

2.09 EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION

QUALITY AREA 2 | VERSION 1.23



PURPOSE

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines for:

- the development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines at LEVNT EC Services.
- being informed by a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies at **LEVNT EC Services**.
- raising the awareness of everyone attending LEVNT EC Services about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

LEVNT EC Services are committed to:

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at LEVNT EC Services.
- having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises.
- ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service.
- ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service.
- informing parents/guardians how communication will be provided in a case of emergency.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of LEVNT EC Services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g., flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service (*Regulation 97*).

Early childhood services have a duty of care to all attending the facility including the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors. It is also a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)* and *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

All services in Victoria are required to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) as part of their everyday operations. All education and care services listed on the Department of Education (DE)'s Bushfire At-Risk Register are required as a condition of their service approval to submit their EMP to their regional office by September 1 each year. DE provides Emergency Management Plan Guidelines and an Emergency Management Plan template to assist services to develop and review their EMP. All services must complete the required sections of the plan and lodge it with the relevant DE regional office. A copy should also be attached to this policy.

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms refer to the Definitions file of each LEVNT EC policy folder.

Country Fire Authority (CFA)/Rural Fire Service (RFS): CFA/RFS respond to a variety of fire and emergency incidents. They are also involved in a range of other activities including:

- 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.

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 Management Plan (EMP): A written set of instructions for the service to prepare for and respond to emergencies. A guide to preparing an emergency plan and an Emergency Management Plan template are available on the DE website (refer to Sources)

Emergency services: Includes ambulance, fire brigade, police and state emergency services - <https://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

Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV): (previously known as Metropolitan Fire Brigade) respond to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills. The FRV 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:

- delivering expert fire and rescue services to the community they serve
- driving systemic change to the built environment through reforms to building design, regulations and legislation, and
- educating the community through fire prevention programs that improve community safety and build resilience.

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

Planned closure: services identified as being at high fire risk and on the DE's Bushfire At-Risk Register will close on days determined to have a fire danger rating of Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner. Where possible, four to seven days' notice of a planned closure will be provided. Services not on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency.

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria:

- strives to prevent workplace injuries, illness and fatalities
- provides benefits to injured workers and helps them to return to work
- enforces Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- provides reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers
- provides an emergency response service 24 hours per day.

Safe Work NSW: are New South Wales' workplace health and safety regulator. They offer:

- advice on improving work health and safety
- provide licences and registration for potentially dangerous work
- investigate workplace incidents and enforce work health and safety laws in NSW

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider, persons with management and control, nominated supervisor and/or persons in day-to-day charge are responsible for meeting legislated requirements of the ECEC sector which are indicated with **LR**.

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Ensuring the Emergency and Evacuation Policy and procedures are in place (Regulations 168) and available to all stakeholders (Regulations 171)	LR	✓			
Taking reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities (Regulations 170)	LR	✓			
Completing the DE Emergency Management Plan, lodging this with the relevant DE regional office (if located on the Bush Fire At Risk Register) and attaching a copy to this policy	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring the service's emergency management contact details are up to date on NQA ITS online portal	LR	✓			
Identifying if the service is on the BARR (refer to Definitions)	LR	✓			
Conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (refer to Definitions) at least once every 12 months, or as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children from the service (Regulation 97(2))	LR	✓	✓		
Conducting a risk assessment of emergency evacuation routes and assembly points	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring any necessary updates to the emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are implemented as soon as practicable after reviewing the risk assessment	LR	✓	✓		✓
Developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (Regulation 97(1)(a))	LR	✓	✓		
Developing an emergency and evacuation floor plan (refer to Definitions) (Regulation 97(1)(b))	LR	✓			
Ensuring 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, and near each exit that forms part of the evacuation route out of the service (Regulation 97(4))	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation drills are rehearsed and documented at least once every 3 months by everyone attending the service. If the service has more than one emergency and evacuation procedure (evacuation and lockdown) all procedures must be rehearsed over the course of the year. (Regulation 97(3)(a))	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers and visitors are aware of emergency evacuation points	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring 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	LR	✓	✓		
Developing procedures that consider collecting children's medication and managing children's medical conditions	LR	✓	✓		
Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as on a monthly basis	LR	✓			

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone (or similar means) for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services (Regulation 98), and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed	LR	✓			
Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risks	LR	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting	LR	✓			
Ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted	LR	✓			
Ensuring 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	LR	✓			
Providing a fully equipped portable first aid kit (refer to Administration of First Aid Policy)	LR	✓			
Ensure that designated emergency exits/routes are always kept clear to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation	LR	✓	✓		✓
Keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to use	✓	✓	✓		✓
Attending regular training to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g. first aid (Regulation 136), emergency management and OHS training	LR	LR	✓		✓
Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)	LR	✓	✓		✓
Developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents	✓	✓			
Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies		✓	✓		✓
Conducting checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with	LR	✓	✓		✓
Informing the nominated supervisor or persons in day-to-day charge or, in their absence, the Approved Provider or person with management and control, about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents at the service		✓	✓		✓
Notifying relevant co-located or closely located services where an emergency situation may place their service at risk (eg. co-located school, adjoining shopping centre or church) and ensuring a list of these services and their contact phone number are listed in the service's emergency management plan		✓	✓		
Notifying DE in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident, change of circumstances and/or complaints (refer to Definitions)	LR	✓			
Completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record, where required	LR	✓	✓		✓
Notifying DE within 7 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)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b) & (c), 176)	LR	✓			
Reporting notifiable incidents (refer to Definitions) in the workplace to WorkSafe/Safe Work (refer to Definitions)	LR	✓			
Engaging with relevant fire rescue and fire services regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans	LR	✓	✓		

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student placement
Identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date	LR	LR	✓	✓	
Ensuring that an attendance record is completed and maintained to account for all children attending the service (Regulation 158)	LR	LR	LR	LR	
Keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure	LR	LR	✓		
Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency	LR	LR	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures	LR	✓			
Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation	LR	✓			
Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off	LR	✓			
Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and protected from hazards and harm (refer to Supervision of Children Policy)	LR	LR	LR		
Raising children's awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.		✓	✓		✓

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- use information gained from checks on documentation and practices and the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record to inform proposed changes to this policy
- revise the policy and procedures as part of a policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
- notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk

AUTHORISATION & REVIEW

This policy was adopted by Lutheran Education VIC, NSW, TAS and ACT Ltd as Approved Provider on 29 September 2023.

REVIEW DATE September 2026 or earlier as required.

REFERENCES

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

SOURCES

- Community Early Learning Australia – CELA’s Simple Guide to bushfire advice for children’s services: cela.org.au/2020/12/04/bushfire-advice-2020
- Department of Education, Bushfire At-Risk Register: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/bushfirerisk.aspx>
- Department of Education, Emergency Management Requirements: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspx (VIC) <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/current-service-providers/emergency> (NSW)
- Fire Rescue Victoria: www.frv.vic.gov.au
- Fire and Rescue NSW: www.fire.nsw.gov.au
- Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- NSW Rural Fire Service: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- VIC State Emergency Service: www.ses.vic.gov.au
- NSW State Emergency Service: www.ses.nsw.gov.au
- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
- Safe Work NSW: www.safework.nsw.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Administration of First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions and Service Events
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing
- Supervision of Children