

# Corporation of the City of Clarence-Rockland

## Clients account policy – Daycare Services

GAR15-01

(Effective April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022)

Adopted by (Resolution and number/By-law number)

### 1.0 Policy Statement

The City of Clarence-Rockland offers a licensed daycare service in targeted schools in the municipality.

The Daycare Services sees to maintaining and developing financial strategies to ensure the financial self-sufficiency of the Service.

### 2.0. Purpose/Objective

The purpose of this policy is to standardize the Daycare Services Clients account regulations and policies.

### 3.0 Definitions

Day of operation:

The service is in operation from Monday to Friday throughout the year except for the stat days.

Stat days:

- January 1st
- Family day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Queen Victoria Day
- 1st of July
- Civic Holiday (August)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- December 25 to 31

\* If one of these days falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the first opening day of the following week will be designated as the day off during which the service is not offered.

Operational hours: 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

School Day: all days included into the school year calendar as per the school board of each school.

Full day: any day that is not a school day.

Totality of the service: any operational day during the year.

Financial Services include: service agreement, invoices, adjustments, withdrawal, absences and custody agreements.

## 4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all accounts receivable for the municipal licensed Daycare Services.

The Daycare Services is responsible of providing all the necessary information to the Finance department so that it can prepare the billing.

The Finance department will be responsible for the collection of receivable accounts.

## 5.0 Policy Procedure/Guidelines

### Registration

1<sup>st</sup> step of registration:

When the parent accepts an admission offer, the Service will send a link by email to new customers, so that they subscribe to the Digibot electronic platform.

The customer must complete the registration file on the platform and always keep his information up to date.

2<sup>nd</sup> step of registration:

The Accounts Receivable Clerk will provide the deposit information to Customer Service when registration is completed on the portal.

3<sup>rd</sup> step of registration:

The client must go to the Client Service at City Hall within the next 3 opening days of registration, to pay the security deposit, as well as the account opening fee.

\*Payment of the deposit will confirm that the child's place is guaranteed.

See the "Schedule User fee By-Law" for details of the fees required to open an account.

Once the deposit has been received and the Digibot portal has been completed, the Account Receivable/Finance clerk will confirm to the administrative team and the crew leader of the concerned daycare that the registration procedure is complete.

The client must contact the Accounts Receivable/Finance Clerk for all financial matters.

### Digibot Portal

On the Digibot portal, the parent will be able to:

- View their billing
- Reserve their childcare service
- Obtain their receipt for tax purposes in February
- renew their service agreement in the spring of each year

\*It will be a priority to respect the deadline requested by the Finance Department.

The parent whose child attends the school age group must complete two agreements annually:

1. For the period of the school year:

The parent will check off the services they are booking for the school year, including the Christmas and the March break.

2. For the summer break:

The summer break agreement will be launched on the client's portal in March. The parent must complete this agreement to ensure that their child can participate in the summer program.

When the customer checks off a service, he is responsible to pay the entire service. For example, when a customer checks off the summer break, this will include all weeks/days that are not school days during summer. The same procedure will apply for Christmas and March break.

#### PD days

PD days will be à la carte. The customers must log in their Digibot portal to book the PD days planned by the School Boards. These dates are different each year and will be identified on the portal as soon as the school calendars are available.

Once the services are reserved on the Digibot portal, the customer will be bound by this agreement, notwithstanding the service that will be used during the term of the agreement.

#### Unexpected closure of the Service

\*There will be no reimbursement of costs when an unexpected situation occurs, resulting in the closure of the service, which is beyond the control of the City; this includes but is not limited to: bad weather, outbreaks, etc.

Only the Municipal Council can authorize the cancellation of daycare fees when an unexpected situation occurs that is beyond the City's control.

#### Toddler and preschooler's group

Children in the toddler and preschool group are required to book all services from Monday to Friday.

