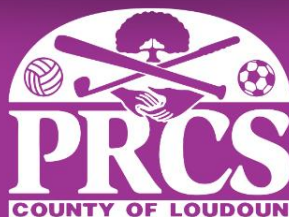


# EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF HANDBOOK

Loudoun County Department of  
Parks, Recreation & Community Services



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## Administration Staff Contact Information

<b>Steve Torpy, Director</b> <a href="mailto:Steve.Torpy@loudoun.gov">Steve.Torpy@loudoun.gov</a>		
<b>LaChanze Garner, Assistant Director</b> <a href="mailto:LaChanze.Garner@loudoun.gov">LaChanze.Garner@loudoun.gov</a>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jay Allred</b>  <b>Recreation Centers Division Manager</b>  <a href="mailto:Jay.Allred@loudoun.gov">Jay.Allred@loudoun.gov</a>                      703-737-8747</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dr. Chezia Calloway</b>  <b>Community Centers Division Manager</b>  <a href="mailto:Chezia.Calloway@loudoun.gov">Chezia.Calloway@loudoun.gov</a>                      703-771-5113</p>	
<p><b>Dulles South Recreation &amp; Community Center</b>                      24950 Riding Center Drive                      South Riding, VA 20152  <b>Patty Reuss,</b>  <b>Program Manager</b>                      571-258-3456  <a href="mailto:Patty.Reuss@loudoun.gov">Patty.Reuss@loudoun.gov</a>  <b>Licensed Programs Coordinator,</b>  <b>TBD</b></p>	<p><b>Claude Moore Recreation &amp; Community Center</b>                      46105 Loudoun Park Lane                      Sterling, VA 20164  <b>Stacy Chase,</b>  <b>Program Manager</b>                      571-258-3500  <a href="mailto:Stacy.Chase@loudoun.gov">Stacy.Chase@loudoun.gov</a>  <b>Wendi Blodgett, Licensed Programs Coordinator</b>                      571-258-3503  <a href="mailto:Wendi.Blodgett@loudoun.gov">Wendi.Blodgett@loudoun.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Ashburn Recreation &amp; Community Center</b>                      21105 Coopers Hawk Drive                      Ashburn, VA 20148  <b>Eric Fritz, Program Manager</b>                      571-627-4999  <a href="mailto:Eric.Fritz@loudoun.gov">Eric.Fritz@loudoun.gov</a>  <b>Stephanie O'Donnell, Licensed Programs Coordinator</b>                      571-578-8469  <a href="mailto:Stephanie.Odonnell@loudoun.gov">Stephanie.Odonnell@loudoun.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Bluemont Community Center</b>                      33846 Snickersville Pike                      Bluemont, VA 20135  <b>Sheri Conrad,</b>  <b>Center Manager</b>                      540-554-8643  <a href="mailto:Sheri.Conrad@loudoun.gov">Sheri.Conrad@loudoun.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Loudoun Valley Community Center</b>                      320 W. School Street                      Purcellville, VA 20132  <b>Nick Wilt, Center Manager</b>                      571-367-8444  <a href="mailto:Nicholas.Wilt@loudoun.gov">Nicholas.Wilt@loudoun.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Lovettsville Community Center</b>                      57 East Broad Way                      Lovettsville, VA 20180  <b>Darby Charles, Center Manager</b>                      540-822-5284  <a href="mailto:Darby.Charles@loudoun.gov">Darby.Charles@loudoun.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Douglass Community Center</b>                      407 East Market St.                      Leesburg, VA 20176  <b>Jon Mattia,</b>  <b>Center Manager</b>                      703-771-5913  <a href="mailto:Jon.Mattia@loudoun.gov">Jon.Mattia@loudoun.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Lucketts Community Center</b>                      42361 Lucketts Road                      Leesburg, VA 20176  <b>Paige Neeley,</b>  <b>Center Manager</b>                      703-771-5281  <a href="mailto:Paige.Neeley@loudoun.gov">Paige.Neeley@loudoun.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Philomont Community Center</b>                      36592 Jeb Stuart Rd.                      Philomont, VA 20131  <b>Sarah Gibson, Center Manager</b>                      540-338-5882  <a href="mailto:Sarah.Gibson@loudoun.gov">Sarah.Gibson@loudoun.gov</a></p>

## Support Staff

**Amy Young, MA Ed., Early Childhood Education Coordinator**

703-737-8006

[Amy.Young@loudoun.gov](mailto:Amy.Young@loudoun.gov)

The ECE Coordinator collaborates with management and teaching staff to identify quality assurance practices in our early childhood programs.

