

# **Evacuation and Relocation During Disasters and Emergencies**

## **Targeted Materials, and Ideas for Trainers**

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Draft- For Discussion Only



## Introduction

This module focuses on preparing for evacuation or relocation in case of a disaster or other emergency. It also includes helpful information for during an evacuation and returning home after an evacuation.

The three main steps to preparing for a possible evacuation due to a disaster or other emergency are:

- (1) Get a Kit, which includes stocking an emergency grab-and-go bag with 72 hours of resources for you and your family.
- (2) Make a Plan, which includes determining beforehand where you and your family will meet, who will be your out-of-town emergency contact, what transportation options are available, and whether you or a loved one requires additional help.
- (3) Stay Informed, which includes knowing where to get information and updates on the disaster, current safety issues, sheltering options, and all clear notices from local authorities or news sources.

Preparing these three steps in advance can prevent evacuation delay, family separation, loss of important documents, and complications resulting from hunger, thirst, cold, or not having access to medications. Special considerations for vulnerable populations include unique supplies, such as medications or technology, and mobility or communication limitations.

Preparing for an evacuation is not the only step. This module also includes important resources covering what to do during and after evacuation and relocation, such as how to determine if evacuation is the right step to take, what to expect when staying at an emergency shelter, how to safely return home, and tips for mental health recovery.

Some of the evacuation and relocation resources are for kids, some for grown-ups, some for people with first languages other than English, some specifically for people with disabilities.

A number of opportunities to support and document behavioral changes can be incorporated within a module about evacuation, beginning with having participants fill out emergency contact numbers and an emergency communication plan. Other opportunities might include tasks such as stocking a go bag, learning more about their homes (turning off utilities, determining safe spaces for sheltering in place), and identifying websites, apps or other resources to stay informed. [Note: The contents herein are beta (draft) versions and have been developed exclusively for educational purposes.]

## Included in this Module

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ATTACHMENTS (14ff)

### **Attachment A: Personal Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities: Sheltering in Place and Evacuation**

## Opener: Think-Pair Share

[Think-pair-share-expand is a collaborative learning strategy where learners work together to solve a problem or add to solutions. This strategy requires learners to (1) think individually about a topic the instructor wants to raise; and (2) share ideas with a single colleague, and then the group.]

Learning to prepare for evacuation and relocation as early as possible and before a disaster or emergency strikes is important so that people have everything they need to survive and be as comfortable as possible in a difficult, and often chaotic time. Being prepared will help individuals and families feel safer and know exactly what to do if a disaster does occur.

Some of the many times when evacuation and relocation planning can make an important difference include:

- When families are separated and need to find each other during a disaster. For example, if an earthquake strikes during a weekday, parents are often at work and children at school.
- When a wildfire comes close to a neighborhood and it is necessary for residents to prepare their homes and evacuate quickly.
- When a disaster strikes and someone who relies on technology for health or to communicate must stay in a shelter.
- When someone with limited mobility must evacuate a tall building.
- When evacuation due to a fire or flood is necessary, but a resident does not have their own transportation.
- When someone cannot stay in their own home for any reason and must find temporary shelter.

These are just a few specific instances drawn from previously documented incidents. On the back of this paper, please list some other kinds of incidents in which you think evacuation and relocation planning might make an important difference.

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to determine what and how to prepare in each of the above cases as well as many others.

