Preparing Makes Sense For People With Disabilities, Others with Access and Functional Needs and the Whole Community.

Get Ready Now.


The likelihood that you and your family will recover from an emergency tomorrow often depends on the planning and preparation done today. While each person’s abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies from fires and floods to potential terrorist attacks. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared. This guide outlines commonsense measures individuals with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs, and the people who assist and support them can take to start preparing for emergencies before they happen.

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This information was developed by the US Department of Homeland Security in consultation with AARP, the American Red Cross and the National Organization on Disability and updated by the FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination.
Include Medications and Medical Supplies: If you take medications or use medical equipment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week. You should also keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as copies of any medical information, if it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medications and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you should to prepare for its use during a power outage.

If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital, whether it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medicines and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist about what else you should do to prepare for its use during a power outage. Work with them to identify back-up service providers within your area and the areas you might evacuate to. If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity to operate, talk to your health care provider about what you can do to prepare for its use during a power outage.

Depending on your needs, items for your Go Kit may include:

- Extra eyeglasses, hearing aids if you have them, or have them on hand
- Extra batteries for hearing aids
- Battery chargers for, motorized wheelchairs or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices
- Copies of medical prescriptions, doctors orders, and the style and serial numbers of the support devices you use
- Medical alert tags or bracelets or written descriptions of your disability and support needs, in case you are unable to describe the situation to others
- Supplies for your service animal
- Medical insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, physician contact information, and a list of overnight or extended access and functional needs similar to yours.
- A laminated personal communication board, if you might need assistance with being understood or understanding others
- Be sure you have cash or travelers checks in your kit in case you need to purchase supplies.
- If you have allergies or chemical sensitivities, be sure to include items that are able to use for personal hygiene and for cleanup.

Include Emergency Documents: Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, medical records, wills, deeds, social security number, charge and bank account information, and tax records. If you practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your personal support network.

Make a Plan:

For What You Will Do in an Emergency

The reality of a disaster situation is that you will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, think through the details of your everyday life. If there are people who assist you on a daily basis, list who they are and how you will contact them in an emergency. Create your own support network of family, friends, neighbors, and those who help you in an emergency. Think about what modes of transportation you use and what alternative modes could serve as back-ups. If you require accessible transportation be sure your alternatives are also accessible. If you have tools or aids specific to your disability, plan for preparing those items. For example, if you use a communication device, mobility aid, or service animal, what will you do if these are not available? If you require life-sustaining equipment, consider alternative modes of back-up. Secure or move furniture and objects that may block your path, if there are aspects of preparing your workplace that you are not able to do yourself, enlist the help of your personal support network.

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Create a Personal Support Network:

If you anticipate needing assistance more than a day or two, consider individuals who can become key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supply kits. Share them with your plan your family, friends, service providers and others in your personal support network.

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Financials:

- Manage electronic payments for your checkable and federal benefits.
- The Direct Express® prepaid debit card is designed as a cash management solution that allows you to manage your funds without having a bank account. Sign up is easy, call toll-free at (877) 521-9811 (phone), (866) 569-0477(TTY) or sign up online at ready.gov.
- Signing up for direct deposit or the Direct Express card is a simple but important step that can help protect your family’s access to funds in case the unthinkable was to happen. If you or those close to you are still receiving Social Security or other federal benefits by check, please consider switching to one of these safer options today.