

Child Safe Environment: Emergency and Evacuation

Policy/Procedure Number: C 2

Policy/Procedure Requirement: National Quality Standards 2; Regulations 97 & 168

Policy Statement

Emergencies are sudden unexpected events or situations that pose an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the education and care service premises and require immediate action to prevent injury or illness to individuals [e.g. flood, fire, a situation that requires the education and care service premises to be locked down].

Rationale

The Service complies with the health and safety requirements of the Regulations. The emergency events or situations that this Emergency and Evacuation Policy identifies and responds to include life threatening situation /injured or collapsed person(s); fires and/or bushfires; threatening, armed or dangerous intruder; chemical spills; gas leak; vehicle collision; power failure; and building collapse.

Strategies and Practices

Emergencies can affect individuals emotionally and psychologically, and services have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of each individual at all times. Children need to feel secure and safe during and after they have witnessed an emergency, and Educators are encouraged to 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 Service will:

- Provide support and information to Educators on compliance requirements for emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures
- Ensure an emergency contact is available for critical events
- Provide forms to assist Educators in the recording of emergency evacuation and lockdown practices
- Monitor compliance during home visits
- Offer debriefing for Educators after an emergency evacuation or lockdown

Educators will:

- **Prominently display emergency procedures, including evacuation floor plan and instructions near each exit** of areas in the home used for FDC
- **Identify and undertake risk assessment of potential emergencies**, e.g. fire, floods, crime, common accidents in the home, threatening intruder, medical emergencies and take all precautions and develop strategies to eliminate, minimise or control each emergency and/or subsequent risks

- In the event of any Emergency situation, contact the Service Manager and/or Approved provider
- Practice emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures **at least every 3 months** at various times of day and week and record this in the appropriate forms in the Service's FDC Diary and Planner
- Have ready access to emergency equipment such as fire extinguisher and/or fire blankets
- Keep child detail cards up to date and easily accessible in case of emergencies
- Test smoke detectors and **replace batteries 6 monthly** in line with daylight savings changes. Smoke detectors are also tested annually during home safety check.

Emergency Procedures

FDC Educators should have emergency evacuation plans for their FDC Residence. This policy covers emergencies requiring evacuation or lockdown, and disruption to essential services.

(i) Internal Emergencies & Evacuation Procedure

Internal emergencies are any incidents that threaten the safety of the physical structure of the building, children, Educators or visitors. Such incidents include but are not limited to;

- Fire
- Flooding
- Structural damage
- Chemical/radiation spill
- Internal gas leak
- Aggressive people

Evacuation Procedure:

When it is unsafe for children, Educator and visitors to remain inside the FDC residence, then activate emergency evacuation procedure immediately. The Educator will:

- Remain calm and remember the Educator's duty of care
- Dial 000 inform emergency service of location and nature of incident, if possible estimate the number of people involved
- Notify the Service Manager and/or Approved Provider
- If necessary, inform other services such as Gas, Electricity, water suppliers
- Collect emergency evacuation kit (including first aid kit, emergency contacts) and mobile phone
- Assemble children and visitors at the designated area
- Administer first aid if necessary
- Contact parents/guardians of all children in care
- Educator to remain with children until each child is collected by parent/guardian
- Do not leave child/ children with visitors or others

Emergencies requiring evacuation:

Fire

- Remain calm, do not panic or shout fire
 - Check the source of the fire
 - Call the fire brigade – Telephone 000
 - Contain the fire (close door/ window if it is safe to do so)
 - Extinguish the fire only if safe to do so
 - Keep everybody away from the fire
 - Evacuate partially or totally – as per the Evacuation Plan
 - Await instructions of fire brigade officer in charge
- **Clothing Fire**
 - Remove blanket from pouch by holding tabs and pulling in a downward motion
 - Unfold and shake blanket loose
 - Stop the victim moving
 - Wrap the fire blanket around the victim
 - Roll the victim on the ground
 - Seek medical attention
- **Small Oil/ Gas Fire**
 - Remove blanket from pouch by holding tabs and pulling in a downward motion
 - Unfold and shake blanket loose
 - Shield your face and hands with the blanket
 - Stop the fire, gently place the blanket carefully over the vessel (e.g. Oil pan, gas) to contain the fire
 - Turn-off the source of the heat and leave the blanket on for at least 30 minutes until blanket is completely cool

