

4.20 Responding to Emergencies Policy

Policy number: 4.20
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Reviewed by: Child Care Team

This policy relates to	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	2.2, 2.2.2, 7.1.2,
Duress Alarm Instruction	

Purpose

Beaucare is committed to ensuring we support the right of staff, volunteers, educators and families to a healthy and safe working environment where risks are minimised or managed. This policy is to protect personal safety when required to work in isolation, from other venues or in educator or family homes. This policy establishes practice guidelines designed to minimise risk of harm and enhance personal safety for staff when confronted with personal threat situations and to protect the safety of clients, staff and visitors to the workplace in the event of an emergency.

Policy Principles

Beaucare is committed to providing the maximum protection for staff, volunteers, educators and families through clear practice guidelines and instruction to minimise consequences arising from an adverse event in the workplace. Beaucare acknowledges the establishment, maintenance and monitoring of a safe work environment is both an ethical and a legal obligation. We are committed to compliance with all relevant fire and emergency regulations to ensure that staff, clients and community members' exposure to risk is minimised and safety is protected, and accept our responsibility to join with other key stakeholders in responding to community disasters.

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Unarmed Confrontation	When an unarmed person confronts another person in a violent or threatening manner, or where a person threatens to commit suicide.
Armed Confrontation	When a person armed with a weapon confronts another person in a violent or threatening manner.

Policy

Unarmed Confrontation

The risk of assault or injury will decrease by the following steps:

- Avoid being alone with the escalated person;
- DO NOT argue with the person;
- Speak normally and do not raise your voice;
- Treat the person with respect.

Educators should avoid opening their door to anyone they do not know or is not listed as an emergency contact for any of the children in care. They should speak to the person through the door or a window.

Where violence appears likely and immediate support is required, the educator should contact the police and the coordination unit. At no time should the educator put themselves or the children in a more dangerous situation in an attempt to overpower or restrain the other person.

Armed Confrontation

In the event of an armed confrontation, under no circumstances should staff, educators, volunteers or families place themselves in further jeopardy. Armed confrontation must be managed by a discreet response, following a predetermined plan developed in conjunction with police authorities. The use of communication systems which may be heard by the armed person must be avoided.

To prevent any escalation of the situation, staff who are directly involved are to obey the offender's instructions, but do only what is told and nothing more, and do not volunteer any information. Wherever possible, attempt to position a barrier between yourself and the perpetrator and his/her weapon e.g. move behind a desk.

Anyone who is not directly involved should stay out of danger. They are to leave the building if it is possible & safe to do. Otherwise they are to follow lock down procedures and raise the alarm. Phone the police emergency number (000) if able to do so without danger, and keep the phone line open.

Carefully observe any vehicle used by the offender/s, taking particular notice of the registration number, vehicle model and colour, and the number of occupants and their description.

Observe the offender/s as much as possible, in particular, note the speech, mannerisms, clothing, scars or any other distinguishing features such as tattoos, and record these observations in writing as quickly as possible after the armed confrontation.

The police will want individual impressions of what happened, uninfluenced by others. Ask all witnesses to remain until the police arrive, and explain to witnesses that their view of what

happened, however fleeting, could provide vital information when pieced together with other evidence.

Preserve the scene until the police have checked the area for fingerprints and other clues. Advise the service manager of the incident as soon as it is safe to do so.

Following the incident, all staff are to be offered debriefing services.

Lockdown Procedure

A Lock Down is a procedure used when there is an immediate threat to the occupants of an educator or family's home. In the event of a Lock Down all people within the building under threat would be instructed to secure themselves in the room they are in, or if possible one of the identified interior safe rooms. Safe rooms should have doors which can be locked from internally and limited/no windows.

If a Threat is Identified

Full Lock Down

- Move clear of all external doors and windows;
- Lock as many external doors and close as many blinds as is possible without risk;
- Do not let unauthorised persons into the building;
- If possible, move to one of the identified safe rooms, or otherwise get to a room that can be locked or barricaded;
- Stay away from doors and windows;
- Remain quiet and turn off mobile phones;
- One person should (if safe to do so) call '000' advising them of the location and the number of people in the room;
- Wait until emergency personnel or management give an "all clear" notification.

Partial Lock Down

- Secure all external doors and windows, and close the blinds;
- Wait for further instructions.

Bomb Threat

Where a serious security breach is suspected or a bomb threat has been received, on no account should staff, educators or families undertake investigations themselves. The Qld Police Service are to be called immediately. Where the bomb threat implies imminent and immediate danger, emergency evacuation procedures are to be followed.

Where the Threat is Received by Telephone

- (1) Remain calm.
- (2) Attempt to keep the caller on the line in conversation, without causing agitation or aggravation.
- (3) Wherever possible, signal to another person to call the Police.
- (4) Keep a written record taking note of the following:
 - The exact wording of the threat;
 - The time of the call;
 - The type and location of the device, if given;
 - Any voice characteristics observed;
 - Any phrases or odd wording used;
 - Any additional information given e.g. motivation, cause etc.
 - Background noises;
 - Any detail that may assist the Police in their investigations.
- (5) As soon as the call has ended, report immediately to the Service Manager.
- (6) Call '000' if not already done.
- (7) Follow police direction.
- (8) Initiate evacuation procedures if the police direct you to do so.

Where the Threat is Received in Writing

- (1) Minimise handling of the document, including the envelope, if received.
- (2) Wherever possible, place it in a plastic document sleeve to preserve any possible fingerprint evidence.
- (3) Notify the Service Manager.
- (4) Notify the Police immediately.
- (5) Follow police direction and initiate evacuation if directed.

Explosion

Should an explosion occur on the premises or in the immediate location, emergency evacuation procedures are to be followed. Appropriate emergency services are to be notified immediately.

Associated Beucare Policies and Documents

[Appendix A Legislation](#)

[Appendix D Privacy and Communication](#)

[Appendix F QIP and Compliance](#)

Relevant Legislation

National Law

National Regulations

National Quality Standard

Australian Government Department of Education and Training: *Child Care Service Handbook*

<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0>