## Videos

- [What if you only had 10 minutes to evacuate?](#) A local news crew puts a family to the test in this fun awareness-building video. Watch to see how they did, and to learn about what to prepare in case of an evacuation.
- [In an Emergency, Will You Be Ready?](#) This 5-minute emergency preparedness video illustrates emergency preparation steps that include developing an emergency plan, creating an emergency kit, creating individual go-bags for family members and plans for reuniting the family after a disaster. It discusses, in addition, specific considerations for people with disabilities.
- [Don't wait, Communicate:](#) This 1-minute short clip emphasizes talking to your family about a disaster communication plan *before* a disaster happens.
- [Red Cross Evacuation Planning:](#) This 7-minute video is a great introduction to the basics of family evacuation planning. Determining an evacuation route, emergency contacts, and places to stay are all part of making a plan. An emergency kit should include food, water, medicine, batteries, clothes, and more. Remember to prepare your home before leaving, and to connect to local information sources to stay informed.
- [Making a Family Emergency Plan:](#) This short video runs through three different scenarios your family could face during an emergency: 1) you are all separated, 2) you are together at home and told to stay there, and 3) you are together at home but need to evacuate. Do you have a plan for these three scenarios? Watch this video to get started creating a plan.
- [Creating a Go-Bag:](#) This 1-minute video runs through important supplies to include in a go bag, including food, water, medicine, batteries, flashlights, and more.
- [Fire Evacuation Plan for Kids:](#) In this video, kids explain how to prepare the entire family for a fire. They cover topics such as staying informed about evacuation, making a communication plan, and practicing with family members.
- [New York City Emergency Management Video Series:](#) This is a 4 video series, which covers 1) importance of a plan and go-bag; 2) key aspects of a disaster preparedness plan; 3) supplies to include in a go bag, especially for people with disabilities; and 4) how to create a back-up plan for those with disabilities, especially when they rely on equipment. Videos are offered in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, ALS, and Sign language. There are two additional children's videos, which cover how to handle a disaster when it happens and how to prepare for a disaster, especially creating a go bag. These last two videos were created by kids for kids.
- [Emergency Preparedness for All:](#) This 10-minute video assists individuals and their families in preparing for a disaster, from the perspective of someone who is hearing impaired. It outlines key information and supplies to have ready in case of a disaster, the

importance of having multiple meeting places, and how to prepare for the electricity to be out for extended periods of time. The video is signed in American Sign Language (ASL) and has an option for captioning.

- [Evacuation Planning for Those with Mobility and Communication Limitations \(Also Available in Spanish\)](#): This 5-minute video from Ready New York follows Patricia, an elderly woman who needs to evacuate her building due to a structural problem. Patricia points out key things to prepare for those with limited mobility. She also runs into neighbors who have communication limitations and specific medical needs and shows listeners how to plan in those cases.
- [Disaster Planning for Special Needs](#): This 5-minute video explains in detail what should go into a disaster preparedness kit and what factors to think about when making a disaster plan for those with disabilities and access or functional needs. It includes detailed lists written out on the screen and sign language interpretation.
- [Red Cross Emergency Preparation for People with Disabilities](#): In under 10 minutes, this video walks through specifics of what to include in a disaster preparedness plan. It first runs through support and supplies that all individuals should have, and then dives deeper into additional factors to consider especially for people with disabilities.
- [Accessible Emergency Information Videos](#): This video is a one-minute introduction to an online compilation of accessible emergency information. When visiting the website, viewers can find many resources using the left-hand navigation bar. There are [additional videos on surviving disasters](#), such as fires and hurricanes, and planning for disasters, which include sign language interpretation and captions.
- [Don't Forget your Pets](#): This is a 1-minute video about also preparing pets and service animals for disasters.
- [Creating a Home Inventory Checklist](#): This short video explains how to document what is in your home before a disaster hits, so that you can be prepared to make an insurance claim if needed. The link also includes a step-by-step list under the video.

## Downloadable booklets, handbooks, and other materials

- [OES Personal Disaster Plan \(San Diego\)](#): This comprehensive disaster planning handbook includes both information and activities to help someone prepare for a natural disaster. The reader will complete steps such as determining emergency contacts, drawing an evacuation plan, locating utility valves in their home, and building a supply kit. It also gives additional information around how to stay informed, and what to do in specific types of emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, and flooding.
- [OES Disaster Preparedness Plan for People who May Need Assistance and Their Caregivers \(San Diego\)](#): This handbook helps older adults, people with disabilities, and

their caregivers preparing for a natural disaster. The reader will complete steps such as listing their support network, getting to know their home, documenting personal needs and medications, building a supply kit, and better understanding what to expect in a disaster. It also contains basic communication boards to put in an emergency preparedness kit.

