

Victorian children's services

School holidays care: Qualifications and training

Fact Sheet | January 2013

Updated | June 2013

School Holidays Care (SHC) services must meet the staffing requirements of the *Children's Services Act 1996* (Victorian Act) and *Children's Services Regulations 2009* (Victorian Regulations).

Minimum staff requirements

A minimum of two staff members are required to be on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated by the service (regulation 50). For a staff member to be 'on duty' they are required to remain on the premises and must be able to support the staff member caring for the children and intervene if necessary. Effective communication mechanisms and policies must be in place.

A limited exception to this requirement applies for small SHC services with a licence capacity of no more than 15 children that are located in a remote or rural area, with no other SHC service within reasonable travelling distance (regulation 51). For these services there must be one qualified staff member on duty and one other adult at or near the premises who is able to attend immediately if required. Effective communication mechanisms and policies must be in place.

Further information about minimum staff for small SHC services is provided in the *Staffing requirements for SHC services with 15 children or fewer* fact sheet available at www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation.

Child/staff ratios

The Victorian Regulations prescribe the minimum number of staff members required to be caring for or educating the children (regulation 54). SHC services must meet a child/staff ratio of:

- 1 staff member for every 15 children or fraction of that number; and
- 1 qualified staff member for every 30 children or fraction of that number.

Minimum training

The proprietor of a children's 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.

In a SHC 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 included in the list of approved certificate III level education and care qualifications published under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (National Regulations); 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 a qualification or training under regulation 60(a), (b), (c) or (d) or a qualification in a field that the Secretary is satisfied is acceptable, within 6 months of commencing to care for or educate children at the service (regulation 60(f)(iii)).

Post-secondary qualifications in the fields of health and allied health meet the minimum training requirements in SHC services. Examples in the fields of health are: medicine and nursing; and allied health: audiology, speech pathology, occupational therapy, psychology, social work, physiotherapy, dietetics and specialist therapies such as music and movement.

Minimum training requirements do not apply to staff members who have completed professional development in lieu of minimum training (regulation 118). Further information is available in the fact sheet *Professional development in lieu of minimum training* www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/pages/vcsfactsheets.aspx.

Qualified staff

In a SHC service staff members meet the requirements for qualified staff members if they:

- are a teaching staff member; or
- have successfully completed a qualification that has been approved by the Secretary (a 2 year full-time, or part-time equivalent, post-secondary childcare or youth recreation qualification) or
- hold a qualification the Secretary is satisfied is substantially equivalent or superior to a qualification referred to as an approved qualification; or
- hold a primary school teaching qualification; or
- hold a qualification included in one of the following lists published under the National Regulations:
 - approved diploma level education and care qualifications
 - approved early childhood teaching qualifications
 - qualifications for working with children over preschool age for Victoria.

Checking approved qualifications and training

Details of approved qualifications and training for SHC staff members are available in the Victorian Government Gazette.

Relevant sections of the Gazette can be accessed at

www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/pages/vcstrainingquals.aspx.

Lists of nationally approved qualifications are available from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACEQA) website: www.acecqa.gov.au.

Exemptions

Exemptions provide for circumstances where a specified children's service or type of children's service is having genuine difficulty meeting certain requirements of the Victorian Act or the Victorian Regulations. Exemptions are granted in exceptional circumstances and enable services to continue to operate whilst working towards meeting the requirements of the Victorian Act and Victorian Regulations.

An exemption is currently available to SHC service that allows a service additional time to meet the qualified staff requirements if a staff member is enrolled and studying for an approved qualification or a qualification approved by the Secretary as substantially equivalent or superior. Once granted, the exemption provides for these staff members to be counted in the child/qualified staff ratios, subject to certain conditions.

For information about an exemption from a requirement of the Victorian Act or Victorian Regulations email cssr@edumail.vic.gov.au.

First aid and anaphylaxis management training

SHC staff members who care for or educate children at the service and who are required to meet minimum staff requirements must have completed approved first aid and anaphylaxis management training at least every 3 years (regulation 63). Yearly updates in the administration of the adrenaline auto-injection device and in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training are also required (regulation 65).

It is recommended that all staff members practice using the adrenalin auto injection devices quarterly, whether or not a child with anaphylaxis is enrolled and attending the service.

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