

Emergency Management Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Policy and Procedures Established: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for staff and licensees to follow to deal with emergency situations. The procedures set out steps for staff to follow to support the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

Clear policies and procedures will support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible.

Definitions

All-Clear: A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster no longer pose a danger and it is deemed safe to return to the child care premises and/or resume normal operations.

Authority: A person or entity responsible for providing direction during an emergency situation (e.g. emergency services personnel, the licensee).

Emergency: An urgent or pressing situation where immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in attendance. These include situations that may not affect the whole child care centre (e.g. child-specific incidents) and where 911 is called.

Emergency Services Personnel: persons responsible for ensuring public safety and mitigating activities in an emergency (e.g. law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, rescue services).

Evacuation Site: the designated off-site location where shelter is obtained during an emergency. The evacuation site is used when it is deemed unsafe to be at or return to the child care centre.

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

Meeting Place: the designated safe place near the child care centre where everyone is to initially gather before proceeding to the evacuation site, or returning to the child care centre if evacuation is not necessary.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program staff, supervisor).

Unsafe to Return: A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster continue to pose a danger and it is unsafe to return to the child care premises.

Policy

Staff will follow the emergency response procedures outlined in this document by following these three phases:

1. Immediate Emergency Response;
2. Next Steps during an Emergency; and
3. Recovery.

Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

Where programs are co-located in school, an Emergency Response Plan outlining the co-ordination of drills will be created with the Centre supervisor, designate and school administrator.

For situations that require evacuation of the child care centre, proceed to the posted **meeting place immediately**.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the child care centre, proceed to the **evacuation site** posted at each centre.

Note: all directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.

For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed.

If any emergency situations happen that are not described in this document, the supervisor or designate will provide direction to staff for the immediate response and next steps. Staff will follow the direction given.

If any emergency situations result in a serious occurrence, the serious occurrence policy and procedures will also be followed.

All emergency situations will be documented in detail by the supervisor or designate in the daily written record.

Fire Procedure

In accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act 2014* (CCEYA) the following procedures must be in place in the Children's Centres:

Duties of staff members in the event of a fire

- The written procedure as approved by the local fire chief outlining the duties of each member of the staff of the child care centre in the event of a fire must be reviewed by staff and the date of review noted.
- A copy of the written procedure as approved by the local fire chief outlining the duties of each member of the staff of the child care centre in the event of a fire must be reviewed by staff and posted in each room that is used for the care of children. Centres will refer to their approved Fire Plan for written procedures for staff.
- The Designated Safe Areas poster will be posted in all classrooms and will outline safe areas for evacuation for; Fire Evacuation, Tornado, Hold and Secure, Shelter in Place, and offsite evacuation. The Designate Safe Areas poster will also include instructions for Bomb Threat, Medical Emergency and Traumatic Events.

Fire drills

- A written record of fire drills, tests of the fire alarm system and all tests of the fire protection equipment is maintained and kept for at least 12 months from the date of the test. Fire drills must be done once per month and recorded in the centres Daily Written Record communication book and the Records of Fire Drills form. Facilities Maintenance coordinates the monthly checks for the Ministry of Labor requirements and maintains a record of these in the fire log binder located in the office. For programs co-located in schools, the school board maintains a record of fire safety panel, extinguisher and emergency lighting check

Procedures

Phase 1: Immediate Emergency Response Roles and Responsibilities

Lockdown:

(When a threat is on, very near, or inside the child care centre. E.g. a suspicious individual in the building who is posing a threat.)

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible.

- Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone who is outdoors proceeds to a safe location.
- Staff inside the child care centre must:
 - remain calm;
 - gather all children and move them away from doors and windows;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - take shelter in closets and/or under furniture with the children, if appropriate;
 - keep children calm;
 - ensure children remain in the sheltered space;
 - turn off/mute all cellular phones; and
 - wait for further instructions.
- If possible, staff inside the program room(s) should also:
 - close all window coverings and doors;
 - barricade the room door;
 - gather emergency medication; and
 - join the rest of the group for shelter.
- Supervisor or designate will immediately:
 - close and lock all child care centre entrance/exit doors, if possible;
 - take shelter.
- **Note: only emergency service personnel are allowed to enter or exit the child care centre during a lockdown.**

Hold & Secure:

When a threat is in the general vicinity of the child care centre, but not on or inside the child care premises. E.g. a shooting at a nearby building.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the external threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible.
- Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone returns to their program room(s) immediately.
- Staff in the program room must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - close all window coverings and windows in the program room;
 - continue normal operations of the program; and
 - wait for further instructions.
- Supervisor or designate must immediately:
 - close and lock all entrances/exits of the child care centre;
 - close all blinds and windows outside of the program rooms; and
 - place a note on the external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre.

