



Daycare/Summer Program
Parent/Guardian Handbook
2025

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Welcome!

Thank you for considering The Arc of East Central Iowa's Daycare and Summer Program. We offer a specialized daycare licensed by the Iowa Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), serving school aged individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) and/or mental health disorders. The primary purpose of this program is to provide a safe, structured environment for individuals through supervised activities emphasizing recreational, social, leisure, and behavioral components. We can meet a variety of health needs including seizure monitoring, briefing, tube feedings, and medication dispensation.

Our low staff-to-participant ratio allows each participant to receive the attention and reinforcement necessary for personal growth. Individuals are typically grouped by age and are offered a variety of daily activities that vary according to the needs and abilities of those involved. Some examples of choices include social and leisure activities such as games, crafts, music, and field trips. We also work on daily living skills such as cooking, personal cares, or safety out in the community. The Arc is a not-for-profit agency with our mission and core values as stated below.

This handbook was designed to inform you of our basic policies and procedures for our Daycare and Summer programs. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please do not hesitate to speak to the Daycare Coordinator.

Mission Statement

The Arc of East Central Iowa empowers individuals with disabilities and their families to engage in lifelong opportunities to live, learn, work, play, and advocate with full dignity and inclusion in their communities.

Core Values

Dignity: Everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect. Their thoughts, feelings and desires are important in driving the priorities of the agency.

Diversity: Everyone adds to the tapestry of their community. Diversity challenges us to understand others, grow stronger together, increase our cultural responsiveness and broaden our perspectives in meeting the needs of our organization and community.

Equity: Everyone is unique and has value. We are committed to building upon each person's strengths, visions, and needs to support access to lifelong opportunities.

Inclusion: Everyone deserves quality education, vocational, social, and living opportunities in an integrated and diverse community. Elimination of systemic barriers ensures the voices of individuals with disabilities and their families are heard.

Open Door Policy

Parents/guardians will be granted unlimited access to their loved one during normal hours of operation unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. A copy of this portion of the court order must be supplied to The Arc for it to be enforced.

Program Staff

The Arc of East Central Iowa follows the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and the Iowa Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) guidelines for staff requirements and training.

The program is overseen by HHS approved On-Site Supervisors (The Arc's Daycare Coordinator and Summer Site Assistants). Classrooms have a Lead Direct Support Professional (DSP) and support DSPs. The Arc makes every effort to maintain a staff to participant ratio of 1:3 and may vary depending on the needs of the individuals. Classroom staff are responsible for maintaining daily contact with the parents/guardians of individuals through face-to-face interactions at drop off and/or pick up. Each classroom will post a daily schedule of activities in the room.

The Arc strives to meet the individual needs of each participant. If you ever have any questions, concerns, or suggestions please feel free to contact the Daycare Coordinator.

The Arc may contact the school or day program your loved one attends to request information which will be used to gather best practices when working with your family member. An Authorization for Exchange of Information is completed prior to reaching out to the school, teacher, or other program.

Location, Days, and Hours

The Arc of East Central Iowa is located at 680 2nd Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401. The Arc Summer Program is held at our building and at Veritas Church at 509 3rd Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401.

Program	Hours of Operation
Daycare (after school)	Monday – Friday 2:50pm – 6:00pm
No school days/Breaks	Monday – Friday 7:00am – 6:00pm
Summer	Monday – Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm*

**Children who attend the Daycare Program year-round may attend during their normal hours.*

The Arc follows the Cedar Rapids Community School District calendar for no school days and breaks.

The Arc observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas, and New Year's Eve.

Admission and Enrollment

We welcome children ages 4 to 21 that have been diagnosed with a disability or mental health disorder and are enrolled in school.

Summer registration is updated and posted on The Arc's website (www.arceci.org) in February of each year for the upcoming session.

Capacity is dependent upon location and staff availability. Enrollment is taken on a first-come, first-served basis with preference to individuals utilizing group ratio services. All others are placed on a waiting list until space is available.

