes of conduct and confidentiality still apply even after employment is terminated. SUMMIT Early Learning will seek to hold former employees accountable for any violation of clients' and or staff members' rights of privacy. Further, SUMMIT Early Learning will pursue all legal remedies available for actions that slander, defame, and/or impugn the business reputation of the agency.

Former employees may be eligible for rehire if they meet the following criteria:

1. Gave appropriate notice prior to leaving employment. (This may be waived in cases of emergency medical circumstances that prevented giving notice.)
2. Returned all agency property prior to leaving employment.
3. Left in good standing.
4. Presented no issues following separation of employment, i.e., maintained professional codes of conduct, maintained confidentiality according to agency's Confidentiality Policy.

Employees who resign and leave SUMMIT Early Learning in good standing, and are rehired within three years of their resignation date, will be placed at the benefit year level where they were when previously employed.

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

The Performance Evaluation should be a positive growth experience for the employee and supervisor. Performance Evaluations will be used to evaluate the entire period of employment since the employee's last evaluation.

Performance Evaluations will be based strictly on job performance. Job descriptions will be used as the basis for the evaluation. At new employee orientation, all employees will be given an opportunity to discuss their job descriptions to ensure that each employee understands the responsibilities and tasks.

Performance Evaluations will be used as a foundation to establish goals for the employee. Employees will be encouraged to develop short- and long-term goals for themselves and to discuss their goals with their supervisor.

Employees will be asked to complete a self-evaluation prior to the performance evaluation meeting. Supervisors will also solicit input from other employees who work closely with the employee being evaluated. Following the provisional period, Performance Evaluations may be conducted annually for each employee. Before the Performance Evaluation is presented to the employee, it will be reviewed and approved by the evaluating supervisor's superior. Employees must acknowledge receipt of the Performance Evaluation by signing the form to indicate that they have received a copy.

Any employee who refuses to sign acknowledging receipt of the Performance Evaluation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Performance Evaluations will be placed in the employee's HR file.

## **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Employee recognition is the responsibility of the SUMMIT Early Learning Management Team. Recognition will be related to years of service or individual site achievements. Employees are recognized for years of service beginning at five years and every five years thereafter. Employee recognition is discretionary.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION/PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURES**

Employees of SUMMIT Early Learning have the right to the airing and consideration of grievances. Grievances are understood to include conflicts with other persons involved in the program as well as dissatisfaction with administrative procedures and policies. Details and further information can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

## **ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND GRATUITIES**

Employees of SUMMIT Early Learning are prohibited from accepting gifts, money, services, or gratuities from clients, vendors, contractors, and all other persons doing business with SUMMIT Early Learning.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Disciplinary action in one of the following forms will be taken when an employee breaks specific rules, regulations, or policies, or does not comply with certain requests or directions: Warning (verbal or written)

- Returning to Provisional Status (written)
- Suspension (written)
- Demotion (written)
- Dismissal for Cause (written)

In administering disciplinary actions, SUMMIT Early Learning will seek to maintain reasonable consistency and equity in taking action in comparable cases. However, a prescribed schedule of offenses and penalties cannot be applied mechanically to this end. Except in cases of gross misconduct, employees will be given adequate warning concerning their performance and opportunities to learn and apply new behaviors. Employees have the

right to follow problem solving procedures in the face of any disciplinary action, except in the case of dismissal.

Dismissal for Cause can occur if an employee has been found to commit one of the following activities: malfeasance in the organization, falsification of agency records, personal unsuitability, poor work habits, unsatisfactory job performance, detrimental behavior, insubordination, policy violations, or other causes that do not promote the effectiveness of SUMMIT Early Learning.

## **ABUSE CHARGES AGAINST STAFF**

SUMMIT Early Learning is committed to protecting the safety of all children enrolled in all service programs administered by the agency. Detailed procedures that are to be followed when faced with suspected abuse of enrolled children by employees are found in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Under the Child Protective Services Act, employees are required to report any suspected abuse of children by another employee to Children and Youth Services, followed by reporting it to the CEO. Employees who do not report suspected abuse are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

SUMMIT Early Learning has established an honest and ethical work environment that encourages open discussion and discourse about agency operations and services. Employees are covered by the Pennsylvania Whistleblower Law, which protects employees from retribution or retaliation if an employee makes a good faith report or is about to make a report about alleged wrongdoing or waste within SUMMIT Early Learning.

A whistleblower is a person who witnesses or has evidence of wrongdoing or waste while employed and who makes a good faith report of the wrongdoing or waste, verbally or in writing, to one of the person's superiors or to the vice president of the Board of Directors.

The following represent wrongdoing or waste at SUMMIT Early Learning: theft or misappropriation of assets, including fund, furniture, fixtures, equipment, or supplies; embezzlement, forgery, or kickbacks; improper hazardous waste disposal; tax issues affecting the organization; abuse of children or families served; discrimination; sexual harassment; or violation of employment standards of conduct. Details and procedures can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

## **TERMINATION**

Termination shall not require prior verbal or written disciplinary action. SUMMIT Early Learning is an "at-will" employer and may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without cause and without notice. This policy is to be used as a guide for employees, but is not inclusive of the reasons or causes of termination from employment.

Termination of employment occurs when there is cause for dismissal in one or more of the following areas: malfeasance in the organization, falsification of agency records, personal

unsuitability, poor work habits, unsatisfactory job performance, detrimental behavior, insubordination, policy violations, or other causes that do not promote the effectiveness of SUMMIT Early Learning.

Causes for involuntary termination include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unsatisfactory provisional period
- Falsifying or misusing records, including application
- Violation of confidentiality rules
- Theft or misuse of agency funds, equipment, or property
- Absence from work without notification and/or approval as per related policies
- Discourteous treatment of the public, clients, or co-workers
- Inappropriate behavior
- Non-performance of duties resulting in injury to the agency, children, families, sub-contractors, vendors, or employees
- Being abusive to or neglectful of children, parents, or employees
- Violation of the Substance Abuse Control Policy
- Failure to submit required documentation within mandated time frame
- Neglect of duty or refusal to comply with directives of supervisor
- Misuse of leave policies
- Insubordination
- Receipt of two suspensions for the same infraction during any 12-month period
- Failure to implement job specifics
- Failure to return to work following a leave of absence
- Failure to meet deadlines as presented by supervisor
- Failure to maintain compliance with child care licensing regulations and/or other applicable federal, state, or local statutes or Professional Development Organization Standards
- Policy violations while on disciplinary probation

Notification of termination may be written or verbal. Verbal notification will be followed by written confirmation. For Head Start/Early Head Start employees, termination is an action approved by the Board of Directors and Policy Council.

## **SLEEPING ON DUTY**

Sleeping during working hours is prohibited for all employees. Any employee who is found to be sleeping while on duty will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Sleeping on duty is cause for immediate termination for any employee responsible for the direct supervision of children as this behavior results in a failure to provide appropriate supervision of children and is a safety issue.

## **RESIGNATIONS**

Resignation is a voluntary act to end employment. Exempt staff and professional level staff are required to provide a written notice of at least four weeks prior to resignation; paraprofessional positions are required to provide a written notice of at least 10 working days. If an employee does not provide the required advance notice or fails to work the remaining time frame, the employee may be ineligible for rehire.

In certain circumstances, a resigning employee may be told that he/she does not need to report to duty during the notice period. The resigning employee will be notified in writing and will be paid her/his regularly scheduled hours up to the scheduled date of resignation but would not need to report to work.

### **Job Abandonment**

Employees will be considered to have abandoned their position and have permanently separated themselves from employment for reasons such as:

- Failing to report to work or contact their supervisor for two consecutive workdays.
- Walking off the job prior to the end of the assigned work period without permission from their supervisor.
- Leaving work prior to arranged coverage substitute's arrival when a partial day of leave is requested. If the arranged coverage does not show, the employee may not leave until other coverage is arranged or an onsite supervisor indicates that it is permitted, after confirming that ratios can still be met.
- Failing to return from any type of approved leave of absence according to the leave request/approval.

Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible for rehire.

# **PAY PRACTICES**

## **PAYDAY AND WAGES**

The agency work week begins on Saturday at 12:01 a.m. and ends on Friday at midnight. Employees are routinely paid every other Friday

All employees are required to utilize the electronic time keeping/payroll system. If an employee misses clocking in or out, the employee must notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible. The supervisor will manually enter the time into the system. Employees who repeatedly miss clocking in or out will be subject to disciplinary action. Detailed procedures and guidelines can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Salaries are reviewed on an annual basis, and SUMMIT Early Learning is committed to providing annual increases when feasible. The Board of Directors will establish annual increases based on affordability, cost-of-living factors, and organizational ability to hire and retain competent employees. The Board of Directors must approve all salary adjustments; Policy Council must approve salary adjustments for Head Start and Early Head Start employees.

## **PAYCHECK DEDUCTIONS**

SUMMIT Early Learning follows applicable regulations including, but not limited to the Fair Labor Standards Act when taking deductions (taxes, benefits, and other optional deductions) from employee's paychecks.

Employees who terminate employment and have an active payroll deduction for voluntary purposes are expected to pay the remaining balance in full.

## **HOURS OF ATTENDANCE/WORK SCHEDULES/CALENDARS**

Employees will be advised of their regularly scheduled hours at the time of hire and will be provided with a calendar established for their particular program. Hours of attendance have been carefully planned, and employees are required to work the hours and days for which they have been scheduled.

With prior management approval, a non-exempt employee who regularly works less than 40 hours/week may work up to 40 hours/week. Prior management approval is also required for a non-exempt employee to work over 40 hours/week. Non-exempt employees who work beyond regular hours without prior management approval will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Regular work days are Monday through Friday. All offices are open at least eight hours each week day, typically 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. Offices are closed on designated holidays. Program hours and individual class times are established by the management staff and may vary by site. Evening and weekend home visits and family meetings may be necessary to meet family needs, as specified by supervisors.

An employee unable to report to work for any reason should notify his/her immediate supervisor **prior** to his/her scheduled starting time. Direct notification from the employee is preferred, but a report from a family member or friend is acceptable in limited circumstances. For employees in positions that require a substitute when absent, it is essential to speak directly with an in-charge person regarding an unplanned absence or send a text message and receive a return text indicating it was received, rather than leaving a voicemail or an e-mail message. An employee's failure to notify his/her immediate supervisor in a timely manner will be considered an unexcused absence and the employee will be subject to disciplinary action. Any employee absent for two consecutive days without notifying his/her supervisor will be considered to have abandoned his/her job and therefore resigned.

Non-exempt employees must seek prior approval for completing work assignments at home. Permission will only be granted in limited circumstances, as employees are afforded time during their scheduled work day to complete all tasks as assigned in their job description. Employees who find they cannot complete assignments during their scheduled work hours should discuss this with their immediate supervisor. Non-exempt employees who take work home without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All sites are required to maintain a Sign-Out Log Book. Staff assigned to the site must check in/check out. If staff leave during the work day, they indicate their destination and anticipated return time. Staff visiting another building sign in and out using the Visitor Log. Log Books are maintained by administrative assistants/site supervisors and are used to locate staff when they are working away from an office, as well as for safety and security purposes.

## **WORK BREAKS**

SUMMIT Early Learning makes every effort to provide regularly scheduled Meal or Break periods for employees.

For classroom employees, the break is scheduled after approximately four hours but no more than five hours of continuous time with children. Child care employees working more than five hours with children must have a break. For non-classroom employees the break is typically around the lunch period each day. For transportation and split shift employees, the break is scheduled between required work hours.

Breaks are not to be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work day. Breaks are scheduled and approved by supervisory staff and are not at the discretion of the employee.

While SUMMIT Early Learning strives to provide regular meal and break periods to employees, there may be times when, due to enrollment, employee absences, and other business needs, employees may be told by their supervisor that their meal or break period is being postponed, shortened or canceled on a given day. Maintaining required ratios at all times and complying with deadlines throughout the agency is of critical importance and employees are required to work as assigned to ensure ratios are maintained and deadlines are met.

Meal or break periods of 20 minutes or more in length will be unpaid; non-exempt employees are required to clock in and out for these break periods.

## **HOLIDAYS**

SUMMIT Early Learning will be closed for designated holidays. From the start of employment, full- and part-time employees will be paid for their regularly scheduled hours for the day on which SUMMIT Early Learning is closed for a holiday, if that day falls within their work calendar.

## **FLEX TIME**

The agency supports the use of occasional flexible scheduling of work hours to accommodate the needs of the agency and employee. Flex time may be worked or taken off with the supervisor's approval within the regular weekly hours an employee is expected to work. Non-exempt employees may not work more than 40 hours/week, without special permission in limited circumstances. Classroom staff may not use flex time scheduling during "child hours." Full days absent from work must be used as days off, not flex time scheduling. Repeatedly using flex time on Mondays or Fridays is not permitted.

## **OVERTIME**

Employees will be notified, on their Job Description and in their letter of appointment at the time of hire or transfer to a new position, whether they are classified as exempt or non-exempt as determined by the Fair Labor Standards Act. The policy addresses payment for overtime for non-exempt employees.

Overtime occurs when a non-exempt employee works over 40 hours in a pay week. Paid time off, sick times, and holiday pay do not count towards calculating hours worked per week.

The nature of the duties and responsibilities of some non-exempt employees may require occasional overtime work. Overtime work should be considered an exceptional situation.

All overtime work must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to working any overtime hours. In cases when obtaining prior approval is not possible, such as situations involving late pick up of children or other emergency or unforeseen situations, the employee must inform his/her immediate supervisor of the situation as soon as possible following the overtime hours. Employees who do not seek prior approval for working overtime will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Non-exempt employees are specifically prohibited from doing work at home without prior approval. Approval will only be granted in limited circumstances with specific regard to whether the work will create an overtime pay situation.

If a non-exempt employee is required to work overtime hours, the employee will receive monetary compensation for the additional hours worked at the rate of time and one half the employee's regular hourly rate of pay as prescribed by applicable wage and hour laws.

## **WORK-RELATED EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

SUMMIT Early Learning understands that employees may incur business expenses while performing their job responsibilities. The agency will reimburse allowable expenses. When requesting reimbursement for purchases and/or travel, employees will be required to complete an Expense/Travel Reimbursement Form, approved by their supervisor, and submit it to the Fiscal Department. Employees must attach original receipts to the Expense/Travel Reimbursement Form. Failure to submit an Expense/Travel Reimbursement Form and/or original receipts in a timely manner may result in denial of reimbursement.

Employees who fail to complete or falsify the Expense/Travel Reimbursement Form may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and possible criminal penalties. Failure to attach original receipts will result in a delay and/or denial of reimbursement of expenses.

### **Travel-Related Expenses**

- **Local:** Employees who are on approved agency business or attending conferences, workshops, and meetings will be reimbursed for travel, including mileage, tolls, and parking. Mileage will be paid from the employee's usual work site to the designated site. Employees must receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor in order to receive payment for these expenses. Mileage will be reimbursed according to the current mileage reimbursement rate.
- **Outside Local Area:** Employees who travel outside of the local area will be reimbursed for travel expenses, overnight accommodations, meals, tips, and other costs necessitated by travel. Employees traveling overnight will be reimbursed for meals up to a maximum allowed amount per day. In some circumstances, employees may be able to receive advance payment of these expenses.

Non-exempt employees who are traveling on approved agency business will be compensated for the time spent traveling provided the travel occurs during normal working hours. If travel occurs at times other than normal working hours, the employee must receive prior approval for the travel in order to receive payment. Employees will not be compensated for time spent commuting to and from work.

## **DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Direct deposit is the preferred method for issuing of paychecks and reimbursement checks. Information is provided to new employees during HR orientation.

## **VACATION/HOLIDAY CLUB**

A Vacation Club and/or Holiday Club are available for SUMMIT Early Learning employees. Employees can specify payroll deductions toward the employee's individual club. Notification and details regarding these clubs are issued by the HR Department on a yearly basis.

# **BENEFITS**

## **HEALTH, DENTAL, AND VISION INSURANCE**

Rates for individual health insurance through agency plans are established by the Board of Directors. Co-shares toward family coverage are also established by the Board.

Individual coverage for both dental and vision insurance is provided by the agency through the Board-approved plan.

Employee co-shares are by payroll deduction. Enrollment election is limited to the annual open enrollment period or when a new employee meets eligibility. Once made, the election is generally fixed for the remainder of the year, unless a qualifying event occurs. Information on qualifying events is available from the HR Department. Upon termination from employment, SUMMIT Early Learning follows Federal Comprehensive Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) regulations as applicable.

### **Eligibility/Guidelines**

- Full time employee may enroll at the end of the first two months of employment; coverage becomes effective on the first day of the following month; if coverage is not elected the employee must wait until the next open enrollment, unless a qualifying event occurs.
- SUMMIT Early Learning complies with Affordable Care Act (ACA) regulations and employer reporting requirements.
- Employees on unpaid leave (except Family and Medical Leave) may not continue on insurances unless the premium is fully paid by the employee. Full payment must be received by the HR Department by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month, or the insurance will be cancelled.

## **COBRA**

Under a federal law called the Comprehensive Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986, most employers sponsoring group health plans must offer an extension of health coverage (called "continuation coverage") to their employees at group rates under certain circumstances when coverage would otherwise end. SUMMIT Early Learning abides by the requirements of COBRA. The circumstances that qualify for an extension of coverage are called *qualifying events*. Below is a list of qualifying events for yourself, your spouse, and your dependent children.

### **A. Qualifying Events for Yourself**

1. A reduction in hours worked.
2. Termination of employment.

### **B. Qualifying Events for Your Spouse**

1. Death of employee (yourself).
2. Termination of your employment.
3. A reduction in employee's hours worked.
4. Divorce or legal separation.
5. Employee becomes eligible for Medicare.

### C. Qualifying Events for a Dependent Child

1. Death of employee-parent.
2. Termination of parent's employment.
3. A reduction in parent's hours worked.
4. Parent's divorce or legal separation.
5. The dependent ceases to be a dependent child under the health plan.

You or a member of your family must inform HR of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status within 60 days of the event. SUMMIT Early Learning is responsible for notifying you or your family of continuation options within 14 days of your death, termination of employment, reduction in hours, or Medicare entitlement. If you do elect continuation coverage, SUMMIT Early Learning is required to give you coverage that, as of the time coverage is being provided, is identical to the coverage provided under the plan to similarly situated employees or family members for whom a qualifying event has not occurred.

COBRA requires that coverage be continued for a maximum of 18 months if you lose group coverage due to termination of employment or a reduction in hours. A second qualifying event, such as divorce or a dependent child losing dependent status, may occur to your dependents while coverage is already being continued. If so, the continued dependents will be eligible for additional months of continued coverage, up to a maximum of 36 months from the date group coverage was first terminated. If group coverage is terminated because of the death of the employee, divorce, legal separation, the employee's entitlement to Medicare, or dependent child losing dependent status, coverage may be continued for 36 months. Your continuation coverage may be cut short for any of the following reasons:

1. SUMMIT Early Learning no longer provides group health coverage to any of its employees.
2. The premiums for your continuation coverage are not paid.
3. You become covered under Medicare or another group health plan.

For additional information about continuation coverage, please contact the HR Department.

### DISCOUNTED TUITION FOR EMPLOYEES' CHILDREN

SUMMIT Early Learning employees are provided discounted childcare tuition. An employee is prohibited from providing direct care to his/her child, except with CEO approval. Discounts are as follows:

- **Full-time employees:** 50% toward the cost for up to two children
- **Part-time employees:** 25% toward the cost of up to two children.

#### Terms and Conditions

- Full- and part-time employees are eligible immediately upon employment.
- Employees requesting child care will move to the top of the waiting list for a particular center on a first-come, first-served basis.
- No sibling scholarship is available to employees receiving the SUMMIT Early Learning child care benefit.

- If an employee is eligible and vouchers are available for government subsidized child care, the employee receives subsidy toward the parent fee at 50%.
- Employee share of child care payment must be paid through a biweekly payroll deduction.
- Employees on leave (except for Family and Medical Leave) may not receive this benefit.

SUMMIT Early Learning further reserves the right to unenroll an employee's child(ren) if the employee's performance is affected by having her/his child(ren) at the center. Staff are employed to perform a specific job and must not allow themselves to be distracted by having their child(ren) enrolled in the program. Employees must not interfere with the supervision or authority of their child(ren)'s classroom teacher.

## **RETIREMENT PLAN: 403(b) THRIFT PLAN**

SUMMIT Early Learning provides a 403(b) Thrift Retirement Plan that allows employees ages 21 or older, to contribute pre-tax dollars to retirement savings and provides for an employer match of 100% of employee contributions up to 4% of salary.

### **Eligibility: Employee Contributions**

Employees scheduled to work regular hours of 20 or more/week from the first day of employment are eligible to participate in the 403(b) Thrift benefit. Minimum contribution level is \$10/pay. Maximum contribution is established by IRS regulations. Contributions must be made via payroll deduction.

### **Eligibility: Employer Match**

Employees must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive the employer match: employed at least one year and worked at least 1,000 hours in that year; age 21 or older.

Enrollment information, plan documents, and related forms are available from the HR Department.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION/EDUCATION ASSISTANCE**

### **Category I Employees (Position requirement of coursework)**

Education assistance is available from a variety of funding sources, and the completion of coursework may be required for some positions. Priorities for financial support of college coursework relate to the qualifications of the positions and normally require the employee to be enrolled in a degree program. Financial support of college coursework is contingent on available funding. Detailed procedures regarding coursework can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

### **Category II Employees (Non position requirement)**

Reimbursement is provided for tuition expenses for an undergraduate or graduate 3-credit course up to \$500 or actual tuition, whichever is less. The course must be in an employee's professional field of employment. Prior approval by the CEO is required. Regular full-time employees are eligible to apply.

- Funds will be allocated by the CEO annually, based on availability, by program. Funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis each year.
- Employees must submit a copy of their course registration to the CEO at the time of registration, including total course cost and their request.
- Following completion of the course, reimbursement will be made for courses receiving a grade of at least a C grade or equivalent.
- An individual staff person will usually only receive \$500/fiscal year. At the CEO's discretion, an employee could receive more than \$500/year if the total allocated funds for college coursework were not expended. Additional awards will be made based on additional course requests, not higher funding for original course request.
- Periodically, special grants may be awarded to specific programs supporting additional or greater tuition benefits. Staff will be informed of these opportunities and may receive information from supervisors upon request.

## **ACCIDENTS/WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

All employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance and must seek treatment for accidents and injuries as required by the plan. Employees will be required to provide information regarding accidents or injuries to their immediate supervisor.

In order to protect an employee's claim for compensation and/or minimize an employee liability, all injuries or accidents occurring during employment, no matter how minor, must be immediately reported to HR. Failure to report workplace injuries in the timeframe and manner required by the Workers' Compensation Insurance Provider may result in the denial of the employee's Workers' Compensation Claim.

A list of approved Workers' Compensation Doctors and Certified Medical Professionals is posted at all work sites.

Employees who are placed on Workers' Compensation will be notified in writing of the status of their position, status of health insurance benefits, and their responsibilities while on Workers' Compensation. Being out of work on Workers' Compensation for a workplace injury does not guarantee that the employee's position will be held for any length of time. Employment status will not affect a claim with Workers' Compensation and the employee should continue to communicate with them regarding the injury and treatment status.

Employees are required to provide SUMMIT Early Learning with regular status updates, plans for procedures and timetables for anticipated return to work. If the employee does not remain in regular contact with the SUMMIT Early Learning HR Department, it may not be possible for SUMMIT Early Learning to hold the position for that employee.

Employees released to temporary “light duty” as per the Workers’ Compensation Insurer may not be able to return to work; a “light duty” position will not be created specifically for an employee to return to work. In this case, SUMMIT Early Learning HR staff will notify the Workers’ Compensation Insurer that light duty positions do not exist and the employee will then be advised by the Worker’s Compensation Insurer/Provider as to the status of his/her claim.

Employees placed on Worker’s Compensation may also be eligible for FMLA Leave. In such instances, a Worker’s Compensation absence may also run concurrently with available FMLA leave time. If both leave types are being used concurrently, the employee will be eligible to return to his/her same or equivalent position returning from the Worker’s Compensation Leave within the time frame of the concurrently running FMLA Leave. However, should an employee’s Worker’s Compensation Leave time be greater than any available FMLA Leave, the employee’s position would not be protected and he/she would only be eligible for return under the requirements of Worker’s Compensation Laws.

## **PTO (PAID TIME OFF)**

Paid Time Off (PTO) is provided in order for employees to have paid time away from work. Employees earn PTO on a monthly basis, and it must be earned before it is used. It is based on employment status, length of service and days/year of work calendar. While provisional employees are eligible to earn PTO, the benefit may not be used until the completion of the first three months of employment. All employees, except for short-term temps and substitutes, are eligible to earn PTO. Non-exempt employees may use PTO by the ¼ hour; exempt employees must use by a full day.

SUMMIT Early Learning has the right to deny an employee’s PTO request for any reason, including but not limited to: other employees have requested the same time off; employee’s performance is not satisfactory and time off would disrupt corrective action efforts; special agency events or activities would necessitate employee’s presence. Employees are discouraged from paying for or scheduling vacations until they have received approval. Requests for 10 or more consecutive days must be in writing and approved by the CEO or HR Director.

When an employee resigns, he/she will be paid for any unused PTO. PTO may be forwarded each year as follows:

- 10 days for employees at or above Level H of the Salary Scale
- 5 days for all other employees

Details and procedures can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

The following charts outline PTO earnings.

## PTO CHART (245-260 days/year)

Based on 8 hours/day

### LEVEL A THROUGH H (including Exempt positions)

Year of employment	Earned per month	Months Earned	PTO Days Earned/Year
Year < 1	.75		
Year 1	.75	12	9
Year 2	1.25	12	15
Year 6	1.5	12	18
Year 10	1.75	12	21
Year 15	2	12	24
Year 20	2.33	12	28

### LEVEL I THROUGH S

Year of employment	Earned per month	Months Earned	PTO Days Earned/Year
Year < 1	.75		
Year 1	.75	12	9
Year 2	1	12	12
Year 4	1.25	12	15
Year 6	1.5	12	18
Year 10	1.75	12	21
Year 15	2	12	24
Year 20	2.33	12	28

Part-time 260-day Staff < 30 hours/week	Earned per month	PTO Days Earned/Year
Years 1 – 4	.5	6
Year 5 and more	1	12

### Pro-ration of PTO for employees on 240 and 220 days/year calendar

Calendar worked	Pro-rated PTO
240 days/year	90%
220 days/year	85%

Employees who work 200 or less days	Earned per working month	Months Earned	PTO Days/Year
190-195 Days Part year (Pre-K Count Program) 9 month	.55	9	5
190-200 Days/year Full year (HS Stretch Calendar)	.5	12	6

## SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is time off with pay for periods of personal or family illness or incapacity resulting from non-occupational or occupational injury, as well as for medical, dental, or optical examinations or treatments.

Sick leave may be used when the employee's illness or incapacity interferes with or makes it impossible for the employee to satisfactorily perform her/his assigned duties.

Absences that are due to illness must be reported by direct notification to the employee's supervisor on the first day of absence. At any time, a physician's excuse may be required; for consecutive sick absences greater than four days a written excuse is required. The employee's failure to report her/his absence could result in termination. Excessive absence, even though reported and documented by a physician, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Sick time is accrued on a monthly basis, must be accrued before it is used, and is available for use from the start of employment. Non-exempt employees may use sick leave by the ¼ hour; exempt employees must use by the full day.

<b>Calendar worked</b>	<b>Accrued per month</b>	<b>Months Earned</b>	<b>Total Number of Sick Days/Year</b>
190-192 Part year (Pre-K Counts Program) 9 months	.67	9	6
190-200 days/year full year (HS Stretch Calendar)	.5	12	6
220 days/year	.58	12	7
240 days/year (EHS Home Visitors)	.67	12	8
246-260 days/year	.75	12	9

Accrued sick leave can be carried forward each year. Accrued sick leave carries no monetary value upon termination.

## SICK DAY TRANSFER PROGRAM

The Sick Day Transfer Program is a voluntary and confidential option that permits the donation of sick days to a co-worker who cannot return to work because of a serious, unplanned, prolonged illness or injury (not related to a work-related injury with Workers' Compensation) that has been documented by a physician. In order to donate sick days, an employee must have at least 20 accumulated sick days. Sick pool donated time may not result in a medical leave of absence lasting longer than 12 weeks. An employee may use up to 60 donated days.

To be eligible to receive transferred sick days, an employee must have exhausted all of his/her own earned paid leave time. A continued absence from work, as documented by a physician, is required. The employee must request a donation from the program. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Sick days cannot be transferred retroactively once an employee has returned to work. Employees will be informed when there is a need for sick day transfers.

## **VOLUNTARY WORK YEAR REDUCTIONS**

On a voluntary basis, some full-time employees are eligible to request unpaid leave beyond their PTO. Details can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

## **UNPAID TIME OFF**

In an unusual situation, a supervisor may approve up to four unpaid days within a year if all earned sick time and PTO are exhausted. Details can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

# **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

The following Family and Medical Leave policy is designed to comply with the provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act Of 1993 (FMLA).

Employees who have been employed for at least one year and for at least 1,250 hours during the preceding 12-month period are eligible for Family and Medical Leave. For situations when an employee is not eligible for Family and Medical Leave, SUMMIT Early Learning will review business considerations and the individual circumstances involved.

Upon return from Family and Medical Leave, employees will return to the same or an equivalent position.

