



2.07 FIREARMS

Purpose Statement

Windermere is committed to ensuring that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.

Where approved residences have firearms on the premises, every precaution will be taken to keep children safe. This is particularly relevant for educators residing in rural areas.

Firearms are regulated at the state and territory level under a uniform national approach, which covers licensing, permits and safe storage. Victoria has their own firearms registry administered by the Victorian police force. Educators must comply with State and territory legislation when in possession of a firearm.

Scope

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

Definitions

Firearm: a rifle, pistol or other portable gun.

Ammunition: a supply or quantity of bullets and shells.

Policy Statement

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Procedures

General

Where educators, or family members living with an educator, own a firearm they must have:

1. A Victorian firearm licence that permits them to possess, carry or use that category and type of firearm
2. Secure storage for the licenced firearm that is inaccessible to children
3. Separate secure storage for the ammunition that is inaccessible to children
4. Knowledge of the safe use of firearms and responsibilities in relation to children.
These responsibilities include:
 - a. Never removing firearms and/or ammunition from secure storage facilities whilst children are accessing education and care services.



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- b. Never having loaded firearms in the house or car whilst children are accessing education and care services.

Risk Assessment

When conducting an assessment of a family day care residence, the Coordination Unit will ask the prospective educator to let them know if they, or a family member, own a firearm. If a firearm is owned, the following must be sighted:

- The firearms licence
- The storage facility for both the firearm/s and the ammunition and;
- The accessibility of the space, to children in care

The Coordination Unit will determine that all health and safety needs of children have been met before approving registration. Annual risk assessments must be carried out on all educators and their properties which will include re-assessment of required documentation (i.e. sighting of firearms licence or renewals), storage facilities and accessibility to children.

A copy of the current Victorian firearms licence must be securely stored on file.

Liaison with Licensing Services Department

Authorisation from the licence (firearm) holder will be obtained to allow the coordination unit to contact the Licensing Services Department.

The coordination unit will pass on licence details to the Licensing Services Department and request they conduct a check of licence and secure storage as per licensing regulations. This will occur if deemed necessary by the police.

Note: Under section 181 of the Firearms Act 1996, Police are unable to identify the owner of a firearm. Therefore the coordination unit will have a record of authority by gun owner and record of request to Licensing Services Division to check firearm, but no record of check being performed.

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
- Firearms Act 1996

Related Policies & Links

- *Assessment & Approval of FDC Educators, Residents & Visitors Procedure*
- *Assessment, Approval & Reassessment of Approved FDC Residences/Venues Procedure*