Note: only emergency services personnel are allowed to enter or exit the centre during a hold and secure.

Bomb Threat:

A threat to detonate an explosive device to cause property damage, death, or injuries
E.g. phone call bomb threat, receipt of a suspicious package.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the threat or supervisor or designate must:
 - remain calm;
 - call 911 if emergency services is not yet aware of the situation;
 - follow the directions of emergency services personnel; and
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for.
- Where the threat is received by telephone, the person on the phone should try to keep the suspect on the line as long as possible while another individual calls 911 and communicates with emergency services personnel.
- Where the threat is received in the form of a suspicious package, staff must ensure that no one approaches or touches the package at any time.

Disaster Requiring Evacuation:

A serious incident that affects the physical building and requires everyone to leave the premises. E.g. fire, flood, power failure.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the disaster must inform all other staff of the incident and that the centre must be evacuated, as quickly and safely as possible. If the disaster is a fire, the fire alarm pull station must be used and staff must follow the centre's fire evacuation procedures.
- Staff must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - gather all children, the attendance record, children's emergency contact information any emergency medication;
 - exit the building with the children using the nearest safe exit, bringing children's outdoor clothing (if possible) according to weather conditions;
 - escort children to the meeting place;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - keep children calm; and
 - wait for further instructions.
- If possible, staff should also:
 - take a first aid kit; and
 - gather all non-emergency medications.

- Designated staff will:
 - help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and
 - in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation.
- If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to a safe location in the centre and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and wait for further instructions.
- If possible, the site designate must conduct a walk-through of the child care centre to verify that everyone has exited the building and secure any windows or doors, unless otherwise directed by emergency services personnel.

Disaster – External Environmental Threat:

An incident outside of the building that may have adverse effects on persons in the child care centre. E.g. gas leak, oil spill, chemical release, forest fire, nuclear emergency.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the external environmental threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible and, according to directions from emergency services personnel, advise whether to remain on site or evacuate the premises.

If remaining on site:

- Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room immediately.
- Staff must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - close all program room windows and all doors that lead outside (where applicable);
 - seal off external air entryways located in the program rooms (where applicable);
 - continue with normal operations of the program; and
 - wait for further instructions.
- Supervisor or designate must:
 - seal off external air entryways not located in program rooms (where applicable);
 - place a note on all external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre until further notice; and
 - turn off all air handling equipment (i.e. heating, ventilation and/or air conditioning, where applicable).

If emergency services personnel otherwise direct the child care centre to evacuate, follow the procedures outlined in the “Disaster Requiring Evacuation” section of this policy.

Natural Disaster: Tornado / Tornado Warning

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The staff member who becomes aware of the tornado or tornado warning must inform all other staff as quickly and safely as possible.
- Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room(s) immediately.
- Staff must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - gather all children;
 - go to the basement or take shelter in small interior ground floor rooms such as washrooms, closets or hallways;
 - take children’s attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - remain and keep children away from windows, doors and exterior walls;
 - keep children calm;
 - conduct ongoing visual checks of the children; and
 - wait for further instructions.

Natural Disaster: Major Earthquake

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Staff in the program room must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - instruct children to find shelter under a sturdy desk or table and away from unstable structures;
 - ensure that everyone is away from windows and outer walls;
 - help children who require assistance to find shelter;
 - for individuals in wheelchairs, lock the wheels and instruct the individual to duck as low as possible, and use a strong article (e.g. shelf, hard book, etc.) to protect their head and neck;
 - find safe shelter for themselves;
 - visually assess the safety of all children.; and
 - wait for the shaking to stop.
- Staff members who are outdoors with children must immediately ensure that everyone outdoors stays away from buildings, power lines, trees, and other tall structures that may collapse, and wait for the shaking to stop.

