



2.20 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Purpose Statement

The aim of emergency planning is to ensure that the safety of educators and children are maintained, as far as possible, during an emergency or a disaster.

A Family Day Care service may need to respond to a range of different types of emergencies such as:

- a. Fire or natural disasters, which include bushfire, flood, cyclone or thunderstorm
- b. Power failure or structural damage to buildings
- c. Vehicle collision or breakdown
- d. Intruder human (i.e. burglary) or animal (i.e. snake)
- e. Incidents causing an injury or fatality (e.g. electrocution).

An emergency situation may not actually occur within the educator's service but an adjoining property/service.

Scope

This policy applies to staff, educators, contractors, children and families.

Definitions

Emergency: sudden, unexpected events or situations that require immediate action to prevent injury to individuals or damage to the service's environment.

Code Red: is the highest rating on the national fire danger rating index. A Code Red rating indicates that weather conditions are at their worst for a bush or grass fire and that leaving or staying away from high risk bushfire areas is advisable.

Policy Statement

TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN IN CARE ARE QUICKLY AND SAFELY EVACUATED OR LOCKED DOWN AND PROTECTED FROM IMMEDIATE DANGER.

TO ENSURE THAT EACH EDUCATOR HAS AN EVACUATION PROCEDURE IN PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL REGULATIONS.

Procedures

Coordination Unit Requirements

1. All Family Day Care services are required to have an up-to-date emergency management plan that identifies responsibilities, procedures and actions to help minimise the impact of an emergency.
2. These plans must be reviewed annually and submitted to the Executive and the relevant Regional office.



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3. When informed of Code Red Days, all educators residing in high risk areas will be advised to close their service. The Coordination Unit is responsible for informing educators of the need to close their service. Family Day Care services operating in high risk areas are not permitted to care for children on Code Red days.
4. Where possible, up to 3 days' notice of a planned closure will be provided. In some instances, educators and families may not be made aware of service closure until the very last minute (given the unpredictability of catastrophic fire conditions).
5. Where a decision has been made to close a service, this decision will not change regardless of any changes in weather conditions or fire ratings. This will help limit confusion and help you/your families to plan for alternative care arrangements.

Educator Requirements

1. Educators are to make all families aware of this procedure, including the possibility of service closure on Code Red days.
2. All educators are required to develop an individual Emergency Management Plan with support from the coordination unit. An Emergency Management Plan template will be provided for use.
3. A risk assessment must be conducted on emergency evacuation locations to ascertain whether it meets service requirements and the needs of the children.
4. An evacuation floor plan must be displayed near each exit of the approved Family Day Care residence/venue. This plan must indicate where the fire extinguisher and blanket are kept.
5. Educators must conduct emergency drills every three months and ensure that all of the children in their care complete a drill each quarter. Drills should take place at various times of the day and week, vary in scenario and demonstrate evacuation through different access doors.
6. Emergency evacuation drills must be documented and submitted to the Coordination Unit for filing.
7. Educators must maintain an evacuation pack which includes:
 - a. Basic first aid kit
 - b. Children's necessities including nappies
 - c. Water
 - d. Torch
 - e. Batteries and
 - f. Clearly labelled folder containing parent contact numbers; details of important medical information; and management plans for any life threatening medical condition.
 - g. A copy of the Emergency Management Plan



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Fire Season

1. The Fire Danger Rating for each weather district is determined by the BoM in consultation with the fire agencies. For each of the Fire Danger Ratings, CFA Victoria has recommended actions you should follow. Refer to: www.cfa.vic.gov.au for further information.
2. On Code Red days, closure advice will be provided by the respective DET regional office. The DET website will also list all potential and actual closures of schools and children's services.
3. On days of extreme, severe and high risk; services on the register are not required to close but to be on alert and follow their individual plan. *Educators may choose to close their service during fire season on days rated 'extreme' or 'severe'.* This is to be made clear to parents/guardians on enrolment.
4. On high risk fire day's educators need to listen to radio station 3LO – 774 on the AM Dial for details on fires.
5. Playgroups **will not be held** on catastrophic (Code Red) days in high risk areas. (NOTE: any fees paid will be calculated and credited towards the next playgroup term).

In the Event of an Actual Emergency or Lockdown

In the actual event of an emergency or lockdown, educators are responsible for:

1. Contacting appropriate emergency services by calling 000.
2. Implementing the Emergency Evacuation Plan. If evacuating, grab the Evacuation Pack and any medications required for children with life threatening illnesses.
3. Responding to the immediate needs of all children. Remain calm to assist children in feeling safe and secure.
4. Contacting the Coordination Unit (as soon as practicable). If able, the Coordination Unit will provide support to educators in an area where a major emergency has occurred.
5. Submitting an incident report within 12 hours of the emergency event. Refer to the *Incident Reporting* procedure for further information.
 - *NOTE: The safety and security of children in care is the highest priority. In the event of an emergency such as fire, the educator must not leave the children unattended while they deal with the emergency (e.g. trying to put out fire). Efforts to contain a fire by closing windows and doors may be made while collecting children if it is safe to do so. The circumstances at the time will dictate as to whether fire-fighting operations should be attempted or left to the fire brigade.*

Relevant Standards/Legislation

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004



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Related Policies & Links

- Incident Reporting
- Managing Medical Conditions
- www.cfa.vic.gov.au