

Staff members and staff requirements

Fact Sheet | March 2011

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Who is a staff member?

A staff member is a person who is employed, or has been appointed or engaged to be responsible for the care or education of children at a children's service. Where a staff member is under 18 years of age they must be under the direct supervision of a qualified staff member who is aged 18 years or over (regulation 5).

Who is not a staff member?

Volunteers, family day carers and visiting early childhood intervention staff members are not included in the definition of a staff member.

Minimum training requirements for staff members

All staff members must hold at least a Certificate III in Children's Services or other qualification or training that the Secretary is satisfied is substantially equivalent to or superior to the Certificate III in Children's Services.

Minimum training for staff members in standard services, limited hours services and short term services

The proprietor of a children's service, except for a limited hours type 1 service, that was licensed before 25 May 2009 or that had applied for an Approval in Principle or a licence before that date has until 1 January 2014 to ensure that all staff members meet the minimum training requirements.

The proprietor of a limited hours type 1 service must ensure that all staff members had commenced minimum training by 1 January 2010 and completed the training within 12 months of commencing it.

Staff members in standard, limited hours and short term services meet the minimum training requirements if they:

- hold a Certificate III in Children's Services, or hold a qualification or training that the Secretary is satisfied is substantially equivalent or superior to a Certificate III in Children's Services; or
- are a qualified staff member or a teaching staff member; or
- hold a primary school teaching qualification.

Generally, for the purposes of meeting the minimum training requirements, a primary school teaching qualification is a Certificate of Teaching requiring two years of full time study or part time equivalent or superior qualification obtained at any Australian university or teachers college.

Minimum training for staff members in school holidays care services

The proprietor of a school holidays care service has until 1 January 2014 to ensure that all staff members meet the minimum training requirements. A staff member commencing with the service after that date who does not meet the minimum training requirement has 6 months in which to commence training that meets this requirement.

In a school holidays care service staff members meet the minimum training requirements if they:

- hold a Certificate III in Children's Services, or hold a qualification or training that the Secretary is satisfied is substantially equivalent or superior to a Certificate III in Children's Services; or
- hold a qualification in a field that the Secretary is satisfied is acceptable; or
- are a qualified staff member or a teaching staff member; or
- hold a primary school teaching qualification; or
- commence one of the above qualifications or training within 6 months of commencing to care for or educate children at the service (regulation 60(f)).

Qualifications in the fields of health and allied health meet the minimum training requirements in school holidays care

services. Therefore persons who hold a post-secondary qualification in health or allied health are considered to have met the minimum training requirements to be a staff member of a school holidays care service. Examples in the fields of health and allied health are as above.

First aid and anaphylaxis management training

All staff members required to meet child staff ratios must have completed first aid and anaphylaxis management training. Staff members must complete first aid and anaphylaxis management training at least every three years (regulations 63 and 64).

Yearly updates in the administration of an adrenaline auto-injection device are required and, once full first aid training has been completed, yearly updates in the use of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation are also required (regulation 65). The Department has developed an Anaphylaxis Resource Kit that is available to services to support their staff in completing the required annual updates on the use of an adrenaline auto-injection device.

When a child who is diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled at a children's service, it is the responsibility of the proprietor to ensure that all staff members on duty when that child is being cared for have completed accredited anaphylaxis management training (regulation 67).

Assessment notice

A licensee, primary nominee or nominee currently present and in charge of a children's service, must read a person's current assessment notice, or in the case of a registered teacher, check the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) register, before that person becomes an employee or is otherwise engaged as a staff member of a children's service (regulation 70). More information is provided in the practice note *Criminal history check requirements for licensed children's services* available at www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/educareservices.

Minimum staff requirements

Minimum staff for standard services, school holidays care services, limited hours services and short term services

Regulation 50 requires the proprietor of a children's service to ensure that at least 2 staff members are on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated by the service. Being 'on duty' does not necessarily mean that a staff member is caring for or educating the children at all times. For a staff member to be considered 'on duty' they are required to remain on the premises and must be able to support the staff member caring for or educating children and intervene if necessary. Effective communication mechanisms and policies must be in place.

Minimum staff requirements – certain school holidays care services

There is a limited exception to the minimum staffing requirement for school holidays care services that have a licence capacity of no more than 15 children, and that are located in a remote or rural area where there is no other school holidays care services available within reasonable travelling distance. These services must have a qualified staff member on duty and another adult at or near the premises where the service operates who is able to attend immediately if required (regulation 51). Effective communication mechanisms and policies must be in place.

Staff records

The proprietor of a children's service must ensure that each staff member has a staff record. The staff record for staff members must include:

- their name, address and date of birth
- a copy of any relevant qualifications or certificates of completed training
- their working hours
- the date on which they undertook and completed training in the administration of an adrenaline auto-injection device and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation
- the date on which they undertook and completed training in first aid and anaphylaxis management
- the date on which the current assessment notice (or VIT registration) was read by the licensee, primary nominee or nominee currently present and in charge of the service, the reference number of the notice and the expiry date of the notice, or the details of when the VIT register was checked.

Relief and casual staff members

When relief or casual staff members are employed, appointed or engaged to be responsible for the care or education of children at a children's service, the proprietor of the service must ensure that these staff members have a current assessment notice and meet the minimum training requirements.

Further information

The **Department of Education and Training** is the Regulatory Authority in Victoria.

Phone: 1300 307 415

Email: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

Web: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation