Employee Handbook

**Pilgrim Lutheran Education Center**

“In His Hands”

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Foreword

Pilgrim Lutheran Education Center has been a part of the Bellevue community for over 20 years. A ministry of Pilgrim Lutheran Church, our childcare and preschool have shown the love of Christ to hundreds of children over the years. We have a history of being ranked as one of Sarpy County’s Best Childcares and are continually improving programming to be the best that we can be for all children in our care. Our commitment to excellence for our children and families helps us to stand out among other childcare centers in our area. We are proud to have a long-time committed staff of teachers who make our program what it is today.

We are confident that you will find our company a dynamic and rewarding place in which to work and we look forward to a productive and successful association. We consider the employees of Pilgrim Education Center to be one of its most valuable resources. This handbook has been written to serve as a guide for the employer/employee relationship.

There are several things to keep in mind about this handbook. First, it contains only general information and guidelines. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. For that reason, if you have any questions concerning eligibility of a particular benefit or the applicability of a policy or practice to you, you should address your specific questions to the Director or Administrative Assistant. Neither this handbook, nor any other company document, confers any contractual right, either expressed or implied, to remain in the company’s employ. Nor does it guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of your employment. Your employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at will with or without cause and without prior notice by the company, or you may resign at any time for any reason. No management or other church official, aside from the Director, has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to make any agreement contrary to the above.

The procedures, practices, policies, and benefits described may be modified or discontinued at any time. We will try to inform you of any changes as they occur.

This handbook and the information in it should be treated as confidential. No portion of this handbook should be disclosed to others, expect Pilgrim Education Center employees and others affiliated with Pilgrim Lutheran Church whose knowledge of the information is required in the normal course of business.

Diversity and Workplace Safety

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

Pilgrim Education Center provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. Pilgrim Education Center complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Pilgrim Education Center expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, genetic information, disability or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of Pilgrim Education Center employees to perform their expected job duties is absolutely not tolerated.

Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy

Pilgrim Education Center is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Pilgrim Education Center expects that all relationships among persons in the building will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

It is the policy of Pilgrim Education Center to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty or status as a covered veteran. Pilgrim Education Center prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities. Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites or other means.

Pilgrim Education Center defines bullying as “repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment.” Such behavior violates the company Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when meting out discipline; it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual that is important.

Verbal bullying includes but is not limited to slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family, persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating, using a person as the target of jokes, and abusive and offensive remarks.

Physical bullying includes but is not limited to pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or the threat of assault, and damage to a person’s work area or property.

Gesture bullying includes but is not limited to nonverbal threatening gestures or glances that convey threatening messages.

Exclusion includes but is not limited to socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

Pilgrim Education Center encourages the reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. It is the policy of Pilgrim Education Center to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. Pilgrim Education Center prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation of such reports. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including management, that the company will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Complaint Process

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy statement or who believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with the Director or Administrative Assistant.

When possible, Pilgrim Education Center encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. Pilgrim Education Center recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through complaint procedures.

Pilgrim Education Center encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, although no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately.

If a party to a complaint does not agree with its resolution, that party may appeal to Pilgrim Education Center's Director or Administrative Assistant.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or someone not directly connected to Pilgrim Education Center (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

Drug and Smoke-Free Workplace

Pilgrim Education Center has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of employees and the children in their care. For these reasons, Pilgrim Education Center is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace. This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees and all applicants of employment for Pilgrim Education Center. The management team is responsible for policy administration.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications’ effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work with children, and promptly disclose any work restrictions to the Director. Employees should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

Whenever employees are working, are operating any company vehicle, are present on company premises, or are conducting related work off-site, they are prohibited from:

Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia);

Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy;

And any detectable amount of any illegal drug or illegal controlled substance in an employee’s body while performing company business or while in a company vehicle or training.

Pilgrim Education Center will not allow any employee to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting the employee’s ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Employees taking a prescribed medication must carry it in the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce it if asked.

Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

It is the policy of Pilgrim Education Center to prohibit smoking on all company premises in order to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and children in our care. The law defines smoking as the "act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind."

The smoke-free workplace policy applies to all areas of the church and education center building and grounds, all company-sponsored off-site conferences and meetings, all vehicles owned or leased by the company, all visitors to the company premises, all contractors and consultants working on the premises, and all employees.

You will need to leave the premises to engage in that activity on your own time, during your break. Employees should not return to work smelling of smoke. Inhaling smoke off of clothes is a presumed cause of increase of SIDS risk in infants. Employees who violate the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.

Safety

It is the responsibility of each employee to conduct all tasks in a safe and efficient manner complying with all local, state and federal safety and health regulations and program standards, and with any special safety concerns for use in a particular area or with a client.

Although most safety regulations are consistent throughout each department and program, each employee has the responsibility to identify and familiarize her/himself with the emergency plan for his/her working area. Each classroom shall have posted an emergency plan detailing procedures in handling emergencies such as fire, weather-related events and medical crises.

It is the responsibility of the employee to complete an Accident and Incident Report for each safety and health infraction that occurs by an employee or child. Failure to report such an infraction may result in employee disciplinary action, including termination.

**Sunscreen**

It is Pilgrim Lutheran Education Center’s policy to require children to wear sunscreen before going outside during the summer season. Parents are required to provide sunscreen. If the parent fails to provide sunscreen for their child, “community bottles” will be used.

