



# Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

*Sole Operator Supplement*

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## Foreword

Safe service environments don't just happen: they require ongoing planning, commitment and maintenance.

This document has been drafted to assist sole operators, who are regulated by the blue card system, in developing and implementing a child and youth risk management strategy. This document should be read in conjunction with the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#) which is available on the Blue Card Services website.

## Requirements for organisations

The *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (the Act) and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011* require regulated organisations, including sole operators, to develop and implement a child and youth risk management strategy which aims to keep children and young people safe.

To comply with the legislative framework, a child and youth risk management strategy must include eight minimum requirements. These requirements:

- address an organisation's **commitment** to creating a safe and supportive service environment
- strengthen an organisation's **capability** to provide such an environment
- assist an organisation to manage any particular **concerns** with respect to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are involved with the organisation, and
- promote the **consistency** of an organisation's approach to risk management, both within the organisation and with respect to compliance with the requirements under the Act.

**The eight requirements are:**

### **Commitment**

1. A statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm, and
2. A code of conduct for interacting with children.

### **Capability**

3. Written procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff and volunteers.

### **Concerns**

4. Policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
5. A plan for managing breaches of your risk management strategy, and
6. Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events.

### **Consistency**

7. Policies and procedures for managing compliance with the blue card system, and
8. Strategies for communication and support.

These requirements apply to all organisations, including sole operators.

## 1. Statement of commitment

As you are a sole operator, your statement of commitment will be describing your individual commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm. Therefore, you should use “I” statements when drafting to personalise your statement.

### SAMPLE STATEMENT STARTER

I am committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and will treat them with respect and understanding at all times. In order to provide a positive and supportive environment where learning and skill development is encouraged and facilitated, I will conduct my business activities in accordance with the following values...*(list the values)*.

## 2. Code of conduct

A strong code of conduct will provide clear guidelines for everyone involved in your organisation about what is expected of them and the consequences if they fail to meet the expectations. As a sole operator you may not have employees to consider however, you should still ensure that you have a code of conduct which outlines standards of behaviour and applies to all people involved with your organisation, such as:

- yourself
- children and young people
- parents and carers
- consultants and contractors, and
- visitors.

Your code of conduct should address issues such as language, supervision of children, physical contact with children, behaviour management, transport etc. Detailed information further outlining the issues which should be considered in your code of conduct can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

## 3. Recruitment, selection, training and management

A sole operator by their nature does not engage paid staff or volunteers therefore policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and management may not be applicable. You are however responsible for your own ongoing training. You should draft this requirement to reflect your individual training goals, objectives, plans and records. Your training plan should include an acknowledgment that you are aware of the obligations regarding handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines (see requirement 4 below) and provide details of specific strategies which you will utilise to ensure that you remain up-to-date with contemporary procedures and maintain current details of relevant contact people/organisations.

You can review tips on how to draft effective training policies and procedures in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

You should also include an acknowledgement that in the event that you decide to engage paid staff or volunteers that you will review your child and youth risk management strategy as a whole and in particular draft specific policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and management.

#### **4. Handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines**

It is critical that you have clear policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines. You should be aware of how to manage and who may need to be advised of any disclosures or suspicions of harm. Detailed information outlining how to draft these policies and procedures can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

#### **5. Managing breaches of your risk management strategy**

Your risk management strategy must include a plan for managing any action or inaction by any person involved with your organisation, including children and parents, that fails to comply with any of the policies and procedures which make up your risk management strategy. Detailed information outlining how to draft a plan can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).

#### **6. Compliance with the requirements of the blue card system**

As you are a sole operator, the focus of your policies and procedures for compliance with the blue card system should be your personal compliance requirements. This would include risk management requirements and your own obligations as a cardholder which include advising Blue Card Services if you have a change in police information and updating your contact details.

As you do not have any staff or volunteers you are not required to keep an 'employee register' however you must keep a written record of your personal blue card details including card number, type of card, issue date and renewal date and your strategy to ensure your card remains current.

It is important to note that your child and youth risk management strategy must be reviewed at least on an annual basis and after any incidents to ensure that risks continue to be addressed and minimised throughout your organisation.

#### **7. Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events**

You are required to have risk management plans for high risk activities and special events.

It is possible that you may not engage in any high risk activities or special events due to the nature of your business. If this is the case you should note this under this requirement however, you must first review the detailed information outlined in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#) to ensure that your activities definitively do not fall within the scope of what can be defined as a high risk activity or a special event.

As part of your annual review of your child and youth risk management strategy, you should consider whether there has been any changes to your organisation which are likely to impact on your approach to high risk activities or special events.

#### **8. Communication and support**

Your organisation must have strategies for communication of your risk management strategy and support to ensure relevant stakeholders are made aware of your policies and your commitment to

child protection. Your strategies for communication in relation to your risk management strategy should be targeted towards all people involved with your organisation, such as:

- children and young people
- parents and carers
- consultants and contractors, and
- visitors.

Your strategies for support should consider what support services which will be available to yourself as well as other people involved in your organisation such as parents and children and young people who may also require support to assist with managing concerns.

Detailed information outlining how to draft these strategies can be found in the [Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#).