

# Emergency Preparedness Toolkit



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Resourced Augusta

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Walton Options for Independent Living

and

The Georgia Council on Developmental Disability

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ESSENTIALS**

The importance of having an emergency preparedness kit and a checklist for your toolkit.

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## **COMMUNICATION IN EMERGENCIES**

List of important emergency contacts and building your personal support network.

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## **EMERGENCY PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS**

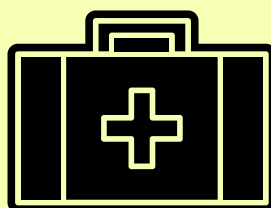
Supplies for emergency situations, documents to keep ready, planning for safe evacuation, and evaluating your preparedness.

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## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND**

Guidance for various disabilities during emergencies, additional considerations, dealing with specific types of emergencies, helpful resources, and sources for further reading.

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## Emergency Readiness: A Guide to Preparedness

Preparing for emergencies, including natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, as well as man-made crises such as terrorist attacks, is an important responsibility. "Emergency preparedness" refers to the thoughts and actions that help individuals to effectively respond to such events. This is key for everyone, no matter gender, race, or disability status, yet there are unique preparations required by individuals with disabilities.

This toolkit aims to serve as a in-depth guide to help you prepare for any emergency. It includes a Preparedness Checklist, designed as a step-by-step aid in developing a well thought through emergency plan.

Creating an emergency plan and putting together a toolkit is a big task that may involve talking and planning with family, friends, neighbors, and supportive organizations. Work to be well prepared, knowing that no plan is ever perfect. Remember, a partial plan is always better than no plan at all. You've got this!

Given the diversity of individual circumstances, this guide cannot cover all of emergencies that you might encounter fully. It is necessary to consider your personal needs and plan for safety accordingly.



# Why Preparedness Matters for Families

Emergency preparedness is crucial for safeguarding the well-being of your family in the face of unforeseen disasters. It's about creating a safety net that ensures your loved ones can weather the storm, both literally and metaphorically. The benefits of being prepared go beyond mere survival, fostering a sense of security, resilience, and empowerment. Here, we explore why preparedness is so vital for individual families, focusing on reducing the impact of disasters, ensuring the safety and well-being of family members, and improving familial resilience.

## **Reducing the Impact of Disasters on Families**

**Protecting Your Home:** Families who are prepared often take preemptive measures to safeguard their homes, such as securing heavy furniture or installing storm shutters, which can significantly reduce property damage.

**Financial Security:** Having an emergency fund and the right insurance coverage in place means families can recover more quickly from financial setbacks caused by disasters.

**Resource Management:** Knowing how to efficiently use and ration supplies in your emergency kit can make a crucial difference in sustaining your family through the initial days of a disaster.

## **Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of Family Members**

**Meeting Basic Needs:** A well-prepared family will have access to essential supplies like water, food, and warmth, ensuring the physical safety of all members during emergencies.

**Healthcare Preparedness:** By planning for medical needs—such as stocking up on prescriptions and having a first-aid kit—families can address health issues promptly, preventing complications.

**Emotional Support:** Preparedness includes plans for mental health care, recognizing the importance of emotional support and coping strategies for family members in stressful times.

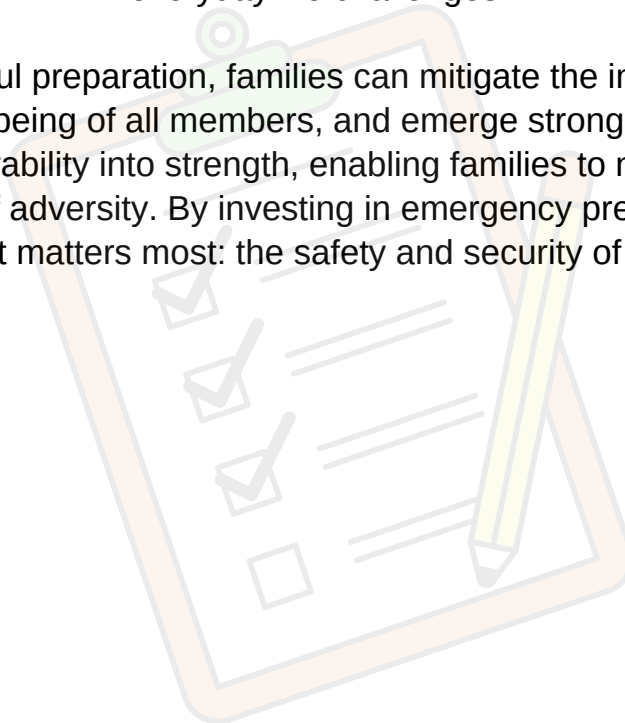
## Enhancing Family Resilience

**Building Confidence:** Families that practice emergency drills and have a clear plan in place can face crises with confidence, knowing they can rely on each other.

**Strengthening Bonds:** The process of planning and preparing together can strengthen family ties, fostering a sense of teamwork and mutual responsibility.

**Adaptive Skills:** Prepared families learn to adapt to changing situations, developing skills and strategies that are valuable not only in emergencies but in everyday life challenges.

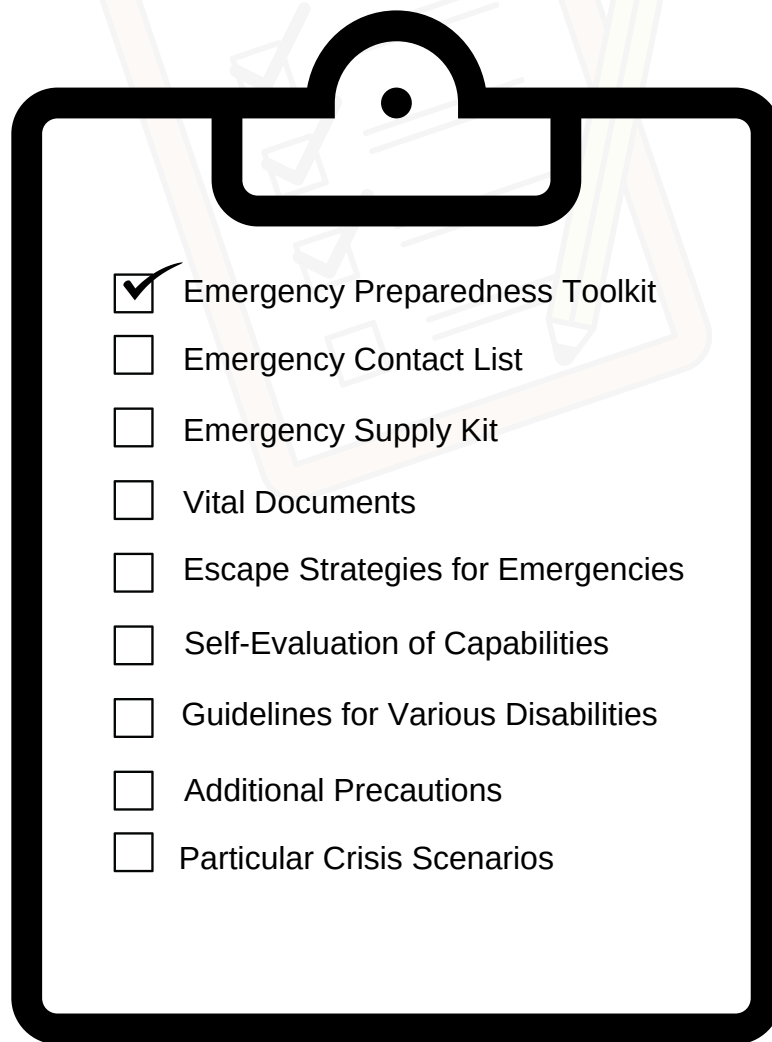
Through thoughtful preparation, families can mitigate the impact of disasters, ensure the well-being of all members, and emerge stronger. Preparedness transforms vulnerability into strength, enabling families to not just survive but thrive in the face of adversity. By investing in emergency preparedness, families can protect what matters most: the safety and security of their loved ones.



## Emergency Preparedness Tool Kit Checklist:

Below is a detailed list of important information to consider as you prepare for various emergencies, including man-made crises, natural disasters, medical emergencies, and more.

of crucial information to consider as you prepare for various emergencies, including man-made crises, natural disasters, medical emergencies, and more. , and more. Make sure you read each step carefully. When you're done, put a check mark in the box next to it. You'll find some forms and tools in here to help you make a good plan for any emergency.



- Emergency Preparedness Toolkit
- Emergency Contact List
- Emergency Supply Kit
- Vital Documents
- Escape Strategies for Emergencies
- Self-Evaluation of Capabilities
- Guidelines for Various Disabilities
- Additional Precautions
- Particular Crisis Scenarios



# Emergency Contacts

Putting together a list of emergency contacts is a key step in getting ready for any sudden events. Here's a simple guide to help you create a complete and easy-to-find list:

## ① Step 1: Gather Essential Information

Start by collecting the following details for each contact:

- **Full Name:** Ensure you have the correct spelling.
- **Relationship:** Specify the person's relationship to your (e.g., parent, friend, neighbor).
- **Primary Phone Number:** Preferably a mobile number for SMS and calls.
- **Secondary Phone Number:** This could be a work or home landline.
- **Email Address:** For alternative communication methods.
- **Physical Address:** Useful in case you need to find or send help directly to them.

## ② Step 2: Identify Key Contacts

Include a variety of contacts that cover all necessary bases:

- **Family Members:** Close relatives who should be informed of your safety and vice versa.
- **Friends and Neighbors:** People nearby who can offer immediate assistance.
- **Local Emergency Services:** Numbers for the fire department, police, and ambulance services.
- **Medical Contacts:** Your family doctor, local hospital, and any specialists you regularly see.
- **Utility Companies:** Include water, gas, and electric companies for reporting outages or leaks.
- **Insurance Companies:** Contacts for your health, home, and auto insurance providers.





### ③ Step 3: Format Your List

Organize your list in a clear, easily readable format. Consider sorting contacts by type (family, emergency services, medical, etc.) and use bold headings for each section. Ensure the font size is large enough to be easily read by all members of your household.

### ④ Step 4: Make It Accessible

- **Print Copies:** Have physical copies in easy-to-see places, such as on the refrigerator, inside the emergency kit, and in your car.
- **Digital Copies:** Save a digital version on your smartphone and in an accessible cloud storage space. Share it with family members so they can also have it on hand.
- **Emergency Kit Inclusion:** Ensure a copy is always in your emergency preparedness kit.

### ⑤ Step 5: Review and Update Regularly

- **Schedule Regular Reviews:** At least once a year, review your list to update any changed numbers or contacts.
- **After Major Life Changes:** Update your list following significant events such as moving, a new job, or changes in family status.

### ⑥ Step 6: Share Your Plan

Let your key contacts know where they are on your list and share relevant parts of your emergency plan with them, especially if they live nearby or are part of your immediate support network.

Following these steps will ensure you have a comprehensive emergency contact phone list ready for any situation.



## Emergency Contacts List

**POST THIS LIST IN A VISIBLE AREA OF YOUR HOME AND  
KEEP A COPY WITH YOUR EMERGENCY ITEMS.**

Emergency- Dial 911	
Police (Non Emergency)	
Poison Control	800-222-1222
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to <u>74174</u>
Suicide and Crisis Hotline	988

Primary Emergency Contact	
Name/ Relationship	
Phone Number	
Address	
Email Address	

Other Emergency Contacts (Friends/ Neighbors/ Co-Workers)	
Name/ Relationship	Number

Doctors/ Medical Providers/Medical Supply Company	
Name/ Relationship	Number

Others (Direct Support/ Caregivers, Etc.)	
Name/ Relationship	Number



## Individual Emergency Support

For effective emergency preparedness, it's essential to establish a plan that includes at least three contacts you can reach out to in case of an emergency. These people should know to check in on you during and after a major event to make you are well or to offer assistance. Relying solely on one person is not the safest plan, as they might not be available when you need their help the most. Make sure that the number one emergency contact person on your emergency contact list has a list of all your other contacts.

- Family (Parents, Siblings, Relatives)
- Close Friends
- Colleagues
- Caregiver(s)
- Neighbors
- Peers/ Roommates
- Community Members/ Others

### ***Discuss the following things with your Individual Emergency Supports***

- Establish and rehearse methods of communication for use in emergencies, considering scenarios where telephones are inoperative. Contemplate alternative communication methods if there's a power outage affecting computers and other devices. Plan for situations where both telephones and electricity are unavailable.
- Provide Location of emergency key, or give them a key.
- Inform your trust support individual/network about the location of your emergency provisions.
- Distribute **copies** of your evacuation strategy, essential emergency documents, and health information card to those in your support circle.
- Notify your main emergency contact about any plans you have to travel or be away from home.



## Emergency Supply Kit

Your Emergency Kit should have important things you'd need if you couldn't be at home. Think about what you really need and pick a place where you can get to your kit easily, like a certain spot in your house or your car. Also, make sure you can quickly grab things that mean a lot to you if you have to leave in a hurry. This could be family pictures, special jewelry, favorite recipe books, or awards.

It's a good idea to always have a bag with you that has the most important things like your keys, phone, money, credit cards, ID, phone charger, and a calendar or planner. Always remember to take this bag if there's an emergency!

This list should help you add to what you already have in an emergency bag.

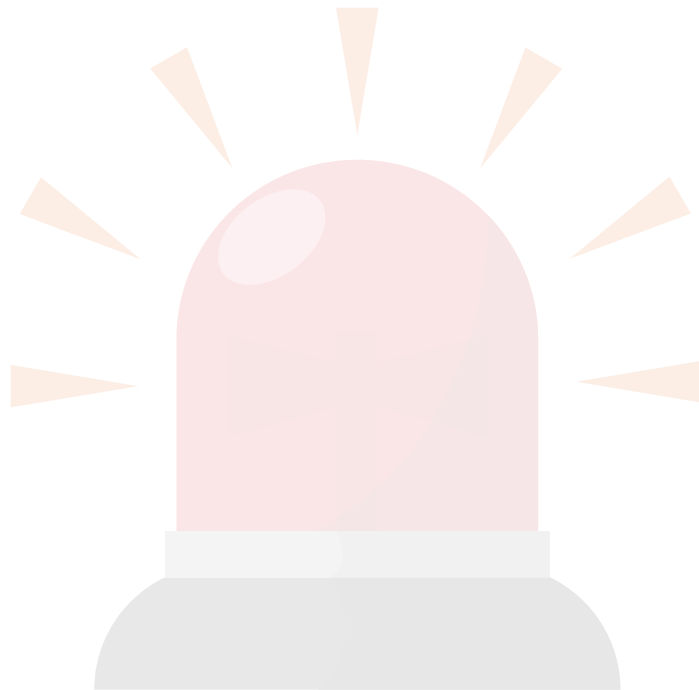
### ***Emergency Supplies:***

- Emergency Bag (A special bag holding all of the items listed above.)
- Extra Cash (Have a variety of small bills and coins.)
- Food (Include canned and other foods that won't go bad)
- Bottled water (At least 1 gallon per person per day)
- Can opener, toilet paper, paper towels, plastic bags for trash, hand sanitizer, liquid soap, writing pens, paper,
- Cell phone (Program emergency contacts as ICE- In Case of Emergency)
- Emergency Papers
- Medications/ Copies of prescriptions (at least 1 week's supply)
- Flashlight
- Signaling Device (Bell, Whistle, Beeper)
- Battery-operated radio
- Watch or clock (Battery-operated)



## Emergency Supply Kit cont.

- Special equipment specific to your needs- for example: supplies for medical equipment, communication devices, etc.
- Clothing- a full change of clothing for the season, extra jacket, extra socks, extra shoes, extra pajamas
- Puzzles, crafts, list of games, etc. to stay engaged with family members
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## Emergency Papers

Consider the essential documents you might require in case you need to relocate to a different city or state. Incorporate these documents into your Emergency Supply Kit. Reflect on the best method to protect these papers. Utilizing a waterproof binder or folder that easily fits into a bag could ensure they remain secure and dry.

### ***Emergency Papers:***

- Social Security Card/ Number
- Local Area Map
- Medical Equipment and Supplies Required (ex. g-tubes supplies, special formula, insulin, supplies for respiratory machines, etc.)
- Model and serial numbers of medical devices
- Health information card/form
- Legal documents including wills, deeds, and marriage certificates
- Credit and bank account details
- Insurance policy identifiers
- Important educational documents

A green arrow-shaped sign pointing right with the text "PLAN A" in white.A red arrow-shaped sign pointing left with the text "PLAN B" in white.

## Emergency Evacuation (Exit) Plan

There might be times during an emergency when you need to leave your home, either by choice or due to an official ruling.

Here are the steps to follow if you're required to evacuate:

- **Select Your Destination:** Identify multiple potential destinations, such as the homes of friends or relatives. Public shelters might not offer the specific support you need.
- **Arrange Transportation:** If necessary, secure transportation assistance in advance. Have more than one transportation option ready, and plan to depart promptly. Consider how you would arrange transportation if telecommunications and power are unavailable.
- **Prepare Your Emergency Kit:** Pack your emergency supplies, including your emergency kit, important documents, medications, etc.
- **Electrical Safety Measures:** Shut off the electricity at the main breaker, except for appliances like refrigerators or freezers that need to stay on.
- **Secure Valuables:** Place valuable items in a secure location or take them with you if possible.
- **Inform Your Support Network:** Contact members of your personal support network to inform them of your evacuation plans and destination.

PLAN A

PLAN B

## Emergency Skills Self-Assessment

It's very important to check out your ability to put your emergency plan into place before an emergency really happens. To ensure safety during an emergency, you must either be able to do certain things or have assistance in place for tasks you cannot perform. Consider the skills listed below. Go through the list, indicating whether you're capable of performing each skill, need assistance, or require a different approach. If there are skills you're unable to do independently, discuss possible solutions with your support network. Aim to have at least one option identified for each skill listed.

PLAN B



- Turning off gas and electricity  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Using a first aid kit  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Quickly/ safely leaving your residence  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Lifting/carrying your emergency kit  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Getting to your planned safe place  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Having a written exit route  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Tips for Specific Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities have unique needs, and it's important to make your emergency preparedness plan to meet those needs.



## Communication Disabilities

### Assistive Communication Tools

- Include notepads, pens or pencils, and a statement telling your preferred communication method in emergencies within your emergency kit.

### Emergency Health Information Card

- Ensure your emergency health information card clearly indicates the best way to communicate with you.

### Maintaining Communication Devices

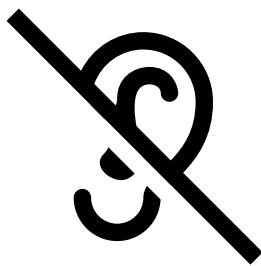
- Secure a reliable power source, such as extra batteries, to ensure your communication devices remain operational for an extended period following an emergency.

### Emergency Health Information Card

- Develop a good way for communicating during emergencies and practice it regularly.

Store communication support items in all your emergency preparedness kits.

Include spare batteries for your communication devices in your emergency kits.



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Communication Disabilities

- Develop and consistently practice a dependable communication method for use during emergencies.
- Ensure all emergency kits are equipped with necessary communication support tools.
- Store extra batteries for communication devices in each of your emergency kits.
- Create a contact list with preferred communication methods for each person, especially those in your support network.
- Keep a backup power source, like a portable charger, to keep the function of electronic communication devices.
- Regularly update and check the functions of all communication aids to ensure they are in working order.
- Familiarize yourself and your support network with any special communication software or apps you use.
- Consider including a small laminated card with communication instructions to assist first responders or others who may help you.
- Practice communication plans with your support network to make sure there is understanding and overall understanding in emergency situations.
- It could help to include instructions or tools for the use of hearing aids or other auditory support devices in your emergency kits.



## Cognitive Disabilities

### Rehearse Emergency Plans

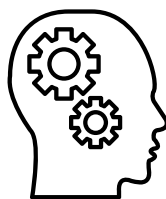
- Understand the actions to take during and after to an emergency.

### Emergency Strategy

- Always carry a copy of your emergency strategy, and place additional copies in planned locations. Make sure it's simple and easy to understand.
- Plan for after-emergency actions and prepare yourself with how to do them.
- Keep a checklist of important tasks and plans to help your memory in emergencies.

### Communication Techniques

- Consider the information that emergency responders might need to know about you and be ready to communicate it effectively, either verbally or in written form. For instance:
  - "My communication method is unique. I can indicate basic images or crucial words, which are available in my wallet or emergency kit."
  - "Understanding spoken instructions can be challenging for me. Please use slow, simple language."
  - "I tend to forget things easily. It would help if you could write down the details for me."



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Cognitive Disabilities

- Create reminders for critical information.
- Practice expressing your needs clearly to others.
- Create a Personalized Emergency Response Plan: Tailor your plan to your unique needs, ensuring it outlines specific actions to take in various emergency scenarios. Include visual aids or step-by-step instructions if helpful.
- Use Memory Aids: Use memory aids such as alarms, apps, or visual reminders to trigger emergency preparedness actions or to remind you of important steps to take during an emergency.
- Simplify Instructions: Break down emergency procedures into simple, actionable steps. Use straightforward language and avoid complex instructions to make it easier to understand and remember what to do.
- Establish Routine Drills: Regularly practice your emergency plan to build familiarity and confidence. Routine drills can help reinforce the steps you need to take during an actual emergency.
- Label Personal Items and Emergency Supplies: Use labels with simple icons or pictures to help identify emergency supplies and personal items quickly.
- Communication Practice: If verbal communication is challenging, practice using alternative communication methods, such as communication boards or apps, with your support network and emergency contacts.



## **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

### **Extra Batteries**

- Maintain a supply of additional batteries for devices that assist with your hearing.

### **Hearing Aid Storage**

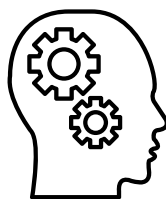
- Store your hearing aids in an accessible location so you can swiftly locate them following an emergency.

### **Visual Alert Systems**

- Install visual alerting devices in frequently used areas to notify you of emergencies.

### **Effective Communication**

- Plan your communication strategy with emergency responders. Carry pens and paper for writing.
- Consider preparing a note explaining your communication needs, such as "I use American Sign Language (ASL) and require an ASL interpreter."



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- Ensure you have your devices and extra batteries at hand.
- Install visual alerts to signal emergencies.
- Prepare notes in advance for communicating essential information to emergency personnel.
- Regularly check the condition and functionality of your hearing aids and other hearing devices to ensure they're in working order.
- Keep a waterproof and shockproof case for your hearing devices to protect them in case of an emergency.
- If you use rechargeable hearing devices, include a portable charger or power bank in your emergency kit.
- Consider solar-powered chargers as backup power source for your hearing devices.
- Supplement your alert system with tactile vibration devices that can alert you to emergencies when you're sleeping or if you're not wearing your hearing devices.
- Explore apps or devices that convert sound alarms into visual or tactile alerts on your smartphone or tablet.



## Mobility Impairments

- Attach your emergency kit to your mobility aid, such as a walker, wheelchair, or scooter, for easy access.
- Always keep mobility aids within reach.

### **Emergency Kit Inclusions**

- Include gloves in your kit to protect your hands when navigating through debris, glass, or unclean surfaces.
- Stock up on extra batteries to ensure your mobility device remains operational for extended periods during emergencies.
- Equip yourself with the necessary tools and knowledge to repair a flat tire on your mobility device.

### **Evacuation Preparedness**

- Arrange your living space to prevent furniture and other items from obstructing a quick exit.
- For those who visit multi-story buildings, learn the stairway exits and practice leaving without the elevator.
- Learn and communicate the safest methods for others to assist in lifting and carrying you, if your primary mobility aid is unavailable. Proactively seek assistance rather than waiting until an emergency occurs.



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Mobility Impairments

- Keep mobility aids and emergency supplies within easy reach.
- Gather additional supplies that enhance your emergency kit's effectiveness.
- Establish a reliable evacuation route from your home or workplace.
- Regularly practice various evacuation strategies to ensure readiness.
- Identify and arrange for accessible transportation methods that can accommodate your mobility device, especially in evacuation scenarios. Keep a list of service providers or community resources that offer accessible transport in emergencies.
- Inform local emergency response teams (fire department, police) of your mobility impairment and residence/workplace location. This preemptive communication can facilitate quicker assistance and rescue in emergencies.
- If you rely on a wheelchair or scooter, consider having a lightweight, portable ramp as part of your emergency supplies. This can be invaluable for overcoming curbs, steps, or other obstacles during an evacuation.





## Mental Health Disorders

A range of emotional responses can be triggered or intensified by a disaster, such as confusion, issues with memory and thinking, anxiety, paranoia, excessive crying, fear, panic attacks, insomnia, restlessness, loud outbursts, feelings of sadness or detachment, irritability, and trembling.

Reflect on the emotional responses you might experience and devise strategies to manage them.

Consider seeking input from family, friends, or mental health professionals on effective coping mechanisms.

### **Communicating With Emergency Responders**

- Consider what emergency responders might need to quickly understand about your condition and prepare a concise explanation or have a written note accessible. For instance:
  - "I have anxiety and might react strongly to loud noises or sudden movements. Please approach me gently and speak softly."
  - "I experience severe stress in crowded or chaotic environments. If possible, could we find a quieter space to talk?"
  - "My condition can make me appear more agitated than I feel. I respond best to calm and patient explanations without physical restraint unless absolutely necessary."
  - "I have a history of trauma, and certain physical interactions can trigger a negative response. Please inform me of any actions you need to take before making physical contact."
  - "I might not respond well to aggressive or forceful behavior due to my mental health condition. A reassuring and peaceful approach helps me cooperate more effectively."
  - "If I seem overwhelmed or disoriented, it's part of my condition. Offering clear, simple choices rather than commands can help me engage better."
  - "I experience a mental health condition that could lead to confusion during stressful situations. A calm environment helps me recover swiftly."



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Mental Health Disorders

- Tailor your emergency plan to include specific mental health needs and triggers. Include coping mechanisms that work for you.
- Compile a list of emergency contacts, including mental health professionals, trusted friends, and family members who understand your condition.
- Carry a card detailing your mental health condition, medications, dosages, and any allergies. Include instructions for non-aggressive intervention techniques that work for you.
- Ensure you have an adequate supply of all prescribed medications, stored in waterproof containers. Consider a pill organizer to keep track of dosages.
- Pack items that help soothe your stress or anxiety, such as stress balls, fidget devices, comforting textures, or a playlist of calming music.
- Include a list of effective grounding techniques or coping strategies in your emergency kit. This could be deep breathing exercises, mindfulness practices, or visualization techniques.
- Identify digital therapy options or support hotlines that can be accessed during emergencies. Store these contacts in your phone and in your emergency kit.
- If applicable, include copies of any legal documents related to your care, such as psychiatric advance directives or power of attorney documents.
- Draft a safety plan that outlines steps to take if you experience a mental health crisis, including who to contact and what treatments are preferred.



## Visual Impairments

For those with partial vision, install security lighting in each room to illuminate walkways.

- Equip yourself with high-powered flashlights that offer broad illumination, along with additional batteries.
- Maintain an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses. Consider having alternative visual aids available for emergency situations.
- Understand that service animals may become distressed during emergencies. Have measures in place to ensure both their safety and that of others. Be ready with alternative mobility solutions.
- If you rely on a cane, store spare ones at various locations such as your workplace, home, school, or any volunteer sites to navigate through obstacles and hazards more easily.
- Include an extra cane in your emergency preparedness kit.



## Enhanced Preparation Checklist for Visual Impairments

Prepare for the possibility of losing the auditory cues you usually rely on in the aftermath of an emergency.

- Consider labeling emergency supplies with large print, bright fluorescent tape, or Braille for easier identification.
- Ensure that mobility aids like canes are securely stored in a manner that protects them from damage during an emergency.

- Create a backup communication plan that doesn't rely on auditory signals, such as visual alarms or messaging apps on smartphones.
- Store extra batteries or charging options for any assistive hearing devices in waterproof containers.
- Include a whistle or air horn in your emergency kit as a non-verbal way to signal for help if you're unable to call out.
- Organize a meeting point with family or household members in case communication networks are down and you can't rely on hearing calls or alerts.
- Keep a list of emergency contacts and personal information in an easily accessible and waterproof container, using a format that meets your needs (e.g., large print, Braille).
- Ensure your emergency kit includes a flashlight with extra batteries to assist with visual signaling in dark or obscured environments.



## Special Considerations

Emergencies can occur anywhere, not just at home, and there may be others to think about besides yourself. This includes when you're traveling or away from your usual environment. It's important to plan not only for yourself but also for dependents in your care, such as non-verbal children who may be unable to communicate their needs, or pets, including service animals like guide dogs. Ensuring they are accounted for in your emergency preparations is crucial.



**Consider the following in your emergency kit for pet emergencies:**

- Water and food bowl(s)
- Pet food
- Blanket or other bedding
- Plastic bags and paper towels for cleaning up waste
- Pet medications
- Favorite toys
- Crate or carrying case for travel
- Litter, litter box, and scooper
- Extra harness/ collar/ leash



# Natural Disasters

Understanding the essentials for responding to natural disasters and emergencies is crucial for minimizing injuries, property damage, and widespread destruction. It's vital for everyone to prioritize health, safety, and community well-being, irrespective of personal differences. Staying informed through online weather updates, television, or local radio is critical for early awareness of potential emergencies. Remember these key points during an emergency:

A **WATCH** indicates that an emergency could happen in your area.

A **WARNING** signifies that an emergency is happening or will happen imminently.

Stay Updated: Keep track of news or radio broadcasts, ready your emergency kit, and prepare your home when a natural disaster is forecasted for your area.

## For Specific Disasters:

### **Indoors During Earthquakes, Hurricanes, Tornadoes:**

- Seek shelter under sturdy furniture like desks or tables
- If no furniture is nearby, stand in a doorway for protection
- Stay away from windows to avoid shattered glass
- Drop to the ground, cover your head, and hold onto something sturdy
- Remain in your safe spot until it's safe to move

### **Outdoors**

- Find a safe location away from buildings, glass, and potential falling debris
- If in a vehicle, slow down and park away from buildings, trees, and power lines, staying in the vehicle until the danger passes.
- Heed evacuation orders promptly

### **Winter Weather**

- Stay warm, dry, and calm
- Avoid driving unless absolutely necessary. If driving, carry emergency supplies
- Wear layers to maintain warmth
- Keep extra clothing and blanket in your vehicle, along with a first-aid kit, water, and non-perishable food.



## Natural Disasters cont.

### **In a Vehicle During Extreme Cold:**

- Stay in your vehicle for shelter
- Run the engine periodically for warmth, cracking a window for ventilation
- Signal for help by attaching a brightly colored cloth to your vehicle
- Move your body to stay warm
- Remain in your safe spot until it's safe to move

### **During a Drought:**

#### **Conserving Indoor Water:**

- Reuse water when possible, such as for watering plants
- Opt for shorter showers, collecting excess water for plants
- Turn off water when not actively using it, like while brushing teeth or soaping up in the shower

#### **Fire Safety**

- Plan multiple escape routes from your home
- Once outside, do not re-enter. Call for help from a safe location
- If your primary escape route is blocked, use an alternative.  
Crawl under smoke if necessary
- Before opening doors in a fire, check if they're warm. If so, find another way out



## Helpful Resources

For additional details on how to prepare for emergencies, please explore the resources below:

