



Child Care Bulletin

July 2024

Emergency Preparedness - Planning

Purpose

Emergencies can happen at any time. Being able to be self-sufficient in a variety of disasters or emergencies requires getting organized and taking steps to stay safe. Emergency plans are unique to each facility and should be developed with consideration to the age of children in care, potential risks, location, and facility floor plan/layout. Facilities must also ensure that emergency plans meet legislative requirements.

Legislative Requirements

[Child Care Licensing Regulation \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca) Section 22 – Emergency training and equipment

Considerations for Planning

- What risks can you identify as concerns to your facility? Think beyond just natural disasters.
- Is your location rural or city? Your location may impact your options for possible support.
- Can children exit the building themselves or do they need assistance?
- Is your facility on multiple floors/levels?
- Plan for building, neighbourhood, and community evacuations.
- What route will you take to exit safely? How will you ensure all children in attendance are accounted for as you exit?
- How will you be transporting children in care in an evacuation? Will you be accessing other supports to transport children? If you are transporting, will you need car seats or is there any mobility challenges?
- How would you provide care at a secondary location? Is the secondary location open when the facility is operating? Is there shelter? Are there washrooms available?
- What system do you have in place to ensure children with medication(s) or specific care instructions continue to have their needs met?
- What supplies or items will you bring to minimize the physical and emotional impact of an emergency? How will you keep children calm and comfortable?
- How will you ensure you have up to date contact information for all parents/guardians, emergency contacts and staff?
- Do parents/guardians/emergency contacts have a cell number and email to contact the facility during an emergency evacuation?
- Do you have a pre-determined meeting location? How will you let families know where you have relocated?
- Where will you store your emergency plan and supplies? How will you ensure employee(s) and parents/emergency contact(s) are familiar with the emergency plan?



- How will you know when it is safe to return?
- What do you need to do to get back to normal operation? Think repairs, clean-up, emotional impact for children, employees, and other operational needs.

Practice

Once you have developed the emergency plan it is a legislative requirement to practice at least once per year. Practicing your plan is a learning opportunity.

- Following your practice, what opportunities have you noticed for changes to be made to your evacuation plan?
- What lessons were learned, either from being an evacuation or a receiving site?
- How do you know your plan works?
- If your plan has been revised following an emergency practice or evacuation, does it need to be reviewed/ approved by a fire authority or expert? Do you have evidence of approval?

Questions

- What is “required” in a plan? Plans need to prepare, mitigate, respond and recover from emergencies.
- Is there an emergency plan template? No, Interior Health does not have a template for emergency plans.
- Is a 72-hour emergency kit required? Is having supplies for 24 hours acceptable? What should be in it? 72-hour kits are recommended in the Provincial and Federal Government resources, however, they are not mandatory. Each facility is expected to maintain adequate supplies to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in care for an emergency event. Remember to check expiry dates – food, water, batteries and first aid supplies. Consider how many children/persons are in care. Do you need one kit or multiple (per Child Care program)? How will you store and transport it? (Suitcase? Bin with wheels?) Are the kits easily accessible?
 - [Basic Emergency Kit \(getprepared.gc.ca\)](#)
 - [Build an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- A method to transport children away from an emergency or evacuation area safely should be included in an emergency plan. If your facility does not have the capability to transport children, have you identified resources for alternative transportation? Look for resources within your neighbourhood, municipality, regional district. Keep in mind, emergency services may not always be readily available to assist with transportation and in a community evacuation there will be significant competition for transportation resources.
- Where should I evacuate? Plan for a building, neighbourhood and community evacuation. Always have a back up plan. During a large scale evacuation, communities may be full of evacuees, transportation routes inaccessible and so forth.
- How do I stay updated on emergency information?
 - [Home - EmergencyInfoBC \(gov.bc.ca\)](#) or follow [@EmergencyInfoBC](#)
 - Register for Municipal or Regional District Alert
 - [Interior Health Media Centre & Alerts](#)
 - [Alertable - Emergency Alerts](#)
 - [EmergencyMapBC \(arccgis.com\)](#)
 - [Wildfire Service - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
 - [DriveBC](#)

You are encouraged to stay informed locally as well as provincially.



Additional Resources

- [Health Emergency Management BC \(phsa.ca\)](https://phsa.ca)
- [Emergency management in B.C. - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca)
- [Get Prepared: Government of Canada](https://www150.ca)
- [Natural Disasters & Emergencies | Interior Health](https://www2.gov.bc.ca)
- [Disasters and Public Health Threats | HealthLink BC](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca)
- [CivicInfo BC | Directories](https://www2.gov.bc.ca) – Directory of Municipalities, Regional Districts, First Nations, etc.

If you have further questions, please contact Licensing Direct at 1-877-980-5118 or LicensingDirect@interiorhealth.ca.