

Family Day Care

Emergency Management Policy

Section: 2 Children's Health and Safety

Policy ID Number: 2.2

Link to National Quality Standard: 2.2.1; 2.2.2, 7.1

Link to Education and Care Services National Regulation: r97; r98; r165; r167; r168

1 Policy Statement

The Coordination Unit and Educators will have processes in place to manage incidents and emergencies as well as maintain a safe environment for children's wellbeing; providing opportunities for themselves and children to learn how to prepare for emergencies.

2 Rationale

The FDC Service is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of all staff, Educators, Educator household members, work experience/work placement students and volunteers irrespective of their involvement in child related duties.

To prepare children, Educators and the Coordination Unit to know how to respond in an emergency.

To reduce the risk of accidents or injuries occurring.

To assist educators and the Coordination Unit to handle emergencies calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of further harm, damage or trauma to those involved in the emergency.

3 Procedures

3.1 General

- The emergency events or situations that this Emergency Policy identifies and responds to are (but are not limited to):
 - Fires including bushfires
 - Lock down
 - Threat to personal safety.
 - Chemical spills
 - Gas Leak
 - Vehicle collision
 - Power failure
 - Life threatening situation /injured or collapsed person(s)
 - Building collapse
- Educators will have a current Emergency Management Plan. General information and a template will be provided in the Emergency Management folder and Educators will be required to update their Emergency Management Plan annually.
- It is recommended that Educators use the Vic Emergency application on their mobile phones. This application issues notifications once registered. These notifications inform Educators of incidents within their local area that may be hazardous and require them to take action and prevent harm to themselves and the children in care.
- The Coordination Unit will conduct a Health and Home Safety check prior to Educator registration and then annually with each Educator. Educators are required to meet these standards at all times children are in care.

- On registration and annually the Coordination Unit will provide each Educator with a Daily Home Safety checklist booklet, Educators must complete this each day they have children in care.
- Educators are always required to monitor the environment for hazards and are expected to respond immediately to any circumstance which may present a risk to the children and themselves.
- Educators are to be qualified in First Aid as approved by the legislation.
- Educators must always have an operating telephone and/or mobile phone.
- Educators must have easy access to Emergency contact phone numbers, including family emergency contact numbers being kept readily accessible and stored appropriately for confidentiality.
- Educators must ensure all emergency contact numbers are kept up to date.
- Educators must prominently display emergency procedures, including evacuation floor plan and instructions near each exit of the home used for FDC. The evacuation plan must outline all possible exit points and the meeting places outside the home. Keys to any locked exterior doors or security doors must be within reach of an adult but inaccessible to children.

3.2 Supervision

- Supervision is a key aspect of ensuring that children's safety is always protected in the service environment, whilst on outings or excursions, and during transportation provided or arranged by the Educator as part of childcare. Educators must ensure they adequately supervise children at all times.
- Educators are permitted to release a child into the supervision and care of an Emergency Services provider (eg: Ambulance, Police, Fire, Child Protection) in the event of an emergency.

3.3 During an Emergency

- Educators and staff are required to:
 - Keep calm.
 - Assist any child in immediate danger if safe to do so.
 - Call the appropriate emergency service 000.
 - Give details of:
 - Nature of emergency – fire, medical, intruder etc.
 - Number, street name, nearest cross street and suburb
 - Any persons trapped or injured
 - Seriousness of situation.
 - Follow the Instructions of Emergency Services representative
- Educators are to contact the Coordination Unit as soon as practical. If the emergency arises outside office hours, staff can be contacted on the emergency phone. Coordination Unit staff will attend any incidents that require their support.
- Educators are to contact families as soon as practical.

3.4 Fire Safety

- All venues used for FDC purposes will meet fire safety standards.
- Educators must have smoke detectors correctly installed in appropriate locations. These must be tested regularly to ensure they are working. Where smoke detectors require batteries to be changed Educators must ensure they do this regularly, it is recommended in line with daylight savings changes.

- Educators must have a Fire Extinguisher and/or Fire Blanket to assist in the prevention of spread of fire.
- Educators that are in an area of bushfire or grass fire risk, close and do not operate on any day declared by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner to be a day of 'Catastrophic' Fire Danger Rating; that applies to the area or district at which the family day care educator's residence or family day care venue is located.

Evacuations

- Educators must identify and conduct a risk assessment for all potential emergencies relevant to their situation. This could include fires, flood and likely incidents in the home, and being aware of children's medical needs, e.g. asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis.
- Educators must plan for, practice and respond effectively to emergency evacuations. These must be rehearsed at least once every 3 months by the Educator with the children and anyone else present in the home. Each rehearsal must be documented and displayed on the noticeboard for parent/guardians to see and evaluated by the Educator in the Daily Home Safety checklist.
- Educators are required to ensure all children registered for care with them are regularly involved in an evacuation practice.
- If required Educators will contact emergency services first, and then parents/guardians and the Coordination Unit immediately if it is safe and possible to do so.
- Educators are required to follow the directions of any Emergency Service staff (eg: Police, MFB, Ambulance or SES).

3.5 Lockdown

- Educators may be required to find a safe place for themselves and the children in care to shelter within the Educator's residence. This could be due to (but not limited to):
 - someone trying to enter or having entered the Educator's home in a threatening manner and the Educator believes their safety and the children's safety is at risk.
 - a critical vehicle accident in the vicinity of your home
 - environmental hazard from a chemical spill
 - smoke hazards from a nearby fire
- These incidents may require the lockdown of an Educator's residence and finding the safest space within the home for everyone to shelter whilst emergency services are attending to the emergency. Educators are required to do whatever is determined safest at the time of the incident.

3.6 Reporting of Incidents

- Educators will report any emergencies as outlined in the Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy and procedures.

3.7 After the Incident

- In the event of an emergency occurring, Educators can consult the Children's Services Coordinator in relation to availability of counselling and debriefing services if required.
- Emergencies can affect individuals emotionally and psychologically. Children need to feel secure and safe during and after they have witnessed an emergency, and Educators should provide children with opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings. It may also be important to seek the advice and support from counselling services for children and adults following an emergency. The Coordination Unit will provide support during this process.

- Educators will evaluate and reflect on each incident using this as a powerful learning experience for the children. Educators and staff will support and help children cope with and process such events.

4 References

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standards](#)
- [ACECQA](#)
- [Child Safe Policy CEO Authorised](#)
- [Child Safe Environment Policy](#)
- Educator Service Agreement
- Emergency Management Folder

5 Definitions

Term	Definition
Supervision	An educator must be able to respond immediately, particularly when a child is harmed, distressed or in a hazardous situation.

Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Revision Section	Revision Description
December 2016	1.0	All	Initial Policy Release (creation date)
May 2021	2.0	All	Updated from old Policy to new format and current information
September 2022	3.0	All	Updated the content to contain the latest regulatory changes.
August 2023	4.0	All	Updated to reflect the councils name change.
August 2024	Next Review Date		