

Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure

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| Date adopted | 12 March 2024 (v4) |
| Adopted by | Director City Life |
| Review due | 12 March 2026 |
| Responsible officer | Manager Child, Family and Youth Services |
| Records reference | 10014854 |

1. Purpose

Melton City Council is committed to:

- safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at Melton City Council
- the development of specific Emergency and evacuation plan, procedures, practices, and guidelines at Melton City Council children's services
- raising the awareness of everyone attending Melton City Council children's services programs about potential Emergency situations and appropriate responses.
- addressing potential Emergency situations, appropriate responses during and following incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff, and others at the service.

2. Application And Scope

This policy and procedure applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge, Responsible Person's, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the early years' service programs and activities of Melton City Council, including during offsite excursions and activities.

This policy and procedure include Melton City Council children's services that do not directly care for children but have a role in the promotion of health, wellbeing, and safety of children with families and the community.

3. Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 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/Primary Nominee or educator (Regulation 158(1)) |
| Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) | Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) Schools, kindergartens and childcare facilities assessed to be at the highest risk of fire are placed on the department's Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR). |

| Term | Definition |
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| Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA) | Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA) are those properties identified to be at risk of bushfire and grass fire. Go to the website link for bushfire overlay areas - Vicplan (mapshare.vic.gov.au) . In the search bar add an address & downloaded property report which will indicate if that address is identified in the BPA e.g., FDC residence, community centre etc. |
| Country Fire Authority (CFA) | CFA respond to a variety of fire and Emergency incidents. They are also involved in a range of other activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fire safety building inspections • delivering community awareness, education, and safety programs • post-incident analysis and fire investigation • fire prevention planning and land use planning at a municipal level. |
| 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 reasonably 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 (National Regulations) |
| 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. The FDC unit follows the Civic Centre Emergency Manual and refers and recognizes this manual as the 'EMP' and will use this in conjunction with the <i>FDC UNIT SERVICE Risk Assessment</i> . |
| 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. |

| Term | Definition |
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| Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record | <p>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.</p> <p>Details required include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>These details must be kept for the period specified in National Regulation 183. A sample Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record is available on the Melton city council website in the Families and Childrens policy and procedure section (Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness) and the FDC portal.</p> |
| Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) | <p>MFB provide a fire and rescue service and are the first to respond to specific medical emergencies. The MFB aims to reduce the incidence and impact of fire and other emergencies on the community. This is achieved through the delivery of educational strategies that assist the community to become more self-reliant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fire safety building inspections and checking firefighting equipment, • delivering community awareness, education, and safety programs. |
| Notifiable Incident | <p>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 (see <i>Sources</i>).</p> |

| Term | Definition |
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| Serious Incident | An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma, or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, Emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (National Regulation 12). A serious incident should be documented in an Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record (ACECQA website – see <i>Sources</i>) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority (DET) must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (National Regulation 176(2)(a)). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in National Regulation 183. |
| WorkSafe Victoria | The manager of Victoria’s workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria’s responsibilities are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help avoid workplace injuries occurring, • enforce Victoria’s occupational health and safety laws, • provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers. |

4. Policy

1. Responsibility/Accountability

- 1.1 The Approved Provider and persons with management or control are responsible for, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure*. This will be achieved through the Leadership Group and their service staff.
- completion of the EMP and saving a copy on the Melton City Council Records Management system.
 - a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (National Regulations 97).
 - for service locations that are deemed to be at risk of grassfire by the Department of Education (DE), an Early Childhood Service Fire Readiness Review Checklist is completed annually to guide planning on grassfire preparedness ahead of the summer period.
 - developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an Emergency (National Regulation 97(1)(a)).
 - an Emergency and evacuation floor plan is developed (National Regulation 97(1)(b)).
 - that the Emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least once every three months by all at the service (National Regulation 97(3)(a)).
 - that the rehearsals of the Emergency and evacuation procedures are documented (National Regulation 97(3)(b)).

- 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 (National Regulation 97(4)).
- that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone or similar for immediate communication with parents/guardians and Emergency services (National Regulation 98) and that phone numbers of Emergency services are displayed.
- identifying potential onsite Hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risk.
- all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including Emergency exit lighting.
- the location of First Aid kits, fire extinguishers and other Emergency equipment are clearly signposted.
- all Emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code (e.g., fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems)
- providing a fully equipped portable First Aid kit.
- developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they can deal with Emergency situations e.g. First Aid, Emergency management and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) training.
- regularly reviewing, evaluating, and updating EMPs, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident).
- conducting spot checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure* are being complied with.
- notifying DoE in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident.
- Completion of the Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record.
- where required notifying DE within seven 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)(b)(i), National Regulations 175(2)(b) & (c) and 176).
- reporting Notifiable Incidents in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria.
- engaging with the MFB and/or CFA regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans.
- all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an Emergency.
- there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and relating procedures.
- all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation.
- developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off.