**Disaster Preparedness Policy**

Our center actively conducts 4 types of emergency drills for fire, severe storm/tornado, intruder, and lock out. The policy for each is listed below:

In case of fire, teachers will lead their class outside to the grass areas according to the evacuation map posted in each classroom. Staff and children will remain in these areas until the building is deemed safe for return.

In case of severe storm or tornado, teachers will lead their class downstairs to the basement according to the evacuation map posted in each classroom. Staff and children will remain in the basement until the danger has passed.

Our intruder policy takes affect when an individual not allowed on our property who is/can be determined a safety risk to our children or staff enters our building. In the event of an intruder alert, staff will lock all kitchen/classroom doors that have hallway access, turn off all lights, and move all children to the attached kitchen or bathroom with no hallway access and encourage the children to remain as quiet as possible. Staff are allowed to take their cell phones with them to remain in contact with management for the all clear to return to business as normal. Management will be responsible for communicating the emergency with local law enforcement.

Our lock out policy takes affect when local law enforcement communicates that someone armed or dangerous is in our area. During a lock out event, teachers will lock all classroom and kitchen doors with hallway access, but teachers and children can remain in the classroom as normal. This will continue until the situation changes or an all clear is given. During the time of the lock out, management will double check all outside doors and will refuse building entry to anyone we do not know.

During all emergencies, staff are required to take their emergency bag containing their first aid kit and red contact cards for their children.

In case of other emergencies/disasters, the teachers and staff will evacuate the children to Fairview Elementary School located at: **14110 Tregaron Drive, Bellevue, NE 68123. Office: 402-827-5950 or Fax: 402-827-5948.**

In case of any emergency/evacuation, a front office staff member will obtain all life-saving medications (epi pens, etc.) from the medication cupboard and the emergency folder with all children and parents information.

Should we have a special needs child(ren) enrolled, a teacher/staff member will be assigned to each special needs child to assist and ensure safe evacuation.

In the event of an emergency, required evacuation or move to an off-site location, administration will notify parents by phone as soon as the situation allows.

In the event of a fire, natural disaster, intruder or other emergency, parents will be instructed how to pick up their children when the situation is safe.

Employment

Qualifications

The director of Pilgrim Education Center must be at least 19 years of age and of good moral character, and must meet one of the following requirements:

-Hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education, or child/youth development.

-Hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university with at least six credit hours in early childhood education, education or child/youth development

-Have an associate degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development.

-Have a childhood development associate credential; or

-Have an high school diploma or GED in 3000 clock hours of verifiable experience in organized group activities for children age birth to 13 as indicated by a positive reference from a former employer or supervisor and:

- Have a successfully completed six credit hours or 36 clock hours of Department-approved training or administration, early childhood education, education or child/youth development. Business courses may be included, not to exceed one-half of the credit or clock hour requirement; or

-A written, department approved plan to acquire at least six credit hours or 36 hours of Department – approved training in administration, early childhood education, education, or child/youth development, in a period not to exceed 12 months. Business courses may be included in the plan, not to exceed one-half of the credit or clock hour requirements.

All teachers at Pilgrim Education Center must be 18 years of age, of good moral character, and either hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certification or meet one of the following requirements:

-Hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

-Hold an associate degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

-Have a Child Development Associate Credential; or

-Have a high school diploma or GED; and

- 1500 verified clock hours of experience in organized group activities for young children as indicated by a positive reference from a former employer or supervisor; or

-Submit a written plan for Department approval to acquire at least three credit hours or 45 clock hours of training in administration, early childhood education, education, or child/youth development, in a period not to exceed six months. The licensee must maintain a copy of the written plan and department approval for department review.

A substitute teacher must meet the age requirement for the position he/she is assuming and be of good moral character. If the substitute works over 20 hours per week and is counted in the staff-to-child ration, the substitute must meet the staff requirements for the position he/she is assuming.

Support staff members must be at least 16 years of age and be of good moral character. A teacher must be in the room with support staff at all times when children are in care.

Volunteers and uncompensated parent helpers are not counted in staff-to-child ratio. Volunteers and helpers must be supervised by the director or a teacher at all times and must not be left alone with any children other than their own.

Employee Classification

All employees are designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications and employees’ employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment-at-will relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and Pilgrim Education Center.

**Nonexempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law’s requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime. Hourly employees.

**Exempt employees** are generally managers or professional, administrative or technical staff who ARE exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Pilgrim Education Center has established the following categories for both nonexempt and exempt employees:

**Regular, full time:** Hourly employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the company’s full-time schedule of 20 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program.

**Regular, part time:** Hourly employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time schedule. Regular, part-time employees are eligible for some of the benefits offered by the company subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program.

**Temporary, full time:** Hourly employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work the company’s full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

**Temporary, part time:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work less than the company’s full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

Temporary workers are not eligible for company benefits unless specifically stated otherwise in company policy or are deemed eligible according to plan documents.

Background Checks

To ensure that individuals who join Pilgrim Education Center are well qualified and to ensure that Pilgrim Education Center maintains a safe and productive work environment, it is our policy and a State of Nebraska Licensing regulation to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants prior to an offer of employment. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant’s resume or application form.

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to Pilgrim Education Center and the State of Nebraska. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and antidiscrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

If information obtained in a background check would lead Pilgrim Education Center to deny employment, a copy of the report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report’s accuracy. Background checks do include a criminal record check, sexual offender registry check, and DHHS background check.

Additional checks such as a driving record may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job related.

Pilgrim Education Center also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

The State of Nebraska also requires a finger print check as well as the other required back ground checks. All payments for required background checks will be deducted from the employee’s first paycheck.

Fingerprint Screening

Pilgrim Education Center offers a child care subsidy program for military families called Child Care Aware. In order to offer this service to our families, the Government requires an FBI fingerprint check to be completed. We require you to have this done the day of orientation as well as your NE state fingerprints. The fee for this will be deducted from your first paycheck.

Annual Staff Training

Each staff member who provides direct care to children must obtain a minimum of 12 clock hours of training annually. Staff who work less than 20 hours each week must obtain 6 Clock hours of training annually.

All New Staff are on 90 day probationary period and must attend New Staff Orientation.

All staff members must complete Care to Prepare and Safe with You trainings within their first 120 days and does not expire.

All staff members are required to take CPR and First Aid Training. Each year, Pilgrim Childcare provides this training through the NE Health and Safety Council. This certification expires every 2 years and must be renewed to remain employed.

All trainings must be approved by the state of Nebraska to count towards their annual training requirement.

Each year, all staff must take at least one class in the NE Early Learning Guidelines. These standards include health and physical, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, creative arts, science, mathematics, and language and literacy.

Center Staff meetings will be held after hours periodically throughout the year, as needed. These meetings are mandatory and if for some reason you have a conflict outside of work which keeps you from attending, you will need to get that cleared from the director and you are also responsible for getting and knowing any and all information you missed. You will also get an unexcused notice placed in your file for missing the meeting and missing too may result in disciplinary action.

Required trainings like ELG and CPR will be set up at the center, as needed. Pilgrim Education Center will pay half of the class plus wages for time at the training. If you cannot make it to a provided training, you will have to take on your own elsewhere and pay the full cost.

The Lutheran Church’s Early Childhood Department sets up and provides free monthly trainings approved thru the state focusing on a variety of topics. Participation in these trainings is highly encouraged and occasionally there will be special rewards or bonuses for those who attend.

Discipline

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing rules and policies. Employees also have the responsibility to perform his/her duties to the best of his/her ability and to the standards as set forth in his/her job description or as otherwise established.

Pilgrim Education Center supports the use of progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues. Our progressive discipline policy has been designed consistent with our organizational values, HR best practices, and employment laws.

Outlined below are the steps of our progressive discipline policy and procedure. Pilgrim Education Center reserves the right to combine or skip steps in this process depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling and/or training, the employee's work record, and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our organization.

The following are examples of different disciplinary action that may be taken.

**Verbal warning:** The Director or Administrative Assistant verbally counsels an employee about an issue of concern. The warning will be documented as such.

**Written warning:** Written warnings are used for behavior or violations that a management team member considers serious or in situations when a verbal warning has not helped change unacceptable behavior. Written warnings are placed in an employee’s personnel file. Employees should recognize the serious nature of the written warning.

**Probation:** This can be for any length of time, depending on the severity of the infraction. The employee can still come to work and will be paid as normal, but their behavior, work ethic, and behavior will be closely monitored. Any further issues with the employee during their probationary period may result in more severe action.

**Suspension:** This can be a few hours of suspension or days depending on severity of infraction. This leave is without pay (unpaid suspension), and is the temporary removal of an employeefrom performing his/her work duties and from receiving pay. PTO time may not be used if you are off due to a suspension.

**Work improvement plan:** Whenever an employee has been involved in a disciplinary situation that has not been readily resolved or when he/she has demonstrated an inability to perform assigned work responsibilities efficiently, the employee may be given a final warning or placed on a work improvement plan (WIP). WIP status will last for a predetermined amount of time not to exceed 90 days. Within this time period, the employee must demonstrate a willingness and ability to meet and maintain the conduct and/or work requirements as specified by the Director and Administrative Assistant. At the end of the work improvement period, the work improvement plan may be closed or, if established goals are not met, dismissal may occur.

Pilgrim Education Center reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any inappropriate conduct, including verbal and written warnings, probation, suspension with or without pay, demotion and or discharge from your employment with Pilgrim.

Familial Hiring Policy

The director may not hire or supervise a member of his/her family without first consulting with the Pilgrim Council of Ministries and receiving express, written permission.  For the purposes of this policy, family member is defined as one of the following:  spouse or significant other, child (natural or adoptive)/stepchild, parent/stepparent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin, or in-law.  If any of the aforementioned family relationships arise (such as through marriage), the Council of Ministries must be notified immediately.  Should the director violate this policy, he/she will face disciplinary action from the Council.

Separation of Employment

Separation of employment within an organization can occur for several different reasons.

**Resignation:** Although we hope your employment with us will be a mutually rewarding experience, we understand that varying circumstances cause employees to voluntarily resign employment. Resigning employees are encouraged to provide two weeks’ notice, in writing, to facilitate a smooth transition out of the organization. Employees who provide two weeks’ notice may not use any PTO /sick leave once notice has been given. Management reserves the right to provide an employee with two weeks’ pay in lieu of notice in situations where job or business needs warrant such action or to take the employee off the schedule if a replacement for their shift has been found. If an employee provides less notice than requested, the employer may deem the individual to be ineligible for rehire and ineligible to receive accrued vacation benefits depending on the circumstances regarding the notice given. If proper 2 week notice is not received in writing exactly 14 days of the employees last day or the employee does not carry out their notice fully and chooses to leave their position before said notice is complete or they are not completing their job duties as assigned in a respectful and professional manor, the employee may be removed from the schedule to part ways with Pilgrim and/or their final pay check will be reduced to the current minimum wage. If the employee has a child/children enrolled at Pilgrim and 14 days’ notice is not given, the employee will be responsible for the current daily rate, in full, for the remaining days left up to 14 days. The amount owed will be taken out of the employees final pay check.