Employees must use all of their accrued paid sick leave and PTO in concert with Family and Medical Leave. The remainder of the leave will then consist of unpaid leave.

### **Reasons for Leave**

All employees who meet the applicable time-of-service requirements may be granted a total of 12 weeks of FMLA (during any 12-month period) for the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child and in order to care for the child
- The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition
- A serious health condition that renders the employee incapable of performing the functions of her/his job.

The entitlement to leave for a child's birth or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care will expire 12 months from the date of the birth or placement.

### **Application for Leave**

In all cases, an employee requesting leave must complete the Family and Medical Leave Request Form and return it to HR. The completed form must state the reasons for the leave, the duration of the leave, and the starting and ending dates of the leave.

### **Notice of Leave**

An employee intending to take Family and Medical Leave because of an expected birth or placement, or because of a planned medical treatment, must submit an application for leave at least 30 days before the leave is to begin. If leave is to begin within 30 days, an employee must give notice to HR as soon as the necessity for the leave arises.

### **Medical Certification of Leave**

The form for leave based on the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's spouse, child, or parent must be accompanied by a "Medical Certification Statement" completed by the applicable health care provider. The certification must state the date on which the health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, and the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition.

If the employee is needed to care for a spouse, child, or parent, the certification must so state along with an estimate of the amount of time the employee will be needed. If the employee has a serious health condition, the certification must state that the employee cannot perform the functions of her/his job.

### **Benefits Coverage During Leave**

During a period of Family and Medical Leave, an employee will be retained on the agency health plan under the same conditions that applied before the leave commenced. An employee who takes Family and Medical Leave will not lose any seniority or employment benefits that had accrued before the date leave began. However, an employee is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits that would have accrued as if he/she did not take the leave.

### **Restoration to Employment**

An employee eligible for Family and Medical Leave will be restored to her/his position or to a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. SUMMIT Early Learning cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to her/his original job. A determination as to whether a position is an “equivalent position” will be made by SUMMIT Early Learning.

### **Return from Leave**

If an employee wishes to return to work prior to the expiration of a Family and Medical Leave of absence, the employee must notify her/his supervisor at least five working days prior to the employee’s return. If an employee fails to return to work upon the expiration of a Family and Medical Leave of absence, his/her employment will be subjected to immediate termination unless an extension is granted.

## **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

An employee who needs time off due to the death of an immediate family member must notify his/her supervisor. With approval of the supervisor, regular employees are entitled to one to three days of bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member. If additional time off from work is requested and approved by the supervisor, PTO, sick time, or unpaid leave may be used up to a maximum of 10 days absent from work. Leave beyond 10 days will be considered by the CEO on a case-by-case basis.

An immediate family member is defined as spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling; and the child, parent, sibling, grandparent, or grandchild of the spouse or domestic partner. If time off is needed for individuals other than immediate family members as defined above, PTO, sick time, or unpaid leave may be requested.

## **JURY OR WITNESS DUTY**

When an employee receives notification to serve on jury duty, SUMMIT Early Learning will grant a leave, provided documentary proof of this notice is supplied. The employee will receive regular pay less jury duty fees received. Duration of jury duty is determined by the courts. When a leave of absence must be taken to answer a subpoena in court, SUMMIT Early Learning will recognize this leave without pay (or employee may use PTO). Proof of the subpoena must be submitted to HR.

## **MILITARY SERVICE LEAVE**

In accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Right Act (USERRA), SUMMIT Early Learning will not discriminate against any person in any employment action based upon military service, application for military service, and/or other military obligation.

Employees requiring leave under this policy must notify the HR department and their supervisor immediately upon receiving military orders that a Military Service Leave will be needed.

Employees returning from Military Service Leave will be returned to their former or comparable position. The returning employee's status, pay, and benefits will be the same upon return as they would have been had the employee not been called to active duty.

If qualifications for the former position have changed during the Military Service Leave, reasonable attempts will be made to retrain the returning employee so he/she may become qualified for the position.

Under Military Service Leave, an employee may use any/all available paid leave time in conjunction with the Military Service Leave.

If an employee is dishonorably discharged from military service, he/she is no longer protected under USERRA, and any and all rights guaranteed thereunder are forfeited.

## **CHILDREARING LEAVE**

An employee may request childrearing leave as a result of the birth or adoption of the employee's child(ren) that extends beyond 12 weeks. Regular full-time employees are eligible if they have been employed for at least 24 months with satisfactory Performance Evaluations. Leave will be granted for up to 40 weeks. Employees who return from this leave will be able to return to an equivalent position, and if feasible, the same location. Employees are required to contact their supervisor no less than two weeks prior to return from leave to confirm work plans. Failure to do so may result in discipline up and including termination of employment. Employees on leave longer than three months will not be advanced in benefit year at the start of the next employment period.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY**

In an occasional circumstance, unpaid leaves of absence may be taken for a variety of reasons, including educational or other personal purposes. While absence for illness and emergency situations may happen from time to time, employees will **not** be granted leave beyond their PTO and sick leave as a standard practice.

Emergency circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Leave without pay will only be granted in extenuating circumstances. Leave without pay **must** be approved in advance of the requested start date of the leave by the CEO. Requests must be submitted in writing. Employees will receive notice of the approval/denial for leave of absence in writing.

Leave without pay that has not been approved will be considered a voluntary termination.

# **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest may exist when the interests or concerns of any director, officer, or employee or said person's immediate family, or any party, group or organization in which said person holds a position as an employee, officer, director, or partner, may be seen as competing with the interests or concerns of SUMMIT Early Learning.

### **Disclosure**

Each member of the Board of Directors and management employees of SUMMIT Early Learning must disclose in writing to the Board any possible conflict of interest, and this disclosure must be updated annually. All Board members and management staff will be asked to sign a "Conflict of Interest" disclosure statement at the beginning of each fiscal year. At the same time, a notification will go out to all employees who will be asked to inform the CEO of any conflicts of interest. Annual disclosure information will be kept by the HR Director.

At non-management and non-Board levels within the organization, a conflict of interest could develop, even though policies are followed. Examples are the employment of relatives, the hiring of businesses owned by employee family members, and other similar situations. Non-management employees may be less aware of conflict of interest policies, so it is the responsibility of the CEO to identify potential conflicts of interest and take the appropriate steps to ensure compliance.

### **Employee Compliance**

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of the CEO to decide when procedural changes, supervisory assignments, or other administrative/operational changes are needed to address conflicts of interest.

## **EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

The following standards of conduct apply to all SUMMIT Early Learning employees, consultants, volunteers, members of governing bodies, as well as employees and consultants from any other organizations in partnership with SUMMIT Early Learning in the delivery of early care and education services.

### **Interactions with Others**

1. You will practice open-mindedness and respect diversity; you will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family, and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), genetic information, and veteran status.
2. You will uphold the agency's confidentiality policy, stated as follows: Employees of SUMMIT Early Learning will not disclose confidential information, belonging to or obtained through their affiliation with SUMMIT Early Learning, to any person, including their relatives, friends, former employees, and business and professional associates, unless SUMMIT Early Learning has authorized disclosure. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law. Failure to

adhere to this policy will result in discipline, up to and including separation of employment or service with SUMMIT Early Learning.

