

**ORDINANCE NO. 1499-24**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, ADOPTING THE 2024 STANDARDS OF CARE FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS PROVIDED AT THE LINK EVENT AND RECREATION CENTER; PROVIDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE CUMULATIVE OF ALL ORDINANCES; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION IN THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richland Hills, Texas, is a home rule city acting under its charter adopted by the electorate pursuant to Article XI, Section 5 of the Texas Constitution and Chapter 9 of the Local Government Code; and

**WHEREAS**, The Link Event and Recreation Center will be offering youth programs in the form of day camps and after-school programs for children ages 5 years old to 12 years old; and

**WHEREAS**, state law requires that the City conduct a public hearing and adopt Standards of Care for the operation of the youth programs; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 13, 2024, the City properly posted and conducted a public hearing to receive public input on the adoption of the 2024 Standards of Care; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council deems it appropriate to adopt Standards of Care which are in full compliance with the requirements of Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, THAT:**

**SECTION 1.**

The Standards of Care attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and incorporated herein for all purposes are hereby adopted as the Standards of Care for The Link as well as all after-school programs operated by The Link during the Birdville Independent School District (BISD), International Leadership of Texas (ILT), and IDEA Public School (IDEA) calendars. Parents of each program participant shall be provided with a copy of the Standards of Care and be informed that the program is not licensed by the state. The City may not advertise The Link as a childcare facility.

**SECTION 2.  
ORDINANCE CUMULATIVE**

This Ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances and of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Hills, Texas, as amended, except where the provisions of this Ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions of such ordinances and such Code are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 3.  
RESERVATION OF RIGHTS AND REMEDIES FOR ACCRUED VIOLATIONS**

That all rights and remedies of the City of Richland Hills are expressly saved as to any and all violations of the provisions of the Code of Ordinances which have accrued at the time of the effective date of this Ordinance; and, as to such accrued violations and all pending litigation, both civil and criminal, whether pending in court or not, under such Ordinances, same shall not be affected by this Ordinance but may be prosecuted until final disposition by the courts.

**SECTION 4.  
PROVISIONS SEVERABLE**

It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of this Ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this Ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this Ordinance of any such unconstitutional phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section.

**SECTION 5.  
PUBLICATION CLAUSE**

The City Secretary of the City of Richland Hills is hereby directed to publish this Ordinance to the extent required by law.

**SECTION 6.  
EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law, and it is so ordained.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** at a regular meeting of the Richland Hills City Council on May 13, 2024, by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ ayes, \_\_\_\_\_ nays, and \_\_\_\_\_ abstentions.

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
THE HONORABLE MAYOR EDWARD LOPEZ

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
LINDSAY RAWLINSON, CITY SECRETARY

## EXHIBIT A

# Standards of Care

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City of Richland Hills – The Link – Event and Recreation Center

### I. General Information / Administration

Purpose: To provide basic childcare regulations for activities operated by The Link – Event and Recreation Center in Richland Hills (The Link). This will allow The Link to qualify as exempt from requirements of the Texas Human Resources Code.

#### A. Organization:

- 1) The governing body of The Link is the Richland Hills' City Council.
- 2) Implementation of the Standards of Care (SOC) is the responsibility of the The Link Manager and staff.
- 3) The SOC will apply to several day camp programs which are conducted throughout the year by The Link. The SOC will also apply to the After-School programs that The Link will operate during the Birdville Independent School District (BISD), International Leadership of Texas (ILT), and IDEA Public School (IDEA) calendars.
- 4) The SOC will apply at all locations where The Link hosts a childcare program, including city facilities, fulltime off-site facilities, and while on field trips.
- 5) The Link will have available, for public and staff, a current copy of the SOC upon request.

#### B. Implementation:

The Link Manager, Recreation & Childcare Coordinator, and Summer Camp Director will be responsible for implementing the SOC for all childcare programs run by The Link.

#### C. Day Camp Objectives:

- 1) To provide children and youth with opportunity to experience a variety of recreational activities which include sports, games, arts and crafts, education, drama, special events, field trips, tournaments, etc.
- 2) To provide an encouraging atmosphere emphasizing positive development of physical skills, emotional growth, and self-confidence.
- 3) To provide a safe environment; always promoting good health and welfare for all.
- 4) To teach children and youth how to spend their leisure time wisely; in an effort to meet the emotional, physical, and social needs of the child.

#### D. Exemption Status:

Once an exempt status is established, the Licensing Division will not monitor the recreational program. The Licensing Division will be responsible for investigating complaints of unlicensed childcare and for referring other complaints to the municipal authorities or, in the case of abuse/neglect allegation, to the local police authorities.

#### E. Standards of Care Review:

Standards will be reviewed annually and brought before the City Council for approval after a public hearing is held to pass an ordinance regarding section 42.041 (b) (14) of the Texas Human Resources Code. Childcare Licensing will not regulate these programs nor be involved in any complaint investigation related to the program.

Any parent, visitor or staff may register a complaint by contacting The Link Manager at (817) 616-3738 or at The Link during program hours.

## II. Staffing

A. Recreation Manager – The Recreation Manager directs the children’s program staff and assists with the planning and execution the activities of participants in the childcare programs.

### 1) Essential Job Functions:

- a) Direct and supervise all Coordinators, Directors and Counselors including hiring and mandatory training.
- b) Develop and train staff with an age-appropriate camp curriculum (elementary ages) in accordance with the philosophy of the program.
- c) Ensure staff is committed to following established guidelines, procedures and standards.
- d) Oversees facility reservations and transportation needs for all camp activities.
- e) Oversees scheduling, confirming, and distributing payments for all field trips.
- f) Maintain supplies, equipment, and all necessary documentation for the operation of the camp.
- g) Conduct on-going program evaluations implementing approved recommendations as needed.
- h) Complete and provide reports to the Parks and Recreation director on a weekly basis to monitor camp activities throughout the program. Reports include: camp schedules, payroll, incident reports, and attendance.

### 2) Qualifications:

- a) Bachelor’s Degree in Education, Recreation or a similar area of study is preferred but not required.
- b) A minimum of three years’ experience in Recreation or Education industries.
- c) Requires a valid Texas DL with a good driving record over the last three years.
- d) Must pass city criminal background check prior to working with children. Must pass pre-employment drug screen and/or physical.
- e) Must complete First Aid, CPR and AED training prior to camp.

### 3) Requirements of Work:

- a) Manager must complete all mandatory staff training prior to the start of camp if possible or within 6 months of hire. This training is to include, but not limited to departmental policies, The Link policy, customer service,

sexual harassment, behavioral and discipline, preventative sexual abuse and molestation, and practical skills for games, songs, and crafts.

- b) Ability to be physically active and involved with children all day.
  - c) Ability to lift 55 pounds.
  - d) Knowledge of child development and age-appropriate activities.
  - e) Advanced organizational and communication skills.
  - f) Varied experience in a variety of activities including sports, arts, nature, drama, and cooperative activities.
- B. Recreation & Childcare Coordinator and Summer Camp Director – responsible for the day-to-day operation of after school and day camp programs.
- 1) Essential Job Functions:
- a) Directs and supervises the day camp program for children ages 5-12.
  - b) Develop a weekly schedule of activities.
  - c) Leads and instructs all camp counselors.
  - d) Plans, coordinates, and supervises programs, and activities of the day camp.
  - e) Assists in facility reservations and transportation needs for all camp activities.
  - f) Assist in scheduling, confirming, and distributing payments for all field trips.
  - g) Works closely with the Recreation Manager to determine work procedures, help prepare work schedules, follow-up on accident/incident reports, and assist with discipline (staff or campers) and any other necessary assistance.
  - h) Maintain an orderly, clean, and safe environment for the children while promoting a non-competitive program directed toward accentuating positive behaviors, physical development and emotional growth.
  - i) Serves as a resource person for camp counselors. Leads the camp counselors in facilitating appropriate behavior among campers and handling inappropriate behavior promptly. Provides direct supervision to campers at all times.
  - j) Maintains positive interpersonal relations among everyone involved in the summer camp program; including children, parents, Link staff, camp staff, Recreation Manager, and Parks & Recreation Director.
  - k) Acts as a role model for children ages 5-12, displays appropriate behavior, and creates a safe, inclusive environment for all campers and staff.
  - l) Monitors the use of recreation equipment and ensures it is used in a capacity that is used in accordance with its intended use.
  - m) Ensures all equipment is returned to its original location and put back in an organized fashion when done using. Follows and enforces staff rules, policies, and procedures outlined in the Summer Camp staff handbook.
  - n) Maintains positive public relations with parents and the general public at all times. Including updating parents about their children's concerns, growth, and corrections.
  - o) Performs administrative duties such as maintaining records, incident reports, etc.
  - p) Performs all other various duties assigned by Recreation Manager

- 2) Qualifications:
  - a) Bachelor's Degree in Education, Recreation or a similar area of study is preferred but not required.
  - b) A minimum of three years' experience in Recreation or Education industries.
  - c) Requires a valid Texas DL with a good driving record over the last three years.
  - d) Must pass city criminal background check prior to working with children.
  - e) Must pass pre-employment drug screen and/or physical.
  - f) Must complete First Aid, CPR and AED training prior to camp.

