



# School Policies

## Hours of Operations

The Shafer Center's business hours are from 8:30am to 5pm Monday through Thursday and 8:30am to 3pm on Friday.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is a critical aspect of your child's educational program and is required by law for children between the ages of 5 and 16. Under the Maryland Compulsory School Attendance law, the parent/guardian is responsible for their child's regular on-time school attendance. In addition, the parent/guardian is expected to provide their child with a signed, written statement accounting for the reason and date(s) of absences to be presented upon the child's return to school for excused absences. If the absence is 3 days or longer, a written statement from a physician is required. Absences not accounted for in writing either by the parent or doctor will be coded unexcused (unlawful).

Any person who has custody of a child who fails to have the child attend school under this compulsory attendance article is violating the law. If there are more than 10 excused or unexcused absences in a quarter, an attendance meeting will be held and county liaisons will be notified if your child is funded.

## Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, § 7-301, Compulsory Attendance

### Absences, Lateness, Early Dismissal, and Vacation

Parents/guardians must call 410.517.1113 by 7:00am to report your child's unplanned absence. If you are going to be more than 5 minutes late to pick up or drop off your child, parents are responsible for calling 410.517.1113. After more than one late occurrence parents will be charged a late fee. For any planned absences, vacations, lateness, or early dismissal, parents are responsible for submitting a Parent Schedule Request to the Director of Admissions at least two weeks in advance. A written note or email is required for any absence to be documented as excused.

## Calendar

Parents/guardians will be able to download our yearly calendar at [www.thshafercenter.com](http://www.thshafercenter.com) which outlines Shafer Center closings, professional days, breaks, conference days, and special events. The calendar is subject to change based on weather related closings and each update will be sent home. On scheduled conference days, child care services are available by submitting a schedule request to the Director of Admissions at least two weeks in advance.

## Forms

The following forms are required annually and renewed before the start date/the beginning of each school year in order your child to begin services:

- Student Medical Authorization Form
- Student Emergency Form
- Allergy and Dietary Restrictions Form
- Student Health Inventory Form

It is important to note that if your child requires medication such as an Epi-pen for allergies or seizures it is required that all medication with proper documentation from your doctor be submitted before the start of



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services and before the start of each school year. All forms can be found on our website: [www.thshafercenter.com](http://www.thshafercenter.com).

## **Inclement Weather**

The Shafer Center follows the closing of the Baltimore County Public Schools during times of inclement weather. Families can sign up to receive text message notifications regarding these closings on: [www.wbaltv.com/weather/closingsignup](http://www.wbaltv.com/weather/closingsignup)

For clients who receive in-home services, please follow the closing policy of the resident county. You can also go to The Shafer Center website for updates.

## **Dress Code**

The Shafer Center has no formal dress code but we strongly encourage parents to dress their children in comfortable clothes that can get soiled. Sandals without heel straps are not allowed.

## **Toileting**

It is not a requirement that your child be potty trained. The Shafer Center can assist in developing a program to help your child achieve success with potty training. Please call the front desk if you would like to request a behavioral consultant assisting you with potty training. If your child is not toilet trained or in the process, please send in diapers, wipes, as well as changes of clothes.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips and/or community outings are recognized as a meaningful part of a child's classroom experience and offer great opportunities for enriching the curriculum. In order to participate, a child must have a Field Trip Permission Form completed and signed by a parent. Parents must sign permission in order to have a service provider drive your child to a designated field trip and parents are responsible for supplying car or booster seat.

## **Pick Up by Unauthorized Adults**

If a child is to be picked up by someone other than his/her parent, then that person must have written permission from the child's parent. The parent should complete the Transportation Pick-Up Consent Form and give to the Office Coordinator. This form is also available on the website.

## **Pick Up and Drop Off Procedure**

Safety is our first priority during arrival and dismissal. The following procedures are to ensure the safe and orderly flow of traffic.

1. During carpool, buses receive priority due to traffic flow.
2. Drop-off for class starts 10 minutes before the classroom start time (8:50). Drop-off for Resource Center services is at the scheduled start of the session. Pick-up for classes and all Resource Center services starts 10 minutes before the scheduled end time (2:50).
3. When entering the car pool line, please pull into the first entrance and make a left and drive around to the right, circling the back of the building stop at the designated cone in front of the building.
4. Only children in the first two cars will be removed if car is positioned in the front of the building.
5. Child **must** be on the passenger side of the car, so that staff does not need to walk with a child in the street.

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6. Parents **should not** get out during drop-off. A staff member will take the child out of the car.
7. All children must be dropped off in car pool line unless previous arrangements have been made.
8. During pickup a TSC staff member will place your child in the car seat but will not buckle the seat. Parent should pull slightly forward and then are responsible for buckling their child in the car seat. Shafer Center staff cannot buckle children into the car.
9. All pick-ups at non-car pool times should be done at the car. Teachers/therapists will take children out to car and debrief parent at the car.

