



***St. James Lutheran Church
Early Learning Center
Employee Handbook***

109 York St., Gettysburg, PA 17325

www.stjamesgettysburg.org

(717)-334-7171

St. James Early Learning Center is a Pennsylvania Department of Health &
Human Services
Licensed, non-profit, Christian, Early Learning facility.

Approved by the St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center Committee
May 25, 1993

Revised November 23, 1999

Revised & Approved by the

St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center Governance Committee
February 5, 2002, March 30, 2004, October 19, 2004, November 10, 2004
December 5, 2006, March 2010, August 6, 2013, June 3, 2014,
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St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center

The St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center is a ministry of service and stewardship of the St. James Lutheran Church. The Center aspires in its operation to provide quality early childhood care and education in a loving Christian environment, to support families in need and to empower the Early Learning staff in this mission.

We seek to provide experiences that foster faith in a loving God;

We seek to serve the community in its need for quality Early Learning;

We seek to respond to the needs of families and support them;

We seek to serve families and children who need financial aid to attend;

We seek to be a witness to faith in Jesus Christ;

We seek to strengthen the staff in its vocation.

St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center aspires to provide quality Early Childhood Care and Education, the Early Learning Governance Committee relies on the Keystone STARS and National Association for the Education of Young Children to guide the policies, practices, and procedures. If a policy in the preceding document appears unclear or a situation arises that is not addressed in the document that follows, the Early Learning Governance Committee will rely on the standards of Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS quality initiative and the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children to direct all other policy and procedural decisions.

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St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center
109 York St.
Gettysburg, PA 17325
(717)-334-7171
childcare@stjamesgettysburg.org

SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination in Services
TO: Staff
FROM: Suzan L. Seibel – Willard, Director

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of staff shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any individual/client/patient/student (and /or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

St. James Lutheran Church Early
Learning Center
109 York St.
Gettysburg, PA 17325
(717)-334-7171
childcare@stjamesgettysburg.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Building
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 225, Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17110

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
333 Market Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

KEYSTONE STARS

St. James Early Learning Center participates in the state-wide Keystone STARS program. STARS stands for **S**tandards, **T**raining/Professional Development, **A**ssistance, **R**esources, and **S**upport. The program is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania. Our Program is a four-star levels, and each STAR level has its own research-based performance standards. These standards measure three areas of early learning that make a difference in the quality-of-care children receive:

- from the staff employed by the center
- in the environment the children attend every day
- in the way the facility is operated

For more information visit www.pakeys.org

EMPLOYMENT

1.1. Equal Opportunity: The center is dedicated to the principles of serving the community with integrity and respect for the dignity and rights of the individual. The center will comply with the applicable regulatory requirements of the major civil rights laws. Specifically, the center will not permit discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex in any aspect of service delivery to eligible beneficiaries and will apply the principles of equal opportunity in all matters of employment and contractual agreements.

1.2 Employment Relocation: At the discretion of the director and/or the St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center Governance Committee, an employee may be moved to another location within the Center, other than the position originally hired for, to benefit any reorganization that may occur at the Center.

1.3 Program Openings: Notice of vacancies will be made known to all employees, so that employees desiring a change of assignment will be aware of the opportunities. Present employees of the center will be given full and first consideration for all positions for which they qualify.

- **Change of employment Status-** a change in employment status will affect an employee's entitlement to some benefits. Please consult with the Early Learning Center director before requesting any permanent change.

1.4 Personnel Records: A personnel file is kept for each employee. St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human

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Services. In compliance with the department and all federal agencies, personnel records include:

- Employment applications and any supportive documentation
- Two written references from non-family members
- Copy of college transcripts or diploma, high school diploma or G. E. D. certificate, training documentation
- Health appraisal with T. B. test
- Correspondence related to the employee
- Copies of Criminal Record Check, Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, FBI Fingerprints, and disclosure statement.
- Employment record and termination date
- Records of promotions and salary changes
- Performance evaluation reports; including disciplinary actions, reports of conferences with the employee
- Information the employee wishes to have included; record or requests for references

Employees are responsible for paying the costs of the clearances and health appraisals. Employees may give written consent for the release of employment information. (Employment information, upon receiving written request, will be released in writing directly to the prospective employer). Personal data will be updated yearly during the performance review. Personnel records are confidential. An employee may request access to her/his file and may examine the same at any reasonable time in the presence of the center director. The Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human Services personnel and the St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Governance Committee have the right to examine the files of all Center personnel without prior consent for information that pertains to the Center operation.

1.5 Orientation Period: The orientation period provides the opportunity to learn the job. The orientation period for the director is six months and all other employees **are 12 weeks**. The director will evaluate an employee's ability, interest and efficiency while performing the tasks in the job description. During this time, the director may dismiss an employee with or without cause, or if duties are not performed as specified or the needs of the center are not being met. The director will be evaluated by the St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Governance committee and can be dismissed with or without cause during the orientation period.

Orientation Training Period: All new staff (paid and volunteer, including substitutes) will be oriented to the following:

- 1) The goals and philosophy of the program.
- 2) Regulatory requirements.
- 3) Written policies of the program with an emphasis on:
 - The planned program of activities of the program
 - Routines and transitions

- Acceptable methods of discipline.
- Parent relationships.
- Occupational health hazards such as back injuries and stress, infectious diseases, issues for pregnant workers and environmental hazards.
- Hand washing, diapering, or underclothing changing and surface sanitation techniques.
- Standard precautions for handling body fluids.
- Meal patterns, food preparation and handling.
- Facility maintenance and cleaning routines.
- Back to sleep positioning for infants.
- Teaching health promotion to children and families.
- Administration of medication.
- Recognizing symptoms of illness when to exclude ill children.
- Emergency procedures including emergency evacuation, fire drills, release of children, sign in and out procedures and unauthorized visitors on the premises.
- Child abuse prevention, recognition, and reporting.
- Injury prevention and hazard recognition.
- Compliance with the regulations of United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the facility's Blood borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.
- The names and ages of children whose care will involve the staff and the developmental and special needs of these children.
- Daily record keeping and daily health checks.

All procedures for the above policies are outlined in the book, Model Early Learning Policies and Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out of Home Early Learning Programs, which is always in the director's office above the staff mailboxes for use.

What the St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center expects of you, the employee:

2.1 Positive Attitude: The correct attitude toward your job is demonstrated by a display of genuine interest in your work and in the welfare of SJLCELC. You show interest in your work by taking pride in what you do, by mastering the details of your job, and by displaying a wholehearted willingness to work. Good manners, cooperation, and consideration for others are established habits that bring about harmony between you and fellow workers. An individual job of public relations can be accomplished by promoting good will through your loyalty and enthusiasm for SJLCELC. Remember that on and off the job you are direct reflection of SJLCELC.

2.2 Attendance and Punctuality: Your attendance record, which includes both absences and tardiness, should be of extreme importance to you. It is given consideration in connection with your performance reviews, salary increases and promotion. Excessive absences and/or tardiness may jeopardize your continued employment.

Reporting to work on time is important to maintaining ratios and providing a safe environment. Your scheduled work time to begin each day is the time that you are expected to be in the classroom ready to work. At the end of your workday, if ratios are not met, you may have to move a child to another room or stay later until the ratios are in compliance.

2.3 Discipline: Staff will use positive guidance techniques when disciplining children such as redirection, planning to prevent problems, positive reinforcement and active problem solving. Staff will guide the children to develop positive self-esteem, respect for other people and property, values of trust and fairness as well as teach them responsibility for their own actions. Staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct for relationships in group situations. Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or other children is unacceptable. Further methods of discipline are outlined in the parent handbook. Physical punishment, abusive language and withholding food are not permitted and subject to review.

2.4 Lesson Plans: Lesson plans, which include field trips, special events and other activities that would be of interest to the families, must be posted in advance in the classroom. Lesson Plans for one week will be prepared by the lead teacher of each classroom in collaboration with classroom assistants.

Weekly lesson plans are written, posted in the classroom (or outside the classroom), and include the age-appropriate PA Early Learning Standards across all areas of development. Lesson plans should be posted by Friday for the upcoming week. Activities and lessons should be planned based on current best practices in child development and as well as children's needs, and interests gathered and documented through observational assessment. Changes in the lesson will occur from time to time depending on the children's interest. Any changes to the written lesson plan should be noted.

- **PLANNING TIME:** Each teaching team will be provided with at least 4 hours per month of paid curriculum and lesson planning time. Teachers will have no responsibility for care of children during planning time. A teacher resource area with books and other materials is available to assist in preparation of lessons. Lesson plans must be aligned with state learning standards and indicate ways in which needs of individual children are being met.

- **CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT**-St James Early Learning Center teachers use *The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers* and *Preschool* as a framework for setting up and maintaining developmentally appropriate environments and activities. The term “curriculum” refers to every part of the day including routines and transitions (i.e., meals, bathroom breaks, outdoor play, etc.) Therefore, it is expected that the teacher’s plans and interactions reflect the goals of the classroom during those times
- **Developmental Screening & Assessments:** Classroom teachers are required to complete a developmentally appropriate screening of each child upon program and/or classroom entry. The screening tool that the center uses is called *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*. The questionnaire must be completed and shared with families within 45 days of program/classroom entry. The child’s classroom start date must be written on the questionnaire and a copy of the questionnaire with parent signature will be placed in the child’s file in the office.

2.5 Importance of Play-classroom Environment Creating and Maintaining a “Play-Based” Play is when children are activity engaged in for the purpose of enjoyment, which helps them to better understand and master their feelings. Play also allows children to practice and master new intellectual, social, and physical skills. In play, children learn to solve problems, to use their imagination, to cooperate and to see themselves as competent and interesting people with useful skills and good ideas

The environment of the room has a major influence on the behavior of the children and their play. In addition to our Christian education, the following recommendations should be applied in classrooms:

- Materials should be kept at the children’s level on low open shelves so those items may be obtained independently.
- Shelves are to be clearly labeled (picture labels for each item with printed words) to help children locate and return materials to the proper spot.
- The classroom must have at least four clearly defined interest areas.
- Interest areas should be separated from each other using low shelves to prevent interference between activities yet permit staff to maintain an unobstructed view of the room.
- Materials in each area are to be rotated on a regular basis to avoid overstimulation or boredom.
- Plan room arrangement and the placement of all shelves and tables with traffic factors in mind. Avoid large open areas in the toddler and preschool classrooms; this promotes running through the room and rough play.

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The behavior of staff has a direct influence on the children and their play.

Therefore...

- ❑ Teacher preparation is not to occur during any part of the day when the children are up and active.
- ❑ Staff are expected to keep their materials and supplies uncluttered and in order as an example to children.
- ❑ Staff will be stationed throughout the room and should not congregate together. Attention must be on the children and actively always engaged.
- ❑ Staff should be able and willing to act playfully. Make ordinary activities more interesting with a little pretend play.
- ❑ Staff members are expected to get down on the floor to interact with the children.
- ❑ Staff members are to listen and observe children and assess what they need, then meet these needs, as necessary.
- ❑ The elimination of play is not acceptable discipline. Disruptive children need a multitude of challenging and stimulating play opportunities.

Play is to be valued as a process rather than an outcome or product. Therefore...

- ❑ It is essential that children be given adequate time to develop and evolve their activities. Ideally daily free play periods should be at least 30 minutes in length.
- ❑ Staff members are to introduce available play areas to children and give children a choice of areas prior to the free play period.
- ❑ Create an atmosphere in which children know that it is okay to be messy and leave ample time for cleanup.
- ❑ Give children a warning before cleanup is to begin. Do not yell this warning but travel to each area to tell children and adjust the warning period to the activity of the children in an area. Children in the block or dramatic play generally need more time to wrap up their play and to clean up than do children doing puzzles or manipulative activities. Time does not need to be clock time as this is irrelevant to most children

Most importantly, remember your own sense of playfulness. Relax and enjoy!