- Ensure family day care educators engaged by or registered with the service and other approved services, that are located in an area prone to bushfire (BPA) or grass fire risk, close and do not operate on any day declared by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner to be a day of 'Catastrophic' Fire Danger Rating that applies to the area or district at which the family day care educator's residence or other approved service is located.

1.2 The Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge, Responsible Person or FDC fieldworker is responsible for

- identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an Emergency.
- ensuring that Emergency contact details are provided for educators and on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept easily accessible and up to date.
- ensuring that an Attendance Record is maintained to account for all children attending the service.
- keeping a written or electronic record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure.
- ensuring that the Emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions and that all parents/guardians, volunteers, contract staff and relief staff are briefed and aware of the procedures.
- If identified as a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) venue/premises to ensure the FDC educator will complete annually an Early Childhood Service Fire Readiness Review Checklist to guide planning on grassfire preparedness ahead of the summer period.
- ensuring that children are adequately always supervised and protected from Hazards and harm.
- ensuring that the EMP is followed in the event of an Emergency.
- testing alarms and communication systems regularly.
- informing the Approved Provider/Manager of any serious or Notifiable Incidents that must be reported to Council Health and Safety Team, Department of Education or WorkSafe Victoria.

1.3 Educators and other staff are responsible for

- implementing the procedures and responsibilities in the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Procedure* and the service's EMP.
- supervising the children in their care and protecting them from Hazards and harm.
- providing support to children before, during and after emergencies.
- checking that the Visitor Record and Attendance Record is completed and checked in the event of an emergency and at the beginning and end of each session.
- checking that the Emergency evacuation diagram and procedure is displayed in prominent positions, as per compliance, and that all attending the service are made aware of these.

- Emergency evacuation diagram to include any areas used for education and care, any water hazards and any multi-storey use, and plan for the safe emergency and evacuation for all users.
- complete and submit risk assessments and planning annually, when the venue changes significantly and as instructed by the council staff to minimise risk of harm or hazard to the educator, children, visitors, and other persons on site.
- rehearsing Emergency evacuation procedures with the children at least once every three months (or more often, as required) and ensuring that these are evaluated, documented, and stored as required.
- providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of Emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures, and manuals etc.
- completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record as required.
- informing the Nominated Supervisor about any serious incidents or Notifiable Incidents at the service.
- attending First Aid, Emergency management and OHS training, and refresher training as required.
- communicating with parents and children about actual and potential Emergency situations and appropriate responses e.g., catastrophic events / closure of service / emergency services called.

1.4 Parents/guardians are responsible for

- familiarising themselves with the service's *Emergency and Evacuation Policy and procedures* and the service's EMP.
- ensuring they complete the Attendance Record on delivery and collection of their children.
- providing Emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and ensuring that this is kept up to date.
- reinforcing the service's Emergency and evacuation procedures with their child
- following the directions of staff in the event of an Emergency or when rehearsing Emergency procedures.
- ensuring that required permission is provided for their child to participate in practice emergency procedures before attendance.

1.5 Volunteers, visitors, and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

5. Procedure

The aim is to provide clear procedures to assist staff/educators to effectively deal with a variety of accidents, emergencies, evacuations, and incidents they may experience during the provision of care.

1.1. Accident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Records

The educator must keep accident, injury, illness, and trauma records for adults in the service and children in care, documenting relevant information relating to health and well-being, logging, evaluating, and storing this as required.

1.2. Procedure for Emergency where medical attention is required.

If an adult or child has an accident or becomes ill while in the service, medical attention is the priority and then every reasonable attempt must be made to notify the parent/guardian as soon as practical. The child must be kept under adult supervision until the child recovers or the child's parent/guardian, or Emergency contact takes charge of the child. If the adult or child requires immediate medical aid, call an ambulance, and commence First Aid.

Any incident requiring attendance by Emergency services is a Serious Incident and children's services staff are required by law to inform the Department of Education (DE) within 24 hours of the incident.

1.3. Procedure for an Emergency where there is a serious injury/illness.

- Reassure the injured / ill adult or child and direct staff to ensure the other children in care are safe.
- Direct an adult to call the ambulance via 000 (or 112 on mobiles) and follow the directions of the ambulance operator.
- Commence First Aid.

1.4. When all the above has been done or it is safe to do so

- Contact the parent / guardian to inform them of the injury/illness.
- If the adult or child has been taken to the hospital by the ambulance, inform the parent / guardian of the hospital the child has been taken to, and the time of departure.
- Refer all questions and concerns of the parent/guardian regarding the child's health to the hospital.
- Only give the parents / guardians the facts of the situation.
- Contact the appropriate children's services Coordinator, Team Leader, or Fieldworker as soon as possible / practical.
- Family Day Care (FDC) educators only - complete an Insurance Public Liability form and forward to the FDC Coordination Unit.

1.5. If the service coordinator or team leader is unavailable.

- contact the Children, Families and Youth Manager.
- In the unlikely event that all children's services' leadership are unavailable, speak to the Director of City Life or then as a final step the Chief Executive Officer.

1.6. Family Day Care (FDC)

- The parent may request that the educator accompany the child in the ambulance to the hospital, but the educator may decline e.g., where a FDC

fieldworker is not available to stay with the remaining children in care to enable the educator to accompany the injured / ill child to hospital.

- Where a Council staff member is available to stay with the children in care, they will contact the parents / guardians of remaining children, to inform them of the Emergency and request that they collect their child from care.
- All educators to download the VicEmergency app and set a minimum 10-kilometre radius 'watch zone' around their address location to maintain situational awareness.

1.7. Emergency Management Planning

- Early childhood education and care services listed on the department's Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) are required to close on days declared Catastrophic in the area the service is located. Refer to CFA website fire danger ratings and the VicEmergency app.
- Services on the BARR (Bushfire at Risk Register) and Category 4 List, or a FDC educator premises is identified as a designated bushfire prone area (BPA) are required to download the VicEmergency app to maintain situational awareness, including determination of conditions such as Catastrophic days and complete an annual fire safety audit.
- If the service is exposed to an immediate threat of bushfire, grassfire or other emergency, the Approved Provider has the authority to enact the service's Emergency Management Plan (EMP).
- If a declared Catastrophic day, extreme or severe fire danger rating is declared for the district, services should follow their emergency and evacuation policy and procedures to reduce the risks, maintain children's safety and wellbeing, and ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated or cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. This may include identifying circumstances where a decision is made to pre-emptively close the service.
- Services may also close on other days that are not a declared Catastrophic day. These circumstances should be documented in the service's Emergency Management Plan (EMP) and educators to notify (email, SMS, or news item) all affected families, Family Day Care unit (if FDC) and early years team leader.

1.8. Practice Emergencies and Evacuations

- Are carried out every three months as a minimum, using alternate exit routes, different scenarios e.g., lock downs, evacuations, and the designated emergency and evacuation assembly areas.
- These are carried out regularly to ensure staff, visitors, residents, and children are familiar with the procedures.
- If in an identified BPA, to practice the 2nd assembly point (at least 2 streets away) at least annually.
- Educators record each evacuation drill (date, time and time taken to complete evacuation, improvement notes and the children's response). Impromptu evacuations may be performed between the planned drills to ensure that new children or adults are familiar with procedures.

- It is important that the staff / educators and the children practise emergency and evacuation procedures from all exits within the service.
- Staff working in an integrated facility must ensure they actively participate in whole of service evacuations / lockdowns on a regular basis and as a minimum annually.
- Parents / guardians and other adults who are at the venue during emergency or evacuation drills are asked to follow the directions of the children's services staff and remain at the service until staff advise otherwise, this ensures all children and adults are accounted for.

1.9. Emergency and evacuations procedure

If an Emergency requiring evacuation occurs the following action will be taken

- Remove all children from the immediate danger area.
- Telephone **000**.
- Staff / educators should walk the adults and children close together via the nearest safe exit to the selected assembly area.
- The staff / visitor register, children's attendance register, children's contact details, First Aid kit and any medication is to be picked up by the staff member nearest to its location so a roll call can be carried out in the assembly area.
- If safe to do so, close all doors after checking all children and staff/educators are accounted for, prior to leaving the building. Check all areas e.g., bathrooms and store areas if safe to do so.
- All staff/educators on duty should familiarise themselves with these procedures. The emergency evacuation diagram indicates the available exit routes and the direction of travel to the assembly areas as designated for each service.
- Contact Council's Families and Children's Services leadership team as per agreement / EMP.

Remember: The location of the danger will dictate exit routes and assembly areas to be used. E.g., lock down, grassfire, bushfire assembly areas may be different to the usual assembly area.

1.10. Assembly areas for emergency and evacuation

- Assembly areas are identified in the EMP / emergency evacuation diagram as a safe area.
- Should this assembly area become untenable because of smoke or other problems then a secondary area is to be used as identified in the EMP/evacuation plan.

1.11. Emergency and evacuation diagram

- The staff / educators must have an up-to-date evacuation diagram displayed near each exit clearly visible and easily visible to families, adults, and children in the service. Preferably A3 in size to assist with visibility. Reasons for emergency and evacuation include thunderstorm asthma, extreme weather, fire, floods, gas leaks, and other Emergency situations which may result in lock down, e.g., threatening persons, earthquake (National Regulations 97).

