



These guidelines are part of a series intended to assist in the development of your service's policies and procedures required under regulations 168 and 169. They set out the main components to be included in your policies and procedures, and considerations for each component.

They should guide how you develop your policies and procedures, and are not an exact format to be followed.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION

POLICY GUIDELINES

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

Emergency and evacuation procedures should be reviewed regularly and must be rehearsed at each approved education and care service. This will assist educators and staff to handle emergencies calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of harm or injury. Given the inherent nature of emergency and evacuation situations, relevant policies and procedures should be sufficiently detailed and well understood so that all staff can react confidently and undertake their designated role in an emergency situation.

To comply with legislation and to be effective, your *Emergency and evacuation policy and procedures* must:

- be informed by a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to your service
- set out instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- include an emergency and evacuation floor plan (noting that a copy of the plan and instructions must be displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises, including near each exit that forms part of the evacuation route of the service)
- be rehearsed and documented every three months. If the service has more than one emergency and evacuation procedure, all procedures must be rehearsed every three months. For example, if you have identified both a lock down and evacuation response procedure in your risk assessments, and incorporated them in your emergency plan, you will need to rehearse both every three months.

In addition, educators and staff must have ready access to a telephone or similar means of communication (regulation 98).

Your policy and procedures will need to consider different types of emergencies. Emergencies situations can range from fire and smoke to personal injuries and threats, bomb threats, suspicious mail, biohazards and chemical spills, gas leaks, floods and other natural disasters. Such emergencies may necessitate a need to evacuate or initiate a lock down.

It is important that your policy and procedures contain sufficient detail to address all possible emergency scenarios in the context of each service environment.

Different emergency situations may present different levels of risk and require different responses, dependent on where a service is located. For example, a service might be located in a flood prone region, or be surrounded by bushland making it more susceptible to bush fires.

Consider consulting with relevant authorities in your jurisdiction, such as a fire safety adviser or emergency services authority, for advice about evacuation plans and emergency exits when developing your policies and procedures (refer to National Quality Standard Element 2.2.2). Consultation involves communicating with those authorities in order to receive advice that is specific to your service.

There are risks inherent in the rehearsal of emergency and evacuation procedures as well as in the actual event of an emergency, and the need for risk assessments should be considered in relation to emergency and evacuation procedure rehearsals.

You might also consider establishing an emergency planning committee, responsible for conducting risk assessments, consultation with relevant authorities, planning and rehearsals of your emergency plans and procedures.

Your policies and procedures should address these requirements, as well as quality practices relating to emergency and evacuation procedures that align with the National Quality Standard.

Every service is different, so it is not sufficient to apply generic policies and procedures to multiple services. You will need to contextualise your policies and procedures to your service's operations and its unique context.

1. Title

Emergency and evacuation policy

2. Policy statement

The policy statement will reflect your service's philosophy about planning and implementing emergency and evacuation procedures. It should provide families, staff and the community with the confidence that the safety and wellbeing of all staff, children, families and visitors to the centre are paramount.

For example:

We are committed to ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending our education and care service by identifying the risks and hazards of emergency and evacuation situations.

Children, educators and staff will regularly rehearse our emergency and evacuation procedures to maximise their safety and wellbeing in the event of an emergency or event requiring evacuation.

3. Background

Your policy needs to include a statement of why this policy is in place.

For example:

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for emergency and evacuation to minimise risk of harm to children.

4. Legislative requirements

Your policy must be consistent with, and refer to, legislative requirements for emergencies and evacuations.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
Regulation 98	Telephone or other communication equipment
Regulation 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures must be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

When writing your policy, you will need to break down what is required under each regulation and how your service will meet these requirements. How these work in practice will be contained in your procedures.

In addition to the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations*, your jurisdiction may have legislation regulating building facility requirements, such as workplace, health and safety legislation, which should also be considered.

