

Resources for Human Development

DISASTER PLAN

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It is essential that licensed settings be prepared for emergency situations. Emergency preparedness reduces the risk of harm to the persons in care by ensuring that their needs will be met during challenging times such as the need to shelter in place or evacuation. This document provides tips for residential settings to prepare for emergencies, based on regulatory requirements as well as recommendations by the Department of Public Welfare, the Office of Developmental Programs, the CDC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Attached to the end of this document is a courtesy copy of Hope for Pennsylvanians. This is the Department of Public Welfare's disaster information.

Emergency Management Agencies

Each municipality (city, borough, or township) in Pennsylvania has an Emergency Management Agency, and each agency, as an emergency management plan. If a municipality does not have a plan, the county in which the setting is located will have one. Even though not required by regulation, it is recommended that each residential home have a copy of and be familiar with their municipality's emergency preparedness plan.

The emergency management agency phone number is typically found in the blue government pages of the telephone book.

Each residential home is required by state regulations to have contact information next to every telephone listing the contact information for the nearest hospital, fire department, ambulance company, and poison control center. It is also recommended by not required by the Department of Public Welfare to also list the number for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: 1310 Elmerton Ave
Harrisburg, Pa 17110
717-651-2001

Risk Assessment

Natural (fire, flood, snow/ice, tornado, etc.):

- 1) Snow/Ice
- 2) Fire/Carbon Monoxide- Fire
- 3) Wind/Tornadoes/Hurricanes/Landslides
- 4) Flooding/Flash Flooding- **MOST COMMON NATURAL DISASTER IN PENNA.**
- 5) Power/Utilities Outages
- 6) Flu/Epidemic/Pandemic Outbreaks
- 7) Dam Failures

Natural Weather Related Disasters

In the event of a natural disaster, updated weather alerts should be followed on local public broadcasting systems. Prepare for power outages, wind damage and extreme temperature changes. Follow instructions given during these weather alerts. In the event that alternative housing is needed for individuals, attempts will be made to arrange for assistance from natural supports in appropriate cases as well as utilizing other RHD licensed sites. If these are not options, arrangements can be made at an area hotel or our main offices if they are not in the scope of the disaster. In the rare

event the emergency public shelters need to be utilized, these will do so as a **last resort or only in the most extreme emergency.**

Depending on the nature of the event, staff may need to remain on shift through the duration of the event, If that occurs, protocols will be put in place to ensure adequate sleep and contact with those outside of the disaster zone. Additional staffing support will be put in place if possible based on the availability of staff and the nature of the disaster.

If we need to shelter in place, homes should be stocked based on the supply list at the end of this document.

Power/Utilities Outages

During some weather related events, there could be power and utility outages. Licensing regulations require that all homes have access to running water, operable plumbing, lights, heat and cooling depending on the time of the year.

If the temperature in the home drops below 62 or rises above 85, the home must relocate to alternate housing. These can be done through area hotels outside of the disaster zone, homes of individual's natural supports, or other RHD programs. The use of space heaters **are not** permitted at any RHD site. If you utilize a space heater, it needs to be permanently attached to a wall.

If the home has a generator, it must need to be large enough to maintain all systems in the home including heating/cooling refrigeration/freezing, pumps for water and septic systems, adequate lighting and electricity at the same time.

All generators need to be professional installed and maintained. There must be a dedicated line for the generator. Never plug the generator into a wall outlet to prevent causing back feeding, placing utility servicemen in risk of being electrocuted. They also should be a CO monitor in the home.

Flu/Epidemic/Pandemic Disasters:

In the event of an outbreak of the flu, or other virus and bacterial infections that can lead to either epidemic or pandemic outbreak, sanitation and personal protection is key to remaining healthy.

Frequent hand washing is key to preventing the spread of an environmental contagion. Use soap and water to cleanse your hands, rubbing them together for 20 seconds including both sides of the hands and under fingernails.

If soap is not available then hand sanitizer can be used. Rub the sanitizer into your hands until they are dry. Hand sanitizer must contain 60% alcohol to be effective.

Ensure routine environmental cleaning happens on at least a daily basis. Ensure that door knobs, counters, phones, bathrooms, remote controls and work stations are cleaned frequently with a disinfectant.

If disinfectant becomes in short supply, you can create your own by place 5 tablespoons in a gallon of water.