**Retirement:** Employees who wish to retire are required to notify their Management Team in writing at least one (1) month before the planned retirement date. Retiring employees will be paid for a maximum of 80 unused accrued vacation hours at the time of their separation.

**Job abandonment:**  Employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for two (2) consecutive workdays shall be considered to have abandoned the job without notice, effective at the end of their normal shift on the second day. The director shall, at the expiration of the second workday, initiate the paperwork to terminate the employee. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible to receive accrued benefits and are ineligible for rehire and their final paycheck will be reduced to minimum wage, and any money Pilgrim paid out for the employees initial back ground checks will also be deducted from the employee’s final paycheck.

**Termination:** Nebraska is an at will state and Pilgrim Lutheran Education Center reserves the right to end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice. Although employment may be terminated at-will by either the employee or the center at any time without following any formal system of discipline or warning, the center may exercise discretion to utilize forms of discipline including verbal warnings, written warnings, demotions, and suspensions. While one or more of these forms of discipline may be taken, no formal order or procedures are necessary. Either you or the center may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause, and with our without notice. Pilgrim Lutheran Education Center reserves the right to prohibit the terminated employee from returning on the property except to return any company property. If the terminated employee has any personal belonging at the center, another employee will gather said belongings and they will be returned at the front desk.

The separating employee must return all company property at the time of separation, including but not limited to, uniforms, keys, books and classroom materials, and identification cards. Failure to return some items may result in deductions from the final paycheck. An employee will be required to sign the Wage Deduction Authorization Agreement to deduct the costs of such items from the final paycheck. Unpaid balances for childcare will result in deductions from the final paycheck.

Accrued vacation and sick leave hours will be paid in the last paycheck.

Former employees who left Pilgrim Education Center in good standing and were classified as eligible for rehire may be considered for reemployment. An application must be submitted to the management and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position, including a background check. Rehired employees begin benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure will not be considered in calculating longevity, leave accruals or any other benefits.

An applicant or employee who is terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment due to a policy violation will be ineligible for rehire. An applicant who resigns without providing a 2 week written notice may be considered ineligible for rehire.

If an employee wishes to change their shift or weekly hours normally worked, same as when giving notice to separate employment, a written request must be submitted to management. Request should be given 2 weeks prior to when employee wishes the change to begin. Employees must be aware that such a request may result in the employee being placed in a different classroom than they have normally been in or put on a closing or float status in order to make the new schedule work within the center. Employee should also be aware that such a request could result in separation of employment if the new shift requested isn’t possible to fit into the normal weekly schedule of the center and the other employees in the center.

Workplace Expectations

It is the expectation of Pilgrim Education Center that all staff will conduct themselves in a professional, positive demeanor conducive to excellent customer service for our parents and families. The children in our care and the experiences that they have at Pilgrim are our top priority.

Family Communication

The children and families of Pilgrim Education Center are our customers. It is imperative that all staff engage in communication with the parents in our building each day. Parents and children should be warmly welcomed into the classrooms each morning. Information shared with parents should only pertain to their child. No children or families can be discussed with parents other than their own. In the event that a parent would like information about another child or family, please direct them to a member of management.

Employees should not contact individual parents about events during the day on personal or work phones without communicating with the front desk.

When communicating about a child’s day remember to begin and end with something positive.

Other classrooms and staff should not be discussed with parents. If parents have questions or concerns, please direct them to a member of the management staff.

Discussing inappropriate information with parent, families, or children may result in disciplinary action.

Morning Drop-Off Procedures

All infants will be dropped off in the Infant 1 classroom. Infants will be moved to their respective classrooms at 8:00 am prior to breakfast, dependent on staffing.

All toddlers will be dropped off in the Toddler1 classroom. Toddlers will be moved to their respective classrooms at 8:30 am following breakfast, dependent on staffing.

All preschoolers and pre-kindergarteners will be dropped off in the Pre-k 2 classroom. They will be moved to their respective classrooms either at 8:00 am prior to breakfast or at 9:00 am following breakfast, dependent on staffing.

Meal Policy

Good nutrition is essential for the children. A nutritionally balanced breakfast, lunch and snack are provided by the center.

Adults are responsible for what, when, and where a child eats. Our kitchen staff will prepare and serve nutritious meals and snacks. Children will either eat in the cafeteria or in the classroom at regularly scheduled times.

Children are responsible for how much and whether. We trust children to manage their own eating and choose which foods that are offered that they want to eat. Federal guidelines for portions are followed.

Bringing in outside food and drink is strictly prohibited, unless the parent receives permission from management. No nut items may be brought into our center.

Cleanliness of Center Spaces

Pilgrim Lutheran Church and Education Center has a contracted cleaning crew that comes in 3 days per week to clean the center and church, but teachers are responsible for keeping classrooms and our building clean throughout the day during business hours. This entails sweeping and mopping up after every meal, and cleaning classroom bathrooms and kitchens during nap time and at the end of the day. Sweeping, mopping, sanitizing sinks, toilets, mirrors, light switches, and changing tables, taking out trash, wiping down and sanitizing counters, refrigerators, and microwaves, cabinets kept organized, neat, and free from clutter, counters in classrooms and kitchens kept neat, tidy, and free from clutter, and sanitize classroom telephones, light switches, and door knobs a few times throughout the day. Cots and nap mats need to be sanitized and children blankets sent home on Fridays to be washed for the upcoming week ahead. We take cleanliness seriously. In staff community spaces, such as the break room and restroom, please clean up after yourself and sanitize areas. Also make sure that all trash is being taken out when full.

Confidentiality

Our parents and families with whom we do business entrust the Pilgrim Education Center with important information relating to their children. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or to employees without a “need to know.” If an employee questions whether certain information is considered confidential, he/she should first check with a member of management. Staff will not post on any social media sites videos, pictures, or comments about any child or family in our program and doing so can be grounds for immediate disciplinary action.

 This policy is intended to alert employees to the need for discretion at all times and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications.

Employees also must respect confidentiality in personnel and human resource matters occurring at Pilgrim Education Center. Parents want to know that their child is being well taken care of and that they are in a positive learning environment each day. Employees should not share frustrations about other staff members, policies, or other behind-the-scenes information with families.

Social Media Use

To protect the integrity of the center, our employees, and families enrolled, it is discouraged that employees not “friend” current families on social media. Below are guidelines for social media use.

Employees may NOT post photos or videos of children who attend Pilgrim Education Center.

Employees may not post photos of themselves in unprofessional settings while wearing Pilgrim Education Center apparel or if they are “friends” with current families on social media.

Employees may not post financial, confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information about the company, children & families, employees or applicants.

Employees may not post obscenities, slurs or personal attacks that can damage the reputation of the company, children & families, employees or applicants.

Pilgrim Education Center may monitor content out on the Internet. Policy violations may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

If it is found you are sharing confidential information about staff, children enrolled, other classrooms, and your classroom, or any work discussions are happening outside of Procare then you could be written up, suspended or even terminated.

Cell Phone Use

Staff must keep cell phones put away at all times during their scheduled work shift, keep them in a purse, bag, cabinet, or car. Phones may not be kept in your pockets. You may only have your phone out with prior permission from management in times of an emergency, on outings away from the center, and on walks with your class. Anyone caught on their cell can be subject to disciplinary action which can include leaving your phone at front desk until your break, verbal or written warning or even termination.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees must avoid any relationship or activity that might impair, or even appear to impair, their ability to make objective and fair decisions when performing their jobs. At times, an employee may be faced with situations in which business actions taken on behalf of Pilgrim Education Center may conflict with the employee’s own personal interests. Company property, information or business opportunities may not be used for personal gain.

Conflicts of interest could arise circumstances such as being employed as a babysitter for a Pilgrim family outside of the center, working closely with family members or friends, accepting or giving gifts, favors, or services to/from a Pilgrim family, or dating a parent or family member of a child in the center’s care.

Employees with a conflict-of-interest question should seek advice from management. Before engaging in any activity, transaction, or relationship that might give rise to a conflict of interest, employees must seek review from the management team.

Outside Employment

Employees are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

Activities and conduct away from Pilgrim must not conflict with or compromise the company interests or adversely affect the Education Center image. Outside employment should not interfere with job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities. In addition, employees are not to solicit or conduct any outside business during paid working time.

Employees are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early. If Pilgrim Education Center determines that an employee’s outside work interferes with performance, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment.

Employees who have accepted outside employment may not use paid sick leave to work on the outside job. Fraudulent use of sick leave will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Attendance and Punctuality

Use of PTO for vacation or scheduled appointments must be submitted for approval by management at least two weeks in advance**.** If you are not current on your required trainings and clock hours, approved leave is subject to leave without pay. PTO time may be used in 15 minute increments only and may not be used if you are sent home early do to disciplinary action. Patterns of absenteeism or tardiness may result in discipline or termination.

Employees should arrive on time and ready to work no later than 5 min after their shift is scheduled to start. If you will be late it is the employee’s job to call the center, so they can make a plan to cover your classroom until you arrive. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Management will adjust an employee’s scheduled hours monthly to reflect the previous month’s average worked hours, without overtime. Should an employee wish to have their hours increased back to their previous scheduled hours, a meeting with management must be held.

Time Off

Allowed time off requests per day is dependent on current staffing.

Requests Off must be submitted a minimum of 2 weeks in advance. Any requests less than 2 weeks may not be approved, but will be handled on a case by case basis by the Director. Be responsible, plan ahead, and remember “Your lack of planning does not constitute an emergency on my part”. No shows or call outs on denied request off days may result in disciplinary action. Weeks crossed out on the calendar in the staff lounge are closed for time off requests based on the current request deadline and/or schedule already posted.

Before submitting a time off request, please check the calendar in the staff lounge. If the day you want has a red “X”, time off requests for that day are full. You may still put in a request, but requests off are handled on a first come, first serve basis and your request may not be approved. Please do not purchase plane tickets, hotel reservations, etc until you know your time off has been approved, Pilgrim is not liable for those costs if your time off request is denied.

Once you have checked that your day is available for requests off, complete the request off form in the staff lounge and place it in the director’s mailbox. If management denies your request, you will receive a copy of the denial.

If there are special circumstances such as a death in family, medical issue like a surgery etc. management can approve this on a case by case basis and if approved, leave can be used. Documentation may be required for an emergency absence.

Management reserves the right to not allow any days off if we are currently short staffed and/or the proper steps were not taken to request the days off.

Employees who are still in their 90 day probation period and/or do not have leave available, should not request multiple days off without a doctor’s note as it could result in disciplinary actions or dismissal.