**Brenda Coggins, Early Childhood Specialist**

[Brenda.Coggins@loudoun.gov](mailto:Brenda.Coggins@loudoun.gov)

The EC Specialist works directly with teaching staff to ensure quality early childhood care is reflected in classroom practices.

**Matt Smith, Inclusion Specialist**

[Matthew.S.Smith@loudoun.gov](mailto:Matthew.S.Smith@loudoun.gov)

The Inclusion Specialist supports teaching staff with professional training and reflective practices to ensure that the needs of participants with different abilities are met.

**Mary Wizbicki, Licensed Programs Manager**

703-771-5112

[Mary.Wizbicki@loudoun.gov](mailto:Mary.Wizbicki@loudoun.gov)

The Licensed Program Manager maintains licensing records and ensures licensing standards are being met.

## Program Goals

- Commitment to excellence in all aspects of our programs.
- Foster life-long learners through intentional teaching practices using the STREAMin3 curriculum model.
- Build positive and authentic relationships with participants and families by creating a welcoming environment.
- Recognize parents as partners in their participants' growth and development and encourage active involvement in the program.
- Celebrate diversity and develop inclusive practices for participants and families.
- Be an asset to the community and a broker of resources.

## Work Schedule

Work schedules will vary depending on location and staffing. All regular employees are assigned specified hours within their work week. For individuals working in child care, the Child Care Supervisor shall post staff schedule 2 weeks in advance. If an unusual circumstance occurs (i.e., late pick up of a participant), notify your manager for authorization of additional hours. Work hours are onsite and consist of staff meetings, trainings, planning and class time. Exceptions regarding training or extracurricular hours may be authorized by the Center or Program Manager as outlined in the **Growth Opportunities Request Procedure**.

Initial Request: Employees wishing to participate in Division-sponsored events, activities, committees, or training (internal or external) must submit a formal request to their direct supervisor. The **Growth Opportunities Request Form** should be submitted to the employee's direct supervisor at least two weeks prior to the initial start date.

Supervisor Evaluation: Supervisors will review the request while considering operational needs, including current workload, staffing levels, and the potential benefits of the employee's participation.

Approval/Denial Decision: Supervisors will decide to approve or deny the request. This decision should be based on: Operational impact, the alignment of the opportunity with departmental goals, and the employee's current performance and development needs.

## Additional Training for all staff in Licensed Programs

All staff working directly with participants are required to obtain 16 hours annually. Any training hours beyond 16 must be approved by a Coordinator or Program/Center Manager. This includes trainings in the Collaboration Library, included in Collaboration.

Managers and Supervisors who do not work regularly on-site with participants are not limited to but only required to take the following trainings annually: Child Abuse and Neglect/Mandated Reporter and Emergency Preparedness Training. Additionally, there are manager courses and various other relative topics in the course catalog within COLLABORATION that may be of value. Managers and Supervisors may assign topic specific training from the Collaboration course catalog to staff as needed.

## On-Going Staff Development and Training Goals

Training should be centered around planning and implementing intentional, developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate learning experiences that promote the social and emotional development, physical development and health, cognitive development, language and literacy development, and general learning competencies of each participant served. Staff are expected to work with their supervisor to identify the best annual training path for the learner needs.

## Professional Training Development focus on the following Content Areas/Core Competencies

1. **Health, Safety and Nutrition** – this includes creating a physically and emotionally safe environment, preventing injuries and illnesses, and providing nutritious, age-appropriate meals.
2. **Child Growth and Development** - physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, Understand and use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young participants and to the needs of each participant, recognizing that differentiating

instruction, incorporating play as a core teaching practice, and supporting the development of executive function skills are critical for young participants.

3. **Participant Observation and Assessment** - understand that assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) are conducted to make informed choices about instruction and for planning in early learning settings. Use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, ability, culturally, and linguistically appropriate in order to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each participant.
4. **Partnering with Families and Communities** - know about, understand, and value the diversity of families, use community resources to support young participants' learning and development and to support families, and build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies. Collaborate as partners with families in young participants' development and learning through respectful, reciprocal relationships and engagement.
5. **The Learning Environment** - creating physical and social environments, modify teaching practices by applying, expanding, integrating, and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, their knowledge of curriculum content resources, and content knowledge. Understand and value each participant as an individual with unique developmental variations, experiences, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, and approaches to learning, and with the capacity to make choices.
6. **Effective Interactions with Positive Guidance** - develop and sustain the habit of reflective and intentional practice in their daily work with young participants and as members of the early childhood profession.
7. **Program Management** - updated PRCS policies and procedures, identify and involve themselves with the early childhood field and serve as informed advocates for young participants, families, and the profession.
8. **Professional Development** - engage in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice. actively investigate ways to improve their practice, such as engaging in classroom-based research, participating in conferences and workshops, providing or receiving mentorship, and finding evidence-based resources.

## College Courses

College courses can count towards annual training. They must be related to participants, child care, special education, education, child psychology or a Core Competency. One college credit is equivalent to 15 annual training hours. Therefore, a 3-credit course is the equivalent of 45 training hours. Hours only count during the year the course is completed, and staff must pass the class with at least a "C" or "pass".

For more information on who is eligible for tuition assistance through County of Loudoun, please visit: <https://www.loudoun.gov/1084/Wellness-Education-and-Other-Benefits>

## Child Development Associate (CDA) Opportunity

PRCS encourages professional and career growth. One way to increase your qualifications for advancement opportunities is to obtain a Child Development Associate Credential. With your

active Collabornation account provided by PRCS at no cost to the employee, you may enroll in a CDA Gold Standard Comprehensive Program. Once all 60 courses (120 hours) are completed, you will then be eligible to apply for a CDA credential through Council for Professional Recognition.

While Collabornation offers the courses that meet national accreditation to apply for a CDA credential, please note the following PRCS policies:

1. This is not a requirement of your position, therefore taking the courses will be on your own time and not paid by PRCS. They will, however, count towards annual training hours.
2. Each staff is responsible for any fees associated with the certification which includes the Competency Standards Book and the actual certification once courses are complete.
3. At this time, County of Loudoun does not reimburse for CDA credential costs. The fee associated with applying for a credential after completing all requirements is typically \$500. You can apply for CDA scholarship here: <https://www.vaccscholarship.com/>
4. Upon completion and receipt of your CDA credential, notify your supervisor or manager. Certificates should be submitted into your Collabornation account.
5. A Q&A document is available through Collabornation that should answer any questions you may have <https://Collabornation.com/child-development-associate-cda/>
6. Any other questions on courses or obtaining the credential certificate can be asked through [Collabornation support hub](#).

## Preschool and Child Care Staff Calendar 2025-2026

Dates	2025-2026 Calendar	Child Care	Preschool
<b>Independence Day – Centers Closed</b>	<b>July 4, 2025</b>	<b>No child care</b>	
All Camps End	August 8 -13, 2025		
Staff Development Day 2025 – Centers Open with Temp Staff	August 22, 2025	<b>No child care</b>	
Curriculum Training Day – Centers Open	August 25, 2025	<b>No child care</b>	
Curriculum Training Day – Centers Open	August 29, 2025	<b>No child care</b>	
<b>Labor Day – Centers Closed</b>	<b>September 1, 2025</b>	<b>No child care</b>	
First day of preschool	September 2, 2025		First Day
<b>Indigenous Peoples’ Day – Centers Open</b>	<b>October 13, 2025</b>		<b>No preschool</b>
Curriculum Training Day – Centers Open	October 31, 2025	<b>No child care</b>	<b>No preschool</b>
<b>Function Training Day – Centers Open with Temp Staffing</b>	<b>November 3, 2025</b>	<b>No child care</b>	<b>No preschool</b>
<b>Election Day – Centers Open</b>	November 4, 2025		
<b>Veterans Day – Centers Open</b>	November 11, 2025		
<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – Centers Close at 12pm</b>	<b>November 26, 2025</b>	<b>Child care closes at 12pm</b>	<b>No preschool</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – Centers Closed</b>	<b>November 27, 2025</b>	<b>No child care</b>	<b>No preschool</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – Centers Open</b>	<b>November 28, 2025</b>	<b>No child care</b>	<b>No preschool</b>
Complete Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences	By November 30, 2025		
LCPS Winter Break	<b>December 22-31, 2025</b>		<b>No preschool</b>

Dates	2025-2026 Calendar	Child Care	Preschool
Christmas Eve – Centers Close at 12pm	December 24, 2025	Child care closes at 12pm	Winter Break
Christmas Day – Centers Closed	December 25, 2025	No child care	Winter Break
Christmas Holiday – Centers Open	December 26, 2025	No child care	Winter Break
New Year’s Eve – Centers Close at 6pm	December 31, 2025		Winter Break
New Year’s Day – Centers Closed	January 1, 2026	No child care	Winter Break
MLK Day – Centers Open	January 19, 2026		No preschool
<i>Preschool Early Registration</i>	February 3, 2026		
<i>Preschool Open Registration</i>	February 10, 2026		
Presidents Day – Centers Open	February 16, 2026		No preschool
<i>Camps Early Registration</i>	March 3 - 6, 2026		
Family Engagement Summit	March 7, 2026		
<i>Camps Open Registration</i>	March 10, 2026		
LCPS Spring Break	March 30 - April 3, 2026		No Preschool
Curriculum Training Day – Centers Open	April 10, 2026	No child care	No Preschool
<i>CASA Early Registration</i>	April 28, 2026		
Complete Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences	By April 30, 2026		
<i>CASA Open Registration</i>	May 12, 2026		
Memorial Day – Centers Closed	May 25, 2026	No child care	No Preschool
Last day of preschool	May 29, 2026		Last Day
Juneteenth – Centers Open	June 19, 2026		

**Centers Function/All Staff Development Day November 3, 2025**

## Inclement Weather and Emergency Facility Closure

Staff are expected to work regular hours. If Loudoun County Government closes for a day, staff do not need to report to work. If Loudoun County Government operates on a delay, both preschool and child care will follow that delayed time. Staff should contact the County Severe Weather Staffing Information Line (703)-771-5678 after 6:00 A.M to check for Loudoun County Government closure. You may also subscribe to Alert Loudoun at <https://www.loudoun.gov/alert>. In the event of a sudden snowstorm or other severe weather condition during program hours, the early childhood staff will continue program operations until the last participant is picked up.

**Preschool** - If Loudoun County Public Schools operate on a delay or early dismissal due to inclement weather, preschool classes will maintain typical start and end time. If Loudoun County Public Schools close due to inclement weather, preschool classes will be cancelled for the day.

**Child Care**- In a weather-related incident child care will open on time. All staff are to report for their regularly scheduled shift. Child care will only close if the Loudoun County Government closes.

Loudoun County Public Schools Inclement Weather Information can be found [here](#).

## Staff Meetings

Staff meetings such as center meetings, professional learning communities, and department-wide meetings will be scheduled throughout the school year. All early childhood staff are required to attend assigned meetings weekly or monthly. Staff meetings will be scheduled within your normal work hours. If you are unable to attend an assigned meeting, he or she must notify the manager prior to and will be held accountable to review the information missed.

## VQB5 CLASS Observations

The State of Virginia has developed the Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5) measurement and improvement system which recognizes the impact of every classroom, provides feedback to every educator, and supports all publicly funded birth-to-five programs to improve. PRCS is participating in VQB5 observations during the upcoming early childhood program calendar year at all community centers and recreation centers. To support VQB5 efforts to ensure that all participants have quality teaching and learning experiences that meet their unique needs, early childhood education PRCS employees are welcome to participate in available training opportunities.

Employees who are CLASS certified are required to work with their supervisors to find coverage if they are interested in conducting an internal CLASS observation at a PRCS facility. Any external CLASS observations outside of PRCS facilities do not include staff work time and must be arranged outside of their regular work schedule with PRCS.

## Program Operations

### Daily Schedule

Staff are expected to maintain a structured classroom schedule which includes large and small group activities, outdoor play, snacks, and learning activities related to the curriculum. These daily schedules should be posted and accessible to the participants, families, and observers throughout the day.

### Cell phones/iPads

Staff should not be using cell phones for personal use during their scheduled work hours. Each center manager has an emergency cell phone. Each classroom will have a designated iPad for parents to sign their participant in and out each day. iPads are for staff use only. Individual sites will develop a method for storing and charging their iPads.

## Bus Safety

If your center provides safety/booster seats, staff will enforce usage according to the Virginia Department of Health. “Virginia Law requires that all participants ages 7 years and younger to be properly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat. There is no height or weight requirement” as stated by the Virginia Department of Health.

## Administrative Responsibilities

### Substitute Folder/Notebook

Lead teachers and Child Care Supervisors are expected to develop a substitute folder/notebook containing pertinent site information, which must be kept in the classroom. All site staff and the manager must be informed of its location. The folder should contain the daily schedule; location of supplies, first aid kits and AEDS, participant information, location of keys; any special information about the group (i.e. allergies, location of meds.); lesson plans; Brightwheel instructions and passwords, and any special instructions concerning the program.

### County Email

All regular staff employed with PRCS are responsible for maintaining a Loudoun County email address for job related communications and access to the County’s LINK system. Both the email system and the Intranet are utilized for sharing pertinent programs and county information regarding meetings, employee services and special events. Staff are to check their e-mail on a regular basis. All formal communication with families should be sent from a county email address with supervisor approval. Informal communication can be sent via Brightwheel.

### Internal Communications

Important Department-wide information is updated regularly on Share Point, Collaboration, and Coco. Staff are expected to regularly check these digital platforms for pertinent information.

### Communication with Families

Creating opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their participant’s care and education is crucial, therefore PRCS encourages family participation in our programs. Staff should only use County email addresses, Brightwheel, or center phone to communicate with participant families. Staff should provide families with verbal reports of participant progress on a regular basis and opportunities for parent involvement in the program. Staff are required to include the PRCS branding logo on all external documents located on Coco.

### Curriculum and Lesson Plans

STREAMin3 Curriculum is an innovative, engaging, and interactions-based curriculum model for participants. Daily activities, routines, and games maximize teacher-participant interactions and

peer interactions. Educators integrate all major areas of growth and development into hands-on activities that encourage participants' deeper understanding of the world around them. The developmental skills highlighted each week in the classrooms will be shared with families and STREAMin3 approved lesson plans will be available for families in the classrooms and/or on Brightwheel.

## Participant Progress and Assessments

Participants' developmental progress will be observed and documented on a weekly basis in alignment with the STREAMin3 curriculum. Staff will use the STREAMin3 assessment documents and scaffold participants' learning based on their individual needs. In alignment with this process, staff will provide at least semiannual opportunities to meet with families to discuss their participant's academic development, social and emotional development, strengths and needs, and engage in partnership opportunities to set goals with families. Staff will provide families with the STREAMin3 family conference form highlighting the areas discussed. Staff must maintain student files in the event of school or classroom transfers for a minimum of two years after the participant's last day of attendance.

## Paperwork

### Summary of Due Dates

- **Monthly Calendars, Lesson Plans, and Newsletter** - Due the 25th of the month for the following month.
- **Classroom Safety Check** - Complete daily and submit by the end of the month.
- **Supply Orders** - Planned in accordance with lesson plans and submitted as needed to your manager. Allow 2–4 weeks delivery time.
- **Snack Orders** - requests provided to manager at least two weeks in advance.
- **Family Conference Forms** - Bi-annual evaluations and family conferences are to be completed for each participant and filed.
- **Incident and Accident Reports** - due same day as the occurrence.

### Paperwork to be posted

- **Daily visual schedule** posted at children's level with pictures or visual cues.
- **Lesson Plans** - accessible to families, either posted on the wall or in Brightwheel.
- **Menu** - if food is supplied by program.

***Failure to turn in required paperwork on time will result in disciplinary action.***

## Licensing information

PRCS Child care programs are licensed by the Office of Child Care Health and Safety with the Virginia Department of Education. The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs assuming responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a participant for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Office of Child Care Health and Safety at the Virginia Department of Education authority to license these programs. Standards for licensing child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, ratios, equipment, and program record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with participants are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes. Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Office of Child Care Health and Safety at the Virginia Department of Education and is a large foundation of our policies and procedures listed within this handbook. If you would like additional information about your centers' compliance history or would like to register a complaint of non-compliance with regulations, please visit the Office of Child Care Health and Safety at the Virginia Department of Education. The Licensing Office that monitors compliance with PRCS is through the Fairfax Office of Child Care Health and Safety at the Virginia Department of Education. Phone: 703-934-1505

### **Office of Child Care Licensing (Fairfax)**

#### **Virginia Department of Education**

3701 Pender Drive, Suite 450

Fairfax, VA 22030

[Fairfax.cclicensing@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Fairfax.cclicensing@doe.virginia.gov)

## Resources for Staff

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
<a href="#">Accident/Incident Reporting</a>	PRCS link to fill out and submit any accident or incident which occurred during program time
<a href="#">Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) PRCS Compliance</a>	PRCS policies on compliance with ADA
<a href="#">Classroom Support Request Form</a>	Need additional support in your classroom? Partner with ECE staff and let us know how we can help!
<a href="#">CPS Reporting Step 1 (internal for PRCS)</a>	This link is to guide staff to collect all information needed for step 2 when you make an official report of suspected child abuse or neglect to CPS. This is for internal documentation only and does not automatically go to CPS.
<a href="#">CPS Reporting Step 2 (to CPS)</a>	Using the documentation submitted in step 1, click on this link to report the suspected child abuse or neglect to CPS. Staff will be asked to log-in or create an account.
<a href="#">Daily Site Safety Check</a>	Required to be completed daily per program by Supervisor or Lead Teacher, or other designated staff
<a href="#">ECE Teacher Resource App</a>	Staff should save this link to their laptop or phones for quick access to handbooks, forms, training dates, curriculum and other important information.
<a href="#">Emergency Drills Log</a>	Emergency drills practiced and documented monthly per program, must maintain record for two years
<a href="#">Emergency Preparedness Plan</a>	Must be printed and filled out and updated annually per PRCS program, completed plan filed in operations binder
<a href="#">EPact Guide</a>	Instructions for downloading children's emergency information
<a href="#">Field Trip Permission</a>	Can be used if ePact participant emergency form is not used for field trips
<a href="#">FMLA</a>	Instructions to request Family Medical Leave, must have worked 1250 hours in previous 12 months in a regular position to qualify
<a href="#">Food Allergy Action Plan Form (FAAP)</a>	Parents must fill this out when registration in ePact indicates a food allergy
<a href="#">Injury Prevention Plan</a>	Must be printed and updated annually per program location, filed in operations binder

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>
<a href="#">Licensing Regulations</a>	Department of Education, Division of Child Care Health and Safety regulations for licensed child day centers
<a href="#">Long-Term Medication Form</a>	Required for medications to be administered as-needed while in care of PRCS programs. These medications are typically inhalers, epi-pens, or daily medications (prescription and non-prescription)
<a href="#">Medication Intake Checklist</a>	Recommend each staff to use when receiving medications from a parent to ensure all policies, authorizations and requirements are in compliance with Licensing
<a href="#">National Weather Service</a>	Reference for any extreme cold or heat weather conditions that are deemed unsafe for outdoor play
<a href="#">No Medication Provided</a>	Requires parent signature to state they will not be providing medication for listed allergies
<a href="#">Participant Expulsion/Suspension Recommendation</a>	Link to fill in all information for your recommendation for a participant suspension or expulsion from the program. All documentation will be submitted here for Division Manager and Dept Director approval.
<a href="#">Request for Time Off</a>	Link to request time off, fill out and submit two weeks in advance
<a href="#">Short-Term Medication Form</a>	Medication authorization for up to 10 business days, does not need physician authorization. Can be renewed twice by the parent signature and date per program year.
<a href="#">Technology How-To's</a>	How to use brightwheel, ePact, Collaboration and retrace
<a href="#">Topical Medications, Sunscreen and Insect Repellent</a>	Form parents fill out to grant permission for staff to apply topical medications, sunscreen or insect repellent
<a href="#">VDH Communicable Disease chart</a>	Steps and actions per the Virginia Department of Health to take when staff learn of a child who has been in the program or is in the program with a listed communicable disease