



EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION POLICY

SUBCATEGORY: Health, Hygiene and Safety

POLICY GOAL

To facilitate the safe evacuation of all occupants in the event of an emergency. To equip educators with the knowledge and skills to safely and effectively carry out an emergency evacuation.

RATIONALE

For the purposes of this policy an “emergency, in relation to an education and care service, means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person at the education and care service;

Examples.

1 Flood.

2 Fire.

3 A situation that requires the education and care service premises to be locked down.”¹

Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standards – Children’s Health and Safety includes Incident and Emergency Management. “Element 2.2.2 - plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.”

What Element 2.2.2 aims to achieve

Planning to manage incidents and emergencies assists services to:

- protect children, adults and staff
- maintain children’s wellbeing and a safe environment
- meet the requirements of relevant workplace health and safety legislation.

Having a clear plan for the management and communication of incidents and emergencies assists educators to handle these calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of further harm or damage.”²

Education and Care Services National Regulations - 97 Emergency and evacuation procedures

- (1) The emergency and evacuation procedures required under regulation 168 must set out—
 - (a) instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency; and
 - (b) an emergency and evacuation floor plan.
- (2) For the purposes of preparing the emergency and evacuation procedures, the approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service.
- (3) The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that—
 - (a) in the case of a centre-based service, the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed every 3 months by the staff members, volunteers and children present at the service on the day of the rehearsal and the responsible person in relation to the service who is present at the time of the rehearsal; and
 - (b) the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented.

¹ Education and Care Services National Regulations (version Dec 2019)

² “Guide to the National Quality Framework” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2020

(4) *The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the education and care service premises.*

98 Telephone or other communication equipment

The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that, when educating or caring for children as part of the service, nominated supervisors and staff members of the service have ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication to enable immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services.”³

“What is a Fire Safety Adviser (FSA)?

A FSA is a person who holds a building fire safety qualification for an approved building fire safety course, issued within the last 3 years.”⁴ This role is appointed by the Nominated Supervisor.

Note: an education and care service is a class 9b building so where 30 or more workers are normally employed a Fire Safety Adviser with the relevant qualification is required. For more information visit <https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/QFES-BFS-InfoSheet-FSA.pdf>

“Evacuation Routes

- *The owner/occupier must ensure that nothing impedes or obstructs travel on the evacuation route.*
- *The regulation defines a thing that may impede or obstruct travel as a vehicle, an animal, fixtures or fittings, goods or materials. It may also include people.*
- *An evacuation route is the path a person would take to exit the building. It is usually marked with exit signage. An evacuation route includes the space above the path of travel. An evacuation route must be indicated on the evacuation diagram (refer to items 9 and 44 for further details regarding evacuation diagrams).*
- *Evacuation routes must be a minimum of one metre wide.*
- *A final exit must lead directly to a road or open space and where people are safe from the effects of a fire or hazardous materials emergency in the building.*
- *Evacuation routes start in common areas, not inside units, meeting rooms or individual offices. A common area is a passageway, stairway, corridor or mall.*
- *The owner/occupier must ensure a clear evacuation route for two metres outside the final exit of the building (i.e. that nothing impedes or obstructs travel for two metres outside the final exit).*
- *A final exit door is the last exit door from the building.*
- *A final exit door must lead directly to a place of safety outside the building or open space and where people are safe from the effects of fire or hazardous materials emergency in the building.*

Evacuation Diagrams

Every building with a total floor area greater than 300 sqm must have evacuation signs/ diagrams (except Class 1a and Class 10 buildings).

- *An evacuation sign comprises evacuation procedures and an evacuation diagram.*
- *An evacuation procedure outlines the process to follow in the event of a fire or hazardous materials emergency.*

³ *Education and Care Services National Regulations (version Dec 2019)*

⁴ *“Fire Safety Adviser (FSA)” Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (accessed online April 2020)*
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/QFES-BFS-InfoSheet-FSA.pdf>

- *An evacuation diagram must show the following details (fire safety reference points): The place that corresponds to the place in the building where the diagram is displayed (e.g. 'You are here' signage).*
 - *The route from (you are here) to the nearest exit.*
 - *Each exit of the building.*
 - *Any intercommunication devices in the common areas (e.g. Warden Intercommunication Points).*
 - *The locations of manually operated fire alarms (e.g. break glass alarms).*
 - *The location of any firefighting equipment in the building e.g. fire extinguishers and hose reels.*
 - *The designated assembly area outside the building.*
 - *The route from each exit to the assembly area.*