Parents/Guardians must accurately and thoroughly complete the application packet and required forms prior to the first day of care. Proof of financial information is required if requesting to utilize the sliding fee scale. Failure to submit these forms and/or pay applicable fees will result in loss of spot in the program.

Rules for acceptance are the same for everyone, without regard to sex, race, disability, religion, or ethnic background.

Program Fees

For the Daycare program, there is an annual fee of \$50.00 to cover the cost of activities for the school year.

For the Summer program, there is an annual fee of \$100.00 to cover the cost of activities for the summer.

These fees are due upon placement into the program and before your loved one can attend.

Meet & Greet

A **mandatory** meeting between parents/guardians and staff will be held prior to the participant starting services. During the meet and greet, parent/guardians and participants(s) will meet with classroom staff to discuss and review the individual's needs. This meeting is crucial to ensuring that staff are knowledgeable about the best practices in working with each person and is mandated according to HCBS regulations. Individuals will not be allowed to attend the program until the responsible caregiver(s) meet with a representative of the program.

Attendance

According to the Iowa Department of Health & Human Services, a record must be kept for each participant's arrival and departure times.

- **Arrival:** Arc staff assume responsibility for a participant only after they have been signed in by Arc staff. During the summer, staff will be near the entrance of the building until 9:00am and will meet you near your vehicle for drop-off. For drop-offs outside of these times, caregivers will need to take their child inside to their assigned classroom.

- **Departure:** Individuals must be picked up inside the building by an authorized adult caregiver. Arrangements can be made with the Daycare Coordinator to bring your child outside to your vehicle if needed. Staff will sign them out on the attendance sheet once they are in your care.
- **Absence:** Please notify the Daycare Coordinator if a participant will not be attending on a scheduled day. Please specify if the participant is ill or has a communicable disease, so we can inform other parents/guardians if their loved one has been exposed to an infectious illness or condition. If a participant does not arrive at the site as scheduled, staff will contact parent/guardians regarding the absence.

Authorizing Individuals to Pick Up a Participant

For the protection and safety of the participants, only authorized individuals will be able to pick up individuals from Arc programming. Participants will be released only to those who are **at least 18 years old** and authorized by the parent/guardian as indicated on the care plan under “Transportation Information”. Parent/Guardians may authorize as many individuals as they wish in this section of the care plan and may update this information whenever necessary in writing. Authorization signature of the parent/guardian and photo I.D. of the individual who will be picking up the participant are required. If someone other than those indicated in the care plan will be picking up the participant, please notify the Daycare Coordinator in writing prior to pick up.

Legal Custody

The Arc cannot refuse to release a participant to the parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of that individual. In most cases, parents have equal custody rights, unless a court or valid written separation agreement provides otherwise. Therefore, if the participant’s other parent or guardian is not authorized to pick up the participant, the center must be provided with a certified copy of the court order or separation agreement awarding custody solely to one parent/guardian or denying custody of the other parent or guardian. If experiencing custody difficulties, The Arc strongly encourages clear communication with the Daycare Coordinator of the circumstances that affect the center.

Change of Address and Phone Number

Please contact The Arc office or the Daycare Coordinator immediately regarding address or phone number changes. If The Arc does not have a current phone number, should an emergency occur, Emergency Contacts will be notified. Services may be suspended until a current working phone number is provided.

Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation of their loved one to and from all programming at The Arc of East Central Iowa. The school district may provide transportation to the program during the school year if written into the individual’s school IEP. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to confirm and set up transportation with the school district.

The Arc will provide transportation for field trips taken during programming.

Fee Policy

The Arc of East Central Iowa accepts a variety of funding and payment options for programming including Private payment, Grants, or Home and Community Based Waiver Program. All funding and payment options must be approved prior to the start of services through the Contract for Care. Communication regarding changes to the funding or payment options are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian and must be completed prior to the service occurring. If communication does not occur prior to the service, the parent/guardian is responsible for the applicable fees for services rendered. Program fees are assessed and billed the month following services. Auto-withdrawal is required, and The Arc will deduct private pay tuition and fees directly from the bank account or credit card provided. A \$30.00 charge will be added for insufficient funds.

The Arc reserves the right to suspend services to any individual with an account balance past due by 30 days or more and terminate all services for accounts 90 days past due. If your account is still outstanding after 90 days, The Arc will turn the account over to a collection agency/small claims court.

Program Rates:

Half Day Care (scheduled for less than 5 hours of care)	School Age
Individual (1:1) Private Pay	\$30.00 per day
Group Ratio Private Pay	\$25.00 per day
Absent fee *Regardless of Funding Type	\$15.00 per day
Late pick up fee *Regardless of Funding Type	\$10.00 for every 15 minutes after the center closes

Full Day Care	School Age
Individual (1:1) Private Pay	\$80.00 per day
Group Ratio Private Pay	\$60.00 per day
Absent fee *Regardless of Funding Type	\$30.00 per day
Late pick up fee *Regardless of Funding Type	\$10.00 for every 15 minutes after the center closes

Sliding Fee Scale Available Upon Request

Home And Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Funding

Respite may be available for individuals utilizing an HCBS Waiver for funding. A service authorization is required prior to the start of services. Waiver funding is contingent on the following:

- the requirements and/or rules of the service can be met in the program
- the service type is appropriate for the time in which the participant is attending
- the appropriate staffing needed for the service is available
- to use Respite hours at programming, at least one parent/guardian *cannot* be working during the time of service

Families choosing to use services through the HCBS/CMH Waivers will be subject to a holding fee (absent fee) for days that their family member is not present at the program (vacation, illness, etc.).

Combination Payment

Families may use a combination of waiver funding and private payment to cover the cost of programming; however, only one payment option will be allowed per day. If switching days between waiver and private pay funding streams, the program will need to be notified of these times prior to start of service.

Children's Mental Health Assistance

The Linn County Children's Mental Health Assistance (CMHA- formerly SED Wraparound Grant) fund exists to fill service gaps when insurance or other programs do not cover all the family's needs or expenses. Any family member who has been diagnosed with a severe emotional or behavioral disorder may qualify for these supplemental funds. Families must apply directly with the Linn County Children's Mental Health Assistance Coordinator.

The CMHA fund reimburses The Arc for care costs. Recipients must contact the Daycare Coordinator before care is provided so that all necessary documentation can be completed. A Notice of Decision is required prior to the start of services. If a Notice of Decision is not obtained, parents/guardians will be responsible for private payment of the participant's program attendance.

Department of Health & Human Services Child Care Assistance Program

The Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) provides funding for care to families with qualified income who meet the other requirements of the Child Care Assistance Program. Participants and/or caregivers must apply directly to HHS to access this funding. If approved, HHS reimburses The Arc for care costs equal to the number of days the participant attends the program and up to six absence days per month (through 9/30/2024). If a participant exceeds six absences per month, the family is responsible for paying the absence fee.

Recipients must contact the Daycare Coordinator before care is provided to ensure all necessary documentation is complete. A Notice of Decision is required prior to the start of services. If a Notice of Decision is not obtained, parents/guardians will be responsible for private payment of the participant's program attendance.

Tax Reporting Information

Individual tax receipts for dependent care credit are available upon request. Please contact the Finance Department at The Arc.

Withdrawal From Services

Written notice of intent to withdraw a participant from the program is to be submitted to the Daycare Coordinator at least two (2) weeks in advance. If such notice is not given, fees will be charged for normal care rate for two weeks.

Meals and Snacks

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Department of Agriculture food program, regulations are followed for snacks and meals served. The Arc will provide a morning and an afternoon snack; menus are posted in each classroom and food prep area.

Lunches are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Food sent to the program must be in a bag/cooler with an ice pack (if needed). The Arc provides microwaves for lunch to be heated up, but the time to cook cannot exceed five (5) minutes. If lunch is not sent, staff will call the family to plan for one to be brought to the site. If families are unable to make arrangements, a meal following the CACFP guidelines will be provided by The Arc and the family will be assessed a \$5.00 fee.

Field Trips

Field trips will be a part of all programs. Parents/guardians sign a Field Trip Permission form upon enrollment into the program and annually thereafter. Parents/guardians are given advance notice of upcoming field trips through calendars and classroom schedules. These postings will indicate the destination, time of departure, and arrival back to the program. If you do not wish for your loved one to participate in a field trip, parents/guardians must notify the Daycare Coordinator so that alternate plans can be made. Each case will be handled on an individual basis as this affects the staffing ratios of the classroom.

When taking field trips away from the Arc, staff will bring the following:

1. First Aid Kit
2. Emergency telephone numbers for each participant's parent/guardian
3. Emergency telephone numbers for a responsible person who can be reached if the parent/guardian cannot
4. The telephone number of the participant's physician and dentist
5. Emergency consent form
6. Sunscreen & insect repellent

Transportation will be provided by The Arc bus, vans, staff, or volunteers. Any adults providing transportation will have:

1. A seat belt for each participant
2. Proof of automobile insurance
3. A valid Driver's license

The driver shall not be allowed to operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription, or non-prescription drugs that could impair their ability to operate a motor vehicle.

Swimming

Individuals will have assigned swim days while at programming. Please be sure to send a labeled swimming suit/trunk and a towel on designated swim days. If you do not want your family member to swim, please notify the Daycare Coordinator in writing of your wishes.

Programs will utilize local YMCA and community swimming pools. Staff will be in the pool to assist in any way necessary and a lifeguard will be on duty. If you have specific instructions about swimming, please notify the staff in the participant's room.

- If your family member needs to wear a life jacket, it is your responsibility to provide one
- If your family member utilizes diapers or briefs, it is your responsibility to provide swim briefs or covers

Clothing/Briefs/Assistive Devices

The Arc asks that all individuals bring an extra change of clothing with them; accidents do happen, and paint, juice, or milk can spill easily. Please initial all items and send them in a bag with the participant's name.

If your loved one utilizes diapers or briefs, we ask that you send an adequate amount as well as wipes for their use. There is storage for large quantities of diapers/briefs, but please be sure to label the bag with your loved one's name.

If your family member has assistive devices that you would like them to utilize during the program, please contact the Daycare Coordinator to arrange a time for drop off and pick up of said device(s).

Toys and Electronic Devices

The Arc provides a wide variety of toys and learning materials. We ask that toys from home, as well as personal electronic devices, including cell phones, iPods, iPads, etc. are not brought to the program. These items can often distract and cause behavioral issues for individuals. The Arc is not responsible for any lost, broken, or stolen personal property that individuals bring with them.

Health Policy

For The Arc to protect and ensure the health of all program individuals, the following guidelines have been established:

- All individuals must be free of communicable diseases and have been immunized against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, measles, and rubella as required by the Iowa State Department of Health with exclusions allowed for medical and religious reasons.
- Any participant who has a contagious or communicable disease will be excluded from the program for the duration of the disease. The Arc will post notice of exposure to any communicable disease, clarifying the symptoms and period of communicability. Notes will be sent home with those individuals who were directly exposed. Communicable diseases/conditions include, but are not limited to, chicken pox, impetigo, head lice, ringworm, strep throat, eye infection, and COVID.
- Any participant who has a temperature of more than one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100° F) will need to be picked up by a parent, guardian, or individual designated on the transportation list within the hour. Participation in the program will be suspended until the participant's temperature is 100° F or less for 24 hours without the aid of medication.
- Any participant with vomiting or three (3) or more bouts diarrhea will need to be picked up by a parent, guardian, or individual designated on the transportation list within the hour. Participation in the program will be suspended until the participant is free of symptoms for 24 hours without the aid of medication.
- Any participant who requires significant medical expertise or medical intervention will be assessed on an individual care basis. If it is determined that special equipment and/or the medical needs of the individual exceed The Arc's ability to safely accommodate those needs, the participant may be excluded from the program.
- If you would prefer for health reasons that your family member not go outside (extreme heat), please inform the Daycare Coordinator in writing.

Required Health and Safety Forms

All individuals must have the following on file prior to the start of the program:

- A completed care plan that includes parent/guardian contact information, emergency contact information, doctor, and dentist contact information, and must be signed and dated by parent/guardian
- A signed Arc release and HHS release for summer programming
- A statement of health status with parent/guardian signature
- Written authorization for medication administration when applicable, this includes over the counter medication
- Written authorization for tube feeding administration when applicable
- School age individuals must have a copy of the most recent physical on file and a current, dated immunization card with physician and parent/guardian signature

Medication Policy

Medication prescribed or ordered by a physician or dentist administered during program hours must have written authorization and instructions. The Arc has the right to contact the prescribing doctor's office to confirm or clarify medication instructions.

- All medication shall be supplied to The Arc in its original container, properly labeled, and will be administered only by authorized personnel that have taken The Arc's medication dispensation training.
- Guardians must complete and sign the Medication Administration form prior to medication being dispensed to the participant and renewed monthly thereafter.
- Over-the-counter medication or nonprescription medications shall be supplied in the original container and be labeled with the participant's name.
- Medication will be stored in a locked box in a locked cabinet on site. Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in a locked container placed in the refrigerator.
- To ensure security and presence of emergency medication transferred to/from programming, a daily two-fold check system will be in place. Upon participant's arrival, Arc staff will confirm medication is present and will document this in the comments section of the Attendance Log. At pick-up, the caregiver will confirm medications are present and staff will initial the Attendance Sheet prior to leaving the program. If the participant arrives without designated emergency medications, or if there is an issue with said medications, the Daycare Coordinator will be required to call guardians (if not present at drop off) immediately to inform them of the situation and complete an incident report.

Injuries

Every effort is made to keep individuals safe; however, it is possible for individuals to acquire bumps, bruises, and scratches. If the injury is serious, you will be notified by telephone immediately. If, in the opinion of The Arc staff, the injury warrants emergency treatment, an ambulance will be called and the participant will be taken to the closest/preferred medical facility, typically St. Luke's or Mercy Hospitals, and parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Parents/guardians are responsible for any costs incurred due to any emergency treatment.

Parent/guardians will be notified of minor incidents via an oral report at pick up or by phone call or text message. A report will be completed and written confirmation of

notification of incident will be obtained for all incidents. Parents/guardians may request copies of incident reports at any time.

Confidentiality Policy

All information regarding program individuals, including both computer and paper based, shall be stored in secured files at The Arc. Such documents will be accessible only to Arc staff as needed. Prior to providing information regarding a participant to an outside agency, the participant's parent/guardian will have signed a release and been given an explanation regarding the need to disclose this information.

The following exceptions do not require prior permission:

- Staff when needing information concerning a participant's health or safety needs
- Arc professional staff when viewing records related to their job functions
- Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency
- Representatives authorized by the Department of Health & Human Services

Mandatory Reporting of Abuse

The employees of The Arc are mandatory reporters of child and dependent adult abuse and are required to report any incident where abuse is observed or suspected. This includes abuse by staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, or any other source. Persons found guilty of failure to report abuse may be subject to fines or prosecution by the authorities.

Supervision and Access Policy

The Arc of East Central Iowa is committed to providing a fun, safe, and structured environment for all individuals. The Arc programs that are HHS licensed do not allow any person in the center who is not a staff member, substitute, or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with the program to have "unrestricted access" to participant(s) for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian. "Unrestricted access" means that a person has contact with a participant alone or is directly responsible for supervision of participant(s).

Discipline Policy

Discipline at Arc programming is designed to be consistent, with an emphasis on redirecting the participant's undesirable activity to an acceptable one and includes explanations of the rules and expected behaviors. Staff are trained to use positive reinforcement for good behavior and attempt to ignore improper or attention-seeking behaviors. "Time away" or a break from an activity or area is used when necessary and is not more than one minute for each year of age. It may be only very short depending on the seriousness of the offense. If there is a serious infraction involving your family member, you will be notified immediately.

Bite Policy

The Arc of East Central Iowa is committed to ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of the individuals served in its programs. The Arc strives to minimize the occurrence of individuals biting other individuals, staff and/or other community members by providing individuals with support that address their social and emotional needs in a nurturing and safe environment. When working with individuals, Arc staff are required to use only positive, safe, and approved non-aversive techniques and instructional strategies to deal with individuals who bite others. If continual biting occurs, the participant may be asked to be picked up early or dismissed from the program.

Dismissal Policy

The Arc reserves the right to discharge any participant from any program or service administered by The Arc. If a participant is discharged, The Arc will attempt to make suggestions to the participant and their team, and/or referrals to the case manager or other agencies for the consideration of other appropriate services. If possible and/or appropriate, The Arc will assist with the transfer of a discharged participant to another program or service provider.

Service Termination for Day

The Arc reserves the right to terminate services for a participant for the day for reasons included, but not limited to, illness, behavior, weather, etc. The parent/guardian has the responsibility of responding to The Arc's phone call within 15 minutes and pick up the participant within one (1) hour of the initial phone call.

Voluntary Discharges

Voluntary discharges may occur at any time. The participant or participant's representative has the right to voluntarily discontinue services for any reason. The Arc requests a two-week (2) notice for the discontinuation of any services.

If a two-week written notice is not provided, the participant or their representative will be charged the normal rate for two weeks of care. If there are extenuating circumstances, exceptions to the two-week notice may be requested by the participant or their representative. All exception requests will be reviewed on an individual basis by Arc managerial staff.

Involuntary Discharges

An involuntary discharge requires a 30-day written notice to the participant and/or their representative by The Arc. An exception is made to the 30-day notice if the circumstances causing the discharge, as determined by The Arc, warrant immediate removal of the participant from the program or service.

The reasons for involuntary discharge from Arc program(s) and/or service(s) may include but are not limited to the following types of situations in which the participant:

- Is a dangerous threat to themselves or others
- Is unduly disturbing to other participants
- Has functional, medical, or behavioral needs that exceed the parameters of the service or support
- Consistently refuses, cancels, or no-shows for services
- Fails to provide pertinent information judged to be critical to the development of appropriate services (i.e., required regulatory medical records or immunizations)
- Fails to provide releases of information or sign service agreements that are critical to the delivery of appropriate services
- Fails to pay fees owed for services and/or supports
- Does not follow the parameters of the services or support
- Fails to utilize services, when available and authorized, on a quarterly basis at minimum

Right To Appeal

Any participant receiving services from The Arc of East Central Iowa has the right to appeal or file a grievance for any rule or policy enforced, procedure used, treatment received, or decision made by The Arc of East Central Iowa. No one may limit or interfere with this right. Participants making an appeal or grievance will not be subjected to retaliation or barriers to services. A copy of the Appeals and Grievances Policy may be requested at any time.

Arc Programs and Services Committee

The Programs and Services Committee provides input and recommendations to the Daycare Coordinator and Senior Program Manager. This committee is composed of parents/guardians of individuals, community members, disability professionals, Arc staff, and The Arc of East Central Iowa Board Members.

Fire, Severe Weather, Tornado, Bomb Threat, Active Shooter, Floods, And Other Natural Disasters

The Arc Daycare and Summer programs have established policies and procedures if there is an emergency such as a fire, tornado, bomb threat, flood, or other natural disaster. The Arc ensures that required inspections of the locations in which the program occurs are met on an annual basis. Fire and tornado drills are held monthly. During severe weather, The Arc checks for emergency information regularly. In the event of a flood, bomb threat, or active shooter, staff follow the instructions listed at each site.

The Arc of East Central Iowa Contact Information

Address: 680 2nd St SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Telephone: (319) 365-0487

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Program email: ArcDaycare@arceci.org

Website: www.arceci.org

Daycare Coordinator: Devin Hartl- x1017; dhartl@arceci.org

Senior Program Manager: Whitney Alber- x1022; walber@arceci.org

Senior Operations Director: Kyle Schramp- x1021; kshramp@arceci.org

Executive Director: Theresa Lewis- x1000; tlewis@arceci.org