As you reflect on the *Emergency and evacuation policy*, it might highlight the need to split its various areas into different policies and procedures that can be readily accessed by all staff members to follow. For example, you may wish to have separate policies for Lock down emergency, Lock/in out emergency, Responding to natural disasters, Medical emergency and Bomb threat.

5. Industry guidelines

Australian Standard AS3745 :2010 – Planning for emergencies in facilities (AS3745) sets out the minimum standards widely accepted throughout the emergency planning industry for the implementation of emergency procedures and training within an organisation. In particular, AS3745 describes the importance of co-ordinating with any other occupants of a multi-storey building and considering the evacuation plan for the whole building when preparing emergency and evacuation policies and procedures. It is recommended that, for services located in multi-storey buildings or otherwise co-located with other occupants, you consult AS3745 when writing your *Emergency and evacuation policy* and *procedures*, in particular when considering how other building occupants may impact on the procedures of the education and care service.

You may choose to engage a professional service offering emergency management advice, and if so, their advice will usually refer to AS3745. It is important, however, to be aware that regulation 97 sets a different, at times higher standard for ensuring the safety of children at a service than AS3745, and that AS3745 uses different terminology to regulation 97.

6. Principles to inform your policy

All decision-making should be carried out in accordance with the principles of your service's *Emergency and evacuation policy*. Examples of principles could include, but are not limited to:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children is a paramount consideration for our service. Therefore, we conduct rehearsals and reviews of our emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Our educational program promotes opportunities for children to learn and develop in all aspects of the program. Key skills such as gross motor,

coordination, language and cognitive skills can be practiced during evacuation rehearsals.

- We are committed to regular communication with families about all aspects of the educational program, their child's development, and the service. This includes information about emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Our educators and staff are key to our service's effective operation. Part of the training and development they receive focuses on our *Emergency and evacuation policy* and *procedures*. This includes conducting and documenting evacuation rehearsals in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Additional consideration for approved providers with multiple services

Where an approved provider has multiple services, the *Emergency and evacuation policy* should note that separate procedures will need to be developed and customised to each service. For example, each service requires a site- specific risk assessment (regulation 97(2)) and site-specific evacuation plan (regulation 97(4)). These will consider site-specific factors such as: its location, neighbours, configuration (including multi-storey), identified assembly points, needs of the children, and staffing (including ancillary staff such as cooks etc.).

Additional considerations for multi-storey buildings

Services and family day care (FDC) educators operating in multi-storey buildings encounter a unique set of circumstances which must be taken into account to ensure a safe environment for children, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of safe and effective emergency and evacuation plans. Your policy principles must reflect the nature of the particular multi-storey building. For example, during an emergency there is significant risk to children evacuating at the same time as others, infants and non- ambulant children may be present, and increased supervision may be required.

For centre-based services, a risk assessment is required to be conducted at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after the approved provider becomes aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children. A review should assess whether all children can be safely evacuated from the building, including infants and non-ambulatory children. As soon as practicable after reviewing this risk assessment, any necessary updates must be made to the emergency and evacuation procedures.

Given the inherent nature of services located above ground floor, additional risks may be present in the rehearsal of emergency and evacuation procedures,

as well as in the actual event of an emergency from such buildings, and the need for risk assessments should be considered in relation to emergency and evacuation procedure rehearsals.

Emergency and evacuation procedures for services in multi-storey buildings should be developed with reference to the emergency and evacuation procedures for the whole building. Where possible, services in multi-storey buildings should seek to coordinate rehearsal of emergency and evacuation procedures with other building tenants, and a building manager may be a good point of contact to arrange this

7. Key terms

To make it easier for your audience, provide definitions of key terms that may not be used every day. For example:

