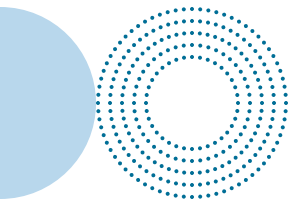


The Resilient Organization

A Guide to
Disaster Preparedness
for Your Staff and
Volunteers





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A Guide to Disaster Preparedness
for Your Staff and Volunteers*

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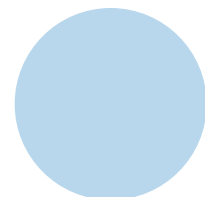
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About This Guide



*For any organization,
its staff is its
most important asset.*

Their lives should be the first priority when a disaster strikes, and while your nonprofit and its mission are very important, it's even more important to make sure everyone in your organization knows how to plan and prepare for the survival of their family and themselves.

The following should be provided to all staff members to help them prepare themselves and their families for a disaster. It can be revisited periodically as part of your organization's regular disaster preparedness review.





Develop a Family Plan

The American Red Cross and Ready.gov suggest the following steps for emergency planning.

Step 1: Consider the Specifics of Your Household

With your family or household members, discuss the types of emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work, and play. Also list any specific needs you have.

The ages of members of your household

School emergency plans

Household members who will need assistance

Locations frequented — what are their emergency plans

Medical needs including prescriptions and equipment

Dietary needs

Disabilities or access and functional needs including devices and equipment

Languages spoken

Cultural and religious considerations

Pets or service animals

Step 2: Put Together a Plan

Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and how you will work together as a team by answering these four essential questions:

How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?

What is my shelter plan?

What is my evacuation route?

What is my family or household communication plan?

These PDF templates can help you create the family plan:

Family Disaster Plan template ([English](#); [Spanish](#)) from the Red Cross

Fillable [Family Emergency Communication Plan](#) from Ready.gov

Emergency Alerts and Warnings¹

There are various ways you may receive alerts regarding an emergency. You may have already been receiving alerts on your phone or on the TV even though you did not take any action. Others, such as opt-in text or email alerts and mobile applications for specific geographic areas require you to sign up or install. Let's look at all the available types of alerts and warnings and make sure you have access to the ones that work for your needs.

1. Source:
https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1530813947931-9aaf619693198d4d0eb96f80d8cb4657/P1093_KnowYourAlertsAndWarnings_070318.pdf

Public Alerts That Do Not Require Sign-Up

Organized by FEMA, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is the nation's alert and warning infrastructure. It provides an effective way to alert and warn the public about emergencies using the Emergency Alert System (EAS), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, and other public alerting systems (such as IPAWS-compliant digital road signs, sirens) from a single interface. IPAWS is used to send notifications for three alert categories — Presidential, AMBER, and Imminent Threat.

Emergency Alert System (EAS)

EAS is used by alerting authorities to send detailed warnings to broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline communication pathways.

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)

WEAs are free, 90-character emergency text messages sent by local alerting authorities to equipped mobile devices within range of cell towers broadcasting in the affected area. You do not have to sign up for WEA alerts.

NOAA Weather Radio

The NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, or NWR, is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting forecasts, warnings, and emergency information 24 hours a day.

NOTE:

A special weather radio receiver is required to receive NWR broadcasts. You can buy these receivers at many retail outlets such as electronics stores, department stores, big box stores, or online. Be sure to look for the Public Alert or NWR logo to ensure that the radio meets technical requirements. Models identified as SAME, or Specific Area Message Encoding, receivers allow users to select alerts for specific geographic areas.

Enhanced Telephone Notification (ETN) Systems

In the event of an emergency, local officials in many local communities can send warning messages and instructions to individuals in an at-risk area through an ETN system, such as a Reverse 911® system.

Most systems include landline phone numbers, but some also allow for messages to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and mobile phones through an opt-in process — check with your local emergency management for information on this system and available features.

Alert Systems to Sign Up For or Install

Opt-In or Sign-Up Text and Email Systems

Local jurisdictions:

Many jurisdictions have opt-in public alert and warning systems. An opt-in system means you must sign up to receive the alert. Once you have signed up, officials in your area can send you text or email messages about local emergencies.

To find out what alerts are available in your area, you can do an Internet search with your town, city, or county name and the word alerts; you can go to the website for your local emergency management or public safety office; or you can contact these offices by telephone.

Local school or organization:

Many workplaces, schools, and community- and faith-based organizations have notification systems to warn individuals of emergencies and provide tailored notifications. These may range from listservs to opt-in text and email systems similar to those used by local jurisdictions.

Mobile Apps

You can get mobile apps from several sources.

FEMA

FEMA provides apps in English and Spanish:

The information you need to collect for storage in your go-bag, master key, and cloud information repository should include

Stay updated with severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations across the U.S.

Learn how to stay safe before, during, and after over 20 types of hazards.

Save a custom list of the items in your family's emergency kit.

Locate and receive driving directions to open shelters and disaster recovery centers.

American Red Cross

The Red Cross Emergency applications combine more than 35 different types of severe weather and emergency alerts. You can choose the alerts that are important to your location or the location of loved ones.

The Family Safe feature allows you to notify loved ones that an alert has been issued in their area and check to see if they are safe. The apps also offer information on what to do before, during, and after severe weather hits and how to find open Red Cross shelters.

The Weather Channel

The Weather Channel app tracks weather and provides local forecasts and push alerts of severe weather to your mobile device.

