

Tuition Policies & Procedures

Sliding Fee Scale

A sliding fee scale is available for income eligible families and is funded by the United Way of Freeborn County. Applications are included in the registration packet and can also be obtained at the Main site office.

Reservation and Registration Fees

- A non-refundable registration fee will be collected annually. \$20.00 per child, or \$30.00 per family.
- Reservation fee- a non-refundable reservation fee of \$100.00 per child is required to hold a slot for all new enrollments. The slot can be held for up to 30 days. For expectant mothers, the slot can be held for up to 90 days from the child's date of birth. No slot is guaranteed without a Reservation Fee. The Reservation Fee will be credited to your child's account during their first week of care.

Contracts and Child Care Rates

- By committing to a contract, you are guaranteed a slot for your child and, in turn, guaranteeing a payment for that slot to The Children's Center, regardless of actual attendance.
- Our contract is a legal and binding contract of exchange of money for services.
- Contract changes must be submitted in writing at least one week prior to the requested change and will be subject to the approval of the Executive Director.
- Overages will be charged at the hourly contracted rate if you go over contracted amount.
- Contract terminations will be allowed through a written request received two weeks prior to termination.
- All child care rates will be clearly posted and communicated to parents. Rates are subject to change at anytime upon a 30 day notice from The Children's Center.
- A sibling discount will be applied to the oldest child's rate only and to only one child per family, attending any site managed by The Children's Center. A sibling discount applies to contracts over 30 hours at a 10% discount and to contracts over 40 hours at a 20% discount.
- The Executive Director must authorize any other arrangements or rates.

Daycare Assistance Programs

- Assistance is provided for eligible families through the Department of Human Services.
- Assistance does not always cover the entire tuition cost, and the family will be responsible for the difference.
- Registration fees may be covered through the Department of Human Services.

Billing and Payment

- Parents will be billed weekly based on their contracted amount for the current week of care. Any overage charges and vacation credits will appear on the following week's statement. Any overpayments will be applied to their account balance.
- Payment is due no later than Friday 12:00 Noon. Payment can be made at any site managed by The Children's Center. A late payment fee of \$10.00 will be added if payment is not received by Friday noon of the current week.
- Deposits are made weekly on Wednesday and Friday.
- Additional charges may be incurred for special events, field trips, and special programs. Any charges for optional services incurred are due upon presentation of a statement from the Center.
- The Executive Director must authorize any other billing and payment arrangement.

Past Due Accounts

- Any account in which payment has not been received within 2 weeks will be considered a Past Due Account.
- All Past Due Accounts require a written Past Due Payment Agreement with The Children's Center.

- The Past Due Payment Agreement will include an 18% APR financing fee on all accounts that have fallen 30 days or more past due.
- The Executive Director must authorize any other arrangements.
- The Children's Center reserves the right immediately to cease providing services under contract for any child enrolled under a Past Due Account. If your account is Past Due, your child may be denied access to the center.
- Violation of a Past Due Payment Agreement may result in cancellation of that agreement and submission of the Past Due Account to a collection agency under the Collection Policy, below.

Late Pick-up Fees

- Late fees will be applied for children staying beyond the Center's closing time. A late fee of \$5.00 will be charged for each child picked up after 6:00pm at the James Avenue site, 5:30pm at the St. John's Sites. An additional \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each child after 6:05pm at the James Avenue Site and 5:35pm at the St. John's Sites.
- Consistent late pick-ups after center closing time can result in termination of child care contract.

Vacation Credit

- Since The Children's Center is financially committed on a daily basis to care for your child, refunds and/or credits are not given for absenteeism. We are a professionally staffed facility and we guarantee your family a daily service. Thus, we expect payment regardless of absenteeism.
- Vacation credit is available for contracts over 20 hours. Contact the office for the specific number of vacation credit available. Vacation credit is prorated for those who enroll or terminate after the Session begins. Families who terminate after using unearned vacation credit will be billed for that time. There will be no refund for unused vacation credits.
- You can request a vacation day by contacting the office or by simply indicating on your child's timecard the day you would like to use vacation credit. All vacation day requests must be made by 5:00pm Friday of the week you wish to have them applied. It is your responsibility to notify your child's teacher when your child is going to be absent.
- How vacation days are calculated: Your weekly contracted dollar amount is divided by 5 days. That is the dollar amount you would be credited for each vacation day requested. For example, if your contracted weekly dollar amount is \$164.00 and you want to use vacation days this is how we would calculate your credit. We would take the \$164.00 divide it by 5 days to come up with a daily amount. In this case the daily amount would be \$32.80. We then take that daily amount and multiply by the number of days you wish to apply vacation credits. That is the amount that will be credited to your account. This is the process used no matter how many days your family normally uses in a week.
- Any other arrangements or exceptions must be authorized by the Executive Director.
- No tuition credit is given when the center is closed the following dates, however vacation credits can be used: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, the Friday before Labor Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Non-Sufficient Funds/Returned Check Charge

- There will be a \$25.00 fee charged for all checks returned, dishonored or unpaid for any reason.

Collection Policy

- The Center is financially committed on a monthly basis to care for children, therefore we have implemented the following collection policy. The Center will refer to a Collection Agency any account which has fallen more than 30 days past due unless a Past Due Payment Agreement for that account has been approved by the Executive Director and followed without violation by the debtor. All charges for collection fees, attorney fees, court costs, or any other expense involved in the collection of these charges may be borne by the parent.

Drop-In Policies and Procedures

- Before The Children’s Center can provide care for your child, all registration materials must be completed, signed and received by our staff at the 605 James Avenue site, Albert Lea. Additionally, parents must attend a brief orientation. These actions are a licensing requirement of the Department of Human Services.
- Call to check on availability. You may be referred to another site if necessary. The availability of care may not be known until the last minute.
- Identify yourself and state you are a “drop-in contract holder”. Each classroom maintains a list of drop-in contract holders.
- Care is provided on a space-available basis only to drop-in contact holders. Drop-In contract holders must call the day before or day of that care is needed. Care will not be guaranteed before this time.
- The Center will be closed on the following days ...New Years Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, the Friday before Labor Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.
- The Children’s Center is not licensed to provide sick child care.
- After securing availability and upon delivering your child to the appropriate site, clearly identify yourself and your child to a staff member. They will direct you to the appropriate room. The teacher in that room will greet you and offer further direction.
- Tuition will be billed to you the week after care. Payment is due upon delivery of statement. Payment drop-boxes are located at each site. (see page 20 for Tuition Policies and Procedures)
- Non-Sufficient Funds/Returned Check Charge –
There will be a \$20.00 fee charged for any returned check.
- Collection Policy
The center is financially committed on a monthly basis to care for children; therefore we have implemented the following collection policy. Any account not collected within 30 days will be turned over to a collection agency and may affect your credit rating. All charges for collection fees, attorney fees, court costs, or any other expense involved in the collection of these charges may be borne by the parent.