

EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Standard 2.3: Each child is protected

Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times.

Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Element 2.3.3: Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Division 5 – Emergencies and Communications

97 Emergency and Evacuation procedures

12 Meaning of *Serious Incident*

DEFINITIONS

Emergency- An emergency includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk.

Critical Incident-

- the death of a child
- serious accident e.g. involving immediate hospitalisation
- natural disaster
- violence, domestic violence, physical or sexual assault, murder, suicide or abduction
- critical or acute illness
- emergency situations such as fire, siege or bomb threat
- unwanted media attention
- major vandalism
- harassment—verbal, physical or implied
- child is missing or cannot be accounted for
- child has been taken or removed from the premises without permission

Serious incident-

(a) The death of a child:

(i) while being educated and cared for by an education and care service or

(ii) following an incident while being educated and cared for by an education and care service.

(b) Any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an education and care service, which:

(i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner or

(ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital.

e.g whooping cough, broken limb, anaphylaxis reaction

(c) any incident where the attendance of emergency services at the education and care service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought

(d) any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service

(i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for or

(ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these regulations or

(iii) is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.

You need to notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident.

PURPOSE To protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all children, educators and staff by ensuring that effective emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures are in place.

POLICY Emergency evacuation procedures and lockdowns are in place to cover a range of scenarios related to individual educator's residence or approved venue as identified by the completion of individual risk assessments by educators.

These are practiced once per quarter with ALL children in care and documented clearly.

Emergency contact numbers are to be readily available when required.

PROCEDURES

Emergencies and Evacuations

- In the event of an emergency suitable evacuation procedures have been developed by individual educators to effectively remove children from a situation of risk- escorted to a safe assembly point in the most efficient manner possible or – initiate lockdown procedures
- The specific steps are based on an initial risk assessment undertaken by the educator with the assistance of the Family Day Care Coordinators to identify potential emergencies for each family day care residence or approved venue and should include evacuations and lockdown procedures.
- These are then documented in the Emergency and Evacuation Procedures and Floor Plan
- The emergency evacuation plan must show all available exits from the residence and the designated assembly area outside, the location of the first aid-kit and fire extinguishers, fire blankets and smoke detectors and clearly state the address of the premises including nearest cross streets.
- The assembly area will be well clear of the building, and will allow children to be taken away from the premises without going back towards the danger area.
- These evacuation plans and procedures are displayed prominently at ALL exits of the residence or venue.
- The family day care educator must ensure the premises is provided with a working landline phone or charged mobile phone at all times; appropriately located smoke detectors; a fire blanket adjacent to the cooking facilities; an appropriately located fire extinguisher and appropriate located garden hose near or connected to house tap
- A family day care educator will maintain the fire protection equipment in accordance with Australian Standards 1851-2005 amendment 2008 and have this documented as proof that the fire protection equipment has been inspected every six months and after every use
- Family day care educators routinely keep any security lock keys readily accessible (but inaccessible to children) to enable swift evacuation if required
- Family day care educators practise emergency and evacuation procedures with all children a minimum of once every three months and preferably at different times of the day; coordination unit staff may request to observe family day care educators practise their emergency and evacuation procedures; family day care educators keep a written record of each practise session.
- Family day care educators should provide children with opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings after they have witnessed an emergency to promote a sense of

security and safety. Family day care educators may seek the advice and support of a counselling service if required

- Notify the nominated supervisor as soon as possible and notify ACECQA and DEC within 24 hours of a serious incident.
- If any injury or illness occurs, family day care educator applies appropriate first aid if applicable and contacts the parents as soon as practical; if child is not well enough to remain in care parents arrange for early collection (see Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness policy)
- After a genuine evacuation, the family day care educator contacts parents and the service

Critical Incidents

Examples of critical incidents are;

- the death of a child
 - serious accident e.g. involving immediate hospitalisation
 - natural disaster
 - violence, domestic violence, physical or sexual assault, murder, suicide or abduction
 - critical or acute illness
 - emergency situations such as fire, siege or bomb threat
 - unwanted media attention
 - major vandalism
 - harassment—verbal, physical or implied
 - child is missing or cannot be accounted for
 - child has been taken or removed from the premises without permission
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- In the case of a death or a serious injury to a child/children, the family day care educator must as soon as practicable;
 - Phone 000 immediately
 - Phone the nominated supervisor as soon as possible
 - Attend to the immediate needs of the child/children
 - Family day care educators must not make any comments to the media about the incident. Refer all media enquiries to the Nominated Supervisor on 0429968568
 - Upon notification the nominated supervisor or delegate will:
 - provide a service staff member to support the educator as soon as possible and

assist in required action to be taken (Refer to supervision policy in emergency situations if family day care educator cannot get in contact with the service staff immediately)

