

## **BACKGROUND MATERIALS FOR DISASTER READINESS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**As disasters strike people around the world with increasing frequency, the need to help people be better prepared for future disasters and emergencies becomes more apparent, and more urgent. To meet this need, CERV has prepared a series of thirteen disaster preparation modules: compilations of useful materials relating to the readiness of a wide variety of specific groups (people with access and functional needs, senior citizens, children with disabilities, pets), situations (sheltering in place, evacuation and relocation), and topics (power outages, emergency kits, health passports). Twelve modules of 20-30 pages cover specific topics,; a thirteenth module covers all 12 topics in Spanish.**

**Emergencies can happen at a moment's notice, without any forewarning or signal. The most important thing you can do, to protect yourself and your family, is simply to take the time to plan ahead and prepare. These modules act as a compiled catalog of useful and unique ways you can prepare for unexpected events, and cover everything you need to know to keep you, your family members (including your pets), safe and prepared in the case of a disaster. In most cases the content has been framed with certain vulnerable populations in mind—such as people with physical limitations, augmented communication needs or old age.**

**No matter who you are or where you are from, these comprehensive modules may help you make sure that you have all bases covered for emergency and disaster preparedness. From communication materials and survival kit components to tips for vulnerable populations and information sources to find these compiled catalogs of curated resources can help protect you and your loved ones when emergencies and disasters try to take you by surprise.**

**The following brief descriptions will help lead you to thirteen useful resources in emergency and disaster preparedness.**

## **Background Materials for Disaster Readiness**

### **1. Disaster and Emergency Readiness Training for People with Disabilities**

Emergencies can happen at a moment's notice, sometimes without any signal or warning. When a disaster strikes, hearing, learning, or visual disabilities can add severe complications, and individuals with a physical or cognitive disability have specific needs that must be planned for before the emergency. But don't worry—protecting yourself and your family can be achieved by planning ahead. Read this module to learn about the importance of proper preparation through assembling a survival kit (or "GoBag"), making an emergency plan with your family, and the top tips on how to stay informed.

### **2. Emergency Health and Communication Passports for Disasters and Emergencies**

Whether during a natural disaster event or even a simple visit to the hospital or doctor's office, effective communication is an important part of life. But how do you share information during a disaster? Two types of documents can be crucial in preparation for emergencies and disasters: health passports and communication passports. Check out this module to learn the importance, ease and fun involved in preparing these documents for children, adults and the elderly—with a strong focus on how to best support those with augmented communication needs.

### **3. Emergency Preparedness for Power Outages, with Special Considerations for People with Disabilities or Older Adults**

Disasters disproportionately impact people with disabilities and older adults. In the United States, people with disabilities are 2-4 times more likely to die or sustain a critical injury during a disaster than a person without a disability. This increased level of risk is heightened further by power outages that often happen as a result of a disaster or emergency. Read this module to learn about the unique challenges that people with disabilities face in power outages, and how you can best prepare to keep yourself safe.

### **4. Disaster and Emergency Readiness Training for Elderly Populations**

Elderly folks are extremely vulnerable to emergencies and disasters, not only because of their physical limitations, but also because of the extent to which the elderly face access challenges

that come with old age. Read this module to learn about the unique ways an aging individual (and his/her loved ones) can prepare for unexpected events.

## **5. Emergency Readiness for People with Medical and Health Challenges**

Emergencies can happen at a moment's notice, sometimes without any signal or warning. When a disaster strikes, medical and health challenges can add severe complications to an already-difficult situation. Individuals with these types of challenges have specific needs that must be planned for before the emergency. But instead of worrying, try protecting yourself and your family by planning ahead. Read this module to learn about the important ways that you and your family can get ready ahead of time.

## **6. People with Health Challenges, Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs**

This interactive, multimedia module focuses on the importance of proper preparation for kids. It is critical that all members of a community have an understanding of the disasters and emergency situations they may be vulnerable to. Children, especially those with underlying health challenges, disabilities or access needs, need to be carefully considered in emergency preparation discussions. Read on to learn fun ways to involve the whole family in readiness and make sure everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

## **7. Disaster and Emergency Readiness for People with Communication Challenges**

In emergency situations, communication breakdowns between those in need of help and caregivers can have dire consequences. These communication breakdowns can be attributed to chronic speech or comprehension difficulties, medical problems, language barriers with non-native speakers and/or cultural barriers—which can, and often do, create huge barriers between first responders and people in need of immediate help. Read this module to learn before an emergency strikes how to break down communication barriers, so that when a disaster strikes, you and your loved ones are better prepared.

## **8. Useful Kits for Disasters and Emergencies**

Imagine not having access to your regular food, water or first aid resources. What would you do? Having a proper emergency preparedness kit can be a life-saving survival mechanism during a disaster or emergency. Read this module to learn the fun ways to build your kit, what items to include, and how your kit should be stored.

## **9. Disaster and Emergency Readiness Training for Wildfires and Home Fires**

Fires can be a serious safety threat to people living in California, and in many other areas as well. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to stay informed and prepare. This all-encompassing module includes fire safety tips for non-traditional learners, kids, elderly populations and people with disabilities, with a focus on building resilient communities as a whole. Read this module to learn how to best prevent fires as well as safety tactics on how to be best prepared if one happens in your community.

## **10. Sheltering During Disasters and Emergencies**

“Sheltering in place” isn’t just a term relevant for COVID-19. It’s a tactic used for all types of emergencies or disasters—whether they be a pandemic, active shooter or other hazard—that means finding a safe location indoors and remaining there until given an “all clear.” or told to evacuate. Read this module to learn how to find a safe spot for you and your family and what supplies to have ready so that you are prepared to shelter during an emergency.

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

What if you had to relocate during an emergency? How would you and your family know when to evacuate, where to relocate and how to plan for that? Read this module to learn about the three main components of preparing for evacuation (get a kit, make a plan and stay informed) as well what to do during and after relocation to keep your family safe.

## **12. Disaster and Emergency Readiness for Pets**

What would you do with your pet if you had to evacuate your home because of a wildfire, earthquake or flood? What if disaster strikes while you are away from home? This module covers the important things you can do now to prepare and ensure your furry loved one’s safety in case of an emergency or disaster.

## **13. La Preparación para Casos de Desastre (Español)**

Prepararse para casos de desastre es primordial para poder enfrentar cualquier desastre que ponga a riesgo a nuestras familias. Mientras más preparados estemos, mejor responderemos a las situaciones de desastre y así limitamos el daño que nos pueda causar. Estar preparado de

**antemano para una emergencia pública puede marcar la diferencia entre una tragedia y la supervivencia. Este módulo se enfocará en cómo podemos prepararnos ante distintos casos de desastre en específico, como: cómo prepararse si es anciano o cuida de ancianos; cómo prepararse si es persona con discapacidad de movilidad o cuida de personas con discapacidades de movilidad; como prepararse si cuidamos de niños con necesidades especiales; cómo prepararse para evacuaciones; cómo prepararse para evacuaciones; cortes de luz; incendios; entre otros. ¡No te lo pierdas!**