

## ECU NEWSLETTER

9 February 2023

### GENERAL TOPICS

#### New transportation requirements for centre based services from 1 March 2023

One of the objectives of the National Quality Framework (NQF) is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services.

Changes have been made to the [National Regulations](#) to further ensure children's safety during transportation.

The following new regulatory requirements will apply to centre based services that provide regular transportation from 1 March 2023:

- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure a staff member or nominated supervisor (other than the driver) accounts for children as they get in or out of a vehicle at an education and care service.
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure records show children are accounted for as they get in or out of a vehicle at the education and care service.
- Approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure records confirm a check of the inside of a vehicle was completed at the service after all children have left to ensure no children remain.

- Approved providers must notify the regulatory authority when they start providing or arranging regular transport, and again when they finish. This should be done through the NQA ITS.

While the changes apply to regular transportation at centre-based services, all approved providers are required to ensure children's safety during transportation. Services are encouraged to review and update their transport policies and procedures to ensure the new requirements are addressed and the service's procedures comply with the regulations.

ACECQA have published guidance information and various resources on [their website](#) including:

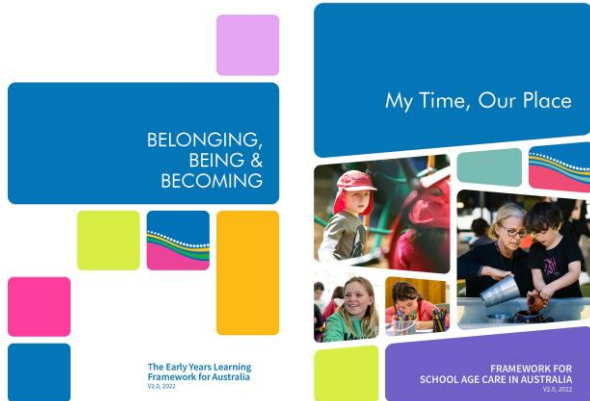
- [Information sheet - Changes to regular transportation of children](#)
- [Information sheet – Minimising the risk of children left in vehicles](#)
- [Information sheet – Guidance for adequate supervision during transportation](#)
- [Safe Transportation of Children Safety Checklist and regular transportation record form](#)

ACECQA will also publish amendments to the national policy and procedure guidelines and update to [the Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

#### Approved Learning Frameworks Version 2.0

In acknowledging their continued importance in supporting high quality education and care, Australia's two nationally approved learning frameworks have been updated.

Version 2.0 of the frameworks are now approved for use under the NQF:



[Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0 \(EYLF\)](#)

[My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia V2.0](#)

Key changes include a stronger connection between the frameworks and the National Quality Standard (NQS) in areas such as: sustainability, theoretical approaches, critical reflection, the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being, knowing and doing, inclusion and the addition of three new principles.

The original approved learning frameworks will remain in operation alongside V2.0 in 2023, before the original versions are revoked from early 2024.

ACECQA have developed an [information sheet](#) and other supporting resources available on [their website](#).

The ECU encourages approved providers and services to begin familiarising themselves with the updated learning frameworks and consider how these will inform their educational program and practice.

### Proposed changes to Child Care licensing fees – Public Consultation

The fees for licensed child care services are currently being reviewed. As part of this process, the ECU is seeking your input.

The review is occurring because the *Child Care (Fees) Regulations 2013*, which specify the fees, are due to expire in May 2023. The ECU has conducted an initial review, considering whether the fee structure and fee amounts remain fit for purpose, and is proposing certain amendments.

The fees under review are:

- Application for a licence
- Renewal of a licence
- Late lodgement of an application for a renewal
- Amendment of a licence
- Replacement of a licence.

Further information can be found on the [ECU website](#).

Two surveys have been developed to capture your feedback, with some additional questions specific to the impact on service operation including in a survey for current operating services.

Licensed service operators and staff please complete [this survey](#).

Members of the public, families using a licensed service, members of peak bodies, or service providers and other personnel from a service approved under the National Quality Framework please complete [this survey](#).

The survey will need to be completed by 26 February 2023. Please note that only one survey can be completed per device.

If you have any questions about the consultation process please contact Jane Jepson on (03) 61 65 5676.

### Prescribed timeframes for applications

The ECU receives applications submitted under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (the National Law) for a variety of reasons including new provider approvals, new service approvals, amendments to existing service approvals and applications to waive a requirement of the [National Regulations](#).

All applications received under the National Law have prescribed maximum processing timeframes for

regulatory authorities to adhere to. These timeframes are calculated on calendar days, not working days.

For your reference these are:

- Application for provider approval – 60 days (can be extended for up to 30 additional days on agreement of the applicant)
- Application for amendment to provider approval – 30 days
- Application for service approval – 90 days
- Application for amendment to service approval – 60 days
- Application for waiver (both service and temporary) – 60 days

It should be noted that each application has prescribed information that must be provided for the application to be considered complete. The ECU may also request any additional information required to consider the application. In both circumstances, the processing time stops from the time the prescribed or additional documentation is requested and restarts once it is provided.

## COVID-19 TOPICS

### COVID-19 Risk Level moved to LOW

On 20 January 2023, Tasmania lowered the official COVID-19 Risk Level to LOW as the weekly number of infections continued to drop over previous weeks.

Although the risk level is LOW, COVID-19 is still circulating, and risk of exposure is still there. Keeping up simple [COVID-Safe behaviours](#) can still help to limit the spread of infection. Public Health continue to recommend testing if you have any COVID-19 or respiratory symptoms and staying home until symptoms resolve.

The factsheet [Best Practice in Early Childhood Education and Care Services \(PDF, 77KB\)](#) remains a useful resource for guidance.

Further general advice about risk mitigation and an explanation of COVID-19 Risk Levels can be found at [Managing the current COVID-19 risk | Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#).

### Where you can find more information

Comprehensive up-to-date guidance can be found on the [Coronavirus website \(coronavirus.tas.gov.au\)](https://coronavirus.tas.gov.au).

The ECU will continue to share relevant information from Public Health to the sector without providing health advice.

#### Contact details

Education and Care Unit

Department for Education, Children and Young People

GPO Box 169

Hobart Tasmania 7001

Email: [ecu.comment@decyp.tas.gov.au](mailto:ecu.comment@decyp.tas.gov.au)

Phone: (03) 6165 5425

Web: [www.educationandcare.tas.gov.au](https://www.educationandcare.tas.gov.au)