

HEALTH & SAFETY - EMERGENCY / FIRE DRILLS

Purpose:

This policy will provide a framework for:

- The development of emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines at Castlemaine Childcare Cooperative and Mt Alexander Family Day Care
- Raising the awareness of all educators, children and families about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

SCOPE:

These guidelines will apply to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children and others attending the service.

POLICY

Castlemaine Childcare Co-operative is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at Castlemaine Childcare Cooperative and Mt Alexander Family Day Care services.

Having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises and to ensure effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service.

This policy will help to make sure an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents; to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service. Furthermore, to assure the safety of children in the case of flood, cyclones, fires and other emergencies including accident to the Educator, emergency procedures must be known and practised.

PROCEDURE

1. A list of **emergency numbers** must be displayed adjacent to each telephone, including:
 - Ambulance
 - Police
 - Fire Brigade
 - Hospital
 - Doctor
 - Poisons Information
 - Parent contact numbers
 - FDC office and after hours
2. The Educator must have a written **evacuation plan** for fire and other emergencies (Appendix 13). This must include procedures on the Emergency Management Plan (EMP), up to date, reflects the family day care educator's operating context and includes:
3. The Educator must practice emergency procedures with children at least every six months so that they, and the children, are prepared for emergencies.

Details to be recorded in **Emergency Procedures Log** (Appendix 14).

- Ensuring a risk assessment is conducted annually to identify potential emergencies relevant to the FDC home or approved venue
- Ensuring educators have designed and displayed a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the premises.
- And follow the emergency evacuation floor plan to safely evacuate and assemble at the evacuation point ,in case of emergency
- Ensuring educators have an evacuation kit, including contact numbers for each child, required medication, water, nappies (if required) a mobile telephone
- Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new educators, including educator assistants, students and volunteers, of the emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Ensuring that educators are rehearsing emergency evacuation practices at least once every three months at various times, and ensure all children are involved
- Ensuring educators also include 'lock down' situations practice i.e. in case of an intruder and have a suitable place within in the home that is a 'safe area'
- Ensuring educators document the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures with the date, time and names of children and educators present and any notable outcomes (times, strategies that worked well, required improvements etc.)
- Ensuring educators place a copy of the emergency contact numbers displayed prominently near phones at FDC homes.
- Ensuring a current database is maintained of educators living in a location identified as a risk of bushfire to be recorded in the 'Register of educators and assistant policies and procedures.
- Ensuring regular monitoring of the Bureau of Meteorology and Country Fire Authority websites on days where there is a high or declared risk of bushfire (Daily during high fire season)
- Ensuring that educators and families are notified by telephone that no education and care will be provided by educators living in a location identified of bushfire on a declared Code Red day in accordance with Bureau of Meteorology and Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Requiring educators have an operating telephone to enable immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services
- Requiring educators to have ready access to emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and are adequately trained in their use
- Ensuring educators have working and sufficient smoke detectors positioned throughout their home/venue and they are tested monthly and batteries changed at daylight savings time – March each year.
- Ensuring educators are offered support and debriefing following a serious incident, emergency or evacuatio

For any bushfire-at-risk educators, Castlemaine Childcare Cooperative must ensure that:

1. Bushfire-at-risk educators do not operate on any day declared by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner to be a day of 'Code Red' Fire Danger Rating that would apply to the location in which that family day care residence or approved family day care venue is located; and
2. the service's emergency and evacuation policies and procedures required under regulation 168 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations include a current Emergency Management Plan (EMP) for managing the service's bush-fire related risks;
3. the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) is kept up to date, reflects the family day care educator's/long day care venues' operating context and includes:
 - procedures for monitoring and managing bushfire risks and events;
 - procedures for notifying families of any closure
4. the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) is reviewed and updated as necessary at least once each calendar year.

Procedure for service Closures

1. All FDC educators will have an Emergency Management Plan on-site and all families will be requested to review and sign the document.
2. All educators will download the Vic Emergency app from Apple or Google Play stores.
Families are also strongly encouraged to do so
3. All educators will set a watch zone within 20km of their residence.
4. Code Red days can be called the night before and will be notified via the Vic Emergency app. information is also available.
here <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings>
5. All services listed as withing Bushfire at-risk zones will close and children will be permitted from attending.
6. The LDC & FDC management teams will notify all educators of centre closures when a Code Red day has been called in the service area.
7. Where services are closed or evacuated as a consequence of Condition 5.a families will still be liable to pay fees.
8. In some situations, services may elect to close their services during Severe or Extreme fire danger ratings. Where Educators elect to close on a lower risk rating parents will not be liable to pay fees.
9. Educators will contact all families informing them of service closures
10. Castlemaine Childcare Co-operative will provide ongoing information and updates to educators and families during Code Red days to inform of the service's re-opening.

Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002)
• Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Emergency Management Plan Guidelines and Emergency Management Plan:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/emergency.aspx> • Metropolitan Fire Brigade: www.mfb.vic.gov.au • Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au • State Emergency Service: www.ses.vic.gov.au • WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Source: Mt Alexander FDC handbook
National Law, Regulations and Standards (ACECQA 2011)
Kidsafe Guidelines
Advice from CFA

Reviewed September 2008, July 2009, July 2012, January 2020