Reporting Absences

In the event of illness, you must CALL the center. It is preferred to call in to the front desk at least an hour before your shift is scheduled to begin. If it is before our opening hours, you must leave a message on the center voicemail. The opening front desk staff will receive the message and notify management, if necessary. Phone calls and text messages to managements’ cell phones will not be accepted as proper notification. Phone calls from family or friends will not be accepted unless it’s an emergency situation. Not reporting to work and not calling to report the absence is a no-call/no-show and is a serious matter. No call/no shows may be subject to disciplinary action.

Excessive Absences

If an employee is absent more than 5 unpaid days per year without a doctor’s note, employee will be subject to a written reprimand, suspension, probation, or termination and the absences will affect their annual performance and salary review.

If an employee calls in more than 3 days per month without a doctor’s note, they will receive a written reprimand. More than 3 attendance reprimands per month will result in suspension, probation, or termination.

*Helpful hint: doctors’ appointments can be scheduled at lunch time, early morning or late afternoon to help with staffing where employee can work before or after scheduled appointment. Or schedule them all for one day to limit your leave used.*

Staff Health Policy

Employees are responsible for monitoring their own health and ensuring that they are protecting the children in our care and other staff members. Any staff that has a temperature of 100.4 or higher are encouraged to be excluded from work until he/she is fever free for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Ibuprophen. Vomiting or Diarrhea employee must be 24 hours free of the symptom before returning to work. Pink eye the employee must be on eye drops for 24 hours before returning to work. Any staff member who is absent for more than three days, must have a Doctor’s note to return to work unless otherwise approved by Director.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church and Education Center encourages, but does not require, it’s staff members to be immunized.

Attire and Grooming

It is important for all employees to project a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. Pilgrim Education Center employees are expected to be neat, clean and well groomed while on the job. Clothing must be consistent with the standards for a business environment and must be appropriate to the type of work being performed.

All employees must be covered from shoulders to knees at all times (no see-through or sleeveless clothing is permitted at any time). Natural and artificial scents may become a distraction from a well-functioning workplace and are also subject to this policy.

Prohibited attire includes visible bras or underwear, jeans with large holes, shorts and skirts shorter than mid-thigh length, crop tops, cami/spaghetti strap/tube tops, hats (unless on a special day or pre- approved by management,) and shirts with profanity, slang, violence, or other non-child friendly content.

Pilgrim Education Center is confident that employees will use their best judgment regarding attire and appearance. Management reserves the right to determine appropriateness. Any employee who is improperly dressed will be counseled or in severe cases may be sent home to change clothes. Continued disregard of this policy may be cause for disciplinary action, which may result in termination.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings such as purses, bags and backpacks must be kept out of reach of children in a cabinet, drawer, or hook that is out of reach to a child. Pilgrim Lutheran Education center is not responsible for any lost or stolen items so please keep them in a safe place.

Company Electronics

The following guidelines have been established for using the Internet, cell phones and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner.

Internet, company-provided equipment (e.g. phones, cameras, tablets, & computers) and services may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications or photos of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing or pornographic nature.

Company computers, tablets and classroom phones may not be used for personal business or personal social media use.

The following actions are forbidden: using disparaging, abusive, profane or offensive language; creating, viewing or displaying materials that might adversely or negatively reflect upon Pilgrim Education Center or be contrary to Pilgrim Education Center’s best interests; and engaging in any illegal activities, including piracy, cracking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access of any computers and company-provided equipment such as phones, cameras, photocopiers, and computers.

Employees may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy to reference only.

Internal and external e-mails are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mail within and outside the company.

**Right to Monitor**

All company-supplied technology and company-related work records belong to the company and not to the employee. Pilgrim Education Center routinely monitors use of company-supplied technology. Inappropriate or illegal use or communications may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Transportation

Pilgrim Education Center currently does not transport children off-site.

In the event that Pilgrim offers transportation in the future, all employees who transport children must take NE State Transportation training and have a valid driver’s license. Before leaving Pilgrim, attendance must be taken to make sure that all children are accounted for and that teachers have an accurate list of children being transported. Before leaving the destination to return to Pilgrim, attendance must be taken and all children accounted for before leaving to return. When driving company vehicles, all motor vehicle laws must be followed. All children must be properly restrained in state-approved and fitted booster seats or seat belts. Employees must wear seatbelts and refrain from cell phone use, smoking, or listening to loud music. Upon returning to Pilgrim Education Center, all attendance must be taken to assure that all children have made it safely. All lights must be turned off, radio, vent etc. turned off. Make sure that all windows are up or closed, doors are closed and locked and keys are turned in at the front desk.

Parents will provide appropriate car seats for their own child(ren) when needed. The classroom teacher is responsible for ensuring that every child is securely seated and belted correctly. Each van is equipped with a first aid kit and at least one adult on the van is CPR/First Aid Certified. Procedures will be established to ensure children are never left alone in a vehicle at any time.

Every teacher has a “Tracker Sheet” which is with him/her at all times. After the children are secured in their seats, the teacher will make visual and verbal contact with each child and will record the time next to that child’s name on the tracker sheet. The teacher will then take a head count to ensure the number of children on the van corresponds with the number of children on the tracking sheet. As the children exit the van, the teacher will make visual and verbal contact with each child and then record the time next to that’s child’s name. The teacher will then take a head count to ensure the number of children off the van corresponds with the number of children on the tracking sheet, and that it also corresponds with the number of children that entered the van.

Emergency procedures in the event a child becomes ill, the vehicle breaks down or is involved in an accident, or other emergency will be established.