2.6 Mandated Reporting: Mandated reporters must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313. As professionals working with young children all employees of SJLCELC are mandated reporters in suspected cases of child abuse.

Additionally, report all cases of *suspected* child abuse immediately to the center director. Some situations may require information gathering and documentation over a period before a case of abuse can be made, therefore all suspicions must be taken to

the center director who will then decide so a plan of action can be put in place for each incident in cooperation with CPS.

2.7 Personal Appearance: Whatever the employee's position or work assignment might be, neatness in attire and good grooming are important. The personal appearance of each employee is important in inspiring confidence in the quality of our work and in that of the Early Learning provided. Each employee should check his/her appearance so that she/he and the Center can be proud of what the public sees. Below are some guidelines for appropriate and safe dress:

- Comfortable clothes that free you to move easily, to be down on the floor and active with the children.
- Clothing must be clean, neat, unstained, modest and in good repair.
- **Words** on clothing must be positive and appropriate for young children.
- Jeans, shorts, sandals, and tee shirts may be worn with the above guidelines.
- Fingernail and toenail polish may be worn if it is in good repair.
- Hair ornaments and jewelry may be worn when they do not pose a hazard to the children in the **employees'** care.

Children and families and other staff enjoy cheerful, colorful, and unusual clothing and accessories. Remember that sometimes there is messy work at the Center, so please wear clothing that is sturdy and easy to launder.

2.8 Supervision of children:

- **No child will be left unsupervised** while attending the program. At least two staff will be available when more than two children are in care. Caregivers will supervise all children in their direct care by sight and sound at all times, even when the children are sleeping.
- Caregivers will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition, whenever leaving one area and arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child. Lead teachers will assign primary care groups and reassign responsibilities as needed. Staff will assist the environment for opportunities to improve visibility and hearing of child activities.
- Child/staff ratios followed by SJLCELC will always comply with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human Services regulations which currently are:
 - ***Infants (children 0 – 12 months)***
One adult for every four children
 - ***Young Toddlers (13 – 24 months)***
One adult for every five children
 - ***Older Toddlers (25 – 35 months)***
One adult for every six children
 - ***Preschool (36 months – 60 months)***

One adult for every ten children

- **School – Age (six years – twelve years)**

One adult for every twelve children.

- Supervision of Active (Large Muscle) Play:
 1. High – risk play areas will receive the most staff attention. (i.e., climbers, slide and water table)
 2. Remaining staff will supervise entranceways and exits.
 3. At no time should this portion of the day be looked at as a time for the adults to socialize. NO two staff persons should be in the same area of the large muscle play, indoor or outside.

2.9 Nap/Rest Time: Supervision must remain a key priority even during nap/rest time. You must position yourself that you can see, hear and assess all children while they are sleeping. You must periodically move around the classroom to make sure no child is having trouble breathing or in distress.

Nap/ rest time is a time for caregivers to complete daily sheets, communicate with families, lesson plan, record observations and documentation, complete paperwork, update children’s portfolios, prep for the next day, clean and rotate toys.

- **Music-** Gentle or soft background music maybe played in the background while the children sleep, BUT not so loud that you cannot hear the children if they are in distress.
- **Personal Devices:** are not to be used during nap time unless approved by the center’s administration. This includes cell phones, kindles, tablets, personal laptops.

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EMPLOYEE GROUPINGS: Hours vary according to individual needs of the employees and the children and families that we serve.

Group A:

Pastors

Associate Pastors

Interim Pastor

Diaconal Minister

Group B:

Minister of Music

Youth Minister

Early Learning Center Director

Group C:

Building Superintendent

Church Administrator

Assistant Director

Group Supervisor – Lead Teachers

Group D:

Administrative Coordinator

Assistant Teachers (full – time)

Group E

Assistant Teachers (part – time)

Assistant Sexton

What the employee can expect from St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center:

4.1 [A-EAD1] Work Hours: The Center is generally open Monday through Friday, 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Hours can vary according to the room and staff position.

Full-time regular employee: An employee who averages 30-40 hours of work per week and is regularly and continuously employed by the Early Learning Center.

Part-time regular employee: An employee who averages 10-29 hours of work per week and is regularly and continuously employed by the Early Learning Center.

- **Change of employment Status-** a change in employment status will affect an employee's entitlement to some benefits. Please consult with the Early Learning Center director before requesting any permanent change

CALLING OFF: When an emergency or unavoidable situation occurs and an employee is unable to be present for working hours, **call the director/assistant director at least two hours before your normal start time** so arrangements can be made to cover those hours.

Employees may plan, with the approval from the director, to use PTO during normal working hours for a personal reason. Employees are responsible for checking the Time off Calendar, to see if others are already scheduled off. The director, prior to the absence, must approve all arrangements.

4.2 Daily Breaks Employees are provided breaks during the day to be refreshed, remain alert and ready to meet the needs of the children. Staff members working more than 5 hours will be given a break of at least of 10 minutes with no program responsibilities when ratios permit. All breaks are planned by the employee's supervisor or administrator responsible for scheduling and must be taken away from the classrooms and responsibilities of children. Break time may not be used to compensate for arriving late to work or leaving early. As always, all requests to be at work at a time different from the scheduled work time must be approved by the administrator responsible for scheduling.

4.3 Salary and Wages: The St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center Governance Committee, which includes the director, will determine the salary of each employee at the Center. The salary scales of the employees will be reviewed once a year as part of the overall budget planning. Increases will be based on, but not limited to the budget, job performance, attendance, punctuality, continued training and education, leadership abilities, positive attitude, and willingness to accept other job responsibilities.

