

# New Employee Onboarding and Timeline

*Learn what to consider when onboarding a new employee.*

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A well-designed and implemented onboarding process can benefit your business by ensuring your new staff member has the information and support needed to meet your program goals. Here is a list of topics to consider when designing your onboarding process:

- **Warm Welcome** – Onboarding is an opportunity to help your new employee feel included and part of your organization. Think of ways you might warmly welcome them into your program. You might consider a meet-and-greet, a welcome letter or email blast to staff and families, or perhaps a small welcome gift. You want to convey the message that you are glad your new employee has joined your program.
- **Vision, Values, and Philosophy** – Chances are you shared these ideas during your interview with your new employee, but now, in your onboarding is an opportunity for your new employee to really understand how your vision, values, and philosophy are lived in your program. Be prepared to share about your mission, the hopes and wishes you have for your program, and how you see your new employee working to make those things happen.
- **Formal Processes** – Perhaps certain forms should be completed a certain way, or you have a particular curriculum that you follow, food paperwork program procedures, where to record their time, and family communication methods. While these are just a few things to consider, you will want to make sure to train your new hire on how formal processes are done at your program, and don't assume that if they had been working somewhere else, they will know how you do things.
- **Operations** – Every employee comes to work wanting to do a good job. Helping an employee understand how things operate in your program will help your new employee be successful. Things to share with a new hire are the best way to communicate with you and other staff members, your dress code, the rules of the break room, where to park, etc. This is a great place to help new employee understand their role in your program.
- **Policies and Procedures** – Reviewing the policies and procedures in your employee handbook will help your employee better understand not only what your policies and procedures are but why they are in your handbook. This is a great time to review attendance policy, clock-in and clock-out procedures, how to communicate and interact with families, policies around working with children, etc. Be sure to

allow space for your new employee to ask questions. Remember the goal is to have an employee understand how things are done at your program and feel confident that they can do those things that you expect.

- **Emergency Procedures** – Your new employee may come with experience in handling emergencies, or this may be their first job. Think through how you want to support and equip them with the knowledge and confidence that they use in an emergency.
- **Expectations** – The way your employees interact with the children, families, and each other daily greatly impacts your business. Take the time to outline your expectations so that your employees understand the tasks and behaviors that are expected of them. This is a great place to help a new employee feel supported by you and the other people in your program.

Depending on the specific needs and characteristics of your business, there may be other items to include in your onboard process as well. Spend some time thinking about what it is that new employees need to know in order to be successful working at your program.

An effective onboarding process should involve other people. As the program leader, the responsibility doesn't have to fall solely on your shoulders. Utilize the skills and strengths of your current employees to help bring a new person into your program. Some programs choose to have a mentor or buddy program where a new employee is paired with a more experience employee who can serve as a resource. When employees feel connected to their co-workers, they are more likely to stay engaged and stay working at your program.

Recognizing that learning new things can take some time, a successful onboarding process occurs over several months. When designing your onboarding process, break up the things that a new employee needs to know and portion out those things over a logical time period. One way to do this is to outline what a new employee in your program needs to know on Day 1, Week 1, Month 1, and Month 3, similar to the below example.

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Week 1</b>
<b>Month 1</b>	<b>Month 3</b>

Lastly, plan to carve out time to connect with your new employee regularly, especially at the beginning of their time with you. The goal is that they are both well acquainted with the policies and procedures of your program and also that you help them continue to learn and grow in your program. You know the power of connection with young children and their families, the same is true for your employees. A little extra time and attention can go a long way in building the viability of your business.

## Additional Assistance

If you have any questions, you can [access free, one-on-one business coaching](#) by visiting [childcare.texas.gov](http://childcare.texas.gov). Other resources, guides, and tools are available there on topics that support your business.

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