



Law & Regs

Regulation 97: Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

- Emergency and evacuation procedures must include:
 - Clear instructions on what to do in an emergency.
 - An emergency and evacuation floor plan.

- A risk assessment must be conducted to identify potential emergencies relevant to the service.
- The procedures must be rehearsed every 3 months by all staff, volunteers, and children present at the time. These rehearsals must be documented.
- A copy of the floor plan and instructions must be displayed near each exit.

Regulation 98: Communication Equipment

- The service must have access to a working telephone or similar communication device for immediate contact with parents and emergency services.

Regulation 168: Policies and Procedures

- Services must have policies and procedures for emergency and evacuation, as detailed in Regulation 97.

Penalties apply for non-compliance from \$1100 to \$2200.

Evidence to show compliance – We've established thorough emergency and evacuation plans according to Regulation 97. These plans cover various scenarios, include clear instructions, and visible floor plans. We assess risks and rehearse procedures every three months, involving staff, volunteers, and children. Copies of plans are near exits. We provide instant communication tools for supervisors and staff, meeting Regulation 98. Our policies, including emergency procedures, are in line with Regulation 168. This ensures safety, health, and wellbeing for the children we care for.

Why is the element important?

A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 2.2.2 and understood educators must practise and implement plans which effectively:

- protect children, staff and visitors during any incident or emergency
- maintain a safe environment and meet WHS/OHS laws.

What could potentially go wrong if educators didn't do the above?

Without proper practice and implementation of emergency plans, the service might lack a coherent response strategy during incidents or emergencies. This could lead to confusion among staff and hinder their ability to guide children to safety. In the absence of practiced protocols, the time-sensitive nature of emergencies might exacerbate potential harm, as staff struggle to navigate the situation adequately.

Failing to maintain a safe environment and meet WHS/OHS laws could result in serious legal and safety repercussions. If evacuation routes aren't clearly defined and practiced, there's a heightened risk of delays during evacuations. Inadequate training and unfamiliarity with emergency equipment could further compromise safety.

In the worst-case scenario, not adhering to these principles might lead to accidents, injuries, or harm to children, staff, or visitors. Legal consequences could arise from non-compliance with safety regulations. The reputation of the service could also suffer due to perceived negligence in emergency preparedness and safety measures.

Week 27, 26 to 30 August 2024 – 2.2.2 Incident and Emergency Management

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You must practice

It's important that we have plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

A service recently reviewed the NQF Guide for Element 2.2.2 and realised they need to enhance their emergency preparedness. They recognise the need to ensure the safety, protection, and compliance aspects outlined in the guide.

Step 1: Comprehensive Training and Drills the service decides to invest in thorough training sessions for their staff. They bring in experienced trainers to conduct regular workshops on emergency protocols, including evacuation procedures and the proper use of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers. These training sessions are hands-on and interactive, enabling staff to build confidence in their abilities.

Step 2: Practice Evacuation Drills Recognizing the importance of practicing what they've learned, the service schedules regular evacuation drills. During these drills, staff guide children through the evacuation routes while ensuring they remain calm and informed. The drills involve both regular scenarios and unique challenges to prepare staff for unexpected situations.

Step 3: Accessibility and Compliance To meet WHS/OHS laws, the service carefully reviews their premises to ensure they have accessible evacuation routes and well-placed emergency equipment. They create easy-to-follow floor plans, including clear exit paths and assembly points. Additionally, they collaborate with local emergency services to validate the effectiveness of their plans.

Step 4: Family Engagement Understanding the significance of open communication, The service actively involves families. They hold regular parent meetings to share their enhanced emergency procedures and encourage parents to discuss safety measures at home. They also provide families with emergency preparedness resources and information on how they can contribute to their child's safety.

Step 5: Continuous Improvement. The service establishes a culture of continuous improvement. They encourage staff to provide feedback after each drill, enabling them to identify any areas that need refinement. This feedback loop allows them to adapt and enhance their procedures based on real experiences and insights.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you are doing well? Describe your practice in detail so it can go directly into you QIP or SAT (NSW only).

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.

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