



Pet Policy

Pets in the classroom provide children the opportunity to observe, cuddle and care for living things. Children at ECC may have the chance to pet, hold or feed the guinea pig and the opportunity to take care of the bearded dragon and frogs through observation only.

Procedures to be followed to ensure the health and safety of children:

1. **Hand-washing:** Hands must be washed after handling animals.
2. **Parent Notification:** Parents must be informed of animals on the premises, prior to a child's admission to the facility, and as any new animals are acquired.
3. **Supervision:** The provider must always be close enough to the children and animals. Children may not be left unattended with the animals. If an animal demonstrates aggressive behavior, including but not limited to biting and scratching, the animal must be excluded from the child care areas and physically separated from the children.
4. **Restricted areas:** Animals are prohibited from areas used for food storage and food preparation.
5. **Animal cages:** All cages should be easily cleanable, and should be cleaned away from the children and in a sanitary manner.
6. **Animal food and supplies:** All animal food, equipment and supplies should be kept separate from food service supplies and food preparation surfaces.
7. **Animal waste:** Waste must be disposed of in a sanitary manner by adults and must be kept away from food service supplies and completely inaccessible to children.
8. **Animal health:** All animals should be properly immunized according to state and local requirements. Animals that appear ill must be inaccessible to children.
9. **Animal bites:** First aid should be administered, as appropriate, and immediate medical treatment obtained if necessary. Parents must be notified of animal bites and advised to contact children's physicians. In Maryland, it is mandatory to report all animal bites to the sheriff, police, or animal control.
10. **Reptiles:** All reptiles must be kept inaccessible to children.
11. **Wild Animals:** Wild animals must be excluded from contact with children, this includes, but is not limited to, squirrels, rabbits, ducks, raccoons, turtles, and birds.
12. **Health and/or safety threat:** Any animal that is found to pose a health and/or safety threat to children in child care facilities shall be excluded from child care areas and contact with children.

I give permission for my child _____ to be near the animals in the Early Childhood Center, Inc., in accordance with this policy.

Parent's Signature

Date