



www.thornhillchildcare.com

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Revised October 2022

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WELCOME

We welcome you to Thornhill Child Care Society. The Society is a non-profit registered charity that has been in operation since 1974. It is overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised mainly of parents who use our services. An Executive Director oversees the day-to-day operations of the Society.

Our Mission:

Thornhill Child Care Society is a non-profit society that exists to provide as secure, caring, quality learning environment for infants through to school age children. Our focus is to provide developmentally appropriate programs that are accessible to all families.

Our Vision:

TCCS will be a leader in the field of child care and early learning through professional development, partnerships and advocacy. We will develop and deliver flexible service options that respond to family and community needs. We will continue our commitment to being an environment where our children and families can be nurtured.

Combined, the Child Care Centres and Family Dayhome Agency can serve over 900 families. Thornhill contracts the services of several outside agencies to provide support and resources for children, families and staff members.

This handbook has been designed to provide important information to those employed by the Society. The information contained in this handbook is a general reference and may be subject to changes or amendments as needed to meet changing environments in the child care industry, changes in the Society's procedures or changes in governmental laws and regulations.

We encourage you to ask questions and to clarify your understanding of these employment conditions and policies. Please direct your questions to your immediate Supervisor, or if necessary, to the Executive Director.

We are pleased to have you join our team and hope your association with the Society will be rewarding.

Board of Directors,

Thornhill Child Care Society

HANDBOOK ADMINISTRATION

Responsibility for the development and practices of the Thornhill Child Care Society Employee Handbook resides with the Executive Director. Final approval rests with the Board of Directors who act on the recommendations from the Executive Director. This handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis and will change and evolve to meet the needs of the Society as well as current employment legislative requirements.

1. PROGRAMS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

1.1 NORTH CENTRE

1. Hours of operation are from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
2. License capacity is for 85 children.
3. Care is provided for children 19 months of age up to and including kindergarten.
4. An ECS/Kindergarten program is operated on-site 5 half days per week.

1.2 DOVER CENTRE

1. Hours of operation are from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
2. License capacity is for 100 children
3. Care is provided for infants through to school age children.

1.3 BOWNESS MONTGOMERY

1. Hours of operation are from 6:45 to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
2. Licensed capacity is for 109 children.
3. Care is provided for children ages 12 months through to 6 years of age.

1.4 LUMINO CENTRE

1. Hours of operation are from 6:30 to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
2. License capacity is for 84 children.
3. Care is provided for children ages infants through to 6 years of age.

1.5 VIK ACADEMY

1. Hours of operation are from 6:30 to 6:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
2. License capacity is for 83 children.
3. Care is provided for children ages infants through to 6 years of age.

1.6 FAMILY DAYHOME AGENCY

1. Agency hours of operation are 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday to Friday. Dayhome employees are available by cellular telephone after hours for emergencies.
2. Family Childcare contract is for 85 Dayhomes.
3. Providers are contracted to care for children infants through to school age.

2. HOURS OF WORK

2.1 FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

Full time employees will be required to work various shifts within the normal hours of operation. Room assignments may vary depending on the needs of the Centre. Full time employees are scheduled for 8 hours per day and receive a 30-minute paid break and a 60-minute unpaid lunch break.

2.2 PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

The hours of work for part-time employees are assigned at the point of hiring. Generally, hours of work will range from 10 to 30 hours per week. Employees who are scheduled for 5 hours of consecutive work will receive a 30-minute paid break.

2.3 ON-CALL EMPLOYEES

The hours of work for on-call employees will vary and are not guaranteed. Every effort is made to schedule shifts in advance. On-call employees will be called in the case of illness or other employee absences the morning they are required.

2.4 OVERTIME

Full time salaried employees who are required to work in excess of 8 hours in a given day will receive time off in lieu of overtime pay, calculated at a rate of straight time. Overtime will be calculated in 15 minute intervals. For example, if an employee works 15 minutes after their 8 hour shift, they would be entitled to 15 minutes of time off in lieu. Individual overtime agreements will be signed and kept on file for each staff member. All time off in lieu shall be taken within six months of when it was earned.

