



The Australian, state and territory Education Ministers have agreed to changes for approved providers of centre-based education and care services to maintain current information about service delivery, including notifying the regulatory authority of changes to the ages of children being educated or cared for and the nature of care provided.

CHANGING YOUR SERVICE (CENTRE-BASED SERVICES)



WHEN DO THE CHANGES START?

The new legislative requirements under the Education and Care Services National Regulations will commence on 1 October 2023.

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

Visit nqfreview.com.au

Contact your [regulatory authority](#)

WHY ARE THE REQUIREMENTS CHANGING?

These changes will strengthen regulatory authorities' access to timely, accurate information about the type of education and care provided by a centre-based service, and allow them to engage more proactively to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of children. Regulatory authorities will have access to more current information to enable them to better identify any additional or new risks that may present within services.

These new requirements will also enable families to access more current information about the services available to them when selecting an education and care service for their child, for example, through the Starting Blocks website. The changes will also help to ensure that children attend service settings that are appropriate for their age and needs. For example, services that are staffed by educators with the required qualifications and knowledge specific to the age group of children being educated and cared for.

WHAT ARE THE CHANGES?

A new regulation has been created to require approved providers of centre-based education and care services to notify the regulatory authority within 7 days when there are changes to the ages of children and changes to the nature of care provided.

When there is a change in the ages of children being cared for and/or the nature of care provided, providers need to ensure that each service has the facilities, staffing qualifications and knowledge specific to the current age group of children



attending. For example, if the service begins to provide education and care to a cohort of children aged 0-2, the service will need to undertake a range of changes, including nappy change facilities and age-appropriate resources and programming to meet the specific needs of that age group. One example of a change to a service's 'nature of care' may be a long day care service that starts providing outside school hours care.

The approved provider must notify the regulatory authority of:

- any change to the range of ages of children to be educated or cared for by a service
- any change to the nature of education and care to be provided by a service.

In general, the notification must be in writing to the regulatory authority in which the service approval was granted.

There will be an associated offence for failing to notify the regulatory authority of those changes of up to \$4,500 for an individual.

If a provider seeks to change the ages of children attending the service, and there is a condition on service approval that relates to the ages of children, an application to amend service approval will be required.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- ACECQA [The Guide to the NQF](#) – Standard 3.1 The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service and Element 7.1.2 Management systems
- For information on maintaining current information about service delivery contact your [regulatory authority](#).

Acknowledgment: The information in this publication is accurate pending the Australian, state and territory education ministers' agreement of the amended law and regulations.