Exceptional supervision is provided on every van. At least one teacher per van has a cell phone to contact the Center in case of illness, a breakdown, or accident.

Should a child become ill, a teacher will bring the child back to the center on the van only if adequate supervision is available for the rest of the children. If not, an administrator will go to the site and transport the child back to the center in the van and then return the van to the site. When the child returns to the center, the parents are contacted by the office staff.

Should a van breakdown, the teacher will notify the center and another van is used to bring the children back to the center. If all vans are in use, one van is used to transport a group of children back to the center while the children waiting for transportation are in a safe area and appropriately supervised.

Should an accident occur, the teacher will determine the safety of the accident site and either keep the children buckled in their seats on the van, or escort them to a safe area away from the accident site. Once the children are safe, the teacher will call the Center and then attend to any first aid needed. The children will be taken back to the center via the procedure(s) listed in section C. Upon return to the center, the children’s parents are contacted and advised of the situation.

Compensation

Reviews

Performance reviews are conducted on an annual cycle based on hire date. Occasionally half-year reviews will also be conducted without salary increases. The performance appraisal will be discussed and both the employee and manager will sign the form to ensure that all strengths, areas for improvement and job goals for the next review period have been clearly communicated. Performance evaluation forms will be retained in the employee’s personnel file.

Pay increases are based on company performance and financials and are not guaranteed. A performance review does not always result in an automatic salary increase. The employee’s overall performance and salary level relative to his/her position responsibilities are evaluated to determine if a salary increase would be warranted.

Budget allocations for salary increases are planned for and allocated before the start of each calendar year. The annual salary increase program is designed to assist management in planning and allocating salary and promotional increases that reward individual performance, that are market competitive and that are internally equitable.

Salary adjustments are occasionally requested or warranted at times other than the employee’s scheduled annual salary reviews. Out-of-cycle salary increases must be preapproved by the Management Team. The management team will review all salary increase/adjustment requests to ensure internal equity and compliance with company policies and guidelines.

Payment of Wages

Wages and Salary payments are made every other Friday for wages & salary due up to the last day of the pay period, the previous Friday.

It is the company’s policy that employees be paid using direct deposit to their bank accounts.

If the normal payday falls on a company-recognized holiday, paychecks will be distributed one workday before the aforementioned schedule.

If an employee's marital status changes or the number of exemptions previously claimed increases or decreases, a new Form W-4 must be submitted to the Management Team.

No salary advances will be made.

No discussion of wages between employees should occur. This includes raises, bonuses, and childcare discounts.

Time Reporting

A work hour is any hour of the day that is worked and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. The workday is defined as the 11 hour period starting at 6:30 a.m. and ending at 5:30 p.m. The workweek covers five consecutive days beginning on Monday and ending on Friday. The usual workweek period is 40 hours.

Overtime is defined as hours worked by an hourly or nonexempt employee in excess of 40 hours in a workweek, and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. Overtime must be approved in advance by the Director to whom the employee reports.

Employees will clock in and out at the clock terminal located at the front door. Employees shall clock in when ready to begin their shifts no more than 5 min before their scheduled time unless otherwise approved.

Daily/weekly work schedules are posted on Fridays before noon in the staff lounge for the next week. When the daily/weekly schedule is posted, employees must understand that we follow state licensing regulations for child/teacher ratios. This means that just because the schedule says your shift ends, does not mean you just grab your things and clock out. Employees must make sure the staff they are leaving in the room are at the correct ratio before leaving. Management does its best to get staff off on time, and in most cases the employee is off on time but there are days when being short staffed or children are not being pick up as early as usual can cause a delay. If you absolutely cannot stay to help with ratios, please make sure to notify management as soon as you know.

Lunch Breaks

While, employee breaks are important to company productivity and employee health, they may not be possible due to staffing constraints. When employee are able to take a break, they must clock out and breaks must be taken in the staff break room, off site, or outside. Employees may bring a lunch or have food delivered and eat in their classroom as long as it’s an appropriate time to eat (such as children’s lunch time or nap time.)

Overtime Pay

Overtime pay is not paid in regular circumstances. Employees must watch their hours to make sure that they are not exceeding 40 hours of work time. If an employee is working more than 40 hours, they can be asked to take a longer break, to leave early from a shift, or to come in later for a shift. There are times that overtime will and can occur. All overtime must be approved by the Director.

Holiday Pay

Pilgrim Education Center recognizes six paid holidays each year, and may be used after the employee has been gainfully employed for 90 days. These holidays are New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Non-paid, observed holidays include: Good Friday, Easter Monday, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & the day after Christmas, and New Year’s Eve. **Y**ou may choose to use PTO time on these five observed holidays provided your required trainings and clock hours are up to date.

President’s day and Veterans Day we are closed for staff in-service training and/or a teacher work day. It is a required work day and requested leave on this day will need Director’s approval. No PTO can be used on this day.

Pilgrim will remain open for a limited number of children and staff schedules will rotate on these holidays. These holidays include Martin Luther King Jr Day, Juneteenth, and Columbus Day/Indigenous People Day.

2 paid snow days are allotted to staff in the event we need to close the center due to weather.

Should a holiday fall on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on the work day closest to the holiday. Any call outs on the day before or day after a holiday or holiday break MUST use PTO or sick leave. If an employee does not have any remaining PTO or sick pay or has not reached the time frame to use it and they call out, they will not get paid for the holiday.