Part-time hourly employees will be paid for the actual time worked. Should they work more than 8 hours in a given day, they will receive overtime pay calculated at a rate of 1.5 times their regular pay.

Staff must obtain approval from the Program Director prior to working overtime hours. Management staff must obtain approval from their direct supervisor prior to working overtime hours. Employees are required to record all approved overtime on their time sheets. Overtime sheets are reviewed periodically by supervisors.

3. SALARY AND BENEFITS

3.1 PAY PERIOD AND SALARIES

Pay is directly deposited into employees' bank accounts on the 15th and at the end of each month. Should a payday fall on a weekend, the deposit will be made on the Friday prior to the date. There is a cut-off date prior to the pay date, so that pay periods are from the 10th to the 25th and the 26th to the 9th of each month. Employees must provide a "void cheque" prior to their first pay period in order for funds to be deposited.

Salaries are set based on the qualification level (Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3) as well as the experience that an individual holds and the position they are hired for. Salary increases are considered annually, based on the employee's performance review. The Salary Grid is approved by the Board of Directors. Staff members who receive a

promotion or achieve a higher qualification level will have their salary adjusted to reflect the change. From time to time, the Board of Directors *may* consider awarding bonuses to staff. The availability and amount of the said bonuses would be dependent on the financial position of the Society.

3.2 MILEAGE

1. The Society prohibits an employee in the course of their employment from transporting any child or children in their vehicle.
2. Employees who obtain prior approval to use their own vehicle for the purpose of the business of the Society (such as visits to Day Homes, obtaining supplies or attending external meetings) will be reimbursed by the Society at the current mileage rate. The employee's trip to their first destination as well as their last trip from work will not be recorded for mileage.

3.3 HEALTH AND WELLNESS BENEFIT

The Board recognizes the importance of employee health and wellness. Studies have shown that employees who are physically active have more energy, are less stressed and have fewer days off due to illness. To support each individual's wellness, the Society will reimburse employees 50% of a fitness facility membership to a maximum of \$250.00 per calendar year. This benefit is open to all permanent staff that have passed their probation period. A receipt showing the purchase of the pass will be required before reimbursement is released.

3.4 GROUP INSURANCE

1. Full time employees who work a minimum of 24 hours per week and have been employed for at least 3 months must enrol in our Group Benefits package. This package includes Life Insurance, Dependant Life Insurance, Employee Family Assistance Program, Long-term Disability and AD&D. The employee is responsible for 100% of the premiums for the Long-Term Disability, and the Society covers 100% of the other premiums. As this plan may change from time to time, complete details are available from the Executive Director.
2. Should an employee not have Health and Dental coverage available through a spousal plan, Thornhill will reimburse the employee 50% of the cost of a private individual plan i.e. Blue Cross, Sunlife, etc. Proof of plan registration and cost must be submitted to the Executive Director prior to any reimbursement occurring.

3.5 SICKNESS AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

1. After three months of employment, full time employees are entitled to 9 Sick and Family Responsibility Days in a calendar year. These days do not accumulate from year to year. Employees are required to submit a medical certificate if absent in excess of 3 days. Upon termination, an employee who has used more than the entitled number of days will have the over-usage deducted from their final pay.
2. Sick and Family Responsibility days may be used if an employee is required to self-isolate or quarantine as per government requirements. Should the time required to quarantine exceed the number of sick days the employee has available, the employee may choose to use accumulated overtime or vacation days or have the excess days be unpaid.

3. Responsible use of Sick time is expected. Employees who exceed the 9 day per year allowance will have a counselling interview scheduled with the Program Director and Director of Operations to discuss an appropriate plan of action to address the health and wellness of the employee.
4. All employees are required to call the centre at or before the time the program opens if they are unable to work due to personal or family illness. Messages may be left on the General Voice Mail box if calling in prior to opening. Text messages are not considered appropriate notification. Should you not notify the program at the minimum of one hour prior to your shift starting, you will not receive pay for that day. Opening staff should confirm individual procedures with their Program Director. In the case of medical appointments for employees and their families, it is preferred that they be scheduled during non-work time. If this is not possible, as in the case of some specialists, advance notice to the Program Director is required in order to receive pay for that day.
5. Part-time employees who work at least 4 days a week are entitled to Sick and Family Responsibility Days which would be pro-rated based on the number of days worked.
6. On-call employees are not entitled to sick day allowance.