- Once the shaking stops, staff must:
 - gather the children, their emergency cards and emergency medication; and
 - exit the building through the nearest safe exit, where possible, in case of aftershock or damage to the building.
- If possible, prior to exiting the building, staff should also:
 - take a first aid kit; and
 - gather all non-emergency medications.
- Individuals who have exited the building must gather at the meeting place and wait for further instructions.
- Designated staff will:
 - help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and
 - in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation.
- If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to a safe location within the centre and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and wait for further instructions.
- The site designate must conduct a walkthrough of the child care centre to ensure all individuals have evacuated, where possible.

Additional Procedures for Immediate Emergency Response

Staff members not in the classroom will proceed to their assigned classroom if safe to do so, or will assist with the closest classroom. Non classroom staff, volunteers and students will proceed to a classroom and assist with children.

List of Emergency Contact Persons:

Emergency: (ambulance, fire) 911

Local Police Department:

- For St. Catharines, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, & Thorold: (905) 688-4111
- For Fort Erie: (905) 871-2300
- For Pelham: (905) 735-7811
- For Grimsby, Lincoln & West Lincoln: (905) 945-2211
- For Welland, Wainfleet & Port Colborne (905) 735-7811

Ontario Provincial Police: 1-888-310-1122

Hospital: Contact information for all Niagara Health sites; call 905-378-4647.

Poison Info: Ontario Poison Centre 1-800-268-9017

Site Supervisor:

Child Care Centre Site Designate: [Insert others: e.g. supervisor, licensee, on-site designate, board of directors, local authority]

Phase 2: Next Steps During the Emergency

- Where emergency services personnel are not already aware of the situation, Supervisor or designate must notify emergency services personnel (911) of the emergency as soon as possible.
- Where the child care centre has been evacuated, emergency services must be notified of individuals remaining inside the building, where applicable.
- If the licensee is not already on site, the site designate must contact the licensee to inform them of the emergency situation and the current status, once it is possible and safe to do so.
- Where any staff, students and/or volunteers are not on site, Supervisor or designate must notify these individuals of the situation, and instruct them to proceed directly to the evacuation site if it is not safe or practical for them to return to the child care centre.
- Supervisor or designate must wait for further instructions from emergency services personnel. Once instructions are received, they must communicate the instructions to staff and ensure they are followed.
- Throughout the emergency, staff will:
 - help keep children calm;
 - take attendance to ensure that all children are accounted for;
 - conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children;
 - maintain constant supervision of the children; and
 - engage children in activities, where possible.
- In situations where injuries have been sustained, staff with first aid training will assist with administering first aid. Staff must inform emergency personnel of severe injuries requiring immediate attention and assistance.

Procedures to Follow When “All-Clear” Notification is Given

- The individual who receives the ‘all-clear’ from an authority must inform all staff that the ‘all-clear’ has been given and that it is safe to return to the child care centre.
- Designated staff that have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals with returning to the child care centre.
- Staff must:
 - take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for;
 - escort children back to their program room(s), where applicable;
 - take attendance upon returning to the program room(s) to ensure that all children are accounted for; where applicable; and
 - re-open closed/sealed blinds, windows and doors.
- Supervisor or designate will determine if operations will resume and communicate this decision to staff.

Communication with parents/ guardians

- As soon as possible, supervisor or designate must notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation and that the all-clear has been given.
- Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the child care centre, supervisor or designate must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by email or written notice.
- If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, supervisor or designate must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.
- Some ways to prepare for problems in communicating with staff and parents include:
 - Having several phone numbers for each staff member – home, work, cell, partner work, cell, out of town contact (consider collecting this as part of regular registration and explain why it is important. Every six month you should ask parents to update their contact info.)
 - Have a voice mail or answering machine that can record a message to be left to provide staff and parents with the information they need during a disaster or after
 - Have a programmable phone so calls to the Centre's phone number can be forwarded out of the area, or voicemail can be checked remotely
 - Provide wallet contact cards for staff members and parents to carry with the most important contact information as well as evacuation locations
 - Have a predetermined meeting place to help parents and staff find one another in the event of a total communication failure
 - Let staff and families know which radio and television stations or websites should have information in the event of an emergency.

Procedures to Follow When “Unsafe to Return” Notification is Given

- The individual who receives the ‘unsafe to return’ notification from an authority must inform all staff of this direction and instruct them to proceed from the meeting place to the evacuation site, or the site determined by emergency services personnel.
- Staff must take attendance to confirm that all children are accounted for, and escort children to the evacuation site.
- Designated staff who have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals to the evacuation site.
- Supervisor or designate will post a note for parents/guardians on the child care centre entrance with information on the evacuation site, where it is possible and safe to do so.
- Upon arrival at the evacuation site, staff must:

- remain calm;
- take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for;
- help keep children calm;
- engage children in activities, where possible;
- conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children;
- maintain constant supervision of the children;
- keep attendance as children are picked up by their parents, guardians or authorized pick-up persons; and
- remain at the evacuation site until all children have been picked up.