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	acecqa.gov.au
Australian Standards	Australian Standards are documents that set out specifications, procedures and guidelines that aim to ensure products, services, and systems are safe, consistent, and reliable.	
Direct Egress	<p>‘Direct egress’ means the ability to move and directly exit to an assembly area that is at the same level as the education and care service and is outside the service premises and away from the building. This does not include travelling through sets of stairs (including fire isolated stairwells), busy occupied areas, traffic or other hazards, or obstructions.</p> <p>For example, a centre-based service, family day care residence or venue is located on the second storey of a multi-storey building. The building is on sloping land which means that the service, residence or venue has direct access to the outdoors at ground level (without the need to travel up or down any stairs) which leads to the assembly area(s) outside the education and care premises and building.</p>	Guide to the NQF
Emergency	An incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person at the service. For example, a flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down or other type of emergency response.	Guide to the NQF
Emergency drill/ rehearsal	A process to rehearse anticipated emergency scenarios or events, designed to help clarify roles and responsibilities, provide training and verify the adequacy of the emergency response.	
Emergency services	Includes ambulance, fire brigade, police and state emergency services.	info.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/public-safety-and-law/emergency-services
Evacuation floor plan	An evacuation plan is used where it is deemed necessary to evacuate the immediate area or building to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults. It may also have the name ‘evacuation diagram’.	
Evacuation route	Continuous path of travel (including exits, public corridors and the like) from any part of a building to a safe place .	ncc.abc.gov.au/ncc-online/national-dictionary-of-terms
Fire safety adviser	A specified role in some jurisdictions. May coordinate fire safety management plans, fire and evacuation plans, procedures, review and practice, and give or arrange instruction to staff on evacuation and the operation of firefighting equipment.	

Term	Meaning	Source
Harm	Physical or mental injury; hurt.	Dictionary definition
Hazard	An unavoidable danger or risk, even though often foreseeable.	Dictionary definition
Lock down	A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving or entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.	
Lock in	A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.	
Lock out	A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.	
Multi-storey building	A building with more than two storeys, including the ground floor. Each level of a split level storey (or a mezzanine), is counted as one storey. For these purposes, the ground floor is the first storey, the first floor is the second storey, and so forth.	National Regulations (Definitions)
Risk	Exposure to the chance of injury or loss; a hazard or dangerous chance.	Dictionary definition
Risk assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking and determining suitable mitigations.	

8. Links to other policies

Refer to related policies and procedures, for example:

- Providing a child safe environment
- Dealing with medical conditions in children
- Enrolment and orientation
- Excursions
- Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- The administration of first aid

9. Induction and ongoing training

State information about induction training and frequency of ongoing training and information sharing to assist managers, coordinators, educators and other staff to fulfil their roles effectively. For example, training staff on the use of emergency equipment, fire warden responsibilities, and/or first aid/asthma/anaphylaxis.

10. Policy created/reviewed

Include the date the policy was created, reviewed or changes were made.

11. Monitoring, evaluation and review

State when the policy will be reviewed and who will be responsible for this. All procedures need to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date and compliant with the National Law and

National Regulations. Your policies should record the dates they have been reviewed or when changes have been made, as well as the next review date. In the event of a revision or change of policy, you will need to ensure educators and families are made aware of the changes and the revised policy, removing access to electronic or hardcopies of the older versions. Follow appropriate record-keeping processes for each updated version of the policy. In addition to regular periodic reviews, you may find it appropriate to review your policy following a risk assessment or a rehearsal debrief that identifies a need for policy revision.

12. Checklist

Have you referenced the relevant regulations and are these reflected in the policy?

Does the title provide a clear and concise statement identifying the intent of the policy?

Have you checked the policy requirements and referenced related legislation that applies to your service type?

Does your policy statement provide a framework for decision-making and ensure consistent practice?

Does your policy statement reflect your service's philosophy?

Is it clear why this policy exists?

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION

PROCEDURES GUIDELINES

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation. These guidelines are part of a series intended to assist in the development of your policies and procedures required under regulations 168 and 169. They are to guide how you develop your policies and procedures, and are not an exact format to be followed.