- Emergency and Evacuation Diagrams need to identify 2 assembly points outside the premises if site evacuation is needed e.g., not in a lock down. The 2nd assembly point must be at least 2 streets away from the premises if they are in an identified bushfire prone area (BPA), moving away from the danger area.
- Diagrams must include water hazards or features. A water hazard or water feature may include dams, relocatable/paddling or fixed pools, ponds, water fountains, large drains or any areas that retain water.
- Diagrams for FDC residences must ensure their diagram is in colour and minimum A3 in size. The diagram must include the areas of the FDC residence or approved venue indicating the areas of the residence or venue suitable for the provision of education and care to children, assembly points, shelter in place, and the existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pools at or near the residence or venue. Other helpful items for the diagram such as fire blankets, extinguishers, first aid box, smoke detectors etc, is encouraged to be on the diagram for ease of locating these emergency support tools and access.
- for a service in a multi-storey dwelling the Emergency and evacuation risk assessment / EMP and diagram on display must include each level and the plan for direct egress to an assembly area that allows the safe evacuation of all children and adults, including non-ambulatory children and adults.
- for a FDC service in a multi-storey building shared with other occupants, will need to include the following information:
 - the storey(s) on which the premises will be located.
 - if the service premises will be located on more than one storey, the ages of the children to be educated and cared for on each storey.
 - the total number of storeys in the building.

1.12. Shelter in place or lock down.

When an incident occurs outside the early childhood service and emergency services, or staff / educators determine the safest course of action is to keep children, educators and staff inside a designated building or facility (as evacuation might reasonably expose people to a greater level of danger. Reasons for shelter in place or lock down could be e.g., Thunderstorm Asthma, aggressive parent, earthquake, weather event.

The following actions can be taken:

- Call 000 for emergency services and seek and follow advice.
- Take emergency kit/first aid kit, including the staff/visitor register, children's attendance book, children's contact details, and any medication.
- Ensure all windows and doors are closed and any air conditioning is turned off.
- Move all children, educators, staff, and visitors to a safe location within the building.
- Check that all children, educators, staff, and visitors are accounted for.
- Ensure communications with emergency services is maintained. Wait for emergency services to arrive or provide further information.
- When safe to do so inform the nominated supervisor.

1.13. Smoke detectors

- Each FDC educator's home shall have installed a minimum of two smoke detectors appropriately positioned in working order and tested every six months. Legislation requires that all new homes (and those undergoing significant renovation) after May 2014, where there is a need for multiple smoke alarms, they must be interconnected so that if one smoke alarm activates, they all do.
- For all Council buildings, smoke detection devices are installed as per building requirements.

1.14. Fire extinguisher

- FDC
 - Each FDC educator shall have installed an approved fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher approved by the Fire Department is currently a 2.5kg multi-purpose (fire classes ABE as the minimum requirement) extinguisher.
 - Fire extinguishers should be either mounted on the wall or in a cupboard that is accessible to the educator and need to be checked and tagged, at a minimum, every six months and hydrostatically tested or replaced every five years from date of stamping.
 - It is a requirement that Australian standard approved signs for extinguishers be in place, being:
 - a standard location sign (has the picture of extinguisher) located a minimum of 2 metres above the floor level or if stored in a cupboard should be placed outside the cupboard, and
 - an instruction sign located immediately above the fire extinguisher.
- All other centres/programs
 - All Council buildings have fire extinguishers installed which are checked and tagged and replaced as per regulations.

1.15. Fire blanket

- FDC and all other centres/programs
 - To be stored in the kitchen in a place that is easily accessible. Fire blankets need to be checked and tagged at a minimum every six months and replaced as per regulations.

1.16. Safety Switches

- Safety switches cut the electricity supply to protect you from serious electric shock, injury or death and help prevent electrical fires in the service.
- All FDC educator homes and Council buildings must be fitted with a safety switch which has been installed and approved by the relevant authorising body.

Related Documents

| Name | Location |
|---|--|
| Please refer to Sources and References page | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website - Children's Services policies and procedures Melton City Council |
| Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Act 2012 • Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Regulations 2012 • Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010) • Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998) • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 • National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 |
| PolicyWorks Manual | This policy and procedure have been adapted from <i>PolicyWorks</i> Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia. |
| Related service policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of First Aid Policy and procedures • Administration of Medication Policy and procedures • Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and procedures • Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and procedures • Occupational Health and Safety Policy and procedures • Staffing Policy and procedures • Supervision of Children Policy and procedures. • Melton City Council Emergency Management Plans |

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