### Late Pick-Up

Picking up children more than five minutes after the end of session/class will result in a fee being assessed at the rate of \$43.00 per hour starting at the 6<sup>th</sup> minute. The first time parents are late they will receive a warning notice. Any time after, the family will be billed for the time which they are late. Minutes will be rounded up to the next multiple of five.

### Peanut Free

**The Shafer Center is a peanut-free school. No peanut products may be brought on campus at any time.**

### Lunch and Snacks

Children participating in full day programs will need to bring a lunch and snack daily. The Shafer Center is a peanut free center. We encourage a healthy lunch please do not send in any peanut related products. The lunches will be not be refrigerated, so please make sure items are not perishable or are properly stored. Please limit items that need to be microwaved. Parents can provide water bottles for students to have access to water to throughout their school day.

### Child Records

Records are maintained for each child beginning with application to The Shafer Center. All information in a child's file will be considered confidential and to be used only by The Shafer Center personnel or specific County employees if your child is funded. It is The Shafer Center's policy that all records pertaining to a child are available to the child's parent(s)/legal guardian upon a written request made to the front desk. Please allow one week to process this request.

### Parental Involvement and Communication

The Shafer Center strongly encourages parent involvement. Please notify The Shafer Center of any changes, challenges, or successes at home. It is The Shafer Center's mission to provide an enriching program for your child and parent feedback is an essential part of shaping that program.

### Observation

Video monitoring system is set up in all classrooms and therapy rooms. Families are welcome to observe their child participating in both classroom services as well as individual and small-group related services. An administrator or consultant will be present for classroom observations. Please call the front desk at 410-517-1113 to schedule an observation and allow at least 2 weeks to process.



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## Daily Communications

Daily communication with families of children receiving services at The Shafer Center is part of our program. Classroom staff will communicate daily via "daily sheet" while related service providers will communicate via communication notebook. In addition, classroom newsletters will be sent home monthly and class newsletters and general communications will also be posted on the bulletin board in the lobby.

## Classroom Quarterly Conferences

Conference Days are scheduled quarterly and are listed on the yearly calendar. Quarterly conferences will be with your child's team; special educator, speech language pathologist, behavior consultant, and classroom assistant.

## Behavior Consultant Meeting

If your child is receiving ABA or classroom services, each family will receive a 1 hour monthly meeting at the location of your choice with your child's behavior consultant. Any time above the 1 hour per month will be charged at the consultant hourly rate.

## Other Meetings

Parents are welcome to schedule an appointment with an administrator or service provider at any time to discuss their child's progress. Please call the front desk to request a meeting and please allow two weeks to process. These additional meetings may be charged.

## Outside Providers/Advocates

- Classroom or therapy observations need to be requested by parent two weeks prior
- Parent is responsible for giving any necessary documents to outside providers; IEP progress reports, IEP related paperwork, assessments
- If additional copies of paperwork or electronic copies are needed, parents should communicate directly with The Shafer Center team and allow two weeks to process this request
- A parent is required to be present during any observations, meetings with TSC providers, or phone conferences regarding their child
- A parent is required to be copied on all emails or written communication regarding their child
- In preparations for IEP meetings, The Shafer Center is required to send IEP paperwork at least 5 days in advance. In order to prepare appropriately, outside providers need to provide feedback, questions, or concerns at least 48 hours in advance in order for them to be considered prior to any IEP meeting.
- Parents can invite Shafer Center team to IEP meeting if TSC is going to be considered as a possible placement. Please give at least one week's notice. If a child is recommended to be placed at The Shafer Center, please allow 2 weeks after the packet has been received from the sending county before the child can start services. This allows us to be in compliance with MSDE and gives us sufficient time to prepare for the student

## Health and Safety

### Water/Lights Out Procedure



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If the water or electricity is out for more than 30 minutes or more, dismissal will begin. Once dismissal starts, it cannot be reversed. If loss of water or electricity does not look like it will be restored after one week, Administrators will reconvene on decision.

## Fire Drills

Fire drills are practiced one time per month.

## Visitor at Entrance Procedure

All visitors must sign in at the front desk, show ID, and be required to wear a visitor's badge.

## Child Abuse and Reporting Law

According to Section 5-704 of the Family Law volume of the Annotated Code of the State of Maryland, any teacher or other professional employee of The Shafer Center who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect must immediately inform the Program Director and report to the appropriate authority. In complying with the mandate to report, the person reporting is given immunity from criminal or civil penalties or liability when that person, in good faith, makes such a report. Such reports are confidential.

## Health Services

The Shafer Center must have complete and accurate health and emergency information for each child. All children must have completed and returned the following forms prior to your child's start date:

1. Emergency Form
2. MSDE Health Inventory
3. Medical Record Form
4. Maryland Immunization Certificate
5. Medication Authorization Form if applicable

Please make sure your child is in compliance with the immunization requirements for the State of Maryland. The immunization record must show the day, month, and year of each vaccination and must be signed by a medical professional or health department official. No child will be admitted to school without providing proof of these immunizations unless exempted for medical and religious reasons that satisfy Maryland law.

## Medication Administration

To administer a medication, we must have the following:

- Medication in original container supplied by pharmacy/ manufacturer
- A correct and legible label on container label that contain the child's name, dosage, and expiration date
- A completed Medical Authorization Form (including Doctors Order if applicable)
- This needs to be completed by the health care provider and a parent, and is required for prescriptions and Over the Counter (OTC) medications as well. Any known side effects or special instructions
- If prescription, at least one dose of the medication has been given to the child at home

## Drop off of Medication

- All non-controlled medications must be delivered to TSC by an adult. This could be a parent, bus driver (if they agree), or an adult that is transporting your child. Please do not send any medications in your child's back pack.
- Any controlled medications must be hand delivered by a parent to one of TSC's Certified Medication Technician's

## Disposal of Medication

- TSC may dispose of any medication when:
  - Medication is discontinued before all of it is used
  - Medication is dropped on floor or becomes unusable
  - Medication expiration date has been reached
- TSC will contact Parent if medication needs to be picked up. All medications not retrieved by the parent will be disposed of two weeks after the expiration date and contact with the parent has been made.

## Pertinent Miscellaneous Information

- A new medication authorization form must be filled out (by the health care provider and by the Parent) for each new illness period. For example, if a child who has an ear infection arrives with medication they used months ago for a previous ear infection; a new form must still be filled out before we can administer medication.
- Prescriptions must be completed ONLY by a person with Prescriptive Authority, which includes:
  - Physicians
  - Physician's Assistants
  - Advanced Practice Nurses
  - Dentist
  - Podiatrists
- OTC ointment & creams (such as sunscreen, lip balm, diaper ointment, etc...) ONLY require a signed authorization form completed by a parent. We have a separate release form for this, also found at the front desk.
- Homeopathic Medicines (including vitamins) cannot be administered, unless prescribed by a *medical* doctor

## Illness

Parents are asked to make a conscientious and responsible effort to attend to ill students until all symptoms have abated to minimize the spread of infection.

- a. **FEVER.** A child shall be deemed to have a fever when there is an under the arm temperature above 100 degrees or more. In addition, if a fever develops while the child is at The Shafer Center or during home therapy provided by The Shafer Center, then the child will need to be picked up and taken home. For home therapy, the therapy session will end. The child may return to TSC if he/she has been fever free for 24 hours without medication.
- b. **RESPIRATORY AND OTHER INFECTIONS.** If a child is ill and requires antibiotics there needs to be a 24-hour period on medication before the child may return to The Shafer Center or receive home therapy (e.g., for strep throat). Ear infections are not contagious, as long as there is no discharge. Exclusion of children with respiratory disease with no fever is probably not warranted, because transmission may already have occurred (e.g., the common cold and coughs).
- c. **DIARRHEA OR VOMITING.** Children who are ill and have symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting may not attend The Shafer Center or home therapy. If diarrhea occurs more than once per day, or a single incident of vomiting occurs during therapy or while at The Shafer Center, the child needs to be taken home as soon as possible and may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

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- d. **CONJUNCTIVITIS.** Known commonly as “pink eye” is extremely contagious. In suspected cases, parents will be contacted and the child will be sent home for the day. In confirmed cases, your child may only return to The Shafer Center or home therapy services after being treated with medication for 24 hours, and there is no longer any discharge.
- e. **RASHES.** This covers a wide variety from eczema to poison ivy to allergies, etc. If the rash is oozing or pussy then your child may not attend The Shafer Center or receive home therapy. If the rash is dry and past infectious transmission, then the presence of a rash in itself is not a reason to exclude your child from services. Some rashes indicate that a child may have fifth disease which may be harmful to any pregnant woman. If it suspected that your child may have fifth disease, your child may need to visit the doctor before returning to school.
- f. **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OR SERIOUS INFECTIONS.** If your child has a serious infection such as rubella (German measles), meningitis, hepatitis, H1N1 influenza virus or chicken pox, The Shafer Center should be notified immediately so that preventive measures can be discussed with The Shafer Center’s consulting physician.
- g. **EVIDENCE OF HEAD LICE OR OTHER PARASITES.** Infested children will be sent home immediately and all families will be informed of the outbreak and precautions that The Shafer Center. The child may return as soon as she or he is free of lice and nits.
- h. **WHEN IS A CHILD TOO ILL TO COME TO THE SHAFER CENTER?**  
A child is too ill to come to the Center when he/she cannot fully participate in all of a day’s activities. It is important to note that our days are very active and a child who returns too quickly to the Center after being ill is more likely to have a relapse.

If your child has to be sent home early because of an illness we ask if they can be picked up within one hour of notification. The child has to be picked up by a parent, a person on child’s emergency contact form or by a person that is authorized by the parent. The child will not be able to ride the bus home if they have an illness.

### **Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook Signature Page**

This form must be signed by the Parents/Guardians and returned to The Shafer Center before your child begins services here. Parents are responsible for understanding The Shafer Center handbook and policies outlined within. We ask if you have any questions regarding the information discussed in this handbook please contact The Shafer Center for clarification. Parents are asked to sign this form stating that you have received, read and understand The Shafer Center policies.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_