Your procedures should be written in clear and concise language, making them easy to read and understand. This makes it easy for anyone within your service to implement.

The steps and guidelines you document will not only guide your practice, but also inform regulatory authorities of roles and responsibilities at the service.

When thinking about your procedures for dealing with emergency and evacuation, they need to be practical and achievable. For example, if your procedure states that you will rehearse your lock down, lock in/out, natural disaster and bomb threat emergency procedures every three months, you will need to make sure steps are in place for this to occur.

The approved provider must ensure emergency and evacuation procedures are developed and regularly rehearsed. This will assist educators and staff to handle emergencies calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of harm or injury. Given the inherent nature of emergency and evacuation situations, all procedure guidelines should be sufficiently detailed and well understood so that all staff can react confidently and undertake their designated role in an emergency situation.

Emergency and evacuation procedures must:

- set out instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- clearly state what is to happen in an emergency and who is responsible for each step at the service
- include an emergency and evacuation floor plan (noting that a copy of the plan and instructions must be displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises, including near each exit that forms part of the evacuation route out of the service)
- be rehearsed and followed by all educators, staff and children at the service. If the service has more than one emergency and evacuation procedure, all procedures must be rehearsed every three months
- be informed by a risk assessment including all possible types of emergencies and evacuations that may be identified as relevant to your service.

It is required in Element 2.2.2 of the National Quality Standard that your emergency and evacuation procedures are developed in conjunction with relevant authorities/experts.

Every service is different so it is not sufficient to apply generic emergency and evacuation procedures to multiple services. For example, different services will require different emergency and evacuation floor plans, and depending on their context will have unique risk profiles and responses required. A service may be located in a flood prone region, or be surrounded by bushland making it more susceptible to bush fires. It is important that your policy and procedures contain sufficient detail to address all possible emergency scenarios in the context of each service environment.

1. Title

Emergency and evacuation procedures

2. Reference to policy and philosophy

Here you refer to your *Emergency and evacuation policy* as seen in your policy documents. You can reference where you will find the policy to help those looking for it.

Your procedures will also reflect your service's overall philosophy and evidence-based emergency and evacuation best practices.

3. Procedures

This is where you detail the way you will implement the *Emergency and evacuation policy*.

It is the 'How to' in your service and includes specific step-by-step procedures for dealing with emergencies and evacuations.

Some areas that will be outlined here should include:

- Where the procedures will be kept.
- When they were last reviewed.
- Resources required for the implementation of procedures, e.g. mobile phone, emergency contact numbers, children's footwear, a first aid kit, medications, the attendance roll, nappies, food,

water, identifying uniforms, iPad or other electronic tablet (if required), and chargers.

- How required items are transported during evacuation. If, for example, emergency evacuation bags are used, also note who is responsible for auditing and restocking them and when this will be undertaken.
- Testing and maintenance of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets, smoke detectors, and timeframes as recommended by recognised authorities.
- The process for the different rehearsals as set out in your policy (e.g. lock down, lock in/out, evacuation, bomb threat, natural disaster, etc.) and when they will be undertaken to comply with regulation 97. Rehearsals should be carried out at different times to accommodate differing levels of attendance and configurations of age groups in attendance, e.g. carrying out some rehearsals when infants and non-ambulatory children are present.
- Alternative evacuation routes that could be utilised.
- Assembly areas. These need to be a safe space for the children to be able to get to, and allow for easy supervision once there. Consideration should be given to moving children to the space, including infants and non-ambulatory children, and transportation to the area if it is offsite. Consideration also needs to be given to potential weather conditions (e.g. if a local park is selected as the assembly point, how will the children be protected when it is raining?).
- How to communicate with families to advise where their children are, how they are being kept safe, and how and when they can be collected.
- How to communicate with co-located services/organisations.
- Systems to monitor implementation of procedures.
- How assessment and reflections will be undertaken following an emergency or rehearsal process, and any adjustments or improvements made.
- Consultation with relevant authorities and experts to inform and monitor evacuation procedures.
- Record keeping documentation, checklists or any other templates and documents that might be associated with the procedures.
- Regular induction and training for educators and staff so they are confident about what they need to do should an emergency arise.
- The orientation process for new families, students on practicum, volunteers and visitors.
- Training in the use and maintenance of emergency

equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets, evacuation cots, etc.

Services and FDC educators operating in multi-storey buildings will also need to include information such as:

- Details of when and how all educators and staff will be trained in first aid response upon induction and re-trained in line with refresher requirements.
- Details about specific evacuation procedures for any infants and non-ambulatory children and any staffing implications.
- Instructions for how the service assesses children's abilities to walk confidently prior to using evacuation stairwells and any staffing implications.
- Instructions in relation to lifts not being used during an evacuation rehearsal or emergency unless authorised by relevant emergency services.
- Coordination of rehearsals of emergency and evacuation procedures with other building tenants.
- Details about specific evacuation procedures for any infants and non-ambulatory children and any staffing implications, particularly when children may be using an upper level of a multi-story residence and there is only one internal stairwell to the ground floor, or where children are sleeping or staying in care overnight.

For a centre-based service located in a multi-storey building with other occupants, and on a floor without direct egress to an assembly area, the approved provider must ensure the emergency and evacuation procedures include the following additional information:

- all possible evacuation routes from each storey on which your premises is located;
- the routes that are proposed to be used in an evacuation;
- how all children, including non-ambulatory children, will be safely evacuated. Your policy should also address how young children and infants will be safely evacuated;
- the stages in which an evacuation will be carried out;
- the identity of the person-in-charge of an evacuation;
- staff roles and responsibilities during an evacuation; and
- arrangements made with other occupants of the building in relation to evacuation.

Examples of where providers operating multiple services would need emergency and evacuation procedures customised to each service include the site-specific risk assessment (regulation 97(2)) and site-specific evacuation plan (regulation 97(4)). These will consider

factors such as: location, configuration (including multi-storey), identified assembly points, needs of the children, and staffing (including ancillary staff such as cooks, etc).

For FDC services, customised emergency and evacuation procedures are required for each FDC educator's residence or venue, and should address any specific risks associated with being in a multi-storey building.

As you reflect on the *Emergency and evacuation policy*, it might highlight the need to split its various areas into different procedures, which will be displayed or accessed by educators and staff to follow in relation to their required actions. For example, as required under regulation 97, a copy of your emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions will be displayed prominently near exits to your services premises for staff to easily refer to.

4. Roles and responsibilities

This is where you will designate specific roles and responsibilities for the different people within the service. This needs to align with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (see pp. 9–10 below).

It is important to note that it is the legal responsibility of approved providers to ensure systems are in place to minimise risk and ensure health and safety procedures are implemented by the responsible people in services including family day care environments (if applicable). Ultimate responsibility lies with the approved provider to ensure their service/s are meeting the requirements under the *Education and Care Services National Law*.

For a centre-based service located in a multi-storey building with other occupants, and on a floor without direct egress to an assembly area, the procedures must identify the person-in-charge of an evacuation.

When developing this section consider:

- What are the roles and responsibilities of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, other staff, volunteers, students, and families in your service in relation to dealing with complaints?
- How will you clearly define these roles and expectations and where will it be documented?
- Do the roles and responsibilities reflect your service type?
- What specific responsibilities will be assigned to the person-in-charge of an evacuation? If the person-in-charge is absent from the service for any reason or resigns from their job at service, what arrangements are in place to ensure someone will fulfil this role until a new person-in-charge is appointed?
- Why are clear and robust procedures for dealing with complaints important for children's safety, health and wellbeing?
- How will you learn from the administration of these procedures to improve your practices?
- How will you ensure that the necessary tools are available so the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators and other staff members can follow the procedures? How will they be made aware of the procedures?