- 3) Requirements of Work:
  - a) Coordinator and Summer Camp Director must complete all mandatory staff training prior to the start of camp if possible or within 6 months of hire. This training is to include, but not limited to departmental policies, Link policies, customer service, sexual harassment, behavioral and discipline, preventative sexual abuse and molestation, and practical skills for games, songs, and crafts.
  - b) Ability to be physically active and involved with children all day.
  - c) Ability to lift 55 pounds.
  - d) Knowledge of child development and age-appropriate activities.
  - e) Advanced organizational and communication skills.
  - f) Varied experience in a variety of activities including sports, arts, nature, drama, and cooperative activities.

C. Camp Leader and Attendant – The Camp Leaders and Attendants are responsible for direct leadership of youth 3-12 in a variety of activities including, but not limited to games, sports, crafts, special events and field trips. The Leaders and Attendants assist in planning and organizing camp schedules, activities, supplies, equipment, and is also responsible for cleanliness of the areas used by camp participants. The Leaders and Attendants are also responsible for completing necessary forms relating to attendance, check-in/check-out procedures, accidents, and incidents.

- 1) Essential Job Functions:
  - a) Promote a non-competitive, positive, self-image enhancing environment for each participant through the direction of well-designed activities.
  - b) Directly lead activities using a method that will provide opportunity for the involvement of all children on an equal level.
  - c) Exhibit enthusiasm for the activity to impart a feeling of excitement to all camp participants.
  - d) Follow procedures for camper check-in/check-out. Reporting accidents, incidents, behavioral modifications, and camp schedules.
  - e) Follow guidelines for safety and storage of equipment, including inventory of supplies.
  - f) Ensure safety of all children and staff during transportation while on field trips.

- g) Provide and adhere to established guidelines set forth for the safety, behavior, communication, and discipline of the camp participants.
  - h) Recognize and reward positive, improved, and outstanding behavior and/or accomplishments of participants.
- 2) Minimum Qualifications:
- a) High School diploma and some college preferred.
  - b) One year of formal experience working with children preferred.
  - c) Requires a valid Texas DL with a good driving record over the last three years.
  - d) Must pass city criminal background check prior to working with children.
  - e) Must pass pre-employment drug screen and/or physical.
  - f) Must complete First Aid, CPR and AED training prior to camp.
- 3) Other Requirements:
- a) Leaders and Attendants must complete all mandatory staff training prior to the start of camp if possible or within a month of hire depending on the availability of each training topic. This training is to include, but not limited to departmental policies, The Link policy, customer service, sexual harassment, behavioral and discipline, preventative sexual abuse and molestation, and practical skills for games, songs, and crafts.
  - b) Staff must exhibit competency, good judgment, and self-control throughout the duration of the camp.
  - c) Staff should relate to the children with courtesy, respect, acceptance, and patience.
  - d) Staff will be evaluated at least once per year by the Link Director and Manager. Evaluations will be reviewed to discuss any areas of improvement or suggestions.
  - e) Staffing Ratios: The state required ratio for number of children (5-13) may not exceed 22:1 children to staff. The Link staff ratio will work to have a ratio no greater than 15:1. For field trips and off-site swimming, the ratio will be closer to 10:1.

### **III. Facility Standards**

- A. Emergency evacuation and relocation plans will be posted at The Link. Program employees will inspect sites frequently for any sanitation or safety concerns. Those concerns will be passed on the Recreation & Childcare Coordinator or The Link Manager.
- B. Each camp must have a fully stocked first aid kit. This shall be checked and stocked on a weekly basis by the Recreation Coordinator or "Lead" Attendant. It shall include bandages and/or Band-Aids, rubber gloves, alcohol wipes, hot/cold packs, gauze, tweezers and scissors.



- C. In a situation where evacuation is necessary, the first priority of staff is to make sure all participants are in a safe location. Program sites will be inspected by the Fire Marshal annually. The Link Manager is responsible for compliance with the Fire Marshal's directives. The recommended number of fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually available and "primed" for use. Fire drills should be conducted once a month during the summer camp.
- D. Medication will only be administered with a parent consent form completed in addition to the program registration form. Prescription medications shall be left in the administration's locked cabinet, in their original container, labeled with the child's name, date, directions and the child's physician's name. Two staff members will be present while medication is given. Medication can only be dispensed only as stated on the bottle unless stated in written form.
- E. All medications will be recorded on the parent consent form.
- F. The Link will have adequate indoor toilets and lavatories located such that children can use them independently and program staff can supervise as needed. There shall be one flush toilet per 30 participants. Sinks will also be at 1 sink to 30 children. It is expected that all camp and afterschool participants will be potty trained. Our staff will not be able to help change children that have had an accident.
- G. All participants must wear tennis shoes daily. Sandals, slip-ons, slippers, or flip-flops will not be allowed, except with appropriate field trips, like swimming.

