

2-P27 Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedure

Responsible	Nominated Supervisor, Centre Team		
Accountable 1	Affinity Education	Accountable 2	Nominated Supervisor
Consulted	Compliance Team, Fire Safety, Policy Committee, External Fire Safety Advisor		
Informed	All staff, students, volunteers, families		

Policy Statement

The objective of this procedure is to articulate Affinity Education Group's compliance with National Law and Regulations, including amendments from the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations WA 2012.

Thousands of families put their trust in Affinity Education every day to maintain the highest level of care and safety for their children. Affinity Education and its educators and employees have a duty of care to the children, families, colleagues and other centre users and to act in a diligent and efficient manner when faced with an emergency.

Emergencies within and around the building, fires, medical situations severe weather events, environmental factors and even threatening people are unpredictable and may occur at any time. All centre-based employees will be alert, prepared and follow the steps as outlined in the service's Emergency Management Plan to ensure their own safety and that of the children and other centre users.

Please note: This procedure must be read in conjunction with *7-P14 Crisis Response Procedure*.

Procedure Strategies

Many circumstances may present themselves as an emergency situation in an early childhood environment and each one presents its own risks. Some locations are more susceptible to emergencies due to their geographical location, so procedures must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are suitable to the individual service.

This procedure provides general information only. Each site must refer to their individual Emergency Management Plan devised for the site.

Natural disasters: Natural disasters may include bush fires or severe weather events such as cyclones, flood or earthquakes.

Fires: As well as bush fires, other fires may occur in the building including from electrical appliance faults, cooking or naked flame accidents.

Other environmental factors: Factors in the vicinity may be cause for emergency procedures to be implemented such as chemical spill, nearby building fire, bomb threat or serious road accident.

Threatening people: People external to the centre such as a wanted person. People involved in the centre may also be a threatening person such as person with non-custodial parent.

Medical emergency: When a person requires urgent first aid and medical treatment such as a person experiencing anaphylaxis, asthma attack, choking or sleeping incident.

Procedure Strategies

General Strategies

- Each centre has an individual Emergency Management Plan (EMP) developed in consultation with emergency response experts and local stakeholders. This procedure must be read in conjunction with the centre's Emergency Management Plan.
- Each centre must conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies relevant to the centre, these will generally fall under three types, Evacuation, Lockdown and Medical. Review the risk assessment at least annually or more frequently if conditions change.
- All employees, including casuals must complete online Fire Safety Training via the Plan Safe platform and refresh annually. Responsible Persons will complete the ECO Member (Chief Warden) training course in addition to the Employee Training course.
- During orientation, and at regular intervals thereafter, all educators will review the EMP to reinforce their understanding and responsibilities regarding emergency response procedures.
- Chief Wardens (who also are Responsible Persons) will be appointed within each centre who will be the point of contact for all matters relating to emergency procedures, evacuation and lockdown.

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- Emergency response procedures including evacuation and lockdown will be discussed at staff meetings at least twice per year and evidenced on the *Meeting Agenda, Reflection and Action Tool*.
- Authorised fire safety technicians will test and tag fire safety equipment at 6 monthly intervals.

Emergency Response Areas

- Each room will have a dedicated space/s to display emergency response documentation. Centre layout and space available in rooms will influence the display of the emergency response area.
- An evacuation plan and evacuation instructions specific to each centre showing nearest exits, evacuation routes and assembly areas will be displayed at all exit points at the centre, mounted in a snap frame at a height of between 1.2m - 1.6m. Check for accurate orientation of the plan.
- Emergency kits will be available near the exit points in each room as well as external gate keys, if relevant.
- Emergency response area may also contain a supervision plan, children's medical management plans and emergency medication, labelled and made inaccessible to children.

Rehearsals

- Emergency rehearsals will be practiced, documented and evaluated at least every 3 months – best practice would be monthly – ensuring they are held on different days and at different times.
- Consider planning a different scenario rehearsal to be covered each month so each three types of responses are practiced within the three-month period. Refer to Emergency Rehearsal Schedule. Practice alternate/secondary evacuation routes.
- Records of rehearsals, including who was involved, will be kept on the Evacuation, Lockdown and Emergency Response Record. The form is also required to be completed in the event of an actual evacuation, lockdown or other emergency. Employee participation will be recorded on the Emergency Rehearsal Participation Record.
- Any new employees, including casuals, should experience a rehearsal within the first 2 days of employment.
- Children and employees will be active participants in all rehearsals.

Reporting

- Report actual emergency events and near misses to the Compliance, Risk and Safety Portal on ServiceNow as soon as practically possible and within 12 hours of the event.
- The Incident Support Team will report actual emergency events as required via NQAITS within 24 hours of the event.

General procedure for Evacuation – Refer to your centre's EMP and service approval for site specific practices.

- The person who locates or identifies the fire or other hazard (e.g. smoke, chemical spill, strong fumes etc.) will alert others in the vicinity and sound the alarm. The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will be notified.
- If safe to do so, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) or other person trained in the use of fire extinguishers can use the extinguisher to extinguish the fire. The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will call 000.
- Staff are to remain as calm as possible.
- Staff are to collect the printed rolls, and emergency kit including emergency medications and escort all children and other persons out of the building to assemble at the designated assembly point.
- If the centre has a lift/elevator, do not use this in an emergency evacuation or rehearsal. Always use the stairs.
- If evacuating from the area near to where the fire is located, check the heat of the door first by touching the door, not the handle with the back of the hand. If it is hot, staff are not to evacuate through this point and follow alternate evacuation route. Staff and children will need to get down low when evacuating when smoke is present.
- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will collect the visitor sign in sheet, the RED Emergency Folder, a copy of family contact details, the centre mobile phone and a first aid kit.
- Older children will walk in a line to the assembly point. Babies are to be placed in the evacuation cot (or approved pram or wagon) and wheeled out to the assembly point. Baby carriers may be used.
- **Please note:** The evacuation cot must be labelled as the evacuation cot, be positioned closest to the exit of the cot area/ room and remain unobstructed and not used for storage of equipment. It may be used for babies' sleep.
- The person in charge of each group is to do a physical check of children evacuated against the marked rolls.
- Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will check with each Lead Educator that all children and other persons have all been accounted for and conduct a final check of all areas of the building including rooms, kitchen, laundry and bathrooms. Doors and windows will be closed when leaving the room if safe to do so.
- Staff are to administer First Aid if required and engage with children to ensure they remain calm and in a group.



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- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will notify the Area Manager, State Manager, General Manager or Chief People Officer who will notify the Crisis Response Team for support in managing the crisis and communication with families. Please refer to 7-P14 Crisis Response Procedure.
- After attendance and instruction by Emergency Services, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) are to advise each group if it is safe to return to the building. Where it is not safe, alternative arrangements will be made.
- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) are to complete the the Evacuation, Lockdown and Emergency Response Record, record details and evaluate actions taken.

If the fire or hazard is in the community nearby to the centre, advice will be sought from the local emergency services as to whether the children and educators should evacuate the building.

General procedure for Lockdown – Refer to your centre’s EMP for site specific practices.

- The person identifying the hazard will alert others in the vicinity. Depending on the nature of the hazard, an alarm may be sounded or educators will spread the alert verbally throughout the centre.
- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will call 000.
- The doors will be locked, if safe to do so, and/or the door release/button disengaged to prevent opening.
- Where safe to do so, doors, windows and blinds will be closed and locked. Consider an evacuation route however, if the threat enters the building.
- Educators will collect the printed rolls, and gather children in a central area of the room or building, depending on the location of the threat.
- The person in charge of each room will physically check the children gathered against the marked rolls.
- Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will check with each Lead Educator that all children and other persons have all been accounted for and conduct a final check of all areas of the building including rooms, kitchen, laundry and bathrooms.
- After attendance and instruction by the emergency services, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) are to advise when the threat has passed.
- Once safe to do so, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) will contact their Area Manager or State Manager to advise them of the situation. This may be escalated to the General Manager who may assemble the Crisis Response Team to assist in the response and communications.
- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) are to complete the the Evacuation, Lockdown and Emergency Response Record, record details and evaluate actions taken.

Please note – The same processes as outlined above will be implemented during a practise rehearsal of an evacuation or lockdown. Simulated calls and use of fire safety equipment will be demonstrated.

Emergency Response for Medical or other Emergencies

- This will be dependent on the medical conditions present at the service. Complete risk assessment and management plans to identify safety measures to take when addressing these emergencies.

Procedure for Record Keeping

- Each centre will create a RED Emergency Folder used for all documentation and record keeping purposes. If safe to retrieve, this folder will be taken by the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) in the case of evacuation.
- The Emergency and Evacuation procedure (this procedure) will be stored in the RED Emergency Folder and in Promapp. This procedure is also stored in the Policy Folder.
- A list of local emergency numbers as well as 000 will be located next to each phone for quick reference.
- All emergency response, evacuation and lockdown rehearsals as well as actual emergency response, evacuations and lockdowns will be recorded on an Evacuation, Lockdown and Emergency Response Record including details of the event and an evaluation of actions and performance.
- An Occupier’s Statement (QLD) will be completed by the authorised fire safety technician and stored in the RED Emergency Folder.
- An Annual Essential Safety Measures report (VIC) must be completed by the fire safety inspector yearly for centres in Victoria and stored in the RED Emergency Folder.
- An Annual Fire Safety Statement (NSW) must be sent to the local council yearly after the inspection is completed and displayed in a prominent position in the entry.

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- Any documentation provided by external fire safety contractors will be stored in the RED emergency folder.