Paid Time Off and Sick Leave

All full and part-time employees are eligible for PTO and Sick Leave benefits. All PTO and sick leave is distributed following the charts below. PTO and Sick leave can be taken in 15 minute increments only.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of Years at Pilgrim****Full Time Employees** | **PTO Distribution Schedule** |
| 1-2 years | 1 hour is earned for every 30 hours worked. |
| 3-10 years | 2 hours are earned for every 30 hours worked. |
| 11+ years | 3 hours are earned for every 30 hours worked. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of Years at Pilgrim****Full Time Employees** | **Sick Leave Distribution Schedule** |
| 1-2 years | 1 hour is earned for every 30 hours worked. |
| 3-10 years | 2 hours are earned for every 30 hours worked. |
| 11+ years | 3 hours are earned for every 30 hours worked. |

To schedule PTO or planned appointments, employees should submit a completed leave request form, at least 2 weeks in advance, to the front desk or the Director and it must be approved by the Director.

Vacation will be paid at the employee’s base rate at the time the leave is taken. Vacation pay is not included in overtime calculation. If a holiday falls during the employee’s vacation, the day will be charged to holiday pay rather than to vacation pay.

Leave taken beyond an employee’s available PTO/Sick Leave balance will be unpaid. If an employee is absent or calls out sick and they have leave available, it will automatically be taken from their available balance.

If employment is terminated, accrued unused PTO leave earned through the last day of active employment will be paid at the employee’s base rate of pay at termination. In the event of the employee’s death, earned unused PTO time will be paid to the employee’s estate or designated beneficiary.

All sick leave can only be used once the employees have earned it.

Sick leave may be used for an employee’s personal illness, well-care, and medical and dental and eye appointments. Sick leave may also be used for illness and well-care in an employee’s immediate family (Husband, children, parents, siblings, etc.)

Sick leave may not be used before accrual. If sick leave is exhausted, any available PTO days will be used in its place. An employee who has a sick leave absence in excess of three consecutive working days must present medical documentation for the absence.

Bereavement Leave

Employees who have completed 90 days of employment are eligible for four paid days for death of an immediate family member. Members of the immediate family include the employee’s spouses/domestic partners, employee’s children and grandchildren, employee’s parents (including step-parents) and grandparents (including great-grandparents,) and employee’s parents-in-law.

Employees who have completed 90 days of employment are eligible for one paid day to attend the funeral of extended family. Extended family includes the employee’s aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

All other time off for funerals of other relatives (including great aunts/uncles and spouse’s grandparents, aunts/uncles, and cousins,) friends, and other acquaintances are not eligible for bereavement pay, but can be excused using PTO or no pay.

Requests for bereavement leave should be made with management as soon as possible. Any additional time off using PTO or unpaid are up to the discretion of management.

Jury Duty

Upon receipt of notification from the state or federal courts of an obligation to serve on a jury, employees must notify their supervisor and provide him/her with a copy of the jury summons. The company will pay regular full-time and regular part-time employees for time off for jury duty up to two weeks of pay.

According to Ne Rev.State.sec. 25-1640 Employers may reduce employees pay by the amount equal to any compensation, other than expenses, paid by the court for Jury duty.

After the employee completes Jury duty you must turn in receipts for compensation made by court to payroll department prior to your next pay check.

Military Leave of Absence

Pilgrim Education Center is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is the company’s policy that no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under applicable law or company policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of company policy, the employee should immediately contact Human Resources.
Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Subject to certain exceptions under the applicable laws, these benefits are generally limited to five years of leave of absence.

Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact the Management Team to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

Breastfeeding

For up to one year after a child’s birth, any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times as needed to express breast milk for her baby. Pilgrim Education Center has designated the Women’s Lounge adjacent to the church restroom for this purpose.

Breaks of more than 20 minutes in length will be unpaid, and the employee should indicate this break period on her time record.

Benefits

For more information regarding benefits programs, please refer to the Plan Descriptions, which were provided to employees upon hire, or contact the Management Team.

Medical and Dental Insurance

The company does not currently offer employees medical and dental insurance coverage options.

Group Life Insurance

The company offers regular full-time employees who have been employed by Pilgrim Education Center for 90 days an employer-paid basic group term life policy along with an accidental death and dismemberment policy through Concordia Plans.

Short-Term Disability

The company's short-term disability plan, also through Concordia Plans, is a benefit that provides partial pay for employees who are unable to work due to illness, injury or disability not related to work, after an absence of more than seven consecutive calendar days. Benefits begin on the eighth day of disability and continue for related absences up to a maximum of 26 weeks. Employees will not be able to return to work without submitting to management a note from a physician or licensed health care professional authorizing the employee's return. Any time spent on short-term disability counts as part of the employee's leave time.

Retirement

The company provides a retirement plan to all employees working 30 or more hours per week, at no cost to the employee through Concordia Retirement Plans.

Workers’ Compensation Benefits

The company is covered under statutory state workers' compensation laws. Employees who sustain work-related injuries must immediately notify their department supervisor.

Childcare

Employees will receive a discount on their child’s tuition, dependent on the company’s financials. Weekly Tuition will be pulled from the employee’s paycheck. If any money is owed after termination of employment, it will be deducted from their final pay check. If requested 2 week /14 day notice in writing is not given by the employee or fulfilled in any way the employee will be responsible for the full tuition amount for their child/children and discount will not apply. Payment will be deducted from the employees final pay check, if amount exceeds the final check it will be billed to the employee to be paid in full within 30 days or it will be sent to collections.

**Pilgrim Education is an at-will employer and reserves the right to amend or change policies at any time. All changes in the handbook will be reported to employees at the time they are made.**