Twitter Alerts

Twitter Alerts are tweets published by select public agencies and emergency organizations during a crisis or emergency that contain up-to-date information relevant to an unfolding event.

Communication Tools

Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Ready.gov recommends saving phone calls for emergencies and using text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.²

Did you know:

News now usually appears on social media first.

Social media crosses geographic boundaries more quickly.

Social channels are informed by multiple individuals firsthand, often through unofficial sources, but sometimes those who are direct witnesses to events.

Social media is commented upon by active social media users who further share and distribute content.

Using social media to communicate during emergency situations makes sense today. Choose your favorite platforms and monitor them closely, like the FEMA Twitter Alerts noted earlier in this module.

But remember not to clutter social media with needless posts, and do help emergency responders by "sharing" helpful information provided by authorities to help others who may be following you on your platforms of choice.

2. Source:
<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

Additional Tools for Safety Check

Safe and Well from American Red Cross:

The Red Cross suggests each individual register with Safe and Well. That way, should family members become separated for any reason, they can reconnect via the secure location platform.

Crisis Response from Facebook:

The Crisis Response tool allows users to mark themselves safe, give or find help, raise money, or get information during and after a crisis. If your family and friends are on Facebook, you may wish to use this tool and let them know that you are safe.

Step 3: Practice the Plan and Review It Periodically

Once you have prepared your family emergency plan, you should practice as many elements of your plan as possible and review the plan periodically during the year and update it as necessary. All family members need to be included in the practice and review. Many emergency management professionals lament the fact that those caught up in emergency situations forget about the well-thought-out plans developed for their safety. Hence, you should keep that lifesaving information current throughout the year and review it from time to time so that when disaster strikes, you will recall it easily.



Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit for Your Family



An emergency supply kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. It should contain enough water, food, and other supplies to allow you to survive on your own for at least 72 hours. This span increases to 14 days or more for big regional disasters such as earthquakes.³ According to FEMA, "when preparing for emergency situations, it's best to think first about the basics of survival: **fresh water, food, clean air, and warmth.**"

Things to consider when preparing the kit:

Mostly likely disasters that will impact your household

The household members

How much stuff you are able to take, depending on two things:

- Your evacuation plan (such as walking to a place not far away from your home vs. driving to another city)
- Time allowed for evacuation (days before the forecasted disaster vs. minutes during an earthquake)

3. See a 2017 report at <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/disaster/14-days-not-3-is-the-new-emergency-kit-standard/281-453947654>

The following lists of supplies are generated from the recommendation of FEMA and the Texas Department of Public Safety and can be adjusted to meet the needs of your family.

Basic Emergency Supply Kit

One gallon of bottled water per person per day

Three-day supply of nonperishable food

Manual can opener if you have canned food

First-aid kit

Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air

Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place
(*Shelter in place* means to take shelter immediately, at home, school, work, or wherever you are, usually for only a few hours.)

Battery-powered or hand-cranked radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both

A flashlight with batteries

Whistle to signal for help

Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation

Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
Cellphone with chargers (and a backup battery or power bank)



Additional Emergency Supplies

Prescription medications, extra eyeglasses, hearing aids, and other essential items

Nonprescription medications such as pain relievers, antidiarrhea medication, antacids, or laxatives

Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water

Paper plates and utensils

Coolers for food and ice storage

Important family documents in a waterproof, portable container:

- Contact numbers of friends, family members, physicians, and your insurance agent
 - Insurance policies
 - Copies of photo IDs
 - Copies of deeds and wills
 - Bank account records
 - Proof of residence
-

Money, checks, travelers' checks or credit cards (if power is out, banks and ATMs may not be available)

Road maps, a travel plan, hotel reservations, list of places between your town and your destination to stop if the highways are clogged

Extra keys

Spare clothes and shoes (Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold climate.)

Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person (Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold climate.)

Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items

Tools such as knife, booster cables, tarp, and rope

Fire extinguisher

Matches in a waterproof container

Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov or the American Red Cross

If You Have Infants or Children in Your Household

Infant formula

Diapers, wipes, and diaper cream

Books, games, puzzles, or other
activities for children

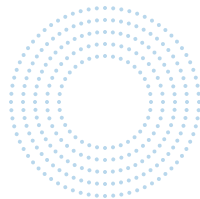
If You Have Pets in Your Household

Food and extra water for your pet

Leash

Cleaning supplies

Veterinary records



Where to Store Your Kit

Home:

Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Keep canned food in a cool, dry place.

Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers.

Vehicle:

In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car.

How to Maintain Your Kit

Replace expired items as needed.

Rethink your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.





Additional Resources

- ⊕ **Disaster Preparedness Plan**, American Red Cross

- ⊕ **Ready.gov**
by FEMA (Plan Ahead for Disasters)

- ⊕ **Disaster Preparedness for Different Scenarios** from The Texas Division of Emergency Management

- ⊕ **Pet Preparedness**, Texas General Land Office

- ⊕ **Build A Kit**, Ready.gov

- ⊕ **8 Best Practices for Emergency Communications on Social Media**, Jennifer Elliott from CivicReady

- ⊕ **Individuals with Disabilities**, emergency plan for people with disabilities and functional/access needs from Ready.gov

- ⊕ To find out if your mobile device is capable of receiving WEA alerts, contact your cellular service provider or visit **Wireless Emergency Alerts**

- ⊕ For information on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, visit **NOAA Weather Radio**

- ⊕ Prepare your car for emergency: **Car Safety**



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