#### **IV. Service Standards – Camp Staff**

- A. This information will be provided to each staff member as a part of the program manual:
  - 1. Appropriate clothing will be worn at all times. City or program shirt will be with appropriate shorts, pants, jeans, or leggings. The only exemption will be bathing suits. Any clothing worn should not have any inappropriate logos, pictures, or messages.
  - 2. Staff will be provided at least two city or program shirts to wear as a uniform top. If a staff member needs to go home to change, it will be without pay.
  - 3. Females will wear one-piece suits while working with the camp or other city programs. If wearing a two-piece suit, the employee, must wear a full length t-shirt and appropriate shorts. Males will wear board shorts that are not form fitting.
  - 4. Name tags/IDs will be worn on the uniform shirt at all times.
  - 5. Participants and parents will be treated with respect at all times.
  - 6. Program staff will take it upon themselves to resolve complaints. Do not refer customer to another staff member outside of camp staff. Elevate to "Lead" attendant, Coordinator or Director if necessary. Beyond that, take a name and phone number for fulltime staff to contact later.

7. Camp staff will keep parents informed of daily activities. General weekly schedule will be available to parents the week before. Daily schedules will be visible each day.
8. Camp staff will monitor the check-in/check-out log at all times.
9. Camp staff will keep each activity area clean and tidy. Cleaning includes floors, walls, furniture, with supplies put away after use.
10. Camp staff will be involved with participants and parents most of the time. Staff will need to check in with the front desk and fulltime staff for updates and messages.

## **V. Operational Issues**

- A. Emergency phone numbers are kept at The Link's front desk, as well as with the camp binder on all field trips.
- B. The Camp Manual is provided to every staff member and outlines the following:
  1. Behavior Management and Discipline Procedures
  2. Rules and Regulations
  3. Forms
  4. Service Standards
  5. Game/Activity Leadership
  6. Guidelines for Communication with children and parents
- C. Check-in/Check-out forms will be used every day. Only designees ages 16-up, listed on the camper's release form, will be allowed to pick up participants. The authorized designee must enter the building and sign the check-out form in order for staff to release the child.
- D. Emergency evacuation and relocation plans will be posted at The Link.
- E. Transportation Requirements

A Texas state law for child safety seats: specifically, booster seats, went into effect on September 1, 2009. This law applies to children under the age of eight and under four foot and nine inches tall. This law will apply to camp participants between the ages of five and seven years old.

The state law states:

- Once a child reaches eight years old, they are not legally required to be in a child safety seat system.
- If the child is younger than eight, but is already taller than four foot and 9 inches tall, that are not legally required to be in a child safety seat system.
- If the child is eight but shorter than the above height, they are not legally required to be in a child safety seat system.
- The law requires that safety and booster seats be installed and used according to the manufacturer's instructions, including age, height and weight requirements and the placement in the vehicle.

In compliance with this law, parents may be required to supply the appropriate booster seat for their child if they fit into the criteria above.

Camp staff will be trained to identify children that are required to be in a booster seat based on birth date. Additionally, staff will be trained by the Richland Hills Police Department on how to properly install a child safety seat.

- F. Parents will be notified of and given additional permission forms, if needed, for field trips. Enrollment information will be maintained on each vehicle while traveling to and from field trips sites.
- G. Enrollment information will be kept on each participant and shall include: Child's name, birth date, home address, guardian's phone number, back-up day-time phone numbers. The registration form will have the name and number of each individual authorized to check-out the participant. Additionally, the form will have signatures for waivers, field trip release, and travel authorization. Lastly, the medication consent will be kept in The Link's administration office.
- H. Staff will immediately notify parent or guardian when a participant is injured or has been involved in any situation that places the child at risk.
- I. The Recreation Manager or Coordinator will communicate with parents if a communicable disease or possible parasitic infestation as required by the County Department of Health.
- J. The children in camp and the afterschool program will be exposed to G and PG movies as well as E and E10 (specifically Lego games) video games. We will not be able to manage whether an individual child sees or hears any part of one of these forms of entertainment. Movies watched could include those seen at The Link or during a field trip. Parents registering their child for Link programs are agreeing to allow their child(ren) to be a part of these entertainment opportunities.
- K. In some cases it may be necessary to evaluate if our programs are the right choice for your family. Completing a registration form is not a guarantee of admission to our program. In some cases, we will need to determine if our program is appropriate for your child. Our programs are not designed for therapeutic or one-on-one care or attention.

## **VI. Behavior Management and Discipline Procedures**

- A. Program employees will implement discipline and guidance in a consistent manner based on an understanding of individual needs and development with the best interests of program participants in mind.

- B. There will be no harsh, cruel, or corporal punishment used as a method of discipline. Discipline will be focused on growth of the individual and encouraging improved behavior management.
- C. Program employees may use brief, supervised separation for the group if necessary. Children will be aware of all camp rules prior to the start of any activity. Their understanding of the rules is an integral part of behavior management. When negative behavior occurs, the participant will know there is a consequence for their chosen action.
- D. Incident reports will be filled out on any disciplinary cases and shared with parents when picking up the child (sooner if an extreme case). Parents will be asked to sign the incident report to indicate that they have been advised about specific problems and/or negative behaviors.
- E. A participant could be suspended based on an extreme case or an aggregated concern of poor behavior choices. If that happens, parents will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up their child.
- F. Immediate removal from the program can happen if a child displays physical harm or threatens another participant. If a participant is removed from the program for behavior issues, there will not be a refund for unused time.

## **VII. Illness or Injury**

- A. Participants shall have and maintain immunizations in accordance with those required by the Texas Department of Health for public school attendance according to age.
- B. Parents shall be notified in cases of illness or injury. If the illness includes the threat of a communicable disease, that child will need to be picked up immediately.
- C. Programs are designed for well children. If a child is suspected of having a temperature and/or shows other signs or symptoms, that child will need to be removed from the program until they can be deemed well by physician. In the case that an injury cannot be remedied with basic first aid, staff shall notify paramedics.
- D. When an injury occurs, an incident report shall be filled out immediately after the incident and given to the Recreation Coordinator and/or Link Manager with a copy kept in the Camp files.
- E. In the event of expected abuse, program employees will immediately report a concern in accordance with the Texas Family Code. In the case where a City employee is involved in an incident with a child that could be construed as child abuse, the incident must also be reported to fulltime recreation staff. Staff will then

notify the Police Department and any other appropriate agency as soon as possible.

- F. Texas state law requires that staff of children and youth programs to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or a law enforcement agency. Failure to report suspected abuse is punishable by fines up to \$1,000 and/or confinement up to 180 days. Confidential reports may be made by calling 1-800-252-5400.

### **VIII. General Guidelines for Children**

- A. As a part of the Camp Manual, parents will be given the following information:
1. A child is not allowed to use the phone unless it is deemed an emergency. In this case, staff should make the call for the child.
  2. Children must use furniture correctly, only sitting where designed and no standing on any furniture, counter, or game table.
  3. Running is only permitted in the gym and on special occasions in the activity rooms, then only with supervision.
  4. Bouncing or throwing balls is only permitted in the gym and on special occasions in the activity rooms, then only with supervision.
  5. Active games that could damage, furniture, fixtures, and equipment shall only be played in the appropriate areas.
  6. Children must always show respect toward staff and other participants.
  7. Children must always have on appropriate attire and athletic, non-marking shoes.
  8. Children will always be contained and separated from the general public, except for on field trips, park visits and when swimming. Then staff will be more diligent with their oversight, so as to know where each child is at all times.
- B. The program will provide activities for each group according to the participants' ages, interests, and abilities. The activities should be flexible and promote social and educational advancement.
1. A weekly calendar will be available to parents the week before each camp session starts.
  2. While monitoring field trips, staff will;
    - a) Count everyone before leaving The Link and before returning back from the destination.
    - b) Carry all pertinent participant information including medical information.
    - c) Carry a first aid kit and mobile phone in each vehicle that is transporting participants.
    - d) Each participant will wear a Link wrist band on each field trip. The wrist band will have Link information in case a participant gets lost or loses visual contact with the rest of the group.

## **IX. Monitoring and Enforcement**

- A. Standards of Care established by the City of Richland Hills will be monitored and enforced by City Departments responsible for their respective areas. Health and safety standards will be monitored and enforced by the City's Police, Fire, and Code Enforcement departments when applicable.
- B. Staff and program issues will be monitored and enforced by the Recreation Department staff. The Link Manager shall visit the program facilities on a bi-weekly basis. The Recreation Coordinator will be responsible for a visual inspection on a daily basis.
- C. Monthly reporting by The Link Manager will include a comprehensive review of all program details, as well as the operation summaries.

For further information regarding the Standards of Care or any other information about children and youth programs offered by The Link please contact the front desk at 817-616-3738.