- **[Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors](#)**: This booklet walks seniors through how to ensure they are prepared for a disaster. It starts by outlining the three basic steps to preparedness: 1) get a kit, 2) make a plan, and 3) stay informed. For each step, the booklet walks through what to do, with lists, basic information, and special considerations for the elderly. It then walks through different types of disasters, such as evacuations, loss of power, and fires. Finally, it offers advice for family members and caregivers, as well as tips for dealing with emotional and spiritual effects of disasters.
- **[Best Practices in the Management of Elderly Disaster Victims](#)**: This report, prepared by Baylor College of Medicine, AMA and AARP, includes a screening tool called SWiFT to help emergency personnel or others determine the level of attention and care an elderly person may need. It also includes recommendations for shelters and evacuation personnel to keep the elderly and those with disabilities safe in an evacuation, based on lessons learned in disaster response during Hurricane Katrina in 2015.
- **[Preparing for Disaster for People with Disabilities and other Special Needs](#)**: This comprehensive guide from FEMA and the American Red Cross walks through four steps to prepare for a disaster: 1) get informed, 2) make a plan, 3) assemble a kit, and 4) maintain your plan and kit. Each section includes information on how to prepare, as well as checklists and photos.
- **[Evacuation Transportation Planning Tips for People with Access and Functional Needs](#)**: This 4-page document gives tips for planning transportation in case of a disaster. It also includes a list of supplies that should be in a vehicle during evacuation.
- **[Planning Considerations for Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place](#)**: While this resource is targeted towards state and local governments, it includes valuable evacuation and shelter-in-place considerations for anyone supporting evacuation planning efforts or trainings. Those working with domestic/sexual violence shelters, hospitals, homeless populations, and unaccompanied minors, etc. would benefit from reading those respective sections of the document to learn more about how to help that population during an evacuation.
- **[Recovering from a Disaster](#)**: This document includes helpful information about health and safety concerns, how to re-enter a home after evacuation, and how to cope with the aftermath of a disaster. It highlights special considerations for children, separated by age group, and tips for how to get help and tap into your support network.

## Downloadable and adaptable materials (not in PDF)

- **Emergency Evacuation Documents (CERV – Word Version):** This handout is a complete list of all of the family documents that you should prepare to take with you in case of an emergency. This document is owned by CERV so can be customized to fit your needs.
- **Emergency Evacuation Preparedness—Taking Responsibility for Your Safety (Kailes):** This guide covers evacuation planning for those who may need assistance due to mobility or other limitations. It includes ability self-assessments and a support network checklist for readers to fill out. Since it is in Word, pieces of the document can be copied into other documents with proper attribution to the original source.
- Because adaptable materials are not often available, you can also use free downloadable worksheet templates to make a customized version of any of the information and resources found in this module. For example, this [project worksheet template](#) could be used to create your own topics (make a kit, practice your plan, create a support network, return home, etc.) and then also customize the checklists under each topic. This [vocabulary worksheet](#) could be adapted to house family contact and personal emergency information in the tables.

## Fillable forms

- [FEMA Family Communication Plan - Important Information \(Parents\)](#): This one-page front-and-back form, made for parents, keeps a family's information in one place, including emergency meet-up locations, work contacts, school contacts, and medical contacts. See [here](#) to download this resource in other languages.
- [FEMA Family Communication Plan - Know the Numbers and Where to Go \(Kids\)](#): This one-page front-and-back form, made for kids, keeps a family's information in one place, including phone numbers for each family member, a meeting place, and basic maps. See [here](#) to download this resource in other languages.
- [Create Your Family Communication Plan](#): This resource from FEMA includes not only fillable forms for family communication, but also includes instructions for how to create and practice a family communication plan.
- **Family Communications Plan (B-ready)**: This form houses basic information about each family member and the places where they spend a lot of time (work, school). It also contains cut-out information cards for each family member to store in their wallet, backpack, etc.
- **My Evacuation Plan**: This one-page front-and-back form houses all information about where to go in an emergency, how to get there and what to take with you.



- [Red Cross Family Disaster Plan \(Also Available in Spanish\)](#): This form helps keep the entire family and pet's information in one place. It also contains a form for the family's action plan and an emergency task list.
- [Create Your Family Emergency Communication Plan](#): This checklist will help the reader create, share, and practice an emergency communication plan with their family.
- **Disaster Planning Toolkit for the Elderly**: This checklist will help the elderly plan for an emergency by preparing a plan and getting all of their important information in one place to take with them in case of evacuation.

## Pamphlets and brochures

- [CAL FIRE "Ready" Brochure](#): This brochure has special considerations for houses and gardens to increase the chance homes survival during a wildfire. It includes diagrams showing best practices for tree and shrub planting to decrease the likelihood of a fire reaching the home.
- [CAL FIRE "Set" Brochure](#): This brochure helps families prepare an evacuation plan, communication plan, and emergency preparedness kit in case of evacuation due to a wildfire.
- [CAL FIRE "Go" Brochure](#): This brochure provides families with a checklist for evacuation due to a wildfire, including diagrams, and what to do if they become trapped and cannot evacuate.
- [Prepare for Emergencies Now](#): This brochure runs through the basics of disaster planning: get a kit, make a plan, be informed, get involved. See [here](#) to download this resource in other languages.
- [Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans](#): This four-fold pamphlet describes the basic steps for preparing older Americans for disasters and emergencies, including getting a kit, making a plan and staying informed.
- [Prepare for Emergencies Now, Information for Older Americans](#): This brochure includes information on getting a kit, making a plan and staying informed in preparation for disasters. It includes special considerations for the elderly. See [here](#) to download this resource in other languages.
- [Saving the Whole Family](#): This pamphlet goes through necessary steps for preparing animals for disasters, including household pets, horses, and livestock or other farm animals.
- [Prepare for Emergencies Now, Information for Pet Owners](#): This brochure includes information on preparing pets for a disaster. It includes a list of supplies that pets will

need in case of an emergency, and considerations such as gathering numbers for emergency animal treatment and evacuating pets when the owner may not be home. See [here](#) to download this resource in other languages.

- [Returning Home After a Wildfire](#): This tri-fold brochure includes checklists on how and where look for fire damage on a property and in a house when returning home after evacuation due to a wildfire.

## Possible sub-topics

- Preparing a go-bag
- Making a family evacuation and communication plan
- Additional considerations for fragile elderly
- Additional considerations for those with disabilities
- Additional considerations for pets or farm animals
- Preparing your house for evacuation
- Evacuation due to a fire
- Evacuation shelters: How to find one and what to expect
- Recovering from a disaster/Returning home after a disaster

## Possible class handouts

- [Disaster Planning Tips for Older Adults](#): This three-page handout includes checklists of items that should be included in disaster planning, with special tips for older adults and persons with different types of disabilities.
- [Personal Emergency Passport](#): This one-page emergency passport, which can be used during an evacuation to relay important personal information to emergency personnel or shelters, houses important information such as a photo, contact information, allergy and dietary restrictions, medical needs, and likes and dislikes. It also includes assistive communication pictures at the bottom. It is a great resource for children as it includes pictures for each field.
- **Family Communications Plan (Habitat)**: This handout includes tips for communicating before, during and after a disaster. It also includes a sheet to house an entire family's important contact information, and cut-out cards for each family member to put in his/her wallet or bag in case of an emergency.

- [Go Bag Checklist](#): This three-page handout includes a go bag checklist with images. It also includes a checklist of things to do before and during evacuation, and signs to post in your window to let emergency personnel or others know if you are okay or need help.
- [Visual Checklist for your Disaster Supply Kit](#): This one-page handout is a checklist of key supplies to include in an emergency kit, with colorful pictures of each.
- [How to Document and Insure your Property](#): This resource provides basic information about insurance and insurance claims in case of a disaster, including decoding insurance jargon, instructions for how to take inventory of your home, understanding what an insurance policy may or may not cover, and tips for how to ensure a claim goes smoothly.
- [Evacuation Shelter Preparedness](#): This handout includes information around what to expect in an evacuation shelter and a complete checklist of supplies to take with you.
- [After a Natural Disaster](#): This handout outlines common behaviors after a disaster and gives tips for supporting family and friends during recovery. Emphasis is placed on helping children and young people cope with a disaster.
- [Returning Home After a Flood](#): This one-page handout includes checklists for how to prepare to return home after a flood or hurricane, including supplies to bring with you, how to safely inspect your home, and how to clean your home due to any damage.

## Suggested group activities

- [SmartDraw Evacuation Planning](#): Explore and print out evacuation routes in your home, work, school, etc. This exercise could be done as a family, group, or individually.
- [Sheltering in Place](#): This facilitator guide includes interactive activities and discussion questions to learn about sheltering in place and how to identify safe spaces in a disaster. Page 3 of the document is a handout outlining what to do in different types of emergencies. There is also a worksheet which asks participants to identify safe spaces for sheltering in place during different types of disasters on a house floorplan.
- [Getting to Safety](#): This facilitator guide includes interactive activities to walk participants through creating a disaster plan. It includes a checklist handout to be completed during the activities, and suggests bringing maps of the local community to discuss evacuation routes.
- [Coming Home After a Disaster](#): This facilitator guide includes extensive checklists for returning home after a disaster. It separates tasks for the homeowner versus tasks that typically need a professional. It also offers a checklist for assessing your home.
- [Community Preparedness: Simple Activities for Everyone](#): This is a full compilation of available FEMA facilitator guides for evacuation and disaster preparedness planning

activities (including the two above). Topics range from getting to safety, to creating a disaster plan, to coming home after a disaster.

- [Disaster Preparedness Activity Book](#): This fun activity book, geared towards children, will help them learn about disasters. It includes key vocabulary, information and activities to prepare for a disaster, and even a certificate of completion.

## Plausible participant behavioral changes

- Family filled out an evacuation plan
- Family reports holding evacuation plan meeting
- Participant filled out evacuation route map
- Family identified meet-up location
- Family created a go bag
- Family identified an out-of-town emergency contact
- Participant organized a support network if s/he requires help evacuating

## Related android apps

- [FEMA Mobile Application](#): The FEMA app is downloadable on both Apple and Android. It provides information on disaster preparedness, response and recovery. It also helps users find shelters and allows them to send alerts to loved ones. The app is also available in [Spanish](#).
- [Know Your Plan Mobile App](#): This Android app offers checklists to help you prepare for a disaster, or you can create your own. Key features of the app include setting due dates, charting progress, and sharing your checklists with friends and family.
- [911HelpSMS App](#): This app, available for both Apple and Android, allows you to text 9-1-1 dispatchers and automatically sends them an accurate GPS position of your location. It is great for allowing those with disabilities to easily communicate with first responders. You can also store family contacts, medical history, medications, and drug allergies on the app.
- [American Red Cross Apps](#): The American Red Cross has a series of apps for disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation, including a general app for emergency updates, and specific apps for floods, earthquakes, tornadoes or hurricanes depending on which type of disaster occurs in your area. All apps are available for both Android and Apple.

- For a list of other available disaster applications for Apple and Android, see [this list](#) from Georgia Tech. The list also includes accessibility and communication applications to aid people with disabilities.

## Other important links

- [Find an Open Shelter Near You](#): The Red Cross website has an interactive map of open shelters to help people find an available shelter near them in case of an emergency. The website also includes information about what to bring, services offered, and transitioning back home.

# **Attachment A: Personal Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities: Sheltering in Place and Evacuation**

During a disaster, it has been certain at-risk individuals, specifically those with access and functional needs, may require additional response assistance before, during, and after an incident. Depending on the disaster, it may be up to 72 hours before emergency personnel arrive. This means it is critical to have a personnel preparedness plan and supplies, should you need to shelter in place or evacuate.

This fact sheet contains suggested guidelines that may vary depending on one's own personal health preparedness capabilities.

## **Do:**

- Create an individual emergency plan
- Assemble a "go kit"
- Check accessibility of local shelters
- Keep a portable generator or back-up cell phone battery

## **Don't:**

- Think it cannot happen to you
- Wait until it is too late
- Leave out those who can assist you in the planning process
- Forget a flashlight, radio, and two routes for evacuation

## **Checklist for Necessary Items to Shelter in Place or Evacuate**

### **1. Stay Informed**

- Know the hazards that may impact your community (floods, blizzards, earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, or extreme heat).
- Look into neighborhood and community emergency preparedness activities and trainings.
- If you have power-dependent medical equipment, notify local utility providers about your needs for backup or priority restoration of power.
- Pre-plan two evacuation routes from home and work. Contact your local emergency management office for locations of sheltering facilities and evacuation routes.

### **2. Assess Your Needs**

- **Assess individual capabilities and needs.**
- **Determine the best plan for an evacuation. What are possible options? What form of evacuation will best suit your health needs?**

### **3. Create a Personal Support Network**

**Build a support team of people who will help in an emergency and provide them with instructions as they will be best suited to help in an emergency. Support teams can include friends, family, co-workers, or caretakers.**

- **Make sure everyone knows your individual emergency plan.**
- **Provide people in your network with an extra set of keys to your home in case of an emergency.**
- **Have a transportation plan and resources to evacuate when needed.**
- **Identify redundant methods of communication, make a plan, and tell your network. Have another way to charge cell phones in the event power is out.**
- **Have at least one out-of-state contact and provide a copy of all important documents and medications to this person.**

### **4. Have a Medical Needs Summary Close By for Responders**

**A summary of medical needs is especially important so that rescue personnel can best meet your needs.**

**Your doctor should be able to assist you with the information to include on a summary of medical need but at a minimum it should have:**

- **Descriptions of disabilities, accommodations, medical conditions, and/or functional needs.**
- **List of medications, medical supplies, and durable medical equipment needed.**
- **List of procedures, treatments, and allergies.**

### **5. Collect Important Documents**

Consider putting the following documents in a fire-safe/water-proof container. Copies of prescriptions and medical needs could also be stored on an external hard drive or USB that can be taken with you.

**Important Documents and Resources:** Keep in a safe area and send copies as appropriate to your out-of-state contact.

- Copies of prescriptions
- Credit card and bank information
- Social security cards
- Cash
- Insurance card
- Wills/deeds
- Immunization records
- Licenses/birth certificates/passports

## 6. Survival Kit

Make sure that your survival kit contains items that will meet daily functional needs. Have a plan for medical treatments and medications.

**Life-support devices that depend on electricity:** Contact your local electric company about power needs for life-sustaining devices (home dialysis, breathing machines, etc.) in advance. Some companies can put you on a “priority reconnection service” list. Let the local fire department know that you are dependent on life-support devices. If possible, obtain a means of back-up power (generator, batteries, etc.) in the event the power goes out.

## Medications

- Ask your doctor which medications are critical and which ones you can do without for a few days or weeks. Ask how to obtain an emergency supply of medication.
- Check regularly to make sure that medications have not expired. If the medication has expired, obtain a new supply and properly dispose of the expired medicine.
- If you require medications or treatments (e.g., methadone, dialysis, or chemotherapy), ask your health care provider what to do in an emergency.
- Find out if your health care provider maintains an electronic medical record that could be transferred in an emergency.

## 7. At the Shelter Provide Direct and Clear Communication



Take charge and practice how to quickly explain to people how best to assist you. Be prepared to give clear and concise instructions to rescue personnel and shelter staff.

- Specific directions should be given to anyone who may provide assistance; for example, “I have low-vision, let me take your left arm above the elbow and I’ll follow you out.”
- Practice giving instructions clearly and concisely in a few short phrases.

### Additional Information

Please refer to the following resources for more descriptive information and ready-made checklists and guides to prepare for a disaster.

- FEMA. Provides [step-by-step instructions](#) on disaster preparedness for individuals with disabilities.
- American Red Cross. Contains detailed instructions on how to prepare for disaster and includes a self-assessment [toolkit](#).
- Center for Disability Issues and the Health Professions. A guide to emergency preparedness for people with disabilities and other activity limitations. It offers a thorough [review of evacuation examples](#) and needed information for different types of disabilities.

### ABC Tools and Resources

- [At-Risk Individuals](#)
- [Behavioral Health](#)
- [Community Resilience](#)
- [ABC Resource Library](#)
- [Contact ABC](#)