

Emergency Plan

Child Care Learning Centers: 591-1-1-.21(1)(p) A written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to severe weather, loss of electrical power or water and death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster which may occur at the Center. The Center will have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, and continuity of operations. The plan must apply to all children in care and include specific accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions. Such plan shall include assurance that no Center Personnel will impede in any way the delivery of emergency care or services to a child by licensed or certified emergency health care professionals.

Family Child Care Learning Homes: 290-2-3-.11(2)(a) A Home shall have a written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to fire, severe weather, loss of electrical power or water, and death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster which may occur at the Home. The Home will have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions. No Home personnel shall impede in any way the delivery of emergency care or services to a child by licensed or certified emergency health care professionals.

Rule Type: Non-Core Rule

Intent of the Rule

To intentionally protect the health and safety of children and staff in case of an emergency. To help prepare children and staff on the appropriate steps to taken when an emergency occurs.

Clarification

During an emergency, it is often difficult to remain calm and think clearly. A written plan provides the opportunity to prepare and to prevent poor judgments made under the stress of an emergency. When emergency plans are written, well thought out and implemented, they provide a common understanding and clear expectations for all those involved. Written emergency plans provide clear instructions and guidelines on what should/must be done in a particular set of circumstances or with regard to a particular issue.

Indicators

- ✓ Child care program staff must have a written plan for handling emergencies.
 - Note: Ensure the plan addresses all emergency situations as specified by the rule requirements and is relevant to the program.
 - TIP: Review written emergency plans annually or more often and update as needed. Consider sharing your plan with your county emergency management official to ensure the plan is feasible and complete.
 - Organizational TIP: Maintain documentation in a central location for easy access by staff, child care consultants, etc. Ensure families are aware of the plan and how they will be contacted in the event of an incident.

- Reminder: Plan specifically for the evacuation of infants, toddlers, children with special needs and/or children with chronic medical conditions. Equipment and materials needed for their care should be considered and taken during the evacuation. The child care program should be able to evacuate all children to a safe location outside of the program within two minutes or less of an emergency alarm.

Things for Programs to Consider -

- ✓ Identify primary and secondary meeting places and plans for reunification of parents/guardians with their children.
- ✓ Develop a system on collaborative planning with other groups and representatives (such as emergency management agencies, other child care facilities, schools, emergency personnel and first responders, pediatricians/health professionals, public health agencies, clinics, hospitals, and volunteer agencies including Red Cross and other known groups likely to provide shelter and related services).
- ✓ Ensure continuity of operations planning, including backing up or retrieving health and other key records/files and offering alternative licensed child care options for parents during the aftermath of the disaster.
- ✓ Additional TIP: Sample Emergency Plan templates are available at:
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/emergency-preparedness-manual-early-childhood-programs.pdf>

Resources:

Caring for Our Children, 3rd Edition

<http://cfoc.nrckids.org>

Childcare Aware of America Emergency Preparedness Webinars

<https://usa.childcareaware.org/preparednesswebinars/>