#### Precisions

- When the ratio allows it, the toddler or preschooler who will start attending the daycare will be granted 3 free sessions, each of 3 hours, to familiarize themselves with his new environment. This clause will only apply to new customers.
- When a child is transferred from a preschool group to a school age group, the parent must fill out a new Agreement to reserve the services according to his needs.
- The staggered entry will be offered to kindergarten children, according to the available space, established by the school administration. A request to add the service must be completed by the client and will be charged according to the full-day rates.
- If the number of registrations decreases during the year and the Service is no longer financially self-sufficient, we may have to close a group. The Service will notify the customers affected by such decision ahead of time.
- Despite the administration rigor in applying the Clients Accounts policy, the manager of the Daycare Services gives herself the right to evaluate a request from a customer following an exceptional event.

### Parents with shared custody

- Parents with shared custody must register their child from Monday to Friday, for all the weeks covered by the service agreement. It will not be possible to reserve a part-time place.
- Parents having a shared custody must submit the Court Agreement issued by a provincial judge, or a separation agreement signed by both parties at the time of registration, to the daycare and the Finance Department.
- The Finance Department will charge parent's the daycare fees according to the Court or separation agreement.
- In the eventuality that one of the two parents do not pay his daycare account, Section Late payment will apply for the parent whose account remains overdue. When the Finance Department closes an account that remains unpaid, it will be possible for the other parent to keep their child's place if they agree to pay for all the days covered by the service agreement.

### Request to add a service

It is possible for customers to add a service when an option was not reserved in the agreement.

- The client must make a request to add a service by contacting the daycare Crew Leader 14 days in advance, to allow us to confirm we have availability in the child's group. Once confirmed, it will no longer be possible to cancel this service addition or exchange it for another day. The addition of service will be billed to the customer's account.
- Customers who do not book the summer but wishes to request additional service for specific weeks for the months of July and August will have to wait until the group compilation has been completed to receive confirmation of their request to add the service.
- The daycare will refuse to accept a child when the parent has not received confirmation from the crew leader that a place is available, following a request to add a service.

### Security deposit

- A security deposit equivalent to two weeks of daycare fees is required for all new daycare clients. The deposit will be non-refundable if the client decides to cancel the daycare service after having completed the registration and paying the security deposit.
- The customer must pay the account opening fee at the same time as the security deposit to the Customer Service of the City Hall. This fee is non-refundable.
- There will be no partial refund of the deposit when the child changes age group (example: the preschool child is transferred to the school age group).
- The security deposit will be applied to the client's account when he gives a four (4) week written notice of withdrawal.
- If the account is up to date, the amount remaining in the account, including the security deposit will be refunded to the client by cheque OR will be automatically transferred to the account of a sibling who attends the Daycare Services.
- When the parent withdraws their child from the daycare for a specific and/or indefinite period, the deposit will be refunded to the client and the account will be closed. The client must put his child's name back on the waiting list.

## Billing

Each Crew Leader will be responsible for the integrity and accuracy of the basic information given to the Finance Department.

## General Procedures

The Daycare Services must keep the original attendances, as well as the supporting documents for billing purposes, in the municipality archives for a period of three (3) years.

The Daycare Services paying clients and partially subsidized clients will be charged at the beginning of each month and the payment will be due on the last working day of each month.

- Clients will have to go to their Digibot parent's portal to check their invoice.
- All state holidays will be charged to customers, notwithstanding the service used by the customer.
- Customers who have shared custody will be invoiced on alternate holidays.
- The Finance Department is responsible for adjusting the client's account.

## Days of absence

The customer is responsible for paying all the days stipulated in the contracts. The customer will not receive any credit for the days when his child is absent.

## Verification of child attendance

The client who will request verification of his child's attendance at the daycare must follow the Access to Information procedures of the City of Clarence-Rockland. The applicant must send his request to the clerk and pay the costs established by the City of Clarence-Rockland when requesting the access to information search.

## Late payment

The Finance Department is responsible for issuing late payment reminders by mail/email. However, should an account be subject to further pressure, the Treasurer of the Finance Department might require the assistance of the director of the affected department.

## General Procedures

Unless otherwise stipulated, a monthly interest rate of 1.25% will be applied to all accounts in arrears; also:

- A statement will be sent by the Finance Department for all unpaid accounts on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) day after the due date. A 10\$ fee will be applied to the account.
- A phone call or an email will be made by the Finance Department on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month when the account remains unpaid. A 21\$ fee will be applied to the account.
- When the payment is still not received, a letter notifying the customer that he is no longer eligible for childcare will be delivered to the client. The security deposit will be applied to the account. A 31\$ fee will be applied to the account.
- On default of payment, or of a reasonable agreement of payment, the municipal Treasurer may either retain the services of a bailiff or of a collection agency to recuperate the monies in arrears.
- A fee will be applied to the customer's account if a cheque is returned to us for insufficient funds. This fee is set by the Finance Department.

### Clients' late arrival at the daycare

This policy is applicable to paying and subsidized parents.

It is understood that the City Daycare Services operating hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- a. All parents arriving at the daycare later than 5:30 p.m. will be charged according to the late fees in effect.
- b. The late parent and the educator will both sign the late departure form indicating the departure time. This policy is applicable to full fee-paying parents and subsidized parents.
- c. The following late fees will be added to the late parent's monthly billing:
  - \$10.00 for the first five minutes late
  - \$1.00 each additional minute of delay
- d. After the third late arrival, the parents will receive a reminder of the Daycare Services late arrival policy.

After being reminded of the late arrival policy and when the parent cannot observe the daycare opening hours, the manager reserves the right to terminate a client's contract.

### Withdrawal from the daycare services

- It is understood that the client can terminate their daycare service by submitting four (4) weeks written/email notice of withdrawal.
- The notice will be submitted to the Accounts Receivable Clerk/ Finance. The client will be invoiced according to the service agreement established during the four (4) weeks following the withdrawal notice.
- The client terminating their daycare services must put the name of their child on the central waiting list if they require a daycare service later.

### Subsidized clients

When the client is approved for a childcare subsidy by the United Counties, the following clauses apply:

- Service agreement
- Billing
- Late payment
- Clients late arrival at the daycare
- Subsidize clients that are eligible to a partial subsidy from the United Counties of Prescott Russell must pay a security deposit as establish in the User Fee By-law. The fee for setting up an account will be paid by the United Counties of Prescott Russell.
- It is understood that the amount charged to the partially subsidized clients is established by the United Counties Social Services of Prescott Russell.
- If the subsidized client wants to make changes or add a service to his agreement, the client is responsible to have his request approved by the United Counties of Prescott Russell Social Services. The client will be responsible to pay the fees if the request is not approved by the United Counties of Prescott Russell Social Services.
- When subsidized clients exceed the absence days allocated by the Social Services of Prescott Russell, the Finance Service of Clarence-Rockland will send an invoice to the client at the full daily rate for each excess day.
- Easter Monday and the Civic holiday (1st Monday in August) will be charged at full rate, since these days are not part of public holidays paid by the United Counties.

- When the child is absent for medical reasons for 3 consecutive days, the parent must contact the United Counties subsidy agent directly.
- The customer who is no longer eligible for a subsidy must complete a new agreement to reserve the services according to his needs and will have to pay the difference between the subsidize and the paying customers deposit fee.
- The subsidized client can terminate their daycare services by submitting two (2) weeks written notice of withdrawal. The notice will be submitted to the Accounts Receivable Clerk/Finance. The client will be invoiced according to the service agreement established during the two (2) weeks following the withdrawal notice.
- It is the customer's responsibility to contact the subsidy agent of the United Counties of Prescott Russell to inform them of the withdrawal of their child from the daycare service.
- When the Daycare Services withdraw a child, the subsidy ends on the same day, unless the parents receive a 2-week notice.

## 6.0 Responsibility

The Community Development Director will establish the policy procedures.

### Review and Amendments

The Director of Community Development shall be authorized to approve minor updates to this policy from time to time and inform the City Clerk accordingly. Minor changes, in this context, means any changes that would not affect the budget.