Instructions given to employees must consider the following components:

- The location of the buildings' evacuation routes (fire exits and pathways to an exit).
- A procedure for conducting members of the public and centre users to an exit and then to the designated assembly point.
- Checking all parts of the building for people.
- The location of fire equipment and method of operating fire-fighting equipment.
- The location of fire alarms and method of operating fire alarms.
- Making the announcement for occupants of the building to evacuate. This can be delivered via an alarm, messengers or a public-address system (if applicable).
- Considering the physical needs and ability of occupants to evacuate the building.
- Contacting emergency services using '000' telephone number passing on details of the emergency.
- Assessing the effectiveness of the building evacuation, with consideration for who may be missing and where they may still be within the building. (Conducting a head count)
- Meeting the attending Emergency Services Officer to pass on updated details of the emergency.

Instructions:

- General evacuation instructions** must be given to staff within 2 days of a person commencing work in the building and discussed at staff meeting at least twice annually.
- First response evacuation instructions** must be given to staff within one month of a person commencing work in the building and discussed at staff meeting at least twice annually.
- Evacuation coordination procedures** must be given to nominated responsible staff prior to or at the time that person takes on those responsibilities and discussed at staff meeting at least twice annually.
- Instructions on **any change to the Evacuation Plan** must be given to all persons as soon as possible after the change taking effect.

Evidence of annual employee fire safety training must be maintained.

Some centres may require special instruction due to the location and design of their centre. This may be due to high-risk bushfire zone, declared flood zone or within a high-rise building. Centres in declared high-risk areas must submit their EMP to the Regulatory Authority annually. This is generally submitted by AEG Compliance Team.

A risk assessment must be completed identifying potential risks and management strategies. Consultation may be had with AEG Facilities, Compliance or Policy departments and local emergency services advice.

Multi-Storey Sites

Centres located in a multi-storey building will refer to their centre's Emergency Management Plan (EMP). Collectively, the individual EMPs, evacuation diagrams, instructions and risk assessments address:

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

The EMP is developed in consultation with a Fire Safety Advisor and reviewed regularly by a Fire Safety Contractor. Risk assessments remain valid for 12 months and must be reviewed when circumstances arise that may affect the safety and wellbeing of children.

Reporting Obligations Following an Emergency Event or Serious Incident

The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person (Chief Warden) must log the incident on the Compliance, Risk and Safety Portal on ServiceNow as soon as possible after the event and within 12 hours to notify the Incident Support Team. Notify the Area Manager and State Manager as soon as possible and notify families of the event via the most suitable method according to the event (e.g. phone, SMS). This may be done by the Crisis Response Team, depending on the circumstances.

The IST will then log the incident on an IO1 Notification of Serious Incident form within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

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Relevant Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations WA 2012
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Queensland Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011
- Australian Capital Territory Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Western Australia Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2017
- Northern Territory Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
- Victoria Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

References

Safe Work Australia. <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA>

ACECQA. 2023. "Multi-storey Buildings Evacuation and Approvals. https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Info_FactSheet_Multi-storeyBuildingsEvacuationsAndApprovals.pdf

Version Control	Date	Author	Description of Change
1	Oct 2013	AEG	Update ECSNR
1.2	Oct 2014	AEG	Update
V4.16	Apr 2016	AEG	Revision
V3.17	Mar 2017	AEG	Revision
V8.17	Aug 2017	AEG	Revision
V2.18	Feb 2018	AEG	NQS update
V3.18	Mar 2018	AEG	Fire safety training
V8.18	Aug 2018	AEG	Multi-storey buildings
V7.19	July 2019	AEG	Revision
V8.20	Aug 2020	AEG	Added reporting and PlanSafe
V9.21	Sept 2021	AEG	Name change of 2-F18. Added reporting.
V5.22	May 2022	AEG	Updated to remove CRM
V8.22	Aug 2022	AEG	Minor update
V10.23	Oct 2023	AEG	Expanded multi-storey building, RACI table
V8.24	Aug 2024	AEG	Changed ASAS to ServiceNow. No review date change
V11.24	Nov 2024	AEG	Added emerg. response area and 12 hours to log event
V10.0	Nov 2025	AEG	Added ECO Member(Chief Warden) training requirements for RPs. Revised to instruct NSW to display Annual Fire Safety Statement. Updated emergency contacts to be AM and SM in first instance. Removed reference to sign in sheets, updated with printed rolls due to electronic sign in. Specified what to include in Identify Emergencies Risk Assessment.

Responsible = those who are responsible for carrying out the task
Accountable level 1 = the owner and person accountable for the sign off or approval of a task
Accountable level 2 = the person who is accountable for the task being carried out
Consulted = the person to be consulted with and whose input, opinions and feedback are crucial to the task
Informed = the person who should be informed and made aware of the task and any updates

Policy Written by: Policy Team	Position: Policy	Date: Nov 2025
Approved by: Affinity Education Group	Approved Date: Nov 2025	Next review date: Nov 2026

Educators to sign: