

Emergency Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

Values

NERPSA is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all children, staff, and persons participating in the program
- Having appropriate procedures in place to effectively manage emergency incidents at the centre.

Purpose

The NERPSA Emergency Management Policy will set the framework for the development of specific emergency management procedures, practices and guidelines.

2. Scope

The NERPSA Emergency Management Policy applies to NERPSA, individual kindergartens within the NERPSA cluster, their committees and staff and parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled, or have children already enrolled at NERPSA.

3. Background and Legislation

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service (Regulation 97).

Early childhood services have a duty of care to the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and all attending the facility. It is also a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

All services in Victoria are required to have an *Emergency Management Plan (EMP)* as part of their everyday 'best practice' operations. All education and care services listed on the Department of Education and Training's Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) are required as a condition of their service approval to submit their EMP to their regional office. The Department provides *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and an *Emergency Management Plan* template to assist services develop and review their EMP (refer to *Sources* below for the link). A copy should be attached to this policy.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

4. Definitions

Attendance record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Emergency: Includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the education and care service premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Emergency Management Plan (EMP): A written set of instructions to assist the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff to deal with incidents or situations that could pose a threat to life, health or property. *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and an *Emergency Management Plan* template are available on the DET website (refer to *Sources* below).

Hazard: A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record: Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence. Details required include the:

- name and age of the child
- circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms)
- time and date
- details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, first aid provided or medical personnel contacted
- details of any witnesses
- names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this
- signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this.

These details must be kept for the period of time specified in Regulation 183. A sample *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is available on the ACECQA website.

Mandatory closure: When services identified as being at high bushfire risk are directed by DET to close on days declared a Code Red Fire Danger Rating day.

Notifiable incident: An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the *Guide to Incident Notification* on the WorkSafe Victoria website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

Serious incident: Defined in Regulation 12 as:

- the death of a child while being educated and cared for by the service
- any incident involving an injury or trauma or the illness of a child that requires or ought to have required:
 - attention of a registered medical practitioner, or
 - attendance at a hospital
- any incident requiring attendance by emergency services
- a circumstance where a child appears to be missing, is unaccounted for, has been removed from the service contrary to the Regulations or has been locked in or out of the service premises.

The Approved Provider must notify the Regulatory Authority (DET) within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Regulation 176(2)(a)). The Notification of Serious Incident form (available on the ACECQA website) s to be completed and submitted online using the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Regulation 183.

State of emergency: A situation in which the government is granted special powers, by constitutional or legal provision, to deal with a perceived threat to law and order, or public safety.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria's responsibilities are to:

- help avoid workplace injuries occurring
- enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers.

5. Sources and Related NERPSA Policies

- Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002)
- Department of Education and Training, *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and *Emergency Management Plan*: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/emergency.aspx>
- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Medication Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*

6. Procedures

NERPSA is responsible for:

- 6.1. Ensuring that the DET *Emergency Management Plan* (refer to *Sources* for the link) is completed, lodged with the relevant DET regional office (where necessary)
- 6.2. Ensuring a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (Regulation 97(2)) (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*)
- 6.3. Developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (Regulation 97(1)(a))
- 6.4. Ensuring an emergency and evacuation floor plan is developed (Regulation 97(1)(b))
- 6.5. Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least once every 3 months by all at the service (Regulation 97(3)(a))
- 6.6. Ensuring that the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented (Regulation 97(3)(b))
- 6.7. Ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises (Regulation 97(4))
- 6.8. Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone or similar for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services (Regulation 98), and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed
- 6.9. Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risk
- 6.10. Ensure a fully-equipped portable first aid kit is provided (refer to *Administration of First Aid Policy*)
- 6.11. Developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g. first aid, emergency management and OHS training
- 6.12. Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)
- 6.13. Notifying DET within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*)
- 6.14. Notifying DET within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service (National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b)&(c), 176)

- 6.15 Reporting notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria
- 6.16 Ensuring that an attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is maintained to account for all children attending the service
- 6.17 Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures.

Educators are responsible for:

- 6.18 Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions
- 6.19 Ensuring that the *Emergency Management Plan* is followed in the event of an emergency
- 6.20 Testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as on a monthly basis, where appropriate
- 6.21 Informing the Approved Provider of any serious or notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) that must be reported to DET or WorkSafe Victoria
- 6.22 Implementing the procedures and responsibilities in this policy and the service's *Emergency Management Plan*
- 6.23 Supervising the children in their care and protecting them from hazards and harm
- 6.24 Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies
- 6.25 Checking that the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is completed at the beginning and end of each session
- 6.26 Rehearsing emergency evacuation procedures with the children at least once every 3 months (or more often, as required) and ensuring that these are documented
- 6.27 Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc.
- 6.28 Completing the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*, as required
- 6.29 Attending first aid, emergency management and OHS training, as required.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- 6.30 Ensuring they complete the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) on delivery and collection of their children (refer to *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*)
- 6.31 Providing emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and ensuring that this is kept up to date
- 6.32 Following the directions of staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency procedures.

7. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, NERPSA will:

- Seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.

8. Authorisation

The policy was adopted by NERPSA on 19th March 2013.

9. Review date

The policy will be reviewed every two years from date of adoption.