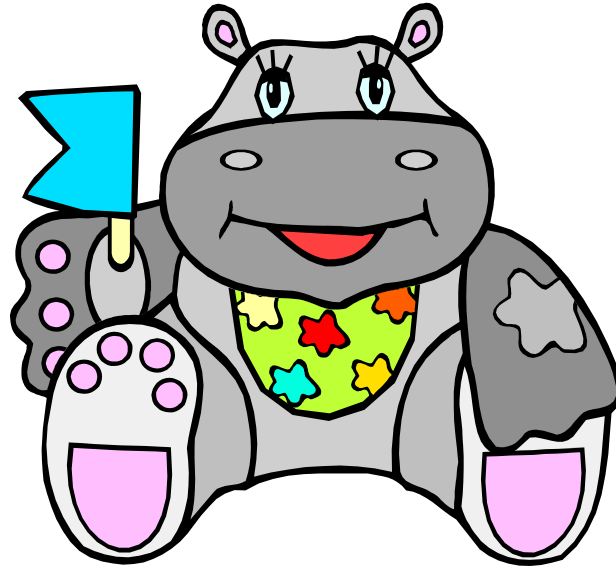


MESSY HIPPO

A FAMILY DAYCARE



<http://messyhippo.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/MessyHippo>

Your Partner in Parenting

Facility Number: 013418523

Established in 2005

Family Handbook

2021

Revision: 15th June 2021

Information in this document is subject to change without notice. Unless otherwise noted.

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Welcome

Thank you for considering my services for your child. I started this business in 2005 to provide quality, reliable daycare for all the participating children.

I truly hope your childcare experience will be a positive one. With that in mind, I make it my goal to provide your children with the best care possible.

This handbook is intended to clarify my philosophy and principles, and describes the conditions under which I agree to provide care.

This handbook is a part of your service contract, please read it carefully.

Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have at any time. Welcome to Messy Hippo!

Sincerely,
Shali Vishwas

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE FACILITY AND LICENSE

Facility Name, Address, and Phone Number:

Vishwasrao, Vrishali S (DBA Messy Hippo. TIN: 47-3302797)
7312 Hickorywood Lane, Pleasanton
Ca 94566-3584

Phone Number: (925) 484-8424

Fax Number: (925) 484-8424

E-Mail Address: info@messyhppo.com

Website Address: <http://messyhppo.com>

Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/MessyHippo>

Twitter: @MessyHippo

Yahoo Local: <http://local.yahoo.com/details?id=34772768>

Facility Number:

013418523

Licensing Officer / Office:

Cherie Acosta
Department of Social Services
Licensing Program Analyst
Direct Phone: (510) 622-1623
E-Mail Address: cherie.acosta@dss.ca.gov

State of California
Department of Social Services
Community Care Licensing Division,
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1102
Oakland, CA 94612

Phone: (510) 622-2602,

Fax (510) 622-2641

Website Address: <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov>

INTRODUCTION

This hand book is my honest attempt to spell out all the policies that I would use to provide child care in my home day care. Information in this handbook including but not limited to rules, guidelines, fee structure and other is subject to change without notice.

This hand book shall work hand-in-hand with our care service contract and serve you as a reference book during your child's enrolment, at the time when your child is in my care, and in general.

In order to improve quality of my service; I encourage you to provide your feedback without any hesitation and help me in maintaining open communication channel among us.

SUMMARY

Children are tender, curious, wonderful beings who need a safe and enriching environment to grow and thrive. I will do my best to ensure the safety, comfort, health, and happiness of all children in my care at all times and will present them with the opportunity to learn at their own pace. In order to meet my goals, I will attempt to gain as much continuing education and training as possible. I will also strive to keep the lines of communication open between myself and the families I serve. Please feel free to discuss your needs for improved child care with me at all times.

Enroll your child on your own risk

As careful as I am with the children in my care, accidents can happen, child can get hurt or injured also child can fall sick. Even this has not happened so far, false accusations or misinterpretation can also create wrong perception. If such or related thing should happen then you shall not hold me responsible. You admit your child into my care on your own risk.

Six Points More Important than Money

It is common observation that many people put money as the first criterion while selecting a daycare for their children. I agree that the money is an important factor; however it should not be placed before other important factors like location and hours of operations. Based on my professional and personal experience I would recommend you to work on the following 6 important check points, before you jump on the finance part.

1. Make sure that the location is suitable to you.
2. Are you comfortable with the hours of operations?
3. Are you comfortable with the provider, staff, facility?
4. Are comfortable with the technicalities like business policies, terms of service contract, etc?
5. Did you like the daycare program?
6. Is there any service guarantee, or facility to try the service before you buy it?

Once you complete the above exercise you are ready to ask the first financial question:

What is this service worth and how much I am ready to pay for it?

HOURS OF OPERATIONS

For me and my family it is extremely important that my customer strictly follow this schedule.

My regular hours of care (hours of operations) are 08:00 AM TO 06:00 PM Monday to Friday, except for holidays, vacation days, and sick days.

08:00 AM to 09:00 AM is a drop off time

05:30 PM to 06:00 PM pick-up time

ENROLLMENT

All forms must be completely filled out and returned before a child enters the program. All forms are subject to yearly renewal and must be kept up to date. All children enter the program on a two-week trial basis, during which either party may cancel without notice. At the end of this period, the parents/guardians and provider will talk about how the child is doing in the program. Fee rates are little higher during the trail program.

TERMINATION OF CARE

Our contract may be terminated at any time for any reason, by either party with proper notice. According to the contract, proper notice will consist of written or verbal notice to the provider not less than two weeks prior to the child's last day of care. If you choose to terminate care with less than proper notice, you agree to forfeit the entire deposit. In addition to the deposit, regular tuition charges, and vacation charges as per service period will apply for the remaining time your child is in care, and will be prorated for the number of days your child remains.

If at any time, after consultation with the parent or guardian, I feel that you or your child pose a safety risk to myself or any of the children in my care, I will give you as much written notice as possible that care is terminated. This action will be reserved for extreme cases only, and I will first attempt to resolve any issues with you before resorting to termination of care. Under these conditions, forfeiture of the deposit will be at my discretion.

CHILD ABUSE

Unfortunately, this is a topic that must be addressed in today's society. It should go without saying that I will not knowingly allow any form of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse of any child in my care at any time. This includes the time that the child is in their own home. On the surface, this may sound like an invasion of privacy, but I cannot ethically turn a blind eye toward such abuse.

I have been trained in the recognition of all forms of child abuse, and will do everything in my power to prevent any instances from occurring. If I notice any signs of abuse at any time, I will alert that child's parent(s) immediately both verbally and in writing, along with a full description of the symptoms. (Bruising, sores, sudden extreme behavioral changes, etc.) I will document this same information for myself, and if necessary, alert the proper authorities after first attempting to handle the situation discretely. You may get notes about your child having bruises or scrapes without needing to fear that I suspect you of abusing your child. Be assured, if I think your child has been abused, I will let you know! The notes I send home are just to alert you in general of any instances that

may come up, and also to protect myself from mistaken accusations of abuse. I would prefer not to have to deal with this issue, but I think it is best that we handle it openly and honestly to avoid any possible misunderstandings. We both want what is best for our children. Please feel free to discuss this or any other issues with me at any time.

WEAPONS AND FIREARMS

At no time will I allow any weapons or firearms of any kind in my home. This includes, but is not limited to: guns, knives, pocket-knives, swords, stun-guns, pepper spray, mace, num-chucks or other martial arts accessories, lassos or hand-cuffs, smoke bombs, etc. This policy also includes all toy guns and other toy weapons such as plastic swords.

I do not have a gun on the premises and will not tolerate any of the families I serve bringing a gun or other weapon into our home at any time.

If your child is found to have a gun, any weapon, or dangerous substance in his or her possession while in my home, you will receive an immediate call from me informing you that you need to pick up your child immediately. I will require written assurance from you that your child will not ever bring any guns or other weapons to my home before I will be able to accept your child for care again. If this is not provided, the terms of this contract will be voided immediately, and you will forfeit any deposits.

If your child arrives with an inappropriate toy, it will be stored in their cubby until the end of the day; and returned with a note asking you not to send it with your child in the future.

Toy guns and swords may be fine for pretend play at home, but they are not suitable for a group care environment.

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL USAGE

Smoking will not be allowed in my home at any time. None of the members of my family smoke, and in fact I am allergic to tobacco smoke. For this reason, I must request that you refrain from smoking while visiting my home.

Also, alcoholic beverages will not be served or consumed by myself or anyone else in my household during regular care hours. Any alcoholic beverages stored on the premises will be kept in a closed cabinet at all times.

If at any time a parent or guardian attempts to pick up a child from my home while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, I will attempt to arrange alternate transportation (by calling the names on the emergency pick-up list) for your child to your home. **If this is not possible, I am legally bound to release the child to your custody and alert the police of the situation.**

CHILD APPEARANCE AT THE TIME OF DROP-OFFs and PICK-UPS

At the time of drop off the family must make sure that the child has received a proper morning bath and his/her personal hygiene are taken care of. The child must have properly combed hair. The child must be wearing a season appropriate

outfit, shoes, and a clean diaper. **If child should dirty his/her diaper before check-in then the family is responsible for child clean-up and putting a fresh diaper on the child.** The family is welcome to use daycare's changing table and supply. **Please do not send a child in a night dress.** As part of check-in process, if feasible encourage your child to walk to daycare from your vehicle, remove his/her own shoes and put it on the designated place. At the time of pick up, please make sure that your child looks fresh and is wearing a clear diaper. In case if an actual situation is different then please let me at once, I will have it corrected immediately.

My Philosophy of Quality Care

I will strive to provide a safe, comfortable, stimulating, fun, educational environment in my home with a semi-structured day plan. Activities will include free playtime, structured playtime, large motor skill playtime, small motor skills activities, story time and theater activities, arts and crafts, music and dance activities, nature and ecology awareness, nutrition, cultural activities, and other educational yet fun activities. I will also provide nutritious meals and snacks, and encourage good personal hygiene skills and manners.

The television will rarely be on during regular care hours and then only to watch educational programs or activities which I have personally prescreened to be appropriate for even the youngest viewers.

An IBM compatible computer will be available for all ages to use, but only under supervision. School-aged children may have internet access, upon written parental consent, but again only while supervised.

Through a mixture of guided and undirected creative play, children in my care will have the opportunity to learn about color, shapes, textures, numbers, letters, animals, seasons, feelings, senses, nutrition, personal hygiene, manners, basic science and math concepts, and creative concepts such as "pretend" play, art, music, drama, and dance.

These may sound like lofty goals for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, but children can learn all of these things and more through creative play. I do not believe in pushing any child to learn at an accelerated rate, and will not make a child feel pressured to achieve any developmental milestones. By providing the right kind of fun safe environment, I believe that children will learn at their own appropriate pace.

Birthdays and Other Holiday Celebrations

Please feel free to bring a special treat to share with all of the children in my care on your child's birthday, but this is certainly not necessary. You may also, if you wish, plan to attend lunch with us on this special day in order to celebrate with your child. However, please give me at least one week's notice of your plans so that I may prepare the children to expect this change to the usual routine. Your child will no doubt enjoy this special day regardless of a celebration (or lack thereof) at daycare, so please do not feel obligated to plan anything elaborate.

As for other festivities, including religious holidays, I will always give you plenty of notice prior to the celebration of any cultural or religious occasions. I personally do not practice or teach any particular religion with the children in my care. However, I welcome the opportunity to include your family's favorite holiday traditions in my lesson plans, but would appreciate as much advance notice as possible so that I can thoroughly prepare. Also, I will attempt to notify you of the related lesson plans so that you may choose to discuss them with your child from your own perspective.

The families I care for come from many different cultural and religious backgrounds and beliefs, so I would prefer to refer your child's questions on these subjects to your authority. Please feel free to discuss with me any preferences you have in my handling of these topics where your children are concerned.

Gift Exchanges

Due to different religious and cultural practices, gifts will only be exchanged if most of the families I serve would like to participate. Typically, the children enjoy exchanging small, inexpensive gifts during the December holiday period and I enjoy giving each child a small present before the holiday break.

I also enjoy giving each child a birthday gift. However, I discourage a general exchange among the children at birthdays since there could be as many as 8 birthdays each year - or more if there are part-time children in care! In addition, children often have birthday parties at their home, so the exchange of presents during daycare hours is not really necessary. If parents would like to provide a special treat for the group on their child's birthday, that would be more appropriate.

Discipline Policy

I do not believe in spanking, slapping, smacking, yelling or hitting of any kind. This type of discipline will not be used in my home, regardless of your practices in your own home. Instead, I prefer the following discipline methods to handle any dangerous or hurtful offenses:

For children under the age of about 18 months, I find it most effective to remove the child from the situation, and redirect their attention elsewhere. Although I will most likely explain to the child that the offending behavior was inappropriate, children of this age are rarely able to fully understand what they have done. Fortunately, at this age their attention span is also usually shorter than with older children, so simply showing them a different toy or activity usually does the job.

For children of about age 2 and over, I will alert the child to the offense by saying firmly "NO", explaining why the behavior is unacceptable, and offering the child the choice to behave. If the child chooses not to behave appropriately, I will first explain to the child why their behavior is not acceptable, and then I will place the child in a chair in the foyer under isolated observation for a period of about 1 minute per year of age.

At the end of the observation period (time-out), I will ask the child if he or she understands why they had a time-out, ask if they understand why they shouldn't do that behavior, then ask if they are ready to play nicely again. I will also encourage children to apologize to the other child/children involved, when developmentally appropriate. This method not only stops the offending behavior, but also teaches the child consequence, responsibility, and empathy in a positive manner.

Dangerous and hurtful offenses include hitting, biting, kicking, pushing, hair pulling, throwing objects at someone, climbing on an inappropriate structure, willful destruction of property, tantrum throwing, and not following reasonable requests. These relatively minor offenses will be handled as described above, depending upon the child's age and developmental stage.

To a point, kids will be kids - but only as long as the emotional and physical safety of all of the children in my care is protected. In the rare instance that I feel any child in my care has a serious discipline problem I will request a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s). If an understanding cannot be reached, I reserve the right to terminate our contract with as much notice as possible in order to guarantee the comfort and safety of the other children in my care.

Number of Children in My Care

Though State of California regulations for a Family Day Care, allows me to care for up to eight children.

I believe children thrive when they receive care with the other children of a similar age. I have optimized my programs to best serve the toddlers in the age range of 12 to 36 months.

When it comes to filling vacancies or increasing the number of children I care for (up to the maximum of 8) I will always give preferential consideration to the families I currently serve. I would certainly welcome the opportunity to care for new siblings as they arrive!

Children need to feel they are getting quality attention from the adults in their lives, and they also benefit from lots of one-on-one care. Therefore, for your children's benefit and mine, I will attempt to keep the group as small as possible.

From time to time, in order to accommodate the families I serve, it may be necessary to accept one or two extra children for a certain timeframe, such as in the case of a public school closing due to weather conditions, family or professional emergency. On these days, I reserve the right to accept older children for temporary care at an additional fee. To the extent possible, I will notify all parents in advance of such days, so that you can decide if you wish to keep your child in care on that day. Be assured that I will never accept more children for care than I believe would be safe and in the best interest of all families I serve. I anticipate that this will be a rare event and not a routine situation.

Assistant Providers

In order to provide desired attention to the children in my care, I may and will employ one or more assistants. You will have the opportunity to meet and get to know the employees, and I will attempt to let you know in advance when there is change in my assistance. In my daycare qualities like safety, mutual respect, and cleanliness are of prime importance, and before appointing my assistants I will make every possible attempt to screen my assistant thoroughly.

Pre-Enrollment Visits

I believe that children, providers, and parents/guardians do best when everyone participates in “get-to-know-you” sessions prior to the first day of care. This helps children get used to the provider and allows parents/guardians plenty of time to ask questions to the provider. It also helps everyone feel more comfortable with the situation. This benefits the child by allowing us to approach the first day of care with ease which helps reduce stress for everyone.

Children benefit from a stable, long-term care environment. My hope is that these visits will help reduce the number of misunderstandings that can inevitably arise, so we can develop a good working relationship and avoid the need for unnecessary termination of care.

I will work with you to schedule as many pre-enrollment visits as required without cost to you. These visits should only last about an hour or so, depending upon the number of questions you have. I would prefer that one of the first visits be without children present to limit distractions. After that, though, I would prefer to gradually increase my interaction with your child, taking cues from their comfort level. All such visits should be in my home in order for your child to get used to this facility.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences will be scheduled periodically with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s). This will allow you to meet with me in a relaxed environment without the distractions of other children and parents/guardian, to discuss things such as your child’s development, discipline strategies, and needs.

I would also welcome your feedback on my effectiveness as an educator and care provider, as well as other issues and concerns that may arise.

By keeping the lines of communication open, I hope to foster a more stable and enjoyable working relationship with the families I serve.

Pick-Up by Someone Other Than The Child’s Parent or Legal Guardian

I will not under any circumstances release your child into the custody of anyone other than his or her parent or legal guardian, as indicated by the signatures on the contract. If you wish to have anyone else pick up your child, you will need to provide a signed consent form in advance, listing the dates on which this person may pick-up your child.

In the event of an emergency, I will attempt to contact you and/or your spouse, or the child’s other legal guardian, or other adult listed on your emergency contact form for approval. In any case, if I am not familiar with the person, I will require a valid photo ID card from an authorized government agency (such as a driver’s license) as proof of identification before I will release the child into their custody.

Please advise anyone who may pick-up your child not to take offense at this policy. It is simply the only way I can assure the protection of you, your child, and all other parties involved.

Anyone picking up a child must have an appropriate car seat in their vehicle or I will refuse to release the child to their care. I simply cannot in good conscience allow a child to travel without a proper safety restraint.

Also, if your family is experiencing a divorce or other legal situation which would affect who is allowed to pick up your child, please let me immediately. You will also need to provide court orders or other proper legal documents indicating who is no longer allowed custody of your child. Unless these papers are provided, I will have no choice but to release your child into the custody of anyone currently on your list.

Visits and Phone Calls During Regular Care Hours

Parents or guardians are welcome to drop by unannounced at any time during the hours their children are in care.

Please be aware, however, that children often do not really benefit from these visits. Many children will cry or act “clingy” during pick-up and drop-off times, but will quickly adjust and start playing happily once Mom or Dad or the other family members are out of sight. Having such irregular additional visits often serves only to interrupt the child’s comfortable routine, and can lead to increased distress during regular transition times.

Since I am frequently very busy attending to the children’s needs, it may be difficult for me to answer the phone during regular care hours. I do have voice mail and will check it periodically for messages. Please limit phone calls to your children while they are in my care since, like unannounced visits, these calls can disrupt your child’s routine and lead to increased stress for everyone involved, especially your child.

Please feel free to discuss your concerns about being able to visit and/or view your child during care hours. I’ve been considering an option to have video cameras installed in our facility that would allow parents to log in to a secure internet site and observe our activities at will. There would be a cost to the parents of about \$30 to \$50 per month.

This is an exciting idea for me, but due to the high installation cost, I would only be able to implement this if most of the parents I serve are interested in subscribing. Please let me know if this feature appeals to you.

Tips for Smooth Transitions At Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Transition times can be stressful for some children. In the morning they may not want to say good-bye to you and at pick up time they may not want to go because they are involved with a fun activity. This is a natural occurrence and may vary with your child’s age and developmental stage.

To ease the situation I encourage parents/guardians to take a minute to help their child feel comfortable and to adjust by offering positive statements. A parent/guardian who shows reluctance to depart only makes the transition harder for their child. Although parents should never sneak out without saying “good-bye” to their child, a brief good-bye usually works best. Crying will usually stop a few minutes after you depart.

Whether you plan to stay for a while when during transition times or you prefer to keep transition times short, it is important that you establish a consistent routine and stick with it.

You are always welcome to stay and chat about your child’s day, but please do this in the living room, rather than the foyer, so that your child doesn’t get upset expecting you to leave immediately. In the living room, there are more distractions to entertain your child while we chat.

If your child misbehaves during transition times, please correct their behavior. My house rules apply from the time they walk in until the time they walk out. This is a testing time when two different authority figures are present (parent/guardian and provider), and this situation will be tested at one time or another to see if the rules still apply.

I will remind your child if inappropriate behavior is being displayed. Please be prepared to back me up. If your rules or desires are being tested, I am ready to back you up as well.

Children of all ages adjust to transitions differently. Most do not like to be rushed, or to wait too long once they are ready to depart. This is especially true during the colder months, when children may get uncomfortably warm once dressed in a coat, mittens and a hat.

When leaving, please **DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO RUN OUT TO YOUR CAR WHILE YOU ARE STILL INSIDE!** Our safety rule is "No one outside without a parent or guardian with them." There may be other cars on the street and a serious incident could occur.

Supplies

You will be responsible for providing your child's:

- Diapers
- Diaper rash ointment
- Sterilized bottles and nipples including (optional) bottle liners
- All prescription and over-the-counter medications
- A thermometer (pacifier- or under-the-arm style for infants)
- Nail clippers
- Spare clothes appropriate for the season (2 sets of outfits, 1 pair of indoor and 1 pair of out door footwear)
- A tooth brush, toothpaste and a comb
- For Infants - Infant formula or breast milk

All other food and supplies will be provided by me. Of course, donations of all sorts of materials are always welcome!

In order to purchase a fresh supply of crayons, construction paper, paint and other creative materials, I request that you pay agreed supplies fees at the beginning of each year, as detailed in your contact.

This money will be used to maintain a full range of art supplies and helps defray the cost of most field trips.

Professional movement and music classes are sometimes attended by our group during winter months at an additional cost, payable to that institution.

Your child may choose to bring their own toys and/or bedding; however I cannot be responsible for their damage or loss. I will provide all linens and a wide variety of toys and educational activities, so there should be no need to bring your own.

Also, please refer to the section on weapons and firearms for restrictions on what items can be brought into my home.

Field Trips

Admission fees for most field trips will be included in your child's tuition and activity fee. I am planning to have memberships to the Zoo, Library, and other children's attractions, as these are favorite destinations.

I may consider arranging trips to local museums, nature centers, businesses and parks. Normally trips to the zoo, aquarium, Local Parks and library, bookstores, a fire station, the airport, indoor playgrounds, a pumpkin patch, local farms, pet shops are favorite among the young children.

I will always welcome your assistance and participation during field trips or other special fun events, though this will be purely voluntary.

Naps

I will offer infants a morning nap, generally between the hours of 10:00 AM and noon, or as needed. All children will be offered an afternoon nap shortly after lunch, generally between the hours of 1:30 PM and 3:30 PM.

All children will be expected to sleep or rest quietly during this time, so that the children who need to sleep can do so. Nap times will start with a story time and/or quiet songs to encourage children to fall asleep.

All bedding and linens will be provided. However, if your child has a favorite blanket or other comfort object, you are certainly welcome to bring these.

Each child will have their own regular sleeping space such as a crib, toddler bed, or cot, and each child's linens will be washed each weekend, or as needed.

Please do not request that your child be exempt from naptime. In a group care situation, this would not be in your child's best interest.

Also, please refrain from phone calling, dropping off or picking up your child during the scheduled nap times as this potentially disrupts the entire group. I will attempt to accommodate occasional deviations from this policy, such as for emergencies and other necessary events.

Potty Training

The decision of when to assist your child with potty-training is a personal one, and should be made based on your child's signs of emotional and physical readiness. I will be happy to offer you verbal assistance and can recommend several good books on the subject. However, please do not request that I begin training your child until he/she has experienced prolonged toileting success in your own home.

Your child will need to remain in diapers or "Pull-Ups" during daycare hours until he/she has shown the ability to remain accident-free in your home for a period of at least two weeks. This is for several reasons: children often appear to be trained in a (calmer, quieter) home situation, but are not yet able to "listen" to their body's signals when presented with the distractions of a group care environment.

Asking me to allow your child to go without diapers before he or she is truly ready would cause unnecessary stress on your child, myself, and my home.

One on One Meeting

Periodically I shall have a meeting with the parents/guardians talk about how their child is doing in the program. This is the best time to discuss things are specific to your child and his/her needs when he/she is in my care.

Food Allergies

To avoid triggering allergic reactions, I will not serve the following foods to children less than 12 months of age, unless you specifically approve them for your child:

- Citrus fruits and juices
- Tomato products
- Nuts, including peanut butter
- Soy products, including tofu
- Eggs
- Honey
- Dairy products
- Wheat products such as crackers, breads or pastas

Please alert me to any suspected food sensitivities or allergies so that I may attempt to accommodate your child's dietary needs. Also, if you avoid any foods or combinations of foods for religious, cultural, or health concerns, please let me know your needs and I will attempt to accommodate your requests for your child. An additional fee may apply if your child's dietary needs require me to purchase special food or beverage items.

Meals and Snacks

I will provide all meals and snacks, with the exception of infant formula or breast milk. Although my family is non-vegetarian, I will consider your requests to exclude meats in the meals I provide.

You are welcome to provide your child's favorite wholesome foods, but please plan to bring enough to share with all of the children. Also, please notify me a day or two ahead of when you intend to bring foods, so that I can plan the day's menu accordingly. Whenever you bring foods, please inform me of any ingredients such as nuts or citrus fruits which may cause allergic reactions. Please refrain from sending "junk foods" (like cakes, cupcakes, candy, chips, sugary cereals, cookies, etc.) except for truly special occasions such as your child's birthday, since these are not typically served in our daycare.

The meal schedule I follow is listed below. Children who are here during those times will be served. Children who choose not to eat during these times will not be served again until the next scheduled meal time. (With the exception of infants, who I believe in feeding on demand) If your child will be arriving after a scheduled meal time, please arrange to feed him/her prior to arrival. This allows me more time to focus on the other daily activities, and eliminates problems caused by children arriving with "Happy Meals" in hand.

Our Meal Schedule: (for toddlers and older)

Early breakfast: 08:00 AM to 09:00 AM
Morning Snack: 10:00 AM to 10:30 AM
Lunch: 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM
Afternoon Snack: 4:00 PM to 4:30 PM

As detailed in the supplies section of this handbook, you are responsible for providing your infant's formula or breast milk. However, I will provide all jar foods or other "strained" foods as needed.

Our weekly menu will be available upon request, and will frequently be posted on our website. If you have questions or concerns about the menu, please feel free to discuss them with me.

Administration of Medicines

Since I am not a licensed medical professional, I will not administer any type of medication, including prescription and over-the-counter medications, without a signed consent form. This form can be filled out when you drop your child off and must include:

- The child's name, age and current weight
- The name and phone number of your child's primary physician
- The name and phone number of the prescribing physician (if different)
- The name of the medication
- The dosage amount and frequency
- Possible side effects
- Reason for needing the medication
- Instructions for proper storage and preparation of the medication (such as should it be refrigerated, shaken, mixed with water, etc.)

All prescription medications must have been prescribed recently, and be clearly labeled with the pharmacy information. Also, the medication must be in a clearly-labeled child-proof container. I would prefer if you also bring the medication in a small sack or baggie labeled with the child's name, so as to avoid any possible confusion. Please provide any necessary droppers, medicine spoons, or other dosing aids. Epipens and inhalers should be in their original outer package (carton), labeled with your child's name.

Although I am trained in infant and child CPR, basic first aid, and recognition of communicable childhood diseases, I do not pretend to be a doctor, and will not under any circumstances provide any medications, including vitamins. You must provide any and all medications for your child.

If Your Child Becomes Ill

Although I am a certified medical assistant, I am not a field expert, I have been educated in the recognition of infectious childhood diseases and I will attempt to alert you at the first sign of any illness.

It is in child's best interest that the parent/guardian should always consult with child's primary physician for any and all health related issues.

In order to protect the health of all children in my care, I will call you at work and request that you pick up your child within 30 minutes if he or she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 1 hour
- Excessive diarrhea for 2 consecutive diapers or toileting
- Vomiting in excess of typical infant spit-ups
- Conjunctivitis ("pink eye")
- Persistent complaints of ear or stomach pain
- Bleeding other than minor cuts and scrapes
- Excessive greenish nasal discharge, indicating possible infection
- Head lice

In the event your child is sent home due to one of the above conditions, he or she will not be allowed to return until they have been symptom free for a full 24 hours, or until accompanied by a signed note from your child's physician.

This policy is intended to help prevent the unnecessary infection of the other children in my care. Although it may seem inconvenient when your child is sent home, you will appreciate knowing your child's exposure is minimized when other children become ill.

I will not send a child home with a common cold, unless accompanied by a fever or other severe symptoms. However, many times when young children are ill, they may not exhibit "classic" signs of the illness (fever, vomiting, etc.) but will be excessively fussy and/or require constant cuddling and attention.

While I believe in providing as much cuddling as desired, if a child is ill and requires my undivided attention this distracts from my ability to provide quality care to all the children in the group. Therefore, if your child reaches a point when he/she requires constant attention, will not play, cries continuously, whines and wants to be helped constantly, etc., then your child will need to stay home.

You should expect that any time a new child is introduced to the group, colds and other minor illnesses are likely to occur until everyone's immune systems have adjusted to the new exposures. Also, advise me whenever a member of your family has an illness so that I can be alert to the possibility of symptoms developing in the childcare group.

If I Become Ill

I will do my best to prevent the spread of illnesses through good hygiene and housekeeping, but total avoidance of illness is impossible.

I will not close the daycare if I am mildly ill due to a cold. I will, however, notify you as soon as symptoms appear in me or any of the children, so that you can decide whether or not to have your child in care that day.

Regrettably, I cannot offer any discount for days that you choose not to bring your child.

If I should become ill with more than a standard cold, such as flu or other fever, I will close the daycare until I have been fever-free for 24 hours. Per our contract, I will be paid for up to five (5) sick days per calendar year.

If possible, I will attempt to have an alternate caregiver in my home for my own sick days; however I cannot guarantee that this will always be possible. In the event that an alternate caregiver is provided, these days will not be counted toward the contracted paid sick days.

Sick-Days

Working with exposure to many families and especially children, it is expected that I will become ill occasionally. Therefore, I reserve the option to take up to five (5) paid sick-days per calendar year. I will not take these days unless I am genuinely ill, and I will always attempt to give as much notice as possible when I am forced to close my home due to illness.

Also, in the event that one of my own family members is mildly ill, I will also give you as much notice as possible to allow you to decide if you want to risk exposure to your child. These days will not count toward the paid sick days since I will still be available to care for your child.

In order to provide my family with a reliable income, I cannot offer a discount for days when your child is unable to attend due to his/her illness or vacation.

Paid Holidays

Although I will do my very best to be available every business day, it is conceivable that I may be forced to close occasionally due to vacation, illness, or other emergency. For unscheduled day offs, I will try my best to provide with as much advance notice as possible.

If you cannot ever tolerate rare, but possible lapses in care, you should consider placing your child in a daycare center, or make other arrangements for backup coverage. I can recommend several options if you need referrals.

In order to spend quality time with my own family, I will be closed on the following major holidays, these are paid day offs.

Please make a note of these day offs on your end as I may not able to provide you with a courtesy reminders.

2021 Paid Holidays

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Friday, January 1 | New Year's Day |
| 2. Monday, February 15 | President's Day |
| 3. Friday, March 5 | Personal Day Off |
| 4. Monday, May 31 | Memorial Day |
| 5. Monday, July 5 | Independence Day (July 4 th is Sunday) |
| 6. Monday, September 6 | Labor Day |
| 7. Monday, September 13 | Personal Day Off |
| 8. Monday, October 11 | Columbus Day |
| 9. Thursday, November 11 | Veterans Day |
| 10. Thursday, November 25 | Thanksgiving Day |
| 11. Friday, December 24 | Christmas Day (Christmas is on Saturday) |

(Reference: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/#url=2021>)

2022 Paid Holidays

(Tentative List, the final list will provide by early 2022)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Friday, December 31, | New Year's Day |
| 2. Monday, January 17 | Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. |
| 3. Monday, February 21 | President's Day |
| 4. Monday, May 30 | Memorial Day |
| 5. Monday, July 4 | Independence Day |
| 6. Monday, September 5 | Labor Day |
| 7. Monday, October 10 | Columbus Day |
| 8. Friday, November 11 | Veterans Day |
| 9. Thursday, November 24 | Thanksgiving Day |
| 10. Monday, December 26 | Christmas Day (Christmas is on Sunday) |

(Reference: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/federal-holidays/#url=2022>)

Yearly 15 Days Paid Vacation

Like any other working professional, I will be taking up to 15 days of paid vacation. I will try my best to provide you with at least 10 days advance notice about my vacation weeks.

This is my tentative holiday schedule:

- Summer Break: 5 days around 4th of July.
- Winter Break: 10 days around year end.

Your payment obligation toward this vacation is follow:

#	Duration of Service	% of Total Payment
1	1 st week to 13 th week	25%
2	14 th week to 26 th week	50%
3	27 th week to 39 th week	75%
4	40 th week to end of the calendar year (Dec.31)	100%

Note: Duration of service is determined by last day of service contract. For example if you issue the 2 week termination notice during 13th week then your service duration is 13 + 2 weeks and with that your vacation payment obligation is 50% of the total vacation payment for the year.

Sample daily program

Morning:

Time	Activities
8.00 am to 9.00 am	Check in
9.00 am to 10.00 am	Playing
10.00 am to 10.30 am	Snack time
10.30 am to 11.00 am	TV time
11.00 am to 12.00 pm	Circle Time
12.00 pm to 12.30 pm	Cleanup Time

- Breakfast is served to the kids during check in time.
- Circle time includes music, dance, age appropriate educational activities, reading a book. Children are encouraged to sit together and enjoy this time.

Lunch:

12.30 pm to 1.30 pm

Quiet time:

1.30 to 3.30 – Nap time for infants and toddlers. Quiet time for school going children.

3.30 to 4.00 – Waking up, Diaper change.

Evening:

Time	Activities
4.00 to 4.30	Evening snacks and milk time
4.30 to 5.00	Free Plays, coloring, playing with friends
5.00 to 6.00	Pickup time.

- As a mother, I know the importance of cleanliness. Before any meals or snacks I will be definitely washing their hands.
- Diaper change: Every two hours for toddlers and as needed too. For infants more often and as required.

Important Information Related To My Daycare Service Contract

In order to provide you with a quality daycare service, avoid any misunderstanding before; during and after the service term I rely on a mutually agreeable written contract.

A sample copy of this contract can be found at the following location:

<http://messyhippo.com/datafiles/MessyHippoSampleServiceContract.pdf>

The following section shall provide you with details explanation on important terms, definitions, and concept that would appear in our contract.

Messy Hippo:

Messy Hippo is an official DBA name of my home daycare business.

A child:

An infant, toddler, or a young kid

A Family:

Child's parents or legal guardians

The Provider:

Vrishali Vishwasrao (The owner and operator.) / Messy Hippo (DBA)

Contract Term:

Contract Term is a time duration for which contract shall remain in force and would be severed as a legal binding between a family and the provider. Normally contract term is 1 year long.

Contract Termination:

Contract can be terminated by either party (family or the provider) at any time by providing a verbal or written notice at least two weeks in advance.

Notice Period:

A mutually agreed time duration before terminating the child care service. Normally 45 days before the last care day. In the notice the full service charges are applied even if the child is not attending the program.

Fees or care/ service charges:

Fees or care/ service charges mean a dollar amount paid by family to the provider for daycare services of their child or children.

Fees are collected on a monthly basis and is payable in advance at the beginning of the month - morning of the first working day of the each month.

Charges are subject to change without notice and will be at provider's discretion. Normally the charges shall remain the same for an existing family for their contract period.

The exact amount shall be defined in to the service contract.

Security Deposit:

Refundable deposit equivalent of one month care charges, normally applied towards last month service charges.

Early drop-off:

Early drop is the child drop-off before 8 AM.

Late pick-up:

Late pick-up is the child pick-up on the same day after 6:00 PM.

Late pick-up charges:

This is the charge payable by the family to the provider for each late-pick-up.

The exact amount shall be defined in to the service contract.

Whole Week:

Monday to Friday

Partial Week:

Less than a whole week, at least one day is counted out.

No fee concessions are given for partial week absentee.

Absentee:

If child is not attending the care program during the regular program hours, or hours specified in the service contact then that child is consider as an absent child while she/he is away from the program. The time frame for which child is away from the program is called an absentee.

Family vacation:

Family vacation is a time period when child is temporarily absent from the day care by providing an advance notice. At least two weeks of advance written notice is recommended.

The provider shall honor up to two weeks of family vacation per year.

The charges stated in to the contract shall be applied.

Provider's vacation:

Provider vacation is a time period for which the child care service is temporarily unavailable. Normally the provider is entitled for two paid weeks of vacation per year. At least two weeks of advance written/verbal notice would give recommended.

The charges stated in to the contract shall be applied.

Sick Offs:

Time frame for which child is not seeking daily care due to illness of the child and/or the family and/or the provider.

Up to 5 days of provider's sick leave (sick days offs) per year shall be full paid.

At her own discretion the provider may offer the family with up to 50% off regular service charges when presented with a proper medical certificate towards proof of child or family illness. The scope of such a concession is limited to two weeks per year.

Information for smooth enrolment

For quick and smooth enrolment please use the following guidelines:

1. Read the family handbook with great care.
2. Note down your concerns and e-mail them to me.
3. Down, complete and submit an electronic copy of Child Information Work book, so that I can complete the following forms and give it to you for your review and sign off:
 - a. LIC 282
 - b. LIC 613B
 - c. LIC 627
 - d. LIC 700
 - e. LIC 995A
 - f. LIC 9150

The latest versions of the above forms can be found here:

<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/PG166.htm>

4. Submit a copy of valid photo id (A Copy of California Driver License is preferred) for each person in the family who is responsible for child drop offs and pickups.
5. Submit a copy of valid photo id (A Copy of California Driver License is preferred) for each person in the emergency contact list, who is also responsible for child drop offs and pickups.
6. Submit a up to date copy of child immunization record
7. For custodial arrangements
 - a. A copy of a valid court order governing the custodial agreement and arrangements
 - b. List of people that need to be explicitly excluded from child pick-up, any additional documentation that may be required.
 - c. List of people authorized to pick up the child from the day care.
8. Submit a signed copy of service contract
9. Submit a personal check of specified amount
10. Submit a signed copy of acknowledgement receipt of this hand book. Please find a simple copy at end of this document.