Exit signs/emergency lighting

- *The owner/occupier must ensure that exit sign covers are in place and unbroken.*
- *Globes for exit signs and emergency lighting must also be in place and undamaged.*
- *A logbook (can be electronic) is required to record six-monthly inspections.*
- *A licensed electrician or appropriately qualified person is required to conduct the maintenance inspections.*

Fire extinguishers

- *The occupier must ensure the maintenance of prescribed fire extinguishers are carried out in accordance with MP 6.1 and by an appropriately qualified person.*
- *Prescribed fire extinguishers are those **required** to be installed in the building.*
- *The maintenance tag **and** either an invoice or summary report are acceptable as a record of maintenance.*
- *An appropriately qualified person is required to conduct six-monthly service inspections.*

Fire and Evacuation Plans

- ***Every** building must have a written fire and evacuation plan in place*
- *This may be a hard copy or in electronic format.*
- *All fire and evacuation plans must be reviewed annually. An example of reviewing the plan may be to walk through the building with the plan to ensure that the evacuation routes have not changed and checking that the same persons remain in the roles listed on the fire and evacuation plan.*
- *The review process must be recorded and kept with other relevant documents.*
- *If changes are made to the building which affects the fire and evacuation plan, the plan must be altered to reflect the changes as soon as practical but no later than one month after the change occurred. Examples of this include refurbishment or a change in the use of the building.*

Fire and Evacuation Instruction

- *The occupier of the building must give general evacuation instructions to workers within two days of commencing work and then annually.*
- *These instructions include the location of fire safety reference points and the procedures for evacuating the building safely in the event of a fire or hazardous materials emergency.*
- *There is no qualification required to provide these instructions.*
- *A record of general evacuation instructions must be kept. This can be in electronic form.*
- *Details on the instruction records must include:*
 - *The name of each person receiving the instruction.*
 - *The name of the person who gave the instruction.*
 - *The date instructions were given.*

- A description of the instructions.
 - These records must be retained with other documents required to be kept.
- A record of practice evacuations must be retained with the evacuation plan and can be in electronic form.
- Details required on the evacuation practice record include:
 - The date of the evacuation.
 - The times the evacuation started and ended.
 - Any action is taken or required as a result of the evacuation, such as a review of the evacuation instructions.

Certificate of Classification Displayed

- The Building Act 1975 - Section 108A requires buildings, apart from Class 1a buildings (a Class 1a building is a normal domestic family home) which were built on or after 1 July 1997, to display a 'Certificate of Classification'.
- It is the building **owner's** responsibility to obtain the 'Certificate of Classification' from the building certifier.
- The 'Certificate of Classification' must be displayed conspicuously, as near as practical to the main entrance.
- An authorised fire officer may require the owner to produce the 'Certificate of Classification' if not displayed. (An authorised fire officer is defined in the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 as a fire officer).

Occupier Statement

- An occupier statement for the maintenance of all fire safety installations must be kept and a copy sent each year to the Commissioner. The occupier statement can be emailed to occupier.statements@qfes.qld.gov.au.
- A copy must be retained with the evacuation plan and can be kept electronically.
- An example of the occupier statement is contained in the Queensland Development Code Mandatory Part 6.1. It is acceptable to utilise a modified form (e.g. company logo/heading etc.) as long as all of the relevant information is contained.

Record Keeping

- A copy of plans and documents, including prescribed documents, must be kept in the building.
- A prescribed document is defined by the Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008 as meaning any of the following for the building –
 - A record of a review of a fire and evacuation plan;
 - A fire and evacuation instruction record;
 - An evacuation practice record;
 - A record of maintenance.
- The occupier must keep fire safety records and prescribed documents for at least 2 years.
- Documents must be produced upon request of an authorised fire officer.
- In addition to keeping the record mentioned above in item 62, a copy of all records must be kept in another place. These copies may be electronic.⁵

Other systems such as Hose Reels and Detection and Alarm Systems

⁵ "Building Fire Safety Management Tool & Advisory Notes" Queensland Fire and Emergency Services V05/2018 (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/FSMT-AdvisoryNotes.pdf>

- Must be tested and maintained as per manufacturers instructions and the requirements under the Building Development Code and Building Fire Safety Regulation.

Approved Providers should refer to the “Building Fire Safety Management Tool & Advisory Notes” Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (effective 05/2018) (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/FSMT-AdvisoryNotes.pdf>

IMPLEMENTATION/ PROCEDURE

The safety of all children and adults at our service is the primary focus when considering the need to evacuate the service.