An example of roles and responsibilities could include, but is not limited to:

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the <i>Emergency and evacuation policy and procedures</i> are in place • ensure that the procedures include arrangements with other occupants of a multi-storey building in relation to the evacuation of children • take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures • ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection • notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or » significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or » significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service • ensure a risk assessment has been undertaken to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service • conduct a risk assessment of emergency evacuation routes and assembly points • review the risk assessment at least once every 12 months and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children from a service, family day care residence or venue located in a multi-storey building with other occupants • ensure that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plans and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit of the service premises, including near each exit that forms part of an evacuation route • ensure emergency equipment is tested within the timeframes recommended by recognised authorities • ensure that designated emergency exits/routes are kept clear at all times to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation • document rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures • notify the regulatory authority of any serious incidents, change of circumstances and complaints • centre-based service: ensure that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed every three months by the educators, staff, volunteers, visitors 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 • family day care service: ensure that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed every three months by each family day care educator and the children being educated and cared for by the family day care educator on that day.

Roles	Responsibilities
Nominated supervisor/ Responsible person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures every three months • discuss emergency and evacuation procedures with other occupants of a multi-storey building to ensure the safe evacuation of children • keep a documented record of each rehearsal and reflections that occurred after • collaborate with educators and staff to develop procedures to manage all risks associated with emergency and evacuation situations • ensure the development of an emergency evacuation floor plan • ensure educators and staff have ready access to an operating telephone or similar means of communication and that emergency telephone numbers are displayed near telephones • ensure that designated emergency exits/routes are kept clear at all times to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation • ensure educators and staff have ready access to emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and that staff are adequately trained in their use • ensure that emergency equipment is tested within the timeframes recommended by recognised authorities • ensure that up-to-date portable emergency contact lists are held in each room within the service and that evacuation procedures state who will carry this list during evacuation • ensure that emergency and evacuation risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly and any necessary updates provided to the approved provider • ensure the emergency and evacuation instructions and floor plan are displayed in a prominent position near each exit of the service premises, including near exits that forms part of the evacuation route and that all staff and educators are aware of these • ensure that all educators and staff are trained in the emergency and evacuation procedures and aware of their roles and responsibilities in an emergency or evacuation • ensure that all educators and staff are aware of emergency evacuation points • ensure that families are regularly reminded of the emergency procedures in place at the service • ensure procedures consider collecting children’s medication and managing children’s medical conditions.
Centre-based educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rehearsing emergency and evacuation procedures with everyone who is present at the service at least every three months and that the rehearsal is documented • communicating with parents about emergency procedures.
Family day care educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rehearsing emergency and evacuation procedures every three months • involve each family day care educator and the children being educated by the family day care educator on the day of the rehearsal • keep a documented record of each rehearsal and reflections of the process • discuss emergency and evacuation procedures with other occupants of a multi-storey building to ensure the safe evacuation of children.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure they have the service’s up-to-date contact details • ensure they complete the attendance record on delivery and collection of their child • provide emergency contact details on their child’s enrolment form and ensure this is kept up-to-date • ensure they are aware of the service’s <i>Emergency and evacuation policy and procedures</i> • ask them to reinforce the service’s emergency and evacuation procedures with their child • if present at the service at the time, ensure that they follow the directions of educators and staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency and evacuation procedures.

The following table will assist you in developing procedures specific to your service’s needs and context. Referring to the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* when you are writing your procedures will assist you to ensure that you are meeting your obligations.

