

## Early Learning

# Emergency and Evacuation Policy

### Overarching Statement

The *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (refer to *Sources*) is the overarching whole of church policy to be implemented by individuals and entities involved with or connected to the Uniting Church. All children who are involved in any of the Church's activities, events or programs have a right to feel and be safe. The Church is committed to provide safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

### Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at the service;
- 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.

### Executive Summary

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all. Emergency management plans must be developed for each and every service based upon their local context and respond to potential emergencies that are relevant to

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the service. All staff at the service must be familiar and adhere with the content, procedures and responsibilities noted in the plan.

Risk assessments and the rehearsal of emergency evacuation procedures are to be documented and conducted on a quarterly basis. Evacuation plans and emergency service contacts are to be displayed in prominent positions near exits. The effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures is to be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to inform policy, procedures and manuals.

Emergency situations, if managed successfully, can be an opportunity to help support and build upon children's and staff's coping mechanisms and resilience. Each person involved in a crisis will respond differently and responses must cater to these. Strategies for recovery may require support from external agencies and children, staff and families will be appropriately supported and referred as deemed necessary.

## Current Environmental Context

An emergency in relation to an education and care service is 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.

Every service is to have a completed Emergency Management Plan (refer to *Attachment 17b*) reviewed and developed on a yearly basis and a copy sent to the Approved Provider. Victorian services must complete the required sections of the plan and those who are located in a Bushfire At-Risk Region (BARR) lodge it with the relevant Department of Education and Training, regional office. EMP/BARR services must also send a copy of the plan to Uniting Manager, Occupational Health & Safety.

All Uniting Early Learning services, listed on the BARR or operating in that fire region (see: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/bushfirerisk.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/bushfirerisk.aspx) (22/01/2018) are identified as being at high fire risk and must close on days declared a Code Red Fire Danger Rating Day (refer to *Attachment 17c*). Services will also close on a day of extreme weather forecast/conditions.

Uniting Early Learning has a duty of care to the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and all attending the facility. It is also a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

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**Attachment 17a:** Responsibilities relating to Emergency and Evacuation

**Attachment 17b:** Department of Education and Training Emergency Management Plan template

**Attachment 17c:** CFA Fire danger ratings & TFS Fire danger rating forecast

**Attachment 17d:** Sample Evacuation Procedure

**Attachment 17e:** Sample Lockdown Plan

**Attachment 17f:** Sample Emergency Communication Tree

**Attachment 17g:** Sample Letter or Phone Message to Families

Relevant forms can be found at [Click link](#)

**Form 17.1:** Emergency Drill Record

**Form 17.2:** Emergency Contact Template

**Form 33.7:** Risk Assessment

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## Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

*Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (approved May 2017).*

Administration of First Aid Policy	Administration of Medication Policy
Delivery and Collection of Children Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Staffing Policy
Supervision of Children Policy	

- Bureau of Meteorology: [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)
- *Children's Services Act 1996*: Section: 26, 29
- *Children's Services Regulations 2009*: Regulations: 75, 76, 77, 90, 91
- Country Fire Authority: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)
- *Emergency Management*. Department of Education and Training, Victoria. Tutorials and online training, Guides, Templates, FAQs. Updated 13 March 2018.  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/emergency.aspx>
- *Managing Bushfire Risks in Centre-Based Services*. Department of Education and Training, Victoria. (updated 16 October 2017). [Click here](#)
- *Managing Bushfire Risks in Family Day Care*. Department of Education and Training Victoria (updated 16 October 2017). [Click here](#)
- *Managing Emergency Situations in Education and Care Services* (2012) PSC National Alliance Children's Services Central NSW
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade: [www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au)
- Tasmania Fire Service (TFS): <https://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>

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- Tasmania State Emergency service: <http://www.ses.tas.gov.au/>
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- State Emergency Service: [www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)
- *Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 4 2014. Standard 16 c) iv). Standard 16*
- VicEmergency: [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

## Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on: 10 May 2018

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 06 June 2019

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