PREPARATION AND PLANNING

- The service must ensure that at all times there is access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication to enable immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services.
- The service should complete a risk assessment of the risks associated with their service, this is to assist in developing plans for each identified emergency relevant to the service.
- Permission to remove children from the premises in the event of an evacuation will be sought from parent/guardians upon enrolment in the Child Enrolment Form

Evacuation Diagrams and Signs

- The evacuation plan and diagram should be completed and reviewed in consultation with families and educators and where possible involve the local fire and rescue personnel. The following should be considered in the development of evacuation plans and diagrams;
 - Exit points from the building and the path of travel
 - Safe evacuation meeting location
 - The local environment eg; close to an airport, risk of bushfire etc
 - Needs of occupants including babies and toddlers and those with mobility restrictions and medical conditions
 - Location of fire-fighting equipment
 - Method of raising the alarm to evacuate
- Must be designed and attached as per the “Building Fire Safety Management Tool & Advisory Notes” Queensland Fire and Emergency Services V05/2018 (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/FSMT-AdvisoryNotes.pdf>
- Evacuation signs/diagrams must be displayed in a conspicuous position, securely attached to a wall or the internal side of a door and orientated in line with the building layout. Sticky tape, blue tac or velcro is not securely fastened, however screws or sufficient double-sided tape providing sufficient strength is acceptable.
- Evacuation signs/diagrams must be appropriately located on each evacuation route of the building.
- The evacuation diagrams should be positioned at a height of between 1200mm and 1600 mm from the floor level and be orientated to the building direction. It must also be a minimum of A4.
- ‘Orientated’ means the diagram must be understandable to a person reading the sign and the instructions must be accurate and correspond to the building layout.
- An evacuation sign comprises evacuation procedures and an evacuation diagram.
- An evacuation procedure outlines the process to follow in the event of a fire or hazardous materials emergency.
- An evacuation diagram must show the following details (fire safety reference points):
 - The place that corresponds to the place in the building where the diagram is displayed (e.g. ‘You are here’ signage).

- The route from (you are here) to the nearest exit.
- Each exit of the building. Any intercommunication devices in the common areas (e.g. Warden Intercommunication Points).
- The locations of manually operated fire alarms (e.g. break glass alarms). ☑ The location of any fire fighting equipment in the building e.g. fire extinguishers and hose reels.
- The designated assembly area outside the building.
- The route from each exit to the assembly area

Preparedness

- Testing of fire-fighting equipment and exit lights must be carried out in accordance with state legislation by an authorised person.
- Emergency drills should be conducted each month or at least every three months per type of emergency, this may include, lockdown, shelter in place and evacuation.
- The service should use a risk management approach to identify all possible emergencies relevant to the location of the service and other known factors. Most emergencies will fit into one of the following response categories:
 - Evacuation premise – leave and assemble in a safer, nearby location off-site.
 - Lockdown in premise – major incident requiring not just the locking in of all persons but restricting the visibility of persons inside the building, away from doors and windows.
 - Shelter in place – may be used where the building needs to be secured and all persons remain inside, it may be due to external factors or environmental risks, usually, adults and children can go about a safe play within the locked premises with doors and windows closed and locked.
- Because an emergency drill is important to identify the practicality of the procedure a variety of scenarios should be practised including but not limited to;
 - Notification of drills, planned or spontaneous
 - Different time of day, early morning, late afternoon, during rest times or meal times
 - Different days of the week, to ensure different children and educators are involved
 - Involving all occupants (including babies who are sleeping and educators on breaks)
- Where possible services will involve their local Fire Station in a drill annually.
- All records of emergency drills must be recorded and evaluated. Records to be maintained at the centre and off-site electronically.
- Emergency procedures should be modified where drills identify areas for improvement.
- A current, portable record of children’s emergency contacts must be available in all rooms for educators to carry in the event of an emergency or evacuation, this may be with the rolls, the attendance records or accessed electronically where kiosk sign-in is used.
- Services must clearly identify, record and communicate the method upon which bulk communication can quickly and effectively be distributed to families. This should form part of the Emergency Management Plan
- Where 30 or more employees are employed a Fire Safety Advisor with the relevant qualification must be appointed.
- It is important that exits from rooms and the centre are clear at all times, this includes during rest times when there are additional beds/mats in use.
- Young children should only use “safe sleeping bags” when sleeping in a cot, these are not safe when used on beds in the event of a sleep time emergency response.

TRAINING

- All educators will receive training on the safe response to an emergency, including an evacuation of the service within two days of commencing employment. This will be recorded on the Educator Induction Checklist and Fire Training Record
- Records of training must be kept both on-site and off-site, this may be in an electronic format.

- Nominated Supervisors should test educators understanding of the training conducted.
- Training provided should include;
 - Site-specific considerations including children with medical conditions and limited mobility
 - The location of the buildings' escape routes (fire exits and pathways to an exit).
 - A procedure for conducting children and other adults to an exit and then to the designated assembly area (safe place).
 - Checking of all rooms (including toilets) for people (after assessing the risk from smoke or fire and only when safe to do so).
 - The location of fire-fighting equipment (fire extinguishers, fire blankets & fire hose reels).
 - The location of fire alarms or equipment for warning of fire (if applicable).
 - The method of operation of fire-fighting equipment (fire extinguishers, blankets & hose reels).
 - The method used to activate fire alarms or equipment for warning of fire (if applicable).
 - Making the announcement for occupants of the building to evacuate. This can be delivered via messengers or a public address system (if applicable)
 - Contacting the Fire Service using '000' telephone number passing on details of the emergency.
 - Assessing the effectiveness of the building evacuation, with consideration as to who may be missing and where they may still be within the building. (Conducting a headcount)
 - Meeting the attending Fire Service Officer to pass on updated details upon their arrival.

RECORDS

In the event that records at the service are destroyed, such as in a fire, it is important to keep copies of the following records in an alternative location off-site. This may be done electronically.

- Service emergency procedures, plan and diagram
- All records of staff training
- All records of emergency drills practised including the evaluation and follow up
- Minutes of discussions related to emergency procedures and evacuations
- All records of the testing of fire-fighting equipment and exit lights (a copy of this may be held by the company responsible for the testing)

EVACUATIONS

The primary responsibility of all educators and other adults working with children is to remove all children and adults from the building safely. The containment of any emergency should be a second priority. Educators should use **RACE** as a reminder of their responsibilities

Remove – Remove all persons from immediate danger (only if safe to do so)

Alert – Alert nearby personnel and follow your emergency procedures (dial 000)

Contain – Contain, close doors to contain the fire (only if safe to do so)

Extinguish/Evacuate – Extinguish if safe to do so. Evacuate to assembly area. Remain at the assembly area and ensure all children are accounted for.

- It may be appropriate for educators working with babies to place all babies into the designated evacuation cot to assist in removing safely via the safest exit.
- **Educators must collect the daily sign-in registers, current contact list for families and rolls for each room to conduct a roll call.**
- **Emergency medication such as Epi-Pens and asthma medication must be collected by team members.**
- Calmly follow instructions given by the Nominated Supervisor or person in charge or the attending Fire Officers.
- The Nominated Supervisor or person in charge will account for all occupants and report persons missing to Fire Officers.

- **Do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so by the manager or Fire Officers.**

Nominated Supervisor or person in charge

- Investigate the cause of the alarm and on doing so proceed with the following actions.
- Determine whether it is safe to stay inside the building, for example, a false alarm or isolated incident such as burning toast.
- **In the event of smoke/fire:**
 - Remain calm, start the evacuation, Call 000 and give full details including address, the extent of the incident as requested, service contact information and the service address, these should be on the Evacuation Plan
 - In the event of a fire, use fire-fighting equipment to extinguish the fire if safe and competent to do so.
 - Visually check all rooms and close all doors if safe to do so.
 - **Collect first aid, phone, roster/record with adults and children in attendance including visitor book and exit the building via the nearest and safest exit and move directly to the on-site assembly area**
 - Allocate a team member to meet emergency services at a safe and obvious location.
 - Check off attending children and adults on daily attendance records and advise the emergency services of any discrepancies.
 - Remain at the assembly area while safe to do so or relocate to off-site evacuation location and communicate this to all necessary persons.
 - Contact the Service Provider or representative when safe and arrange for parents to be notified, this may be using the bulk communication method.
 - Notify the local Regulatory authority within 24hrs using NQAITS.

LOCKDOWN

- In the event that a situation requires children to be locked into the centre to prevent a person or product from entering the building the following should occur.
 - Educators should be alerted that a lock-down is required
 - Educators should lock all doors and windows to their room and those of near-by rooms such as laundries, staff rooms etc.
 - Children should calmly be escorted to an area away from doors and windows, this may be to a storeroom or corner of a room
 - The Nominated Person or another person in charge should contact 000 to advise of the situation and request assistance
 - All adults should act to ensure the safety of all persons including themselves
 - Contact the Service Provider or representative when safe and arrange for parents to be notified, this may be using the bulk communication method.
 - Notify the local Regulatory authority within 24hrs.
- Lockdown must be practised monthly or at least every 3mths and recorded on the evacuation record. A record of this drill must be kept both at the centre and off-site electronically.
- Educators should discuss possible scenarios and develop action plans for their individual service, these should be recorded and shared with all existing and new educators.

