

Bringing Children to the Workplace Policy



One way employers can support the parental needs of employees with young children is to allow them to bring their kids to work. Such a policy has become increasingly common as a temporary measure in response to COVID-19 school and daycare closures. If you opt for this approach, you need a policy to ensure that bringing children to work doesn't cause distractions, interference with operations or health and safety hazards. Here's a Model Policy you can adapt that addresses these challenges.

1. PURPOSE

ABC Company is committed to supporting employees faced with the difficult task of balancing their work and family responsibilities. ABC Company also recognizes the difficulties that employees have been experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic due to closures of school and daycare facilities. As a result, ABC Company has decided, on a temporary basis, to allow employees to bring their children to work. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that having employees' children at the workplace does not compromise anybody's safety, health, professionalism or productivity.

2. POLICY

Starting on [date] and until further notice, employees may bring minor children to work at [location(s)], provided that they follow all of the requirements and conditions set out in this Policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy:

'COVID-19 symptoms' include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea;

'Recent exposure' means close contact of at least 15 minutes in duration without a mask or PPE with a person confirmed as having COVID-19.

4. BAN ON BRINGING SICK, SYMPTOMATIC OR RECENTLY EXPOSED CHILDREN

Employees may not bring children to work with them if those children have COVID-19 symptoms or any other illnesses or if their children have had recent exposure or traveled outside the province in the past 14 days.

5. PERMISSION REQUIRED

Employees must understand that bringing children to work is a privilege for which they must receive advance permission and that it may not be possible to grant such permission in all situations. Accordingly, before bringing children to work, employees must notify their supervisors in advance of the names and ages of all the children they propose to bring to work. Supervisors must then approve the request after determining whether having the children in the workplace may reasonably pose an undue health or safety hazard or substantial interference with work operations. Where permission is denied, employees will be responsible for making alternative childcare arrangements so that they can come to work without bringing their children.

6. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Duty to Supervise

[If applicable] ABC Company will not provide on-site daycare or babysitting services. Instead, employees will be responsible for supervising their children at all times while they are at the workplace. Children must exclusively stay in the employee's office or workspace at all times, unless the employee escorts the child to the bathroom. Employees who bring their children to work may not leave the premises for any reason unless they take their children with them.

6.2 Responsibility for Children's Safety

Employees must recognize that in bringing their children to work, employees are agreeing to accept full responsibility for their children's health and safety. Employees must also ensure that their children know, understand and obey all applicable ABC Company workplace health and safety rules, including but not limited to with regard to social distancing, handwashing, cleanliness and hygiene.

6.3 No Children in Company Vehicles

Employees may not take their children in an ABC Company vehicle or have their children with them while operating any vehicle while performing their job duties.

6.4 Responsibility for Children's Behaviour

Employees must ensure that their children are not disruptive and do not interfere with normal work office operations.

7. EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS

Employees who feel that the children of a co-worker are creating distractions and/or health or safety hazards may not complain directly to the co-worker/parent of the child creating the problem. Instead, they may take their complaints to their supervisor or HR Department. Such complaints will be kept

anonymous to the extent possible. ABC Company will have final discretion to decide what to do to resolve the complaint.

8. FAILURE TO COMPLY

ABC Company reserves the right to revoke an employee's privileges under this Policy if it believes that the employee has violated this Policy, an employee's performance has declined or that the employee's child has created a distraction or health and safety hazard. Failure to comply with this Policy may also result in discipline in accordance with the ABC Company progressive discipline policy.

9. POLICY SUBJECT TO REVOCATION & CHANGE

Employees must understand that this Policy is temporary, and that ABC Company reserves the right to modify and revoke it at any time, as dictated by experience and developments with the public health situation. In the event that ABC Company revokes this Policy, it will attempt to provide reasonable advance notice so that employees have enough time to make alternative childcare arrangements.

APPENDIX: CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY PARENT AGREEMENT, CONSENT AND WAIVER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AGREEMENT: By signing this, I certify that I have read the Children in the Workplace Policy. I understand and agree to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Policy. I further understand and agree that, in the event I fail to comply with such terms and conditions or otherwise fail to meet any criteria currently in or that may be added to the Policy and conveyed to me in writing, my eligibility may be terminated, requiring me to remove my children from the workplace within a reasonable period of time, and that Policy violations may also result in disciplinary action.

I acknowledge that ABC Company reserves the right to cancel or revoke this Policy in part or in its entirety at any time, thus requiring me to remove my children from the workplace within a reasonable period of time. In this event, I understand that ABC Company will attempt to provide a reasonable period of time for me to make alternate childcare arrangements.

Signature of Parent/Employee _____ Date _____

CONSENT AND WAIVER

In consideration of ABC Company's agreement to permit me to bring my children to work with me in compliance with the Children in the Workplace Policy, I hereby release and hold harmless, on my own behalf and on behalf of my children (i) ABC Company; (ii) any entity affiliated with ABC Company; and (iii) any of the current or former owners, officers, directors, agents, representatives, insurers, lawyers, successors, assigns, and current employees, if any, of ABC Company, and the foregoing entities from any and all claims, liabilities, causes of action and demands of any kind or character, including negligence, whether vicarious, derivative or direct, that I, my children, or any of my children's family members, heirs, or assigns now have or may hereafter have or assert against ABC Company, growing out of, resulting from, or connected with this policy and/or with me bringing my children to work or their presence at work with me. This waiver does not preclude legal remedies for injury that cannot be

waived as a matter of law.