Areas to include in your procedures	Things to consider and outline in each area (this will be specific to the context of your service)	Strategies for monitoring and implementing procedures	Related policy and/or procedures
<p>Risk assessment Act: 167 Regs: 97, 116 QA2 QA3: 3.2.1 QA4: 4.1 QA5 QA6 QA7: 7.1.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaking a risk assessment that considers all possible emergencies and evacuations (for FDC services, one will need to be completed for each FDC educator’s residence or venue), including rehearsals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a child safe environment Enrolment and orientation Incident, injury, trauma and illness The administration of first aid
<p>Emergency evacuation plan, including rehearsals of processes noted in the policy Act: 167 Regs: 97, 98 QA2 QA3: 3.2.1 QA4: 4.1 QA5 QA6 QA7: 7.1.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How you intend to meet the regulations related to emergency and evacuation. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for educators, staff and families and consider how you will inform them of their roles and specific responsibilities, including the person-in-charge of an evacuation. In the event of an emergency, who you will contact and how. Who is responsible for checking each area of the service, including outdoor play spaces and equipment, to ensure all children are gathered and evacuated. The stages in which an evacuation will be carried out, considering the other occupants for services in multi-storey buildings. What the designated and appropriate routes and assembly points are (think about your risk management process for the different possibilities, ensuring you are reducing the risk and that assembly points outside the service allow the children and adults to meet in a safe space). What you may need for specific children, e.g. a medical management plan and associated medication. Who has first aid training (including asthma and anaphylaxis) and if it is up-to-date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure your policies and procedures are available for all to access. Develop a schedule of emergency and evacuation rehearsals (at least every three months for all procedures) and a template for documenting and reviewing these. Consider implementing unannounced rehearsals or conduct rehearsals on different days of the week at different times. Consider creating a role delegation flowchart outlining each role and responsibility. Regularly review supervision plans and ratio checks. Ensure all educators, staff and volunteers understand each step of the procedures. Create an emergency contact list and communication tree. These will need to be updated regularly. Ensure educators and staff regularly maintain emergency contact records and that families fill out attendance records on arrival and at departure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a child safe environment Enrolment and orientation Incident, injury, trauma and illness The administration of first aid Dealing with medical conditions in children

Areas to include in your procedures	Things to consider and outline in each area (this will be specific to the context of your service)	Strategies for monitoring and implementing procedures	Related policy and/or procedures
<p>Emergency evacuation plan, including rehearsals of processes noted in the policy, cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are locked gates on any designated exit route and, if so, where keys are stored and who is responsible for collecting them. • How children are accounted for at the assembly area and actions to be taken in the event there are children unaccounted for. • Considerations for when assembled after evacuating, including the accessibility of the assembly point and the possibility of being there for an extended period of time or of inclement weather. • Consultation with authorities or other experts in relation to the development, assessment and monitoring of emergency and evacuation procedures. • If the assembly area is in a car park, consider the possible attendance of emergency services and vehicles in the car park and vehicles travelling on an adjacent road. Will you need traffic mitigation equipment to separate children from vehicles? • What you may need for specific children (e.g. a medical management plan and associated medication), where they are stored, and who is responsible for collecting these during an evacuation. • Whether you are required to consult with authorities or other experts in relation to the development, assessment and monitoring of emergency and evacuation procedures. • Who is responsible for documenting and evaluating rehearsals. • Any implications for staffing ratios based on the <i>Emergency and evacuation policy and procedures</i>. • Promoting familiarity with all evacuation routes through regular rehearsals. • Whether the location of the displayed emergency and evacuation floor plans meet your jurisdiction's requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a checklist for emergency evacuation bags (if used) and regularly check they are stocked and in the designated location. • Offer regular opportunities for children to practice evacuation skills as part of the educational program. • Consider opportunities for families to take part in regular emergency rehearsals to ensure they are familiar with the procedures. • Offer regular opportunities for children to practice evacuation skills as part of the educational program. • Consider opportunities for families to take part in regular emergency rehearsals to ensure they are familiar with the procedures. • Develop any records or checklists associated with the procedures. • Include emergency and evacuation training as part of the educator and staff induction process and have it as a regular item on meeting agendas. • For services with school age children, consider how to involve the children in the evaluation and reflection process after an event or rehearsal. 	