Gas leak in the home

- Ventilate the area by opening nearby doors and windows
- Evacuate home, and if safe to do so, turn off the gas supply (by turning the yellow valve lever on the gas meter so it runs perpendicular to the pipe)
- Do not use a source of ignition such as matches or cigarette lighters
- Seek expert advice by calling ActewAGL Faults & Emergencies on 13 19 09

Structural Damage to Residence

- Dial 000 for an Ambulance/ Fire if required
- Seek advice from Service Manager/ Approved Provider

Chemical Spills

- Call Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for more advice
- Administer First Aid if safe to do so
- Safely clean up spill immediately

(ii) External Emergencies & Lockdown Procedure

In the **event of direct external and immediate danger to the children or the Educator**, activate **lockdown immediately**. Such emergencies include but are not limited to;

- Intruders
- External gas leak
- Bushfire
- Bomb threats/ Explosions
- Flood/ Storm

Lockdown Procedure:

- Lock doors and windows
- Contact Police on 000
- Children are to sit on the floor in the safest room and are to be supervised until further notice
- Educator to check that all children are accounted for, check outside area and toilets
- Notify Service Manager and/or Approved Provider
- Co-operate and assist Police as necessary

Bushfire

- Call 000 for emergency services and seek and follow advice
- If evacuation is required and time permits before you leave:
 - Listen to TV or local radio for bushfire/weather warnings and advice
 - Make sure you close all doors and windows
 - Turn off power and gas
 - Check that all children and visitors are accounted for
 - Ensure children do not hinder emergency services or put themselves at risk
- Seek advice from your Service Manager and/or Approved Provider
- Contact parents as required

Storm/ Bad Weather

- Call 000 for emergency services and seek and follow advice
- Initiate lockdown procedure
- Contact parents/ guardian

Bomb Threats

- If there is a bomb threat in the vicinity of the FDC residence or a suspicious object is found at or near the residence; then lockdown procedure is activated
- Contact 000 and seek guidance from police/ emergency services
- Contact parents/ guardians
- Contact Service Manager and/or Approved Provider

Threatening, Armed or Dangerous Intruder

- Remain calm and **do not** take any risks
- **Do not** agitate the assailant/s by making unnecessary movements or setting off alarms
- Keep your hands where they can be seen by the robber
- Cooperate with the assailant and **do** as they say
- Without risk and when safe dial 000 to inform police and Service Manager/ Approved Provider
- Attempt to keep intruder away from the children
- If any injuries occur, administer First Aid if safe to do so
- Call for an ambulance on 000 if necessary
- Do not attempt to confront or fight the intruder
- Discreetly notice all possible details about person
- Write a full report of the incident

Gas leak outside

- Remain inside
- Contact ActewAGL Faults and Emergencies on 13 19 09
- Remove all ignition sources from the area
- If safe to do so, turn off the gas supply
- In the event of an emergency, such as a gas leak or bushfire, turn off your natural gas supply by turning the yellow valve lever on the gas meter so it runs perpendicular to the pipe

Earthquake

If outside

- Stay outside and move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires
- **Drop** to the ground
- Take **cover** by covering your head and neck with their arms and hands
- **Hold** on until the shaking stops.

If inside

- Move away from windows, heavy objects, shelves etc
- **Drop** to the ground

- Take **cover** by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture or go into the corner of the building covering their faces and head in their arms
- **Hold** on until the shaking stops

(iii) Other Emergencies & Disruption to Services

Educator/person in charge may decide to close the Service and notify all parents/guardians in the event of a disruption to water, power and/or telephone services, following considering the length of time and circumstances of the particular disruption

Vehicle Collision

- If in sight of children, instruct children to come inside or out of view
- Dial 000 for an ambulance if required
- Dial 000 for Fire if there is a petrol spill or other possible hazards

Power Failure

- Notify ActewAGL on 13 10 93 and ask for an estimated down time
- Turn off all electrical equipment at the power point
- Keep fridge and freezer use to a bare minimum
- Contact the Coordination unit for advice as to whether children should be sent home

Life Threatening Situation /Injured or Collapsed Person(s)

- Check for any danger and clear area of any children
- Administer First Aid if safe to do so
- Dial 000 for an ambulance if required

Day-to-Day Service Management of Health and Safety Policies

- Reviewed quarterly and as required

Resources and Further Readings

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit www.acecqa.gov.au
- Childcare Service Handbook 2013-2014
- Planning for Emergencies - http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/fdcqa_factsheet_24.pdf