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ANNUAL FEES
DUE 1 JULY

Annual fees due for NQF services



Invoices were emailed in late May for the annual fees for the 2017–18 financial year. Services must pay the annual fee on or before 1 July 2017.

It's a good idea to log into NQA ITS and review the services that you hold approval for. If your service is not currently operating you may choose to surrender your service approval. If this has not happened, you will have received an invoice including that service's annual fee.

More [information on fees can be found on the ACECQA website](#).

Suspended services

If your service is suspended, you are required to pay the annual fee by 1 July 2017 (s53 of the Education and Care Services National Law).

Surrendering your approval

If you want to surrender your service's approval, visit the ACECQA website and submit the form: *SA07 Notification of surrender of service approval* to begin this process. This form must be submitted before 1 July 2017 or the annual fee will be incurred.

Late payments

If the annual fee is unpaid after 1 July 2017 you may be subject to late fees and if it remains unpaid, the suspension of your service approval.

The annual fee indexation is in regulation 235 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Late fees are covered in regulation 233 of these regulations.

If you have questions about the fees or process, [please contact us](#).

CONVERTING
BETWEEN UNITS
AND \$

Children's Services Act fees and penalties for 2017



The fees for services regulated under the *Children's Services Act 1996* change each year on 1 July.

For the 2017–18 financial year, a fee unit is \$14.22 and a penalty unit is \$158.57.

We have [created a conversion table](#) for converting the units to dollars and it is available on our website.

New Organisational Duty of Care begins 1 July



From 1 July, there will be a new 'organisational duty of care to prevent child abuse' in Victoria.

This duty of care will create a presumption of liability, such that certain organisations, including the Department, schools, and early childhood services will need to prove that they took "reasonable precautions" to prevent child abuse if they are defending a legal claim.

This duty will apply to any organisation that exercises care, supervision or authority over children.

This reform is part of a suite of child safety reforms, such as the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which implement key recommendations from the Victorian Government's 2013 Betrayal of Trust Inquiry. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has also supported an Organisational Duty of Care.



What's changing for services?

The new duty should represent no significant change in day-to-day practice for services in managing their duty of care obligations, so long as they are compliant with the Child Safe Standards and are taking reasonable steps to minimise the risk of child abuse.

The new duty does not change existing duties that services and educators already have, but instead reinforces the importance of ensuring that they take reasonable precautions to minimise the risk of child abuse.

What is a reasonable precaution?

What is meant by 'reasonable precautions' will depend on the organisation and is not defined in legislation.

Whose conduct will it apply to?

It relates to conduct by an individual, such as an educator, associated with the organisation while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation. Individuals associated with the organisation is defined broadly to include, but is not limited to, employees, volunteers, contractors, office holders, and foster or kinship carers.

Can organisations delegate the duty?

Organisations cannot avoid their duty by delegating their care, supervision or authority of children to other organisations. For example, if a school sends students to a privately run camp and a member of the camp's staff abuses a student, the school is required to prove that it took reasonable precautions to prevent that abuse.

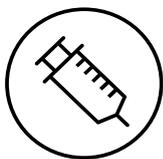
Any criminal penalties?

There are no criminal offences attached to the new duty, rather the duty will impact organisations through legal claims of liability due to negligence.

More info

[Find out more information from the Department of Justice and Regulation.](#)

Childcare services and immunisation



The National Law and Children's Services Act do not require staff working at education and care services to be immunised. However, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (regulation 88) does prescribe that services take reasonable precautions to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Staff working in education and care services are at an increased risk of catching and passing on infectious diseases. Infections are common in early childhood settings and extended contact with large numbers of children provides an opportunity for infectious diseases to spread.

Resources



The Department of Health and Human Services provides best practice advice based on [The Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) regarding immunisation of staff who work with young children. This advice recommends the following vaccinations that services may consider for staff members:

- Whooping cough (pertussis)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Chickenpox (varicella)
- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- Seasonal Influenza

Do you have a policy?



Services may wish to consider developing or amending their policies and procedures to reflect how vaccination requirements for educators, staff, students, and volunteers will be managed, including processes for vaccine refusal, medical contraindication, and vaccine failure.

The National Health and Medical Research Council publication [Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(2013\)](#) also provides guidelines for the prevention of illness from infectious diseases.

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