Separate sick individuals from healthy individuals using self-quarantine, social distancing and the use of personal protection such as gloves, gowns and face masks (if required). Stay home or out of the community when ill, especially if experiencing respiratory symptoms and/or a fever.

Restrict visitors to offices and homes. Hold meetings via phone conferences, vidyo, face time, zoom meeting.

Do not report to work or travel either for work or enjoyment if an individual is experiencing symptoms.

Depending on the nature of the event, staff may need to remain on shift through the duration of the event, If that occurs, protocols will be put in place to ensure adequate sleep and contact with those outside of the disaster zone. Additional staffing support will be put in place if possible based on the availability of staff and the nature of the disaster.

If we need to shelter in place, homes should be stocked based on the supply list at the end of this document.

Flooding:

If it has rained hard for several hours and you are in an area designated as prone to flooding, be vigilant for rapidly rising water.

If you are in an area where you could be cut off from the rest of the community, notify program management immediately so alternate residential arrangements can be made on higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and drains before the actual flooding occurs.

If you get cut off from the community or road because of rising water, do not attempt to cross it. Seek higher ground in the area you are at.

If there is water laying on the road or rising under a bridge, do not drive through it or over it. Do not drive through barricades.

In the event the vehicle is trapped in rising water, stay in the vehicle if you can safely do so. Do not leave the vehicle and attempt to walk through the water. If need be to escape rising water, climb to the roof of the vehicle.

Utilize cell phones or wave down passing motorists or by-passers to contact 911.

B) Human caused (suicide, homicide, HAZMAT, transportation accident, terrorism, civil unrest, etc.)

- 1) Chemical Threat including HAZMAT incidences due to proximity of I-78 and Route 33. A HAZMAT incident occurs almost daily on either I-78 or Route 33.
- 2) Radiological Threat
- 3) Other terrorist threats that may include explosions, snipers, Internet viruses, etc.
- 4) Severe behavioral crisis
- 5) Missing consumer and/or Amber Alert
- 6) Armed Intruder

Chemical, Radioactive or Terrorist Threats:

In the event of such a disaster, follow instructions on news alerts on the public broadcasting network or area radio stations. In the event that alternative housing is needed for individuals, attempts will be made to arrange for either assistance from natural supports in appropriate cases as well as utilizing other RHD licensed sites. If these are not options, arrangements can be made at an area hotel provided it is out of the area of the disaster. In the rare event the emergency public shelters need to be utilized, these will do so as a **last resort or only in the most extreme emergency.**

Missing consumer/Amber Alerts:

In the event of a missing individual, a search party will immediately be formed to locate the individual in the immediate area. Program Management will be notified **immediately** if an individual's whereabouts is not known. If this is an individual with no or limited safety skills 911 needs to be contacted immediately as well as a search party formed. Assistance will be sought in developing a search party. Family members will be notified as well as the appropriate county, appropriate supports coordinator, and any regulatory bodies and RHD corporate office.

For those individuals' with alone time in the community, their supervision plans will be followed as to what time they can be unaccounted for before considered missing.

Severe Behavioral Crisis:

In the event of a severe behavioral crisis, all behavioral protocols will be put into place. If the protocols are not effective at the time, the program management, behavioral specialist and clinician will be contacted for further support and guidance. If it is determined that immediate medical and/or psychiatric interventions are needed, 911 will be contacted. The individual will accompany to the hospital in the ambulance or following behind the ambulance as per what is deemed appropriate by EMS. All supervision ratios need to be maintained until the individual is either admitted into the

psychiatric ER or into the hospital notifies RHD that they will be providing appropriate supervision.

The person accompanying the individual to the hospital will ensure hospital personnel is made aware of all pertinent personal and medical information for the individual

Suicide/Homicide:

In the event of a suicide or homicide, 911 will be contacted immediately. All individuals will be taken out of the house and alternate housing arrangements will be made, until 911 has completed its investigation and the individual feels safe to return. RHD will also arrange for counseling for all individuals affected by the event.

The immediate help of the clinician and RHD Helping Hands will be elicited to provide support to the individuals and staff affected by this tragedy.

Armed Intruder:

In the event of an intruder entering a home or office, attempt to quickly and quietly leave the area from an alternate exit such as a door or window. If exiting is not a possibility, attempt to get to another area that can be locked, away from the door or windows looking into the room. Utilize closets, large pieces of furniture or items in the room to create a shield. If possible, contact 911 to make them aware of the situation.