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The church is required by law to take deductions from each employee's paycheck for federal income tax, social security tax, Medicare tax, Pennsylvania state tax, and certain local taxes. Each employee is required to fill out and sign time sheets daily, which are reviewed and approved by their supervisor and filed in the director's office. The pay period ends every other Friday and paychecks are issued on the Wednesday following the end of the pay period. **If a non-exempt employee works more than 40 hours per week, the employee is paid time and a half for each hour over 40 hours.**

4_[A-EAD2].4 Performance Review: Before the end of the orientation period, a performance review is conducted. Thereafter, reviews should be conducted annually in January.

4.5 Additional Compensation Pay: Employees may be considered for and awarded additional compensation in addition to their regular hourly wage. Such additional may be paid when the St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center is awarded a merit or ERA award from a government agency which award is partially based on a component of staff development and professional growth. The amount of additional compensation will be determined by the years of service to the center, level of education plus ongoing educational enrichment. If the merit or ERA award is not provided to SJLCELC, this will not apply.

4_[A-EAD3].6 Staff Meetings: In addition to the annual training events, staff meetings are held approximately 7 months per year, tentatively the third Tuesday of each month unless otherwise notified. Meetings are approximately one hour in length and happen right after work; start time 5:45. All staff is expected to attend meetings and will be paid accordingly.

4_[A-EAD4].7 Professional Development Trainings: The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with professional development opportunities that increase their skills and enhance their contributions to the organization. SJLCELC complies with all regulatory training requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education, Office of Child Development and Early Learning and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Specific details can be obtained from program administration.

All staff will be paid for the additional hours required by this regulation as time worked. **Any time the total hours worked exceeds 40 hours per week, the employee will be paid at time and a half for hours more than 40 as required by Fair Labor Standards Act of Federal Labor Laws.**

Policy_[A-EAD5]

The work performance of the staff is a vital key to the success of SJLCELC. Providing professional development to our employees is an investment in their careers and the organization's future.

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All employees are eligible for reimbursement for training costs that are approved by the organization. It is the employee's responsibility to seek out the training mediums that will enhance his or her career development and align with the organization's mission and individual annual staff training plans.

Procedure

- a. All employees are eligible for professional development reimbursement.
- b. Professional development can be obtained through attendance at trainings approved by the Pennsylvania Key and posted on their website at: www.pakeys.org OR Better Kid Care.
- c. Requests for reimbursement must be made within 60 days of completed training.
- d. Receipt for cost of the training and certificate of completion must be provided for reimbursement.
- e. Completed requests with receipts and certificates must be provided by noon Thursday the day prior to payroll.

Revised 9.2.14

4.8 Travel Expenses: When an employee is engaged in business out of town that pertains to the Center, mileage shall be reimbursed at the current rate established by the **IRS**. It shall be the responsibility of the employee to submit the official mileage to the director for reimbursement. Claims will be made monthly and are not allowed to accumulate.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center offers certain benefits to eligible employees. These are not a right but a benefit that we wish to extend. Prior notice will be given if these benefits are to increase, decrease or change. **Employees will be eligible for benefits after 12 weeks of employment following the end of their orientation period. The Director will be eligible for benefits after 12 weeks of employment following the end of their orientation period.**

5.1 Health Insurance: Health insurance will be available for all full-time employees 12 weeks after their hire date. Health insurance will be provided based on insurance guidelines for the current calendar year. Provision for insurance will be evaluated annually based on budgetary projections

5.2 Pension: Employees are eligible for a pension benefit at after their orientation period (12 weeks). Employees receive a benefit rate of 6% of their annual calculated salary. This contribution is provided by the center. This contribution is provided by SJLCELC. The employee has opportunities to contribute additional money to their pension fund directly from their paychecks. The money in your employee pension fund belongs to you even after you leave the program.

5.2 Holidays: Seven paid holidays are observed each calendar year.

- New Year's Day,
- Easter (observed on Good Friday),
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

All employees will be eligible for paid holidays. Holiday pay shall not duplicate any payment made for vacation. Each employee will be paid their regular rate of pay for their usual number of scheduled hours.

To receive holiday pay, an employee must work the last day scheduled before the holiday and first scheduled day after the holiday, **unless they have prior approval.** If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will celebrate it on Friday, and if a holiday falls on Sunday, the center will celebrate it on Monday.

5.3 Bereavement Leave: In the case of the death of a member of an employee's immediate family employees may take up to 3 days of paid leave for a death in the employee's immediate family. Immediate family includes spouse, child, sibling, parent, stepparent, or stepchild. Employees may take one day of paid leave for a death in the employee's extended family to include grandparent, grandchild, in-laws such as mother

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or father-in-law, sister or brother-in-law, or a stepbrother, or stepsister. Additional unpaid leave may be available at the discretion of the director. Bereavement will be granted at the employee's regular rate of pay. The employee must have completed his/her orientation period to be eligible for bereavement leave pay.

5.4 Leave of Absence: A leave of absence without pay may be granted after two years of continuous service for illness, advanced study, familial concerns, or restoration of health. No PTO time is accumulated during this time. Request should be submitted to the SJCC for approval.

5[A-EAD7].5 Maternity Leave: With physician's approval, an employee may continue to work during her pregnancy. Maternity leave may be applied for and granted by consent of the SJLCELC. This is unpaid and staff may use PTO however and time in their sick bank.

5.6 Civic Responsibilities:

- **Jury and Witness duty:** any employee who is called to serve on a jury panel or serve as a witness in court proceedings which she/he is not a litigant, will be allowed time off to serve. The employee's job will be protected while serving in this capacity. The employee will be paid the usual pay for the usual hours less the amount they are reimbursed by the county or state. It is the responsibility of the employee to inform the director of the rate of county reimbursement.
- **Voting[A-EAD8] Time:** a good citizen always finds the time and incentive to vote on Election Day, not only in national elections, but also in the community elections. Employees of the Center are also encouraged to do so. The voting polls are usually open from early morning to late evening. It is expected that the employee will find time to vote either before or after work.