3. You will uphold and support parental confidence in our responsibility to maintain the physical and emotional safety of children in our custody.
4. You must have an interest in and concern for children and their families, especially low-income children and children with disabilities.
5. You will implement positive strategies to support children's well-being and prevent and address challenging behavior.
6. You will not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children by any means, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Using corporal punishment.
  - b. Using isolation to discipline a child.
  - c. Binding or tying a child to restrict movement or taping a child's mouth.
  - d. Using or withholding food as a punishment or reward.
  - e. Using toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child.
  - f. Using any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, or corrupting a child.
  - g. Physically or sexually abusing a child.
  - h. Denying basic needs.
  - i. Using any form of verbal abuse, including profane, sarcastic language, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or child's family.
  - j. Using physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment or reward.
7. You will establish and maintain appropriate staff/client relationships.
8. You will never leave a child alone or unsupervised while under your care.
9. You are prohibited from using any form of threatening or harassing behavior with staff, parents, volunteers, and others in or related to the workplace, and you are not expected to tolerate similar behavior toward yourself from others.

### **Laws and Regulations**

1. You will follow all government regulations and guidelines as promulgated by applicable government and regulatory agencies.
2. You are prohibited from any fraudulent activity, including falsification of any agency records or documents.
3. You must abide by certain political lobbying restrictions: Federal employees and employees from programs funded in total or in part by federal dollars are prohibited from lobbying federal, state, or local lawmakers during work time or with federal grant dollars. This prohibition includes:
  - a. Contacting lawmakers about issues or concerns while on the job.
  - b. Using agency supplies or equipment to prepare materials for distribution, the purpose of which is political lobbying.
  - c. Scheduling meetings between lawmakers and staff for the purpose of attempting to influence voting behaviors, i.e., particular bills, regulations, etc., during agency paid time.
  - d. Meeting as staff to prepare strategies regarding legislation, regulations, etc., during agency paid time.
4. You are to inform the HR Department, during any period of employment, if you are the subject of any of the following within or outside of the workplace:
  - a. Criminal or civil charges and convictions
  - b. Felony charges or convictions
  - c. Investigations of child abuse OR founded or indicated child abuse situations

Failure to immediately report this information to the HR Department may be grounds for dismissal. You understand and accept that SUMMIT Early Learning may choose to separate you temporarily from employment during the disposition of certain serious criminal or civil charges.

5. You are prohibited from accepting gifts and/or gratuities as stated in this Employee Handbook.
6. You are prohibited from any behavior that appears to represent a conflict of interest, including but not limited to using your position for purposes that are, or give the appearance of being, motivated by a desire to gain for yourself or those with whom you have family, business, or other ties.
7. You will not report to work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol and will not use illegal drugs or alcohol on the job or during work hours.
8. You are prohibited from smoking at any time on all SUMMIT Early Learning premises and all agency-owned vehicles, and personal vehicles during transportation of clients.
9. You are prohibited from participating in partisan political activities as stated and amended in the Hatch Act. A copy of the Hatch Act is provided at the time of hire.

#### **Workplace Conduct Standards Not Previously Addressed**

1. You will accept supervision and not behave insubordinately.
2. You will be punctual, dependable, cooperative, alert, flexible, and a good listener.
3. You will strive to be motivated, resourceful, creative, self-confident, warm, and have a good energy level.
4. You will support and participate in a **teamwork** approach to the delivery of services and the overall management of the organization.
5. You will adhere to the highest standards of professionalism while on the job or representing the organization to clients and/or the community.
6. You will report any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of other staff or volunteers. It is your personal responsibility to immediately report your observations to your supervisor, HR or the CEO.
7. You will be able to perform your job according to “Essential Requirements” and all amendments and addendums thereto as defined in individual job descriptions.
8. You will sign a statement indicating that you have received the Employee Handbook when it is distributed.
9. You will follow standard health precautions with regard to site sanitation and infectious disease control as established by the agency.
10. You are prohibited from having any weapons, firearms, and ammunition on any SUMMIT Early Learning premises or where SUMMIT Early Learning services are performed.
11. You will not misuse your official position to accomplish improper purposes (malfeasance).
12. You will not discredit the agency through personal behavior considered socially and morally unacceptable that may become known to SUMMIT Early Learning after beginning employment (as determined by PA DHS licensing regulations).
13. You are not permitted to bring your children/grandchildren to direct service sites unless they are enrolled. (Children of staff can attend special program “family-related” activities with permission from the supervisor.)
14. You will not make public statements under the auspices of any agency title without the CEO’s approval.

15. You will not take or use agency equipment or supplies for personal benefit without permission from the CEO or designee, who will establish an appropriate level of compensation.
16. You have a right to expect appropriate, respectful, and reasonable behavior from SUMMIT Early Learning clients, i.e., parents/caregivers of enrolled children.

### **Penalties for Violation of Standards of Conduct**

Penalties or disciplinary action of employees, consultants, and volunteers related to the violation of the aforementioned Standards of Conduct will be addressed through implementation of the disciplinary procedures. Depending on the standard violated, discipline will vary from coaching to immediate termination of employment. If a volunteer, consultant, or employee of a partner organization violates this code of conduct, he or she may jeopardize continued association with SUMMIT Early Learning. If a client (parent or guardian of enrolled children) behaves inappropriately, disrespectfully, or unreasonably, services may be discontinued at the discretion of the CEO.

## **CONTROL OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS IN WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Employees are required to practice standard precautions when dealing with body fluids in the workplace in order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Standard precautions are posted at work sites, and employees will receive periodic information on the control of blood-borne pathogens in the work environment.

## **E-MAIL AND INTERNET USAGE**

Electronic mail, instant messaging, Internet access, and voice mail are business tools provided by SUMMIT Early Learning, and their use should be limited to business applications. Any inappropriate use as determined by management will be cause for disciplinary action. SUMMIT Early Learning recognizes that employees will occasionally need to send and receive personal emails during their work hours. However, personal use of electronic mail and Internet access should occur predominantly during non-work hours. Except for infrequent and brief occasions, staff are not to use the internet for "streaming" for non-business purposes. Examples of "streaming" are listening to music on local radio stations and sites such as Pandora.

Because the agency owns the equipment, no employee should have a complete expectation of privacy in e-mail and voice mail transmissions. Every employee has a responsibility to use electronic communications in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. Use of electronic resources for non-work purposes is discouraged and monitored accordingly. Unlawful activity and inappropriate use is prohibited and may be cause for disciplinary action. All employees must sign an Acceptable Use Policy.

## **CELL PHONE/PERSONAL PHONE CALL POLICY**

SUMMIT Early Learning recognizes that employees will occasionally need to place and receive personal phone calls during their work hours. Agency phones or personal cell phones may be used for the occasional call. Excessive personal calls during the work day, regardless of the phone used (personal or agency) is disruptive to others and a distraction from work

responsibilities. The agency encourages a reasonable standard of limiting personal calls during the work time to emergencies or essential personal business and in keeping all such calls brief. Employees are expected to make personal calls on non-work time when possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of this policy.

Cell phone/communication device use is not permitted while supervising children (either in the classroom or playground), in meetings or trainings, or any other group activities. Cell phone use is not permitted while driving any vehicle on agency time unless the vehicle is stopped and parked in a safe location. All personal cell phones and other communication devices are required to be turned off or kept on silent mode at all times while employees are on duty.

If employee use of a personal cell phone causes disruption or loss in productivity, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **CYBERSPACE IDENTITIES**

Employees are strictly prohibited from posting information and/or photographs related to SUMMIT Early Learning, its employees, and/or the children/families served by SUMMIT Early Learning on any non-SUMMIT Early Learning website and/or blog, including but not limited to social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. All electronic communication between staff and clients must be transparent.

Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Further, SUMMIT Early Learning will pursue all legal remedies available for actions in violation of this policy.

## **AGENCY EQUIPMENT**

Except in the ordinary course of performing duties, agency equipment assigned to employees may not be removed from SUMMIT Early Learning's premises without permission from a supervisor. Acceptable use and proper care of assigned equipment are expected. Excessive use of office equipment for personal use is prohibited, including agency computer equipment and cell phones. When an employee leaves SUMMIT Early Learning, the employee must return all agency property.

## **EMERGENCY/INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS**

In any emergency the safety and security of the children and employees are of the utmost concern. SUMMIT Early Learning requires that all employees act in a professional and calm manner in any emergency. Further, it is expected that all employees will attend to the safety and security of the children throughout an emergency scenario. Approval for working at alternate sites, including home, is considered the exception and must be pre-approved by supervisor. Agency closing due to inclement weather days will be determined by the CEO.

### **Inclement Weather Days**

#### **Non-Office Employees**

- **9 Month Employees (including School-based Employees):** The procedures will be distributed for each program year.

- **Head Start Stretch Calendar Employees:** The procedure will be distributed in the fall for the coming winter.
- **Home Visiting Employees:** Use flexible scheduling or PTO in inclement weather. Supervisors must be notified of plans on inclement weather days, i.e., if home visitor intends to complete home visits, use PTO, or work on a designated “make-up day” instead. With supervisor approval, staff may work part days at home or in the office, as long as scheduled visits can be made up at a later time.
- **Child Care Employees:** The child care program will not be closed except in the rare times that extreme weather conditions result in a state of emergency being declared. Closings due to inclement weather days will be determined by the CEO.

### **Office Employees**

Office staff is expected to report to work. They may use flex time or PTO to accommodate late arrivals, early departures, or if absent for a full day. SUMMIT Early Learning offices will not be closed unless extreme weather conditions prohibit the child care program from operating.

### **Other Emergencies**

Other situations, including but not limited to electrical power failure, lack of water, lack of heat or air conditioning, hazardous road conditions, or other situations that may endanger the safety or health of children and employees, may result in SUMMIT Early Learning facilities being closed at the discretion of the CEO. Employees will be advised of their obligations in these situations.

In the event of emergency closing in the middle of the day, employees will be instructed by supervisory staff as to their responsibilities during the emergency. Employees will be required to remain at the program facility as long as children are present. This may require employees to remain after normal closing hours. Employees must be mindful that compliance with licensing regulations must be maintained even in emergency situations. Employees will be informed by supervisory staff as to when they may go home. Employees may be required to go to another center to assist during an emergency closing. Employees who refuse to cooperate during an emergency situation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **BULLYING**

SUMMIT Early Learning will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps as needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying.

Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- **Physical bullying:** when one person engages in physical force against another such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.

- **Verbal bullying:** when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as belittling or calling another hurtful names.
- **Nonverbal or relational bullying:** when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- **Cyberbullying:** the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **WORKPLACE SAFETY/VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

SUMMIT Early Learning strives to provide a safe workplace for all employees. Employees will be held to the highest standards for following and enforcing safety policies and procedures. Employees are expected to set the best possible example and to be proactive regarding safety issues.

Employees must be keenly aware of their environment and persons who have entered any facility. Anyone who is not recognized should be questioned about the nature of her/his visit. Strangers should be escorted to the door. Any unusual incidents should be documented and brought to the attention of a supervisor immediately. If an employee is uncertain or feels jeopardized, he/she should seek the assistance of a supervisor or a co-worker.

When meeting one-on-one with a client, it should be done in a public place; if meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others.

Employees at SUMMIT Early Learning are required to inform the HR Department immediately if any of the following occurs: The employee is arrested for any crime listed below in column one or two; a Protection from Abuse (PFA) order has been filed by the employee or against the employee; any domestic situation or problem has developed that includes violence or the threat of violence; or a household member has been arrested for any of the crimes listed in column one or two of the following chart:

<b><u>Column 1</u></b>	<b><u>Column 2</u></b>
Criminal homicide	Illegal use or sale of drugs
Aggravated assault	Theft or stealing
Harassment	Stalking
Kidnapping	Disorderly conduct
Unlawful restraint	Threats of violence
Rape/ Statutory Rape	Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders
Deviate sexual intercourse	
Aggravated indecent assault	
Indecent assault	
Indecent exposure	
Concealing death of child born out of wedlock	
Endangering welfare of children	
Dealing in infant children	
Prostitution and related offenses	
Obscene and other sexual material	
Corruption of minors	
Sexual abuse of children	

Any situations involving a PFA may result in suspension from employment without pay until a copy of the PFA has been provided to the HR Department. Employees must report if they are being investigated for child abuse due to events/actions outside of the workplace.

Employees who hear about potential risks from other employees or families served should encourage the other party to speak with a site supervisor, as the information is necessary to maintain everyone's safety. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **WORKPLACE HARASSMENT**

### **What is workplace harassment?**

Workplace harassment is any unwelcome or unwanted conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or an aversion toward another person on the basis of any characteristic protected by law, which includes an individual's race, color, sex, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, disability, or other personal characteristic protected by law. A conduct is unwelcome if the employee did not solicit, instigate or provoke it, and the employee regarded the conduct as undesirable or offensive.

SUMMIT Early Learning provides a workplace free of discrimination. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, color, sex, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, disability, or other personal characteristic protected by law are not tolerated. Actions by an employee that are designed to threaten, intimidate, or bully another employee will not be tolerated. Overt and subtle harassment creates an offensive, hostile, and uncomfortable work environment and is strictly prohibited.

Harassment by any employee or by a client to an employee requires investigation. If harassment is found, the harasser will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination or loss of services.

### **Sexual Harassment**

SUMMIT Early Learning employees, volunteers, clients, and applicants have a right to a discrimination-free environment, including freedom from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment may be defined as, but is not limited to:

- Suggesting to an employee that submitting to sexual favors enhances employment opportunities and/or advancement.
- Threatening or insinuating that refusal to submit to sexual advance will adversely affect employment appraisal, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development.
- Offering unwelcome sexual advancement or flirtation.
- Using sexually degrading words.
- Offering sexually suggestive or erotic comments regarding a person's body or mannerisms.
- Displaying graphically sexual pictures and/or objects in the workplace.

Supervisors will maintain workplaces free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment policies shall be discussed with employees, ensuring that insulting and/or degrading sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

### **Harassment Complaint Procedure**

Workplace harassment complaints should be reported immediately to an employee's supervisor. If it is inappropriate to notify the supervisor, contact the CEO. Workplace harassment complaints will be investigated promptly, and all information will be kept confidential. Investigation results require the CEO's action and resolution.

### **Harassment Complaint Action**

Workplace harassment investigations confirming allegations require swift and prompt corrective action and disciplinary action or possible termination of employment of the offending party.

## **RETALIATION**

All employees are encouraged to uphold all rules, regulations, statutes, standards, and laws with which SUMMIT Early Learning is required to comply, and report violations to their supervisor, licensing authority, and/or appropriate government agency.

Employees are protected from any retaliatory actions when they make a report of harassment, discrimination or violation of local, state, federal laws and regulations. Any supervisor or employee that takes negative employment or disciplinary action against an employee because the employee is known or is suspected to have made a report of harassment, discrimination or violation of local, state, or federal laws and regulations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

SUMMIT Early Learning does not offer a formal Employee Assistance Plan but does offer staff training on mental health topics and will offer employees individual or group counseling when faced with extremely difficult situations while on the job or as a result of the job. Employees should speak to their supervisor or the HR director if mental health services are needed.