3.6 MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE

1. An employee who has been employed for at least 90 days will be eligible for up to 78 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave consisting of 16 weeks of maternity leave and 62 weeks of parental leave.
2. Vacation time will not accumulate during maternity leave.
3. An employee on maternity leave is not entitled to contribution with respect to the benefits package described in paragraphs 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 listed above. However, if the employee wishes to continue on the Group Benefit Plan while they are on maternity/parental leave, he or she is responsible for 100% of the monthly premiums. Post-dated cheques can be left with the Executive Director.
4. An employee going on maternity or parental leave must provide 6 weeks written notice before going on leave. Employees must give written notice at least 4 weeks before they return to work or to notify the employer that they will not be returning after their leave ends. An employee on maternity or parental leave who opts to change their return date must provide 4 weeks written notice and must discuss it with their immediate Supervisor.

3.7 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

1. Full time employees are entitled to three days paid bereavement leave in the event of a death in the employee's immediate or extended family. One day paid leave will be granted for a staff member to attend the funeral of a non-family individual. In instances where extensive travel is required, an employee may be granted additional days without pay, but must obtain approval from their immediate Supervisor.
2. Part-time employees are entitled to three days paid bereavement leave as described in 3.7-1 if the part-time employee is regularly scheduled to work on the days taken off for bereavement.
3. On-Call employees are not entitled to paid bereavement leave.

4. Unpaid bereavement leave may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

3.8 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A Leave of Absence is defined as any time off which is not covered by accrued vacation or earned overtime. An employee may request a leave of absence without pay by submitting a written request to the employee's immediate Supervisor, who will review it with the Director of Operations. All requests for a leave of absence without pay will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the needs of the Society.

3.9 LEAVES NECESSITATED BY LAW

Leave **with pay** will be allowed to staff members for reasons necessitated by law. If a staff member is required to serve as a juror in any court of law or is subpoenaed by the Crown to attend a court case as a witness, the staff member shall not lose any pay because of such attendance. The employee will remit the remuneration currently paid by the Court System back to the Society.

We provide the following job-protected, **unpaid** Leaves in accordance the Alberta Employment Standards to employees who have been employed longer than 90 days:

- Compassionate Care Leave
- Long-Term Illness and Injury Leave
- Domestic Violence Leave
- Critical Illness of an Adult Family Member
- Critical Illness of a Child
- Death or Disappearance of a Child
- Citizenship Ceremony Leave

4. HOLIDAYS AND VACATION

4.1 STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

The following are recognized Statutory Holidays. Thornhill Child Care Society will be closed to observe:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| • New Year's Day | • Labour Day |
| • Family Day | • Thanksgiving Day |
| • Good Friday | • Remembrance Day |
| • Victoria Day | • Christmas Day |
| • Canada Day | • Boxing Day |
| • August Civic Holiday | |

Employees who have worked for Thornhill for 30 working days and were scheduled to work on the closure date will receive General Holiday pay for that day.

Full time, salaried employees will be paid their regular wage for the Statutory closure dates. Part-time staff will receive pay for what they would have worked on the closure day. On-call staff are not eligible for General Holiday Pay.

4.2 ANNUAL VACATION

1. Full time employees are entitled to vacation with pay calculated from their anniversary date as follows:
 - a. 15 working days annual vacation after the first year of continuous service. During the first year of employment, with the approval of the Executive Director, 5 days out of the 15 days may be taken after 6 months of continuous service. (Accumulated at the rate of 1-¼ days per month).
 - b. 20 working days annual vacation after 5 years of continuous service and in your 6th year of employment. (Accumulated at the rate of 1 2/3 days per month).
 - c. 25 working days annual vacation after 10 years of continuous service. (Accumulated at a rate of 2 ½ days per month).
2. Employees who are paid on an hourly basis will receive vacation pay calculated on each pay cheque. On-call employees' vacation pay will be calculated at 4% of earnings, and all other hourly paid employees will receive vacation pay equivalent to the entitlement in paragraph 1 above.
3. Vacation time cannot be used in lieu of 2 weeks notice of termination.
4. If a Statutory Holiday occurs on any workday during the vacation period it is not counted as part of the vacation allowance.
5. All vacation requests must be submitted to your direct supervisor in writing. The Director of Operations and/or the Program Director reserve the right to ensure that employee shortages do not occur as a result of overlapping vacations. Vacation must be taken annually and cannot be carried over to the next year.

5. EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 HIRING

The Executive Director is hired by the Board of Directors. All other staff are hired by a member of the Society's management team. Qualified candidates who have submitted a resume will be interviewed and asked to provide a list of references. Every effort will be made to obtain information that will verify the candidate's ability and skill for the position. A minimum of two reference checks will be conducted, and where possible, the previous employer will be asked to provide a reference. When a suitable candidate has been found, a Job Offer Letter that outlines the terms of employment, as well as a copy of the Employee Handbook will be presented to them.

Upon acceptance of the Job offer, the new hire will receive an orientation from their direct supervisor which will include, but not be limited to, a review of their job description, the Employee Handbook, and the Staff Policy and Procedure manual if applicable.

5.2 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All employees shall serve a probationary period normally of 3 months. A written evaluation will be completed prior to the end of the probationary period. If an employee's performance is unsatisfactory during the probationary period the employee may be terminated without notice.

5.3 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

All employees will undergo a criminal record check including a vulnerable sector search. Applicants are to be advised of this requirement prior to receiving a job offer. Employment is contingent on receipt of the results. Criminal Record Checks must be renewed every three years. Should an employee not provide their direct supervisor with an updated Criminal Record Check prior to the 3-year expiry date, they may be required to take an unpaid leave until one can be provided.

5.4 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Each employee will receive a written performance evaluation annually. In addition to the performance evaluation, regular feedback and support will occur as an on-going part of supervision.

5.5 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Every staff member shall have a job description that outlines the qualifications for the job as well as specific duties and responsibilities. These job descriptions will be reviewed annually.

5.6 PERSONNEL FILES

Personnel files will be maintained for each staff member and will include all documentation relevant to the staff member's employment (resume, references, job description, evaluations, qualification certificates, salary and increases, medical certificates, professional development, disciplinary and grievance reports and other documents as developed). The confidentiality of the information collected regarding a staff member is respected in accordance with privacy laws.

5.7 PROMOTIONS

The Society prefers to promote from within. Available employment opportunities will be posted internally and may be posted externally concurrently. Employees interested in posted employment opportunities must submit a resume and cover letter. Interviews will be conducted with suitable and qualified persons.

5.8 DISCIPLINE

Unsatisfactory conduct by an employee, which is considered by the employer to be serious enough to be entered on the employee's record but not serious enough to warrant termination of employment, shall result in a written warning to the employee. The warning shall state a defined period by which improvement or correction is expected. At the conclusion of such time the employee's performance shall be reviewed. *Accumulation of one verbal warning and two written warnings may result in termination of employment.*

An employee who has been subject to a written disciplinary action may, after one year of continuous service from the date the disciplinary measure took place, request in writing that their personnel file be cleared of any written record of such action. Such a request shall be granted provided the employee's file does not contain any further record of

disciplinary action during the one-year period and at the discretion of the Executive Director. The above-mentioned process does not prevent immediate termination for just cause.

5.9 SUSPENSION

Should an incident occur, or a complaint be received in regards to a serious allegation of an employee's conduct or performance, suspension *with pay* for a period of up to five days may be ordered. This will allow for:

- a. a Safety Plan to be activated. Should the allegation involve the mistreatment of children, a plan is required to ensure their on-going safety.
- b. an internal or external investigation to occur. An internal investigation would be conducted by the employee's direct supervisor and the Director of Operations and/or the Executive Director. An external investigation may be conducted by Child Care Licensing or other regulatory body such as the Police Service.
- c. the employee to take any corrective action deemed necessary

The Executive Director and/or the Director of Operations will conduct a Disciplinary meeting with the employee to discuss the results and the outcome of the investigation. Further actions could include a written warning or termination.

5.10 TERMINATION

5.10.1 TERMINATION WITH JUST CAUSE

An employee who commits any act or omission recognized at law as constituting just cause for summary dismissal may be subject to immediate termination without termination notice, or termination pay in lieu of notice, including but not limited to:

- a. Acts of gross negligence endangering the health and/or safety of the children;
- b. Acts of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse;
- c. Petty thievery, stealing;
- d. Prolonged absence without reasonable cause or repeated tardiness;
- e. Wilful destruction of Society property;
- f. Being impaired or intoxicated by drugs (including medications) or alcohol during working hours;
- g. Gross and/or repeated insubordination;
- h. Acts of violence or fighting on Society property; or
- i. Misrepresentation of qualifications and/or experience on the application form

5.10.2 TERMINATION WITHOUT JUST CAUSE

The employer may terminate the employment of an employee by giving the employee written termination notice, or at the employer's sole discretion, termination pay of an amount equal to the wages the employee would have earned if the employee had worked the regular hours of work for the applicable termination notice period. The employer may give an employee a combination of termination pay and termination notice at the employer's sole discretion. The termination notice period shall be **limited to** the applicable time set out in the *Employment Standards Code*, RSA 2000, c E-9, s 56, as amended from time to time, or successor legislation. The provision of such termination notice, termination pay in lieu of notice, or combination thereof, constitutes **full and final**

satisfaction of all rights or entitlements which the employee may have arising from or related to the termination of his or her employment (including notice, pay in lieu of notice) whether pursuant to contract, common law, statute or otherwise.

5.11 RESIGNATION

Two weeks written notice of termination excluding any vacation time due is required of all employees.

5.12 CONCERN RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

In the event that an employee has a complaint or concern regarding policies or procedures, the following steps should be adhered to:

- a. Attempt to resolve the concern in private (with no children, parents or other employees present) through discussion with individual(s) involved.
- b. If unresolved, discuss the concern with your immediate Supervisor.
- c. If unresolved, discuss the concern with the Director of Operations and/or the Executive Director (a written description of the concern may be required).
- d. If no resolution, a written description of concern may be presented to the Board of Directors with a copy to the Executive Director.
- e. The Board will make the final decision on resolution outcomes.

5.13 EXIT INTERVIEW

A member of the Board or the Senior Management team may conduct an exit interview when an employee leaves their employment with the Society. The purpose of this interview is to provide an opportunity for an exchange of information regarding the employment experience of the individual concerned. Suggestions for improvements to work assignments, program operations and other matters pertinent to the Society are always welcome.

5.14 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is mutually beneficial to employees and to the Society. Full time and part-time employees are eligible to receive financial assistance towards their professional development.

To obtain financial assistance towards professional development, the eligible employee must:

- a. Identify a course, workshop or seminar which directly relates to the current or projected needs of the Society and is linked to the goals set at the employee's annual evaluation and,
- b. Obtain approval from the Executive Director prior to enrolment.

Upon successful completion of the approved course or workshop, the Society will reimburse the employee's tuition or registration fee up to a maximum of 50%. The amount will depend on the Society's approved budget for the given year.

In the case of a first aid course, it is the intent of the Society to pay 100% of the fees, up to a maximum of \$150.00. This is also dependent on the Society's approved budget.

5.15 TRAUMA-INFORMED ENVIRONMENT

Thornhill strives to be an inclusive environment that is trauma-informed. Therefore, we require all staff to take Professional Development in trauma-awareness. The preferred training is on-line at <https://trauma.respectgroupinc.com>. It is an expectation that this training is completed within the first three months of employment.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION

6.1 EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

Thornhill Child Care Society shall not normally employ relatives, however, if there is a situation where this becomes necessary, in no case will one person be the direct supervisor of his or her relative.

6.2 SAFETY AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

Thornhill supports a safe working environment. Safety is the responsibility of every staff member. Reasonable guidelines to ensure the personal safety of all employees and volunteers are established and maintained. Every staff member should be familiar with emergency exits and the location of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, alarms and first aid kits.

If an employee is involved in a workplace accident or sustains a workplace injury, the accident or injury must be immediately reported to a Supervisor. All Workers Compensation Board and Occupational Health and Safety policies must be followed.

6.3 WORKPLACE SECURITY

It is the responsibility of every staff member to ensure that their personal belongings are kept secure. The Society does not assume responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to personal effects. All efforts will be made to maintain a safe and secure environment.

6.4 LETTERS OF REFERENCE

An employee's direct supervisor is the only individual who can sign letters of reference or comment on job performance on behalf of Thornhill Child Care Society.

6.5 SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING

When employees access social networking, blogging or similar websites from their own personal computers outside of working hours, they are expected to consider whether their actions might impact Thornhill Child Care Society. Employees must be cautious where there is a risk that their actions on the Internet will harm the reputation or business of the Society.

This means that employees must not make disparaging, threatening, defamatory or abusive comments about Thornhill Child Care Society, other employees or about clients and/or children of clients on the Internet. Similarly, employees must not make comments that are reasonably likely to cause offence in relation to any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the Alberta *Human Rights Act*, including race, gender, sexual orientation or national/ethnic origin.

A failure to respect this requirement may expose the Society to legal liability, either for defamation or for a breach of the *Human Rights Act*. Comments like these from employees could also seriously harm the reputation of Thornhill Child Care Society.

Employees must also remember that they are required to respect the confidentiality of information they receive in performing their jobs. This means that employees must not disclose in online comments information which might identify clients, or information such as addresses, phone numbers, photographs or other personal information about clients.

Employees should take care to maintain distance and professionalism with clients at all times. Employees should be cautious about making or accepting contact with clients online, and should be aware that any contact with clients carries risk as detailed above. If employees have clients as “friends” or contacts on Facebook or other social networking sites, they must be careful to maintain a very high degree of professionalism in all of their conduct on those sites.

Violations of Policy

Employees who contravene any part of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including possible immediate termination of employment.

6.6 CELL PHONE USE

Staff members are not permitted to use personal cell phones while they are working with children. This includes receiving and sending text messages, e-mails, phone calls etc. Cell phones may be used while staff are on their coffee and lunch breaks. In cases of emergency, the office staff will ensure that staff members are called to the business phone.

6.7 HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

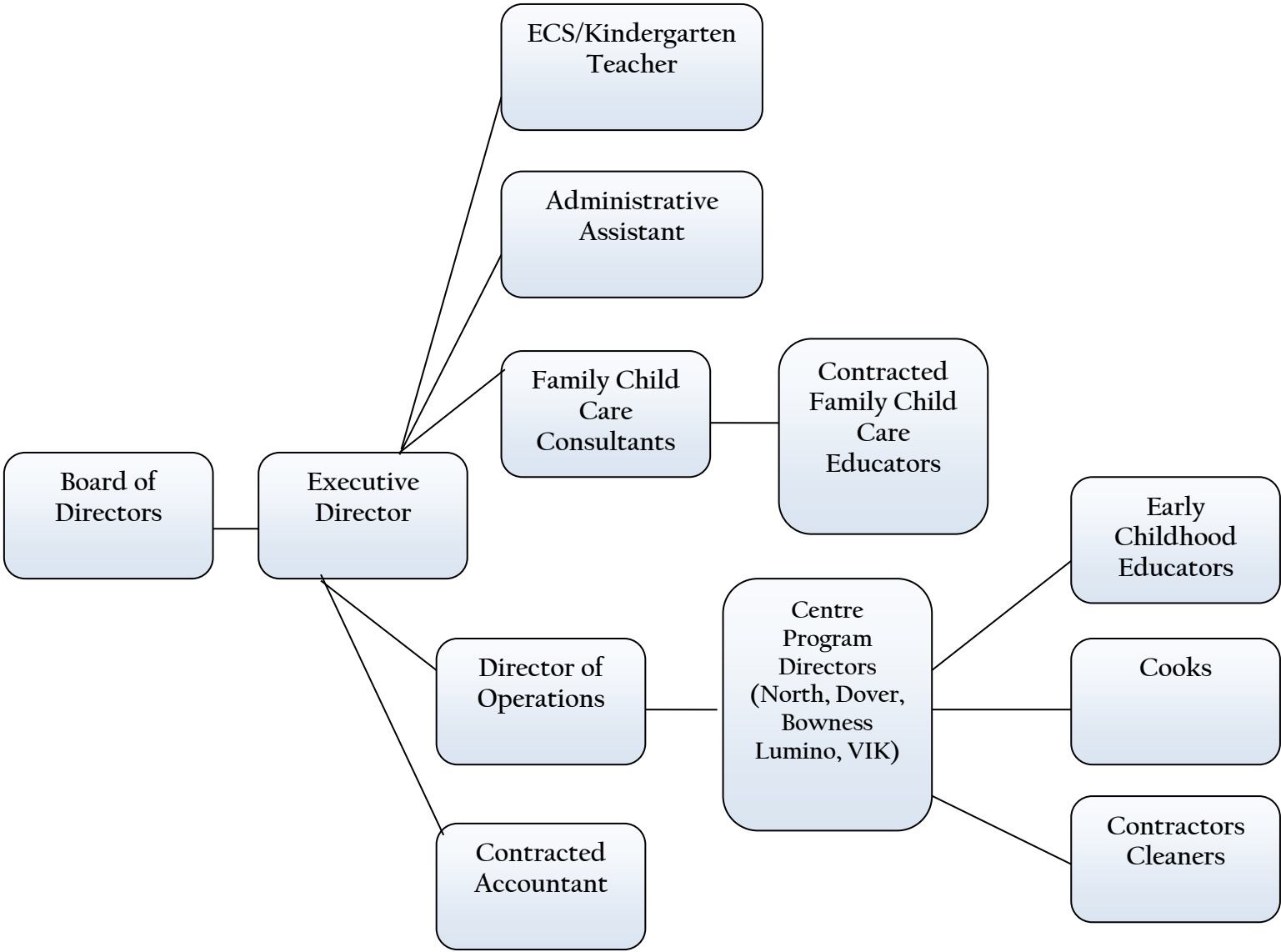
Discrimination is defined as unjust practice or behaviour, whether intentional or not, based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical and/or mental disability, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, source of income, age, ancestry or place of origin and which has a negative effect on any individual or group. Thornhill Child Care Society does not tolerate any acts of discrimination and promotes a workplace that is free of discrimination.

Harassment is unwelcome written, verbal or physical conduct that disrupts or interferes with another staff member’s work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment.

Harassment can include physical or verbal conduct, conduct that is offensive by innuendo such as a display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs/images. Harassment may also include promises of favours or advantages for giving in to the demands or threats of revenge for refusing.

Thornhill Child Care Society believes that each individual has the right to work in an environment conducive to equal opportunity, free from discriminatory practices and respectful of the rights of all staff. Discrimination and harassment practices will not be tolerated.

Thornhill Child Care Society Organizational Chart





Thornhill Child Care Society

Employee Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read and understood all the information and policies contained within the employee handbook. I accept and agree to abide by all policies contained herein and any amendments that may be made from time to time.

I understand that this handbook is not intended to cover every situation that may arise during my employment but is a general guide to benefits, practices and expectations of the Society. Any questions have been addressed with my immediate Supervisor.

Name (print)

Signature

Date

Supervisor

Date