5.7 Emergency Closing: The director will make the decision to close **or delay the opening time of the** Center based on weather reports and other local Early Learning facilities. The decision will be made by 5:00 a.m. and will be posted on the website: www.stjamesgettysburg.com, Facebook, and being **emailed to you the employee.**

****Staff should arrive 15 minutes prior to center opening to prepare classrooms for children and families.**

5.8 PAID TIME-OFF (PTO):

Paid Time Off (PTO) includes vacation, illness, unexpected center closings and other personal needs [A-EAD9]. The Early Learning Center director and assistant director must approve all non-emergency ***PTO requests two weeks prior to the date scheduled to be off.***

PTO is not available until the end of the 12-week orientation period.

PTO may be used if the center is closed for an emergency, Black Friday, Christmas Eve and if we close for New Year's Eve.

Requests for PTO are limited to one week's vacation, five days, preferably Monday through Friday, during the time between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

A second week may be requested during this time, only after all employee "first weeks" requests have been accommodated. These "second week" requests should be submitted in writing to the Center Director who will present them to the Early Learning Governance Committee. Remaining accrued vacation should be scheduled outside of that time. No more than two employees will be permitted to schedule vacation at any given time. The Center Director, under the direction of the Early Learning Governance Committee, will make every attempt to honor all employee requests. However, requests will not be granted that could put the health and safety of the program at risk. Exceptions would be granted in the event of an emergency or in the event of a low census schedule day of operation.

PTO- at the end of the calendar year, any unused PTO hours, will be rolled into your sick bank with a maxim of 240 hours (30 days).

Upon departing from employment, the employee will NOT be compensated for any unused accrued PTO. A departing employee who used ***PTO leave*** prior to accrual will be responsible to reimburse St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center through their last paycheck ***or through a payment plan as agreed by both parties.***

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Employees working 30 hours or more per week will accrue Paid Time Off (PTO) according to the following schedule:

Employee Category	Years of Service	Days Accrued Per Month	Quarterly Accrual	Days Per Year
Group B & C– Director/Group Supervisor	0 - 5 completed years of service	1.5	4.5	18
	6 – 10 completed years of service	2	6	24
	11 + years	2.5	7.5	30
Category D – Assistant Group Supervisor	0 - 5 completed years of service	1.25	3.75	15
	6 – 10 completed years of service	1.5	4.5	18
	11 + years	2	6	24

PTO accrual will be calculated quarterly. Advance payments for PTO will be subject to the approval of St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Governance Committee

5.9 PAID TIME OFF (PTO) CASH-OUT OPTION GUIDE:

St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center encourages our employees to take time off away from work to have a more balanced lifestyle. In addition, SJLCELC is offering a PTO Cash-Out Option for eligible employees. This program is intended to provide you with more flexibility in utilizing your time-off benefits.

Eligibility

- Eligible employees with one year of employment who accrue PTO and have a minimum of 80 hours in their sick bank.

Policy

- An election period will be held each year in May and November, during which time you will have the opportunity to make an irrevocable election to cash-out PTO hours that **are accrued in the current calendar year. You may not cash-out hours that have not yet been accrued at the time of Cash – Out Option.** You may not elect to cash-out PTO hours previously accrued in previous years. PTO shall be carried forward from year to year with a maximum accrual of 30 days which will be carried over to a sick bank.
- This benefit requires an **Annual** election. Due to IRS regulations, elections will not carry over from one calendar year to the next calendar year.

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- You may elect to cash-out either 40 or 80 PTO hours, depending on your annual PTO accrual.
- A minimum of 40 hours **MUST** be in your PTO bank at the elected time in the period you are making the election. Remember to allow enough PTO hours in your bank to cover vacation, sick days, and emergencies. The PTO hours you will accrue in the next calendar year that you elect to cash-out **will not be available** to use during the year for these purposes. If your accrual rate changes (such as due to a leave or change in scheduled hours) so that there are insufficient hours accrued in the plan year to cover your election, you will receive only the balance of your elected PTO cash-out available at the time of the cash-out. If there are no hours available, no cash-out will occur.
- There are two PTO Cash-Out pay dates. The cash-out will be on Wednesday on the first payday in June and/or the Wednesday on the first payday in December. Two cash-out pay dates may be elected, not to exceed a total of 80 hours.
- The PTO Cash-Out will be a separate **physical** check. The check will be available in Payroll for pickup after 12 p.m. on the day the check is due. If the check is not picked-up in Payroll by 3 p.m., it will be mailed to your home.
- **Reminder: If you reach your maximum bank accrual, you will not receive cash-out if you do not accrue the PTO hours you elected. The cash out is based on hours you accrue in the calendar year, not on the bank you had prior to making the election. Plan to take time off so you continue to accrue PTO hours.**

• **Maximum annual PTO Cash-Out election available is 80 hours, provided you have a minimum balance of 80 PTO hours and 80 hours sick bank^[A-EAD10] at the time you make an election.**

Accruals will differ based on years of service and employment status.

Procedure

- *To elect this benefit, you **MUST** complete, date, and sign the irrevocable PTO election form, attached.*

All copies of the form MUST be signed and received by Early Learning Director for verification and approved by Treasurer two weeks prior to the elected pay out dates. The IRS requires that there can be no exceptions.

- Provided your election is received by the due date and provided you have 80 hours in your Sick Bank and 80 hours in your PTO bank at the time you make an election, you will automatically receive your PTO Cash-Out in either June and/or December. **No other action is required.**
- The “employee copy” of the form will be returned to you once the 120 hours in PTO bank has been verified.

