



commission for
children and young people
and child guardian

Safe environments for young people

Child protection - managing the risks

Risk management strategy compliance – 1 January 2007

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland, particularly those most vulnerable.

Under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000* ("the Act"), people working with children under 18 in certain categories of business or employment must undergo the Working with Children Check and be issued with a positive notice blue card.

While certain service providers are required to hold a blue card, this alone can not guarantee the safety of a child. A blue card is only one element of an effective strategy to manage the risks to children in particular service environments.

The Commission commends those organisations taking their obligations to safeguard children seriously. Many businesses, organisations and individuals are now implementing child protection policies and risk management plans, and are not simply relying on blue cards to ensure that the people working with children will act in children's best interests at all times.

From 17 January 2005, employers and businesses providing regulated child-related services have been required to have a written risk management strategy in place to protect children and young people from harm.

Recently, legislative changes have further strengthened this requirement by specifying the elements of a risk management strategy. These elements are outlined in the *Commission for Children and Young People Amendment Regulation (No.1) 2006* and become effective from 1 January, 2007.

The following hyperlink can be accessed to obtain those specific requirements:

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/SLS/2006/o6SL102.pdf>

What is a risk management strategy?

A risk management strategy is a set of policies and practices tailored to specific service environments to protect children from harm.

The strategy should identify and evaluate potential harm to children in the service environment and detail the procedures to help manage the identified sources of harm in order to foster child-safe environments.

How does this affect you?

Under the legislation, service providers must take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harm to children and young people in their care.

By 1 January 2007 an employer or business regulated by the Act must have in place a **written** risk management strategy that complies with the new regulation.

This strategy must be updated **annually**.

The Commission will continue working with government, non-government, and community groups to provide training and resources to help organisations comply with the regulation's requirements.

Over the past 18 months, the Commission has provided free workshops to help organisations develop risk management strategies appropriate to their particular service environment. Workshops tailored to specific work environments can also be arranged for a small fee.

While the Commission provides training to help organisations develop their own risk management strategies, it cannot approve or ratify these strategies.

This responsibility rests with the individual organisation and service provider.

What must a risk management strategy contain?

To comply with the requirements under the Act, as a minimum, a risk management strategy for child protection must include:

- a policy with a statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm
- a Code of Conduct for interacting with children and young people
- recruitment, training and management procedures for staff (including appropriate employment screening – i.e. blue cards and registers of staff who hold blue cards)
- reporting guidelines and directions for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm
- a policy for managing breaches of the risk management strategy
- policies and procedures for compliance with blue card legislation
- risk management plans for high risk activities and special events, and
- strategies for communication and support such as:
 - information sheets for staff, volunteers and parents about policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct, and
 - training materials and strategies to help staff, volunteers and parents identify and manage risks of harm.

When must my risk management strategy comply with the new regulation?

Child related service providers must include the above elements in their risk management strategy by 1 January 2007 to avoid penalty under the Act.

For more information on risk management, go to the Commission's website at www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/about/risk_management.html or call the Commission on **1800 113 611** or **(07) 3247 5145**.

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