- arrange for the other children to be cared for and contact their parents
- arrange for counselling and debriefing for all people involved including the family day care educator's family
- arrange an official statement to be prepared and given to any party involved
- attempt to protect the educator from the media
- provide the educator with information and support which may help you
- inform ACECQA and DEC's within 24 hours

The following may occur in the first 24—72 hours:

- the police and emergency services will be involved in the case of a serious accident or death
 - police may make the site of the incident a crime scene and will take control of who can and cannot enter
 - Work cover NSW may also have the right to enter your home and investigate
 - the educator may be suspended from the Family Day Care register during the investigating period. This may be decided by the regulatory authority, the police or the approved provider
 - parents may be distressed and want information and need support
 - educator will be required to write a full report of what has happened as soon as possible
 - any witnesses will also need to provide a report
 - the educator may be interviewed by Police, Community Services, Work cover NSW and the approved provider or delegate
 - the educator will need to notify their public liability insurance provider
 - NSW Health may be notified if it is a notifiable disease
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- The service will be available to either assist the educator personally or liaise with other appropriate agencies on their behalf
 - the educator will be kept informed of any actions or outcomes following an investigation

Lockdown procedures

Whilst many emergency situations will require staff and children to evacuate from the Service, there are potential situations that will require the facility to go into 'lockdown'.

- Lockdown means that all windows and external doors are locked, and where possible internal doors are locked, with children and adults being moved to a room/position that does not allow them to be viewed.
- Where possible access should be maintained to a bathroom and enough space should be available for children to be comfortably involved in quiet activities. It is therefore vital that appropriate spaces have been identified and displayed on an Emergency Lockdown Procedure. This information can be displayed on the back of the Evacuation Plan, which can then be quickly taken from the wall when required. This act will ensure that in a situation involving unwanted visitors that the plan is not visible or available for them to use to predict your reaction.

Sample Lockdown Procedure

STEP ONE

The Nominated Supervisor/Director/Incident Manager is informed of the emergency, and the appropriate alarm is sounded by the person finding/being made aware of the emergency.

STEP TWO

All external doors and windows are locked. All blinds/curtains are closed. Babies and toddlers are assisted to relocate to the designated assembly point by all available adults.

STEP THREE

If it was not the Police that notified the Service of the emergency, the Nominated Supervisor/Director/Incident Manager calls them to report the situation on:

- Landline – 000
- Mobile phone – 112 (phone credit is not required to make this call)
- UHF radio – remote or isolated services

When prompted by the 000 operator, state:

- The name and address of the service
- The nearest cross street and any relevant landmarks that will assist in locating the service
- The nature of the emergency
- The location of the emergency (within the building, backyard, car park, external to service etc.)
- Which entrance to use and who will meet the emergency services (if applicable to the situation).

DO NOT hang up the phone until told to do so by the operator.

STEP FOUR

The delegated Emergency Management Team members collect all required resources as per predetermined roles:

- Mobile phone
- First aid kit
- Emergency kit
- Children's and staff sign-in/attendance sheets
- Emergency contact lists for children and staff

STEP FIVE

Unaffected rooms are checked for children, staff, and visitors and then accounted for via a roll check. The Nominated Supervisor/Director/Incident Manager is advised immediately of any missing child/children, staff, or visitors.

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STEP SIX

Children are supervised and supported throughout the lockdown period by all available Educators, staff, and available adults. Children, staff, or visitors with additional or medical needs are supported.

STEP SEVEN

First aid is administered as required by the delegated person/persons.

STEP EIGHT

The Nominated Supervisor/Director/Incident Manager continues to liaise with appropriate/relevant emergency services throughout the lockdown period.

STEP NINE

Children's families (and staff families) are contacted and advised of the emergency situation by the delegated person. If appropriate, arrangements will be made for children to be collected.

STEP TEN

The service will remain in lockdown until given the 'all clear' by emergency services.

Source:

- Education and Care Services National Regulation—97
- NSW Fire Brigade www.fire.nsw.gov.au
- Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations—Funding Agreement
- Safe Work Australia—Model Work Health and Safety Regulations AS-2005 (incorporating Amendment 1 & 2)

Forms and supporting documents:

- Critical Incident Flip Chart
- Incident/Injury/Trauma and Illness report
- Incident Report form— Public Liability if taken out with Family Day Care Australia
- Emergency phone numbers
- Educator Compliance folder
- Emergency evacuation plan and procedures