1. **Georgia Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Individuals with Disabilities and Older Adults**: This coalition is a central part of the state's emergency preparedness efforts, serving as a bridge between local advocacy groups for individuals with disabilities and older adults, and Georgia agencies responsible for emergency preparedness. It aims to ensure emergency plans incorporate the needs of these groups and to share relevant preparedness and response information. The coalition includes various agencies and organizations involved in emergency preparedness planning and response, working on behalf of individuals with disabilities or older adults (State of Georgia ADA Coordinator's Office).
2. **Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS)**: This agency offers resources and information for Georgians with access and functional needs, including emergency preparedness instructions in sign language for the deaf or hard of hearing. They emphasize the importance of being informed about the types of disasters that could affect your area, creating a support network, and having a personalized emergency plan and kit. GEMA/HS provides a range of resources to help individuals with disabilities prepare for emergencies, including making plans and building kits specific to their needs (Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency).
3. **Southeast ADA Center**: Part of the ADA National Network, the Southeast ADA Center serves Georgia and other states in the region, promoting voluntary compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It offers outreach, training, and accurate ADA information to individuals, businesses, employers, and state and local governments. The center conducts research and provides resources and training on financial inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities in financial institutions among other topics. It also offers various web courses on the ADA and related topics (Southeast ADA Center).

These resources provide detailed support for individuals with disabilities in Georgia, from emergency preparedness planning to ADA compliance and financial inclusion. Whether you're looking for information on how to make your emergency plan, build a kit, or ensure your financial services are accessible, these organizations have valuable tools and information to offer.





## **Helpful Resources cont.**

1. **HHS.gov** provides American Sign Language (ASL) Public Service Announcement Videos and a Public Health Workbook to help define, locate, and reach special, vulnerable, and at-risk populations in an emergency. They also offer training materials focused on effective planning, response, and recovery for special needs populations, consistent with federal civil rights laws (HHS.gov).
2. **The CDC** has a comprehensive section on disability and health emergency preparedness, including resources for first responders, training videos for emergency planners, and tips for providing services to individuals living with functional and access needs. They also offer specific advice for community-based organizations on how to plan for emergencies and disasters (CDC.gov).
3. **Ready.gov** outlines steps for creating a support network, planning for accessible transportation, and managing medications and medical equipment during an emergency. They provide detailed tips for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, and those with a speech disability, ensuring that everyone's needs are considered in an emergency plan (Ready.gov).
4. **FEMA.gov** emphasizes the importance of being informed, making a plan, and taking action. They also stress additional considerations for people with disabilities, such as creating a support network and considering accessibility needs during an emergency (FEMA.gov).
5. **The American Red Cross** offers guidance on creating an emergency plan that addresses your specific needs, whether it's managing communications, equipment, service animals, pets, or home hazards. They highlight the importance of a personal support network and completing a personal assessment to ensure all your needs are considered in an emergency plan (RedCross.org).
6. **The University of Colorado Denver** highlights the critical need for community-based planning for people with disabilities and the aging population. They offer a range of services, including identification of appropriate assistive technologies and customized training tailored for emergency managers, first responders, and community members (UCDenver.edu).

These resources can help you or someone you care for to be better prepared for emergencies by considering and addressing the specific needs of individuals with disabilities. Each resource offers valuable information, tools, and tips for ensuring safety and readiness in the face of unexpected situations.



## References

For additional details on how to prepare for emergencies, please explore the websites listed below:

1. Krump, A. and White, E. (2007). Emergency Preparedness Tool Kit for People with Disabilities. Retrieved July 25, 2023 from [https://partnership.vcu.edu/media/partnership2022/resource-downloads/Emergency\\_Prep\\_Toolkit\\_\\_FINAL\\_April\\_2007.pdf](https://partnership.vcu.edu/media/partnership2022/resource-downloads/Emergency_Prep_Toolkit__FINAL_April_2007.pdf).
2. American College for Emergency Physicians and American Academy of Physicians. (Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Needs. Retrieved August 15, 2023 from <https://www.acep.org/by-medical-focus/pediatrics/medical-forms/emergency-information-form-for-children-with-special-health-care-needs>
3. American Red Cross. (2023). Inclusive Preparedness Resources . Disaster Safety for People with Disabilities. Retrieved July 25, 2023 from <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/inclusive-preparedness-resources.html/>.
4. Kailes, J.I. Disability Policy Consultant. (2019). Emergency Power Planning for People Who Use Electricity and Battery Dependent Assistive Technology and Medical Devices. Retrieved July 27, 2023 from <https://www.jik.com/Power%20Planning%2010.24.09.pdf>
5. Adams, B.W. Pet Disaster Preparedness: Prevent tragedy by preparing for a disaster or everyday emergency before it happens. The Humane Society of the United States. (2023). Retrieved August 1, 2023, from <https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/pet-disaster-preparedness>.