Areas to include in your procedures	Things to consider and outline in each area (this will be specific to the context of your service)	Strategies for monitoring and implementing procedures	Related policy and/or procedures
<p>Emergency evacuation plan, including rehearsals of processes noted in the policy, cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you intend to transport required items such as a mobile phone, emergency contact numbers, children’s footwear, a first aid kit, medications, the attendance roll, nappies, food, water, iPad or other electronic tablet (if required), chargers etc. If emergency evacuation bags or similar are used, where they are located, what they contain, who is responsible for collecting the bag, and how/ when audits are conducted on the contents. • The location and movement of infants and non-ambulatory children. • Specific evacuation procedures for infants and non-ambulatory children and any staffing implications, including the location and use of equipment, e.g. carriers, cots, prams. • Consideration of how equipment such as evacuation cots or prams are able to travel through evacuation routes given distances and any obstacles (e.g. a playground, narrow doorways, gates). • Consideration for children evacuating from a multi-storey building, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » any additional educators or staff required to assist in the evacuation » any equipment required to ensure the safety of children evacuating via stairs » how and where equipment (e.g. prams, cots) is stored and managed should infants and non-ambulatory children need to be evacuated from above ground. • Regular induction and training for educators and staff. • Access to an operating phone to allow communication with families and emergency services. • If your procedures include steps from start of evacuation to finish of evacuation, including assembly points. • If located in a rural area or in an area that experiences natural disasters, whether there is a community response that you need to take into consideration when developing your procedures. 		

Areas to include in your procedures	Things to consider and outline in each area (this will be specific to the context of your service)	Strategies for monitoring and implementing procedures	Related policy and/or procedures
Emergency evacuation plan, including rehearsals of processes noted in the policy, cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are any families at your service that would be part of this community response. • Have you liaised with your relevant emergency services/local council? • In the event of a lock down in a centre-based service, how is the need for a lock down communicated to educators and staff without alerting the person/s responsible for the threat? How do the educators and staff know where the appropriate and safe locations within the service are to take children? 		

5. Procedures created/reviewed

Include the date the procedures were created or reviewed.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

State when the procedures will be reviewed and who will be responsible for this. All procedures need to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date and compliant with the National Law and National Regulations. Your procedures should record the dates they have been reviewed or when changes have been made, as well as the next review date. In the event of a revision or change of procedure, you will need to ensure educators and families are made aware of the changes and the revised procedure, removing access to electronic or hardcopies of the older versions. Follow appropriate record-keeping processes for each updated version of the procedures.

In addition to regular periodic reviews, you may find it appropriate to review your policy following a risk assessment or a rehearsal debrief.

7. Checklist

Do the *Emergency and evacuation procedures* align with your *Emergency and evacuation policy*?

Have your procedures been written in plain English and can they be easily implemented by an educator or staff new to your service?

Is it clear who is responsible for the implementation of the procedures?

Are all educators and staff aware of the procedures and can implement them if required?

Have your policy and procedures been communicated to families?

Do you need to develop any resources to monitor and record the procedures?

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Include links to useful resources that have helped inform the development of your policy. Be mindful of any state or territory specific content.

Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- [ACECQA – Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- [ACECQA – Opening a new service](#)
- [Community Early Learning Australia – CELA’s Simple Guide to bushfire advice for children’s services: 2020 update](#)
- [NSW Government – Emergency Planning, Management, Response and Recoveries](#)
- [Queensland Government – Display of emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions](#)
- [Queensland Government – Emergency and evacuation policies and procedures under the National Law](#)
- [Queensland Government – Guidance for approved providers: early childhood education and care services operating in multi-storey buildings](#)
- [Queensland Government – Incident and emergency management](#)
- [Tasmanian Fire Service – Information and resources](#)
- [Victorian Government – Department of Education and Training Emergency Management Requirements](#)
- [Emergency Management Plan \(EMP\) sample template for Early Childhood Services](#)