## **NON-SOLICITATION**

SUMMIT Early Learning prohibits the solicitation, distribution, and posting of materials on or at agency property by any employee or non-employee, except as permitted by the procedures stated in the Policies and Procedures Manual. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

All employees are expected to present a neat and clean appearance and to dress appropriately for their position and duties and also for the safety of employees and children. Employees' dress should reflect the professional nature of their position as well as be functional within the expectations and responsibilities of their job. All articles of clothing must be of adequate size and should cover the employee's midriff, chest, and back while performing all required job duties.

SUMMIT is not responsible for damage to or loss of an employee's articles of clothing, jewelry, and/or accessories.

Management staff will determine appropriate and safe attire based on the following Guidelines. Below is a list of attire that **may not** be worn by staff.

- Halter tops, tube tops, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps or crop tops, or tops that reveal cleavage
- Ripped, torn, or frayed clothing
- Two-piece bathing suits for water activities
- Structured shorts that are shorter than the middle of the thigh
- Clothing that is skin-tight without loose layers over it
- Skirts that restrict mobility and an employee's ability to perform job responsibilities
- Clothing with messages about alcoholic beverages, smoking, or other inappropriate messages or words
- Dangly or protruding jewelry in piercings on any part of the body
- Tattoos with inappropriate pictures or messages

Drivers, cooks, direct service, and maintenance staff must wear sneakers or solid shoes at all times.

Direct service staff are required to wear SUMMIT shirts. Two shirts will be provided to all direct service staff; additional SUMMIT wear will be available to purchase. Pants that may be worn with the shirts are jeans (with no holes), khakis, black leggings/yoga pants, capris, or shorts, per agency guidelines.

Direct service staff that work in community settings at district schools are to follow the dress code of the district.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

During hours of employment, while on agency property, or with the use of agency funds or equipment, employees of SUMMIT Early Learning are prohibited from the following:

- Participation in any partisan or non-partisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, for an election for public or party office.
- Participation in any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election.
- Participation in any voter registration activity.

Violation of this policy will result in immediate termination.

## **SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE**

All facilities, grounds, and vehicles of SUMMIT Early Learning are **Smoke-Free Environments**. Smoking is prohibited in any of these areas, including personal vehicles while transporting clients. Smoking is only permitted inside personal vehicles. Vaping is prohibited at all times and in any work related area. Employees who take smoke breaks during the work day must adjust their work schedule to ensure that all smoke breaks are unpaid. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE CONTROL/DRUG TESTING**

SUMMIT Early Learning management will take necessary measures to ensure that the use of alcohol or unauthorized substances by employees does not endanger the health, safety, and security of our children, employees, volunteers, SUMMIT Early Learning sites, and the entire SUMMIT Early Learning operation.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, concealment, transportation, sale or use of unauthorized substances on SUMMIT Early Learning premises, vehicles, or while conducting program business off-site is absolutely prohibited. The presence of an unauthorized substance(s) in an employee's system while on SUMMIT Early Learning premises, vehicles, or while conducting SUMMIT Early Learning business off premises is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized substances include illegal drugs, unauthorized drugs, and drug paraphernalia. The abuse or misuse of alcohol, prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs which have been legally obtained is also strictly prohibited on SUMMIT Early Learning premises, vehicles, or while conducting SUMMIT Early Learning business off premises. Employees are prohibited from coming to work under the influence of any drug, legal or illegal, including alcohol or prescription medication, if the drug negatively affects an employee's judgment, attentiveness, or cognitive function.

SUMMIT Early Learning has the right to require employees while on duty to agree to inspections of SUMMIT Early Learning property.

### **Employee Testing**

If an employee reports to work and, based on the observation of at least one responsible individual, there is a reasonable suspicion of substance abuse or misuse, or because the employee's behavior or health appears to endanger the health, safety, or well-being of the children, SUMMIT Early Learning will require testing of the employee. Confirmed positive tests of urine, blood, or expired air, or refusal to submit to testing or refusal of permission to release substance testing information to appropriate management, will be basis for termination of employment. Substance testing is not a part of SUMMIT Early Learning's ongoing evaluation program. Substance testing may be required (1) where reasonable suspicion exists to warrant such testing; or (2) where necessary to comply with federal, state, or local regulations.

### **Employee Testing for Safety-Sensitive Positions**

SUMMIT Early Learning requires that persons who work in safety-sensitive positions or who are required to hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) to perform job duties must be tested for controlled substances and alcohol, effective January 1, 1996, in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. The following five types of tests will be required: pre-employment, random, post-accident, return-to-work, and reasonable suspicion.

Pre-employment/pre-duty testing will be conducted following a recommendation for employment but before a person actually performs safety-sensitive functions for the first time. Pre-duty testing will also be required when employees transfer to safety-sensitive positions.

Refusal to comply with a request for testing is considered a violation of this policy and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE**

Details of an employee's employment status will only be discussed with the subject employee. This includes but is not limited to job assignment, salary, days off, attendance, performance, promotion, demotion, and pay. Inquiries made by the parents, spouses, and/or other acquaintances of an employee will not be entertained.

SUMMIT Early Learning will, at the employee's request, discuss employment-related information with the employee's retained Attorney at Law.

In the case of a personal or medical emergency, SUMMIT Early Learning will contact a designated emergency contact person on the employee's behalf. Employees will be required to list an emergency contact person as part of their employment documentation.

## **REDUCTION IN FORCE**

A Reduction in Force occurs when changing priorities of funding sources, budgetary constraints, reorganization, or other conditions require SUMMIT Early Learning to eliminate positions.

Employees selected for layoff must be approved by the Board of Directors (and Policy Council for Head Start/Early Head Start). Written notification of release will be given to employees with as much notice as is required by law or as much as is reasonable under the circumstances.

### **Position Elimination and Employee Reassignment Guidelines**

The following factors may be considered when eliminating positions and/or reducing employees, but the evaluation of these factors shall be within the sole discretion of SUMMIT Early Learning.

- The needs of the agency
- Transferability of skills to other positions
- Demonstrated current and past performance
- Length of service

### **Reassignment**

Employee reassignments will be made in a logical way with the least disruption as possible. If possible, employees will be retained in their original positions or a comparable position.

## **CHILDREN IN WORKPLACE**

Employees in non-direct service sites should not bring their children to work during regular work hours except for rare situations that may arise, and only for short periods of time (one to two hours). Employees must closely supervise children, be prepared to keep children busy, and prevent children from interfering with work responsibilities. Employees must always have supervisor permission prior to bringing any children to work, even for a short period of time.

There are times when children may not be in the workplace:

- If they are sick or contagiously ill
- For more than two hours a day
- For days when the public schools are closed for bad weather or weather delays/early dismissals

## **BREASTFEEDING AT WORK**

Employees will be provided an unpaid reasonable break time to breastfeed or express breast milk for nursing children for the first year of life. These break periods will be provided each time the employee has the need to breastfeed or express milk. Details can be found in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

## **PERSONAL VEHICLE USAGE & MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

SUMMIT Early Learning will reimburse employees' mileage for the use of their personal vehicle for work travel at the current rate established by the Board of Directors. Cell phone use is prohibited while driving for work. Employees are expected to maintain current license, registration, inspection, and insurance on their personal vehicles used for work purposes.

## **AGENCY VEHICLE USE**

If available, agency-owned vehicles are to be used for on-the-job travel. Employees are expected to follow the use and sign-out procedures. Appropriate child and adult restraint systems must be used at all times, and the employee must have a valid, current driver's license and follow all traffic laws. Cell phone use is prohibited while driving agency vehicles.