SHELTER IN PLACE

- A shelter in place may be used where a building should be secured to prevent persons or external environmental elements, chemicals, smoke, storm debris from entering the building but it would not be deemed necessary to restrict the movement of adults and children safe

within the indoor environment. Not required to be away from doors or windows for example.

- All doors and windows should be closed and locked
- All adults should act to ensure the safety of all persons including themselves
- It may be necessary to use blankets or towels to prevent smoke or airborne containments from entering the building.
- All adults should ensure that children remain calm and are about to go about general play indoors as is safe.
- Shelter in Place drills should be practised monthly or at least every 3mths and recorded on the evacuation record. A record of this drill must be kept both at the centre and off-site electronically.
- Educators should discuss possible scenarios and develop action plans for their individual service, these should be recorded and shared with all existing and new educators.

BOMB/SUBSTANCE THREAT

- Call **000** for emergency services and seek and follow advice, this may be for an evacuation or a shelter in place.
- Report the threat to the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge.
- Do not touch any suspicious objects found.
- If a suspicious object is found or if the threat identifies a specific area, then **evacuation** may be considered:
 - If appropriate under the circumstances, clear the area immediately within the vicinity of the object of children and staff
 - Ensure children and staff are not directed past the object
 - Ensure children and staff that have been evacuated are moved to a safe, designated location
 - Do not touch, tilt or tamper with the object
- Seek advice from your Approved Provider or Person with Management or Control/Licensee Representative if required.
- Contact parents as required.
- Notify the local Regulatory authority within 24hrs.

If a bomb/substance threat is received by telephone:

- **Do not** hang up
- If possible fill out the phone threat checklist while you are on the phone to the caller
- Keep the person talking for as long as possible and obtain as much information as possible
- Have a co-worker call 000 for emergency services on a separate phone without alerting the caller and notify the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge.
- Listen carefully for a full description:
 - Gender of caller
 - Age of caller
 - Accents and speech impediments
 - Background noises
 - Key phrases used by the caller
- Ask the caller:
 - What is the threat?
 - When is the threat to be carried out?
 - Where the threat may be located?
 - Why the threat is being made?

- Where are you? Where do you live?
- What is your name?
- Once a call is finished:
 - DO NOT HANG UP – it may be possible to trace the call if the telephone line is kept open, regardless of whether the caller hangs up
 - Ensure all information has been written down
 - Report threat to emergency services immediately – use a separate telephone line or mobile phone (in case the caller rings again)
 - Follow any instructions given by emergency services
 - Notify the Approved Provider or management representative
 - Notify the Regulatory Authority within 24hrs

If a bomb/substance threat is received by mail:

- Do not touch, tilt or tamper with the object
- Call 000 for emergency services and seek and follow the advice
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge.

If a bomb/substance threat is received electronically or through the service’s website:

- Do not delete the message
- Call 000 for emergency services and seek and follow the advice
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge.

RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- Child Enrolment Form
- Educator Induction Checklist
- Record of Evacuation, Fire and Lockdown Drills
- Service Specific Plans and Diagrams
- Emergency posters to support emergency management plan
- Phone threat checklist

RECOGNISED AUTHORITIES AND DOCUMENTS WHICH GUIDE POLICY

- “*Education and Care Services National Regulations*”, Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (Dec 2019)
- “*Guide to the National Quality Framework*” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2020
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Services website (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/Pages/owner-occupier.aspx>
- “Fire Safety Adviser (FSA)” Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (accessed online April 2020)
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/QFES-BFS-InfoSheet-FSA.pdf>
- “Understanding the NCC – Building Classifications” National Construction Code Commonwealth of Australia and States and Territories of Australia (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.abcb.gov.au/Resources/Publications/Education-Training/Building-classifications>
- “Evacuation Planning Handbook 4”, Emergency Management Australia, Attorney-General’s Department, Australian Government (2013) (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/1699/handbook-4-evacuation-planning-kh-final.pdf>
- Fire and Rescue NSW website (accessed on-line April 2020)
<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/index.php>

- *“Building Fire Safety Management Tool & Advisory Notes”* Queensland Fire and Emergency Services V03/2017 (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/documents/FSMT-AdvisoryNotes.pdf>

DATE CREATED: December 2020

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
December 2020	Information about Fire Safety Advisor for 30 or more employees. The requirement to do lockdown practise at least every 3mths and discuss possible scenarios to develop a plan.
December 2021	