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- Your PTO Cash-Out will be based on your current **base rate** of pay at the time of the payout. **Tax Sheltered Account (TSA-403(b) deductions will be taken**, provided you have not reached the IRS maximum!
- **PTO Cash-Out is subject to all applicable taxes and deductions taken on earnings**

5.10 Sick Leave Bank:

Sick time is the rollover of your PTO time from year to year with no more than 30 days of carry over time.

The purpose of this policy is to provide all regular, full-time employees with short term disability protection in the event they are personally subject to a catastrophic/chronic illness or injury and face a hardship and have exhausted all other PTO. Requests for care of family members including spouse, parents, and dependent children subject to a catastrophic/chronic illness or injury will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Earned Sick Leave must be used for illnesses lasting **more than** three consecutive days with a written note from the physician, ongoing treatments or periodic treatment over an extended time.

To be considered for benefits from your Sick Leave Bank, the catastrophic/A-EAD11/chronic illness or injury must require the services of a licensed medical practitioner. A catastrophic/chronic illness/ injury has been defined to include, but not limited to, the following: lengthy illness, hospitalizations, necessary surgery requiring a lengthy recovery, and ongoing treatment regimen requiring frequent time off from work or pregnancy.

Reasons for denying sick bank time may include, but not limited to unnecessary cosmetic surgical procedures, illnesses and injuries that do not require medical treatment, minor illnesses and injuries that are temporary in nature.

Requests for Sick Leave Bank use must be made using the Request for Time Off form and be accompanied by a written statement from a licensed medical practitioner starting the beginning date of the condition, a description of the illness or injury, a prognosis, date the employee may be able to return to work and restrictions that may exist.

EMPLOYEE/EMPLOYER RELATIONS

6.1 Grievances: St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center has a good reputation in the community. The Center's reputation is partly because our people at all levels have worked with the common understanding and the ability to communicate freely. The director is a vital two-way link in our communication system. The director is the St. James Early Learning Governance Committee's voice in bringing Center policies and direction to the employee. Equally important, the director is the first means of communication with the committee each employee has about personal concerns, job concerns and the Center. Employees should feel free to talk to the director about their views, questions, or problems. This is the employee's right and privilege and that is why the director is there.

A grievance is a claim by a permanent staff member that she/he has been personally affected by a violation, misapplication, or misrepresentation of one or more policies at the SJLCELC. In the event an employee feels a situation exists which warrants a grievance, the following procedure should be followed:

- The employee should discuss the problem with his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Classroom supervisors are responsible for their classroom personnel. Every effort should be made to reach a satisfactory solution to the problem at this level.
- If the employee does not receive a satisfactory answer or settlement to her/his problem from his/her immediate supervisor, she/he should discuss the problem with the director.
- If one or more parties remain dissatisfied with the outcome, the grievance must be brought to the chairperson of the SJLCELC Governance Committee by contact the church office at 717.334.2012. At this time your contact information will be given to the board president to be in contact with you relating your concerns

6.2 Harassment Policy: St. James has a policy against harassment of any employee or applicant based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, physical handicap, sexual orientation, or medical condition. Harassment is an extremely sensitive issue that can have dire consequences even if accusations are false. We ask all employees to share in the responsibility to maintain a workplace that is free of discrimination and abuse. Any employee who believes he/she has been or is being harassed by a coworker and supervisor should immediately report the facts of the incident to his or her director, or the governance committee if the accusation is being made against the director.

6.3 Confidential Information: Revealing information about enrolled children and their families, unless authorized to do so by the director is not allowed. It is important that each employee exercise confidentiality concerning the children enrolled at the Center and their families as well as fellow employees and themselves. The condition and/or care of any child and information about the family should never be discussed

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with other employees or anyone else not directly responsible for the care of the child. Anyone requesting information about a particular child, family or coworker should be directed to speak with the director.

6.4 Smoking: Smoking or use of other alternatives are not permitted on the Church properties. Smoking is not permitted at any time around the children, this includes on walks with the children or field trips. Please, also be mindful of your clothing, when arriving to work, as it does not smell like smoke, this may irritate or cause respiratory inflammation in the children in your care.

6.5 Personal/Telephone Calls: Families of employees should know that they are welcome to call the Center if they have a need. Please instruct them to tell the person who answers the phone whether the call is an emergency that cannot wait or whether the call can be returned later.

Employees may use the Center's telephone in the director's office to make brief calls to check on or make arrangements to handle unexpected situations. This is a "family friendly" workplace. We want families of employees to know that they have access to the employee when needed. If an employee's work is being interrupted too often, we expect the employee to take actions to eliminate the situation.

6.6 Baby Sitting: St James Early Learning Center does not encourage our employees to babysit enrolled children, but we understand that opportunities may arise when babysitting outside of staff work hours can be a great fit for families and staff. Listed below are few items to keep in mind if you do decide to babysit a child enrolled in the Early Learning Center:

- SJLCELC does not operate a babysitting service. Babysitting is accepted by SJLCELC employees by their own accord. As such, SJLCELC does not monitor the care that occurs outside the Early Learning Center and is not responsible for any incidents that may occur outside of our direct work hours.
- Refrain from discussing the Early Learning Center outside of work hours for the following confidentiality reasons:
 - SJLCELC would like to prevent person opinions from tainting a family's vision of someone or something that pertains to SJLCELC
 - SJLCELC employees may not discuss other enrolled children or family members of the center
 - SJLCELC employees must not discuss other information related to SJLCELC employees, procedure, or practices.

Technology & Media

7.1 Cell Phones or Similar Devices at Work

SJLCELC is aware that employees utilize their personal cellular phones for business purposes. At the same time, cell phones are a distraction in the workplace. We recognize that other distractions occur; however, curbing the use of cell phones, while working is one way to minimize the risks of accidents. Due to research that indicates that cell phone use while driving is dangerous and may even approach the equivalent danger of driving while drunk. Although you are not driving while at work, the distractions cellular or similar devices put the safety of children at risk and are strictly prohibited during scheduled work hours.

This prohibition of cell phone or similar devices include receiving or placing calls, text messaging, surfing the Internet, receiving, or responding to email, checking for phone messages, or any other purpose related to your employment.

To ensure the effectiveness of performance, employees are asked to leave cell phones in their designated locker or mailbox in the Early Learning office. On the occasion while staff and children leave the premises, personal cell phones may be carried on the walks or field trips to be used only in an emergency. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including employment termination.

7.2 Personal Technology Devices: SJLCELC staff may NOT use their own personal devices such as a cell phone, to take photos, documentation, send emails, and post on social media sites.

Computer Responsibilities:

Staff members are expected to use the Internet responsibly and shall not use the Internet connection in any way that may be construed as illegal or unethical, including violating copyright law.

Staff members are expected to be responsible for the care of the SJLCELC 's technology resources, from power cords to computers. Staff will do their best to maintain network security by:

1. Keeping passwords private. Passwords should not be written down in a publicly accessible place but should be provided to administration.
2. Not sharing passwords or let another person use a computer that you are logged onto without supervision.
3. Logging off when leaving the computer unsupervised or Web based programs.

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Personally, owned software may not be installed on any computer that is the property of SJLCELC. School-owned software may not be installed or used on personally owned computers.

Downloading and installation of programs is prohibited *unless* expressly approved by the administration.

Staff may not gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted areas or files.

Staff may not alter any software protections or restrictions placed on computer applications, files, or directories

7.3 Email's: Each classroom is assigned an email address. Classroom email is not to be used for the creation or distribution of any offensive or disruptive messages inconsistent with SJLCELC policy against discrimination. Email should be treated the same way as other written communications to and from families or other staff. Sensitive issues should not be discussed via email. Administration should be informed or CC on questionable emails.

7.4 Blogging / Social Networking: If a staff member maintains a personal blog or social networking site, he/she must maintain confidentiality and not refer directly to students, staff, or any other protected school information.

St James is not responsible for any personal data stored on SJLCELC computers, that may be lost or remain in the program if a staff member is dismissed. Inappropriate use of technology or violation of these guidelines may be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination.

7.5 Social Media: Social media is defined as media designed to be circulated through social interaction, using accessible online forums. Examples include but are not limited to Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and SnapChat. Staff at SJLELC may only use Social Media approved by St James administration and Governance committee, currently Facebook and St James Lutheran Church web page.

Photographs posted on social media sites can be copied. Any pictures of children that are posted, families must have a signed a photo release form on file.

Parents must be informed of the social media avenues approved for program uses. Parents provide a written arrangement for their child's photo may be use for social media.

- **Posting & Sharing:** When posting on social media, confidential is the number one factor. Do not post confidential information about SJLCELC, students, families, or co-workers. Examples include names of children or family members, negative comments, and personal information. Be aware that a presence in the

social media world is public. Be respectful and mindful of what you post. Employees who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary actions or termination.

Do not use SJLCELC's name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate. You may not use SJLCELC logos for endorsements, images, or iconography on personal social media sites.

Health & Safety

8.1 Fire Drills: A fire drill will take place six months per year. All staff on duty will: direct the evacuation of the children from the building, exit according to the directions posted in each room, account for all children once outside of the building and in a safe location.

8.2 Safety and Security: The early learning space is locked down and separated from other church activities throughout the working hours of the center. Staff, parents, and visitors can enter the facility through the east side door and south side front door. On the occasion that someone forgets or misplaces their key card, they may use the call button which can release the doors from the classroom. If that occurs, please step into the hallway to identify the visitor. All past families, children and staff must be approved by the Early Learning Director/Assistant Director before granting admission.

8.3 Personal Injury While Working: If you receive any injury while working on the job or in the course of employment, immediately report in writing to your supervisor the following information: time, location, circumstances of the incident and description of the injury. If injured, the director should report to the SJCC Governance Committee.

8.4 Parking: The employees are welcomed to park in the church parking lot except on occasion when the church has a funeral or special event. The parking spaces nearest to the church are for child drop-off and pick-up for the convenience of the parent and the safety of the children. Staff should park in the middle to the back of the lot.

Resignation & Termination

9.1 Resignation: We value each employee and hope that she/he will look on this position at the Center as the important work that it is. Every effort will be made to allow the employee personal and professional growth. The desire at the Center that the employee is fulfilled with the work she/he is doing and will remain at the Center for a long time. Any An employee who experiences job dissatisfaction is requested to discuss it with her/his immediate supervisor and the director to see if there are adjustments that can be made to bring more satisfaction. (Refer to Grievances). Employee wishing to resign her/his employment with St James Early Learning Center for any reason is required to submit a two-week written notice. The Center respectfully asks for more notice, if possible. **At that time, the director will contact the chair of the Early Learning Governance committee to schedule an exit interview.**

Orientation Period: If at any time after the orientation period, the employee's performance does not meet the job description requirements, the employee will be notified and have two weeks to improve these deficiencies. After two weeks, the director and/or the St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center's Governance Committee will meet with the employee (first notice) to evaluate improvement. If at that time, the deficiencies have been corrected, no further action will be necessary. If at that time, enough improvement has not been shown, the director will arrange to meet with the employee in one week (second notice) to evaluate the continued progress.

If at the first notice or the second notice it is determined that the employee is unable or unwilling to meet the requirements as set forth in the job description, the employee will be terminated or asked to resign.

9.2 Termination or Dismissal: means that an employee will be fired and receive no additional benefits. There will be no notice. The following will be causes for summary dismissal:

- **Violation of Confidential Information:** Information that an employee acquires while working at the Center about the children in the care of the Center, their families, co-workers, or themselves, is to remain in this Center. Any topic concerning the personal lives of the same must be held as a sacred trust. Employees should never leave information where it can be observed by the casual visitor or other parents. Be careful with records, correspondence, and personal information. Mishandling of confidential information may result in a summary dismissal.
- **Embezzlement of Funds, Equipment or Supplies:** Employees must be careful when handling money or property. Careless handling will not be tolerated, and proof of dishonesty will result in dismissal. It is the policy of this Center to pursue reimbursement and this may mean indictment or criminal charges.

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- **Fraudulent Forgery of Documents:** If it can be proven that an employee deliberately forged any documents or papers, that employee will be summarily dismissed.
- **Illegal Use of Controlled Substances or Alcohol:** Consuming alcohol or controlled substances during work hours or when directly supervising or responsible for the supervision of children is prohibited. Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances by any individual when involved in the care or supervision of children is not permitted and will result in immediate dismissal.
- **Abuse/Neglect:** If at any time an employee, by willful neglect, endangers the health or safety of the Center children, or other staff member, she/he will be terminated immediately. Abusive treatment, including inappropriate physical contact or foul language directed at a child, their family member or coworker will not be tolerated and result in immediate termination.
- **Conviction of Felonious Charge:** If an employee is convicted of a felony or convicted of child abuse, her/his work here will be terminated.
- **Any staff member who is arrested for a misdemeanor or felony must notify his or her supervisor of such arrest no later than seven calendar days after the arrest.**

The following may also serve as, but are not limited to reasons for termination:

- Reorganization or retrenchment.
- Unsatisfactory job performance.
- Excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism.
- Summary dismissal (immediate termination).

After the termination of employment, for any reason, the employee's final paycheck will be issued at the end of that pay period.

Upon resignation or termination, the employee is expected to turn in their key card at their time of departure. Employee is expected to pay all debts to the Center and return all Center equipment and materials before their final pay.

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Appendix A

St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center
Employee Training Reimbursement Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Training Date	Title of Training	Training Hours	Cost

Total Reimbursement Amount Request:

Employee Signature Date

Director Signature Date

All requests must be accompanied by a completed paid receipt and completed certificate of training.

Appendix B

2021 Paid Time Off (PTO) Cash-Out Request

Employee Name (please print): _____

Date: _____

I request to make the following irrevocable PTO Cash-Out Election for PTO Accrued during 2021 and to be paid out in 2021 calendar year.

I understand that I may elect only 40 hours in June, and/or 40 or 80 hours in December.

If no election is made in June, I may elect a maximum of 80 hours in December.

Reminder -Total PTO Cash-Out cannot exceed 80 hours. Also, I understand that I must have a minimum of 80 hours in my PTO Bank as of December 31, 2021.

- JUNE** (to be paid on June 5, 2021) 40 hrs. **AND/OR**
 DECEMBER (to be paid on December 1, 2021) 40 hrs. 80 hrs.

IMPORTANT: I understand that the PTO hours I will accrue next year for which I have elected a cash-out will be considered accrued first before those hours for which I have not elected a cash-out, and that the PTO for which I have elected a cash-out will not be available for use to cover vacations, sick days, or emergency time off needs. I understand that to receive the cash-out, the PTO hours I have elected for cash-out must be accrued starting January 1 of the cash-out year and must be accrued by the specified cash-out check date, and that the cash-out amount will be reduced by any shortfall in such PTO hours accrued by that date. I also understand that the resulting cash-out check is considered supplemental wage and therefore is subject to all applicable taxes, in addition to any other payroll reductions/deductions taken on earnings such as TSA, etc.

Employee Signature Date*

****Must be signed and received by Human Resources/Benefits prior to the 15th day of May and November as required by the IRS. An Approved or Denied copy will be returned to you once eligibility has been verified.***

Application Approved

Application Denied

Verified by Director: _____ **Date:** _____

Approved by Benefits Administrator: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix C

**St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center
Employee Request for Time Off**

Name: _____ Date: _____

***Remember to check the calendar in the office before you schedule a day that you really would like to have off. It is more likely to be granted if no other person is scheduled off.**

Dates Requested Leave: _____

Paid Time Off: _____

Sick Time: _____

Additional Notes/ Comments: _____

Approval: _____ Date: _____

**St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center
Employee Request for Time Off**

Name: _____ Date: _____

***Remember to check the calendar in the office before you schedule a day that you really would like to have off. It is more likely to be granted if no other person is scheduled off.**

Dates Requested Leave: _____

Paid Time Off: _____

Sick Time: _____

Additional Notes/ Comments: _____

Approval: _____ Date: _____

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Appendix D

Time Sheet

St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center;
109 York St.; Gettysburg, PA 17325; (717)-334-7171

Employee Name: _____

Pay period Beginning → Ending Date: _____

Day	Date	Time In	Break (Time in/ Time Out)	Time Out	Total Regular Hours	Staff Meeting	PTO	Training	Holiday	Total Hours Paid
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday										
Thursday										
Friday										
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday										
Thursday										
Friday										
Total Hours	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX						

****If you are taking a paid time off or holiday pay, then do NOT mark any of those hours as hours worked. Put the total number of hours claimed in the appropriate column.***

Total Regular Hours: _____ Staff Meeting: _____

Paid Time Off: _____ Training: _____

Holiday Leave: _____ Total Hours Paid: _____

Employee Signature & Date: _____

Director & Date: _____

Office Manager & Date: _____

Receipt and Acknowledgement:

This is to acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of the St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center's employee handbook.

I understand that the contents of the handbook are presented as a matter of information only and are not to be construed as an employment contract. I also understand and agree that St. James Early Learning Center may change, rescind, or add to any procedures, benefits or practices described in the handbook from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion, with or without prior notice.

I further understand that my employment is not for a specified term and that it may be terminated with or without cause at the will of the St. James Lutheran Early Learning Center Governance Committee in agreement with the center director.

I have received and carefully read the foregoing RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, and I sign the same of my own free will and deed.

Upon completions, give this page to the center director.

Employee Signature: _____ DATE _____

Employee's Name typed or printed: _____