

POLICY: 6.1 Child Safe Environment

Procedure: 6.3 Smoke Alerts

To give Educators and children the best chance of surviving a house fire, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) recommends updating your smoke alarms to match the new legislation as soon as you can. In the meantime, it is the Educator's responsibility to make sure all your alarms are working and properly maintained.

The new legislation specifies that all Queensland dwellings will be required to have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in all bedrooms, in hallways that connect bedrooms with the rest of the dwelling and on every level.

A 10-year phased rollout of interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in Queensland will happen over three specific periods starting from 1 January 2017.

For Educators to comply with legislation, interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms are required:

- From 1 January 2017: in all new dwellings and substantially renovated dwellings (this applies to building applications submitted from 1 January 2017).
- From 1 January 2022: in all domestic dwellings leased and sold.
- From 1 January 2027: in all other domestic dwellings.

6.3.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service **6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators, and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents/guardians to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

[6.3.2 Definitions](#)

[6.3.3. Installation](#)

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6.3.2 Definitions

Dwellings - houses, townhouses (Class 1A) and units (Class 2).

Photoelectric - the method the device uses to detect smoke. **Hardwired** - connected to the domestic dwelling's electricity supply.

Interconnected - if one smoke alarm sounds all the other smoke alarms will also sound. Interconnection can be wired or wireless.

Substantial work carried out - under a building development approval and the total building work equals 50% of the dwelling over 3 years.

Storey - a space within a building that is situated between one-floor level and the floor level or roof above.

6.3.3. Installation

Because smoke rises, smoke alarms should be placed on the ceiling. If that is not possible, it may be positioned high on a wall, according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Educators will meet the legal requirement, to have smoke alarms installed on or near the ceiling on any storey/level of the residence:

- in every bedroom or if working towards leave door open;
- in hallways that connect bedrooms and the rest of the dwelling;
- if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms, and;
- if there are no bedrooms on a storey, at least one smoke alarm should be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling;
- in any other room that is used to provide care;
- Any person can legally install a battery powered smoke alarm. However, 240-volt smoke alarms connect to the electricity supply and must be connected by a licensed electrician. For more information read the [Smoke Alarm Installation Information Sheet](#).

6.3.4 Maintenance

In relation to smoke alarms Educators will ensure:

- They are tested at least annually in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- They are cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions, which is usually vacuuming; (you do not need to be qualified or licenced to clean or test a domestic smoke alarm).
- They are replaced before reaching the end of service life or before 10 years expires, whichever is the shorter. The warranty offered by its manufacturer usually indicates the service life of a smoke alarm.
- Must have a fixed Australian Standards sticker clearly visible (AS 3786)
- Smoke alarm batteries must be replaced as needed e.g. immediately when the smoke alarm battery indicator is activated/beeps.
- It is best practice to replace the batteries on 1 April each year.
- All smoke alarms should be interconnected within the dwelling.

Find out more about [photoelectric smoke alarms](#) and the requirements for [properties for sale or lease](#). [Smoke Alarm Maintenance and Replacement Fact sheet](#)

6.3.5 Security and Fire Emergencies

In our attempts to make our homes secure against intruders and burglars, we often overlook issues of life protection in the event of a fire.

Nominated Supervisor and or Coordinators will:

- When assessing the suitability of the residence ensure any security devices, such as deadlocks and window grills that prevent intruders from getting in or thieves removing goods do not also pose a risk of preventing Educators, children, and others from getting out in case of an emergency fire evacuation.
- Support Educators to ensure they undertake a risk assessment and management process to protect the health and safety of children.
- Annually check these requirements as part of the re-registration process.

Also See 7.1 Emergency Management, Lock Down, and Evacuation Policy for guidance on ensure drills occur regulary.

Each Educator must have considered the emergency escape from their residence in the event of fire:

- Install deadlocks that can be opened from the inside without keys.
- If keys are needed, leave the key where easily accessible to the door but out of reach of children and potential intruders.
- Limit the number of keys needed to open doors by having locks keyed alike.
- When installing security grills on windows, select a unit that features keyless options on the inside.
- Be prepared to smash a window as a means of escape. Use a solid object to break the window, and clear away jagged glass. Place a blanket over the window frame to protect yourself against cuts.
- Ensure that any window grill bars/screens readily open outwards from the inside.
- If grills are key locked, the key should be readily on hand.

Review

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	10/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policies

6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy

Forms

Home Safety Checklist

Risk Assessment Plans

Reference

Refer to 6.1 Child Safe Environment Policy