

PETS IN THE CLASSROOM

PURPOSE:

To explore the world of animals through observation, care, and feeding of classroom pets while adequately maintaining the safety and health of all children, parents, volunteers, and staff.

PROCEDURES:

1. **Animals not allowed in the centers at any time will be:** reptiles (e.g., lizards, turtles, snakes, iguanas), frogs, monkeys, hook-beaked birds, baby chicks, ferrets and potentially aggressive animals. Educational programs which include prohibited animals and are run by zoos, museums, and other professional animal handlers are permitted. (CCD Rules for The Certification of Child Care Centers, regulation 414-300-0240)
2. **Animals allowed in preschool classrooms** shall be limited to fish, water frogs, hermit crabs, butterflies, insects, hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, rats, mice, and rabbits.
3. **Animals allowed in infant or toddler classrooms** will be limited to fish (according to CCD Rule 414-300-0240 (4))
4. All staff must be aware of children's allergies and fears. If a child has an allergy to an animal that animal will not be allowed in the classroom setting. If a child has a fear, appropriate measures will be taken to help the child deal with the fear. Parent(s) shall be informed in writing of any animal in the center.
5. Other animals, not excluded, may visit the classroom for the duration of, but not more than, one day and will be properly caged and/or maintained in a safe, healthy, and sanitary manner.
6. Any animal on the premises shall be in good health, show no evidence of carrying any disease, have been vaccinated according to a licensed veterinarian's recommendations, and be a friendly companion for the children.
7. Animals shall be kept out of rooms used for storage of food, food-related equipment and supplies, or for food preparation.
8. Animals shall be kept in an approved cage for the type of animal. Cages shall have removable bottoms and shall be kept clean and sanitary.
9. Centers will have and follow written procedures for the care and maintenance of the animals in the center.
10. There shall be assigned staff who are responsible for the handling, care, and feeding of the animal(s).
 - a. The cleaning of cages shall not be done in areas used for food preparation, storage, or serving.
 - b. Staff must immediately and thoroughly wash their hands after handling animals or cleaning cages.
 - c. The cleaning of cages shall be scheduled when children are not present.
 - d. Animal food supplies shall be kept out of the reach of children and stored separately from food supplies and equipment. Animal food shall be stored in a manner that does not attract rodents or insects.
 - e. Chemicals related to the care of animals shall be kept under lock.
11. Staff will always be present when children are handling animals.
12. If children are allowed to handle animals they shall immediately and thoroughly wash their hands after handling.
13. No animals will be transported on the bus.