Communication with parents/ guardians

- Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, supervisor or designate will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children.
- Where possible, supervisor or designate will update the child care centre's voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the child care centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.
- Some ways to prepare for problems in communicating with staff and parents include:
 - Having several phone numbers for each staff member – home, work, cell, partner work, cell, out of town contact (consider collecting this as part of regular registration and explain why it is important. Every six months you should ask parents to update their contact info.)
 - Have a voice mail or answering machine that can record a message to be left to provide staff and parents with the information they need during a disaster or after
 - Have a programmable phone so calls to the centre's phone number can be forwarded out of the area, or voicemail can be checked remotely
 - Provide wallet contact cards for staff members and parents to carry with the most important contact information as well as evacuation locations
 - Have a predetermined meeting place to help parents and staff find one another in the event of a total communication failure
 - Let staff and families know which radio and television stations or websites should have information in the event of an emergency.

Phase 3: Recovery (After an Emergency Situation has Ended)

Procedures for Resuming Normal Operations:

E.g. where, applicable, reopening the child care centre, contacting the Ministry of Education Program Advisor, responding to media and community inquiries, contacting the insurance company, informing the caterer, temporarily relocating, etc.

- Directions from emergency services personal would be followed; including when it was safe to return to the centre. Supervisor or designate would contact the Ministry of Education Program Advisor to discuss the emergency situation and plan for resuming normal operation. Supervisor or designate would assure any repairs and inspections were completed and the centre was deemed safe before resuming normal operations. Manager, Supervisor or designate would contact the insurance company.

Procedures for Debriefing Staff, Children and Parents/ Guardians:

Include, where, applicable, details about when and how the debrief(s) will take place, etc.

- In case of emergency and evacuation parents will be sent an email and called by supervisor or designate.
- Following the emergency, parents will be notified in writing, by email or by phone, the actions to be taken. If there is a need to debrief; parents, children and staff would have a chance to meet with a counselor. Supervisor could consult with Region of Niagara Public Health to develop a plan for group debriefing if appropriate

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Emergency management

68.1 (1) In this section,

“emergency” at a child care centre means an urgent or pressing situation in which immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in the child care centre. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates has written policies and procedures regarding the management of emergencies that,

- (a) set out the roles and responsibilities of staff in case of an emergency;
- (b) require that additional support, including consideration of special medical needs, be provided in respect of any child or adult who needs it in case of an emergency;
- (c) identify the location of a safe and appropriate off-site meeting place, in case of evacuation;
- (d) set out the procedures that will be followed to ensure children’s safety and maintain appropriate levels of supervision;
- (e) set out requirements regarding communications with parents;
- (f) set out requirements regarding contacting appropriate local emergency response agencies; and
- (g) address recovery from an emergency, including,
 - (i) requiring that staff, children and parents be debriefed after the emergency,

- (ii) setting out how to resume normal operations of the child care centre, and
 - (iii) setting out how to support children and staff who may have experienced distress during the emergency. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), a licensee is not required to have emergency management policies and procedures described in that subsection if,
- (a) the child care centre is located in a school, the licensee uses or adopts the school's emergency management policies and procedures and those policies and procedures address the same matters as described in subsection (2); or
 - (b) the licensee is otherwise required to have a plan that addresses the same matters as described in subsection (2). O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.

Intent

The intent of this provision is to require licensees to have policies and procedures that protect the health and safety of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

The provision requires that staff roles and responsibilities be clearly outlined in the event of an emergency.

Disclaimer:

This document is a sample of a policy and procedure that has been prepared to assist licensees in understanding their obligations under the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15. It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure that the information included in this document is appropriately modified to reflect the individual circumstances and needs of each child care centre it operates.

Please be advised that this document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as such. The information provided in this document does not impact the Ministry's authority to enforce the CCEYA and its regulations. Ministry staff will continue to enforce such legislation based on the facts as they may find them at the time of any inspection or investigation.

It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation. If the licensee requires assistance with respect to the interpretation of the legislation and its application, the licensee may wish to consult legal counsel.

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