



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

People with disabilities face unique challenges in the event of emergencies such as fires, natural disasters and terrorist attacks. You may need a detailed emergency plan depending on your disability and your access needs.

HOW DO I MAKE AN EMERGENCY PLAN?

The first step in making an emergency plan is identifying your resources. You should talk to your support network, including family, friends, co-workers, personal attendants, and service providers about how they can help you in the event of an emergency. At least one of these people should be outside your immediate location in the event that you need to evacuate.

You should also think about how your access needs will affect your response to an emergency plan. Things to consider include:

- Whether you use a communication device, have medication that must be refrigerated or durable medical equipment that requires electricity, and how you can charge them in the event that power goes out;
- Whether you use a mobility aid, and how that will affect your ability to evacuate;
- Whether you depend on accessible transportation, and how that will affect your ability to evacuate;
- Whether you receive regular, frequent medical treatment that you will need access to during an emergency;
- Whether you need assistance with personal care; and
- Whether you have a service animal or emotional support animal, and how you will take care of it in an emergency situation.

Try to locate the nearest accessible emergency shelter before a disaster occurs. You can use the Red Cross Find Open Shelters Tool (<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery/find-an-open-shelter>), which will help you locate a disaster shelter in an emergency.

Take any equipment you will need with you to the shelter and determine how you will transport it. Make transportation arrangements beforehand and set up a backup plan.

Finally, you should create an emergency kit that includes equipment related to your disability such as:

- Medication;
- Emergency documents such as medical records;
- Backup medical equipment and assistive devices;
- Batteries for assistive technology;
- Notebook and pen to communicate if your communication device stops working;
- Supplies for your service or assistance animal; and
- Personal care supplies.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR ME IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY?

Available resources include:

- Ready.Gov, which includes guides on how to protect yourself against specific types of emergencies;
- The New York State Emergency Management Office (www.dhss.ny.gov/oem/; 518-292-2275);
- Your local emergency management agency;
- Your local FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (see: <http://asd.fema.gov/inter/locator/home.htm>);
- Smart911 (<http://smart911.com>);
- The FEMA Mobile App (<https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app>);
- The Red Cross Disaster Apps: (<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps>);
- The Red Cross Safe and Well tool (<https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/index.php>), which will allow you to list your status after an emergency online; and
- The SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline: (<http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>)

New York City residents can also sign up for the NYC Department of Emergency Management's Advance Warning System, which provides information regarding emergency situations to people with disabilities. You can register at <https://advancewarningsystemnyc.org/user/register>.

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[HTTPS://WWW.READY.GOV/DOCUMENT/PREPARING-MAKES-SENSE-PEOPLE-DISABILITIES-AND-SPECIAL-NEEDS](https://www.ready.gov/document/preparing-makes-sense-people-disabilities-and-special-needs)

THE RED CROSS GUIDE TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AT:

[HTTP://WWW.REDCROSS.ORG/IMAGES/MEDIA_CUSTOMPRODUCTCATALOG/M4240199_A4497.PDF](http://www.redcross.org/images/media_customproductcatalog/m4240199_A4497.pdf)

THE UNITED SPINAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE AT:

[HTTP://WWW.SPINALCORD.ORG/RESOURCE-CENTER/ASKUS/INDEX.PHP?PG=KB.PRINTER.FRIENDLY&ID=75](http://www.spinalcord.org/resource-center/askus/index.php?pg=kb.printer.friendly&id=75)

AND THE RESOURCES AT [HTTP://WWW.DISASTERSRUS.ORG/MYDISASTERS/DISABILITY/DISABILITY_PREPAREDNESS.HTM](http://www.disastersrus.org/mydisasters/disability/disability_preparedness.htm).

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