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Practices & Procedures

Subject: Preschool Closure Policy and Procedure

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Summary

This document details the procedures and policies regarding Trout Lake (Vancouver) Community Centre Association Preschool closures. This document will include:

- guidelines for weather and public health closures;
- when refunds are applicable;
- staff wages during closures; and
- navigating staff shortages.

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Introduction

Trout Lake Vancouver Community Centre Association (TLVCCA) aims for the Trout Lake Community Centre Preschool to remain open — when safe to do so — to provide an important and reliable service to the community. The purpose of this policy is to manage expectations, and to establish a clear method for:

- Staff to communicate if conditions exist that impact their ability to attend work
- Staff to make decisions around full or partial closures, changes to operating hours or capacity
- How these decisions will be communicated with staff and families

Some potential factors for closure, partial closure, changes to operating hours or capacity are:

- Insufficient number of employees to safely operate the program
- No available appropriate substitutes to cover absent regular staff
- Severe weather forecast, current weather and road conditions that are dangerous or mean that staff are unable to get to/from the centre
- Power outages
- Government and Vancouver Coastal Health directives
- Disease outbreak

1.0 Policy Statements

1.1 Weather closures

If the Vancouver School Board announces closures due to inclement weather, our programs will also close. You can listen to local radio station CKNW AM 980 or access information on the Vancouver School Board website for closures. We will attempt to communicate any closures to families via telephone as soon as possible.

- 1.1.1 Preschool staff will be informed by email, phone or text message.
- 1.1.2 If an employee is unable to travel to work due to weather conditions (not severe) and the Preschool remains open, it is an employee's responsibility to inform their Supervisor before 6:30 a.m. in order to support the team to find a substitute.
- 1.1.3 If conditions exist that mean the Preschool needs to close early, parents will be notified directly by phone and asked to arrange to pick up their child as soon as possible.
- 1.1.4 Depending on the circumstances, it is possible that families and staff could arrive at the Preschool and then be informed of a closure without prior knowledge. The Preschool recognizes that, when all means of communication are down, staff may have no means to

communicate closures other than in person or via a physically posted notice.

1.2 Public health closures

A public health emergency (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) can change rapidly and our ability to remain open may change without notice; or we may be ordered closed at any time by BC's provincial health authorities, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and/or our licensing officer.

- 1.2.1 During public health emergencies/pandemics, the TLVCCA will close the Preschool for public health reasons only if instructed by a Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officer.
- 1.2.2 Outside of public health emergency periods, TLVCCA retains the right to close child care programs at any time, if deemed necessary, including due to emerging health issues such as a communicable disease outbreak within the Preschool.

1.3 Refunds

- 1.3.1 There will be no refund for closures of three days or less.
- 1.3.2 For closures of more than three days, refunds will be provided based on the participant's usual monthly fee and attendance, pro-rated per days closed.
- 1.3.3 For closures of more than 15 consecutive days in one month, TLVCCA will provide a credit of 50 percent of the participant's monthly fee toward future payments.
- 1.3.4 If the facility temporarily closes for longer than one month due to COVID-19, the families will not be charged fees for any following months of closure. The child's spot in the program will be held for reopening.
- 1.3.5 No additional compensation is provided if a parent/guardian must leave work due to the closure of the Preschool.
- 1.3.6 No compensation is provided if the Preschool remains open and the program is offered to families, regardless of whether parents send their child or not.

1.4 Staff wages

- 1.4.1 Staff will receive regular wages if the closure is three days or less, based on hours that they were scheduled to work, however should a situation exist that the Preschool is closed for more than three days, TLVCCA will address this issue directly with the team.
- 1.4.2 If the Preschool closes due to a public health emergency such as COVID-19, the staff will receive their regular scheduled wages for the first 15 days. TLVCCA will consider wages during closures longer than 15 days on a case-by-case basis.

1.5 Alternate operation strategy for staff shortage

As always, we will do everything that we can to maintain our usual operating hours and capacity, by covering staff absences with qualified substitute Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). However, this is not always achievable and it is possible that occasionally Trout Lake Preschool may face staff shortages due to illness, difficult weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances.

In the event that we are unable to maintain the appropriate child-to-staff ratios as required by child care regulations, we have put the following process in place:

- 1.5.1 Families will be placed into 3 groups per class (group info will be shared with you).
- 1.5.2 In the event of a staff shortage, 1 or 2 group/s per class will be contacted and asked to stay home for the day.
- 1.5.3 We aim for families to be notified by 6:30 a.m on the day at the very latest, via phone or email.
- 1.5.4 If staff shortages occur over multiple days, groups will be rotated to reduce the overall impact on each family.

We are hopeful that these procedures will not be necessary, but parents/guardians should be asked to take note of their family’s group number and familiarize themselves with these steps to ensure that in case of emergency, there is as little confusion as possible.

2.0 Related policies and procedures

- Trout Lake Community Centre Preschool COVID-19 Policy and Procedures for Parents
- Trout Lake Community Centre Preschool COVID-19 Teacher's Guide/Procedure Manual

3.0 Revision schedule

Association policies and procedures shall be reviewed at minimum every four years or as required by an Association resolution. Document owners will be responsible for managing the document revision cycle. All document revisions will be presented to the Association for approval by motion and amendments will be stored in sequence in the following table.

Table 1: Association policy amendment history

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	February 28, 2022	New policy
2.0	July 22, 2022	Policy & Planning Committee review
2.0	July 27, 2022	Board approval