During a disaster, what critical services must be maintained:

- **Medication administration**
- **Behavioral protocols, including adhering to restrictive procedure plans**
- **Emergency medical and psychiatric services**
- **Adequate meals, water and sleep:**

Food: The Department of Public Welfare recommends a 3-day supply of food and water for use in an emergency. The number of meals needed for a three-day supply is determined by adding the number of persons in the home, multiplying the results by 3 meals, and multiplying that number by 3. All food should require no refrigeration, minimal or no cooking, and little or no water.

Water: It is recommended by the Department of Public Welfare, that at least one gallon of water per person per day be stored. A normally active person needs at least one-half gallon of water daily for drinking.

Additionally, in determine adequate quantities, take the following into account:

- Individuals needs vary, depending on age, physical condition, activity, diet and climate
 - Persons who are ill may need more water
 - Very hot temperatures may double the amount of water needed
 - A medical emergency might require additional water

The safest and most reliable emergency water supplied is commercially bottled water.

If preparing containers of water, it is recommended that only food-grade water storage containers from surplus or camping supplies is used for water storage. Thoroughly clean the container with dishwashing soap and water, and rinse completely. If the water used comes from a commercial utility source, nothing else needs to be done. If the water is coming from a well or water source not treated with chlorine, treat as follows:

Add 16 drops (1/8 teaspoon) of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. The water should have a slight bleach odor, if not repeat the dosage and let stand for 15 minutes. If it does not still have a bleach odor, discard the water and find another water source. If procedure was effective, tightly seal cap without touching the inside of the cap, date the container and store in a dark, cool place. Replace it every 6 months. Water may not be stored in previously used containers.

Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products that do not contain 5.26 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient are not recommended.

A contract with a local bottled water supplier is acceptable if it includes:

- The amount of water to be delivered
- A guarantee that the water will be delivered immediately upon request, 24 hours a day
- A guarantee that the water be delivered as a priority even in the event of a regional general emergency

Homes may use a combination of onsite storage and water delivery.

An emergency water supply is not needed if the home has a private well or cistern, and can demonstrate that the water will be accessible and safe for drinking in the event of an emergency, including power outage. This must include the ability to pump water and to run any necessary purification systems.

H.A.L.T.: Remember do not get too hungry, angry, lonely and/or tired.

Gas: If a disaster seems possible or likely, keep a full tank of gas. All extra gas supplies should be kept in only a non-glass container approved for gas storage. Do not store gas near a source of heat.

In the event, the site must be closed, the following information accompany the individual to the evacuation site.

- The person's full name
- The person's social security number
- The person's medical diagnosis
- The person's physician's number and telephone number
- Current medications, including the dosage and frequency
- A list of allergies
- Other relevant medical conditions
- Health insurance information
- The name, address, telephone and email of individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency
- Health and safety plans
- Restrictive procedure plans

Codes / regulations / needed short-term waivers:

All appropriate county offices of the Office of Developmental Programs and HCSIS as well as the respective parents and individual supports coordinators would be notified as soon as possible in the event that any residential unit needs to be closed and the individuals relocated to a safer area.

In the event an individual cannot safely remain in the home, it is to be immediately reported to the management team.

Licensing regulations are being adhered to at all time even while in alternate locations as the situation warrants.

All appropriate county offices of the Office of Developmental Programs, HCSIS as well as respective parents, legal guardians and individual supports coordinators will be notified immediately of any injury or death of a consumer.

The Program Director and the Regional Director will be immediately notified.

CEO, will be notified of any death of any individual.

CEO, or his designee will address any media.

Short or Long-Term Evacuations:

All RHD offices may be used as short-term emergency shelter:

RHD Offices are located at:

601 E. Broad Street. Bethlehem, PA 18018

3895 Adler Place, Building A, Bethlehem, Pa 18017

In the event of long-term shelter, area hotels can be utilized provided they are outside the disaster zone and meet all requirements for operating utilities.

It may be necessary to go outside the disaster area to obtain appropriate housing.

Public Shelters may also be utilized as a last resort.

Despite the location of either the short-term or long-term shelter, state regulations must be maintained at all times.

CLOSING:

Once the disaster has ended, the management team will review what had occurred and evaluate the plan for further recommendations.

In order to ensure that all portions of this plan is evaluated, on-going paper notes should be maintained concerning the effects of the disaster, and as well as how plans have either worked or failed.

APPENDIX A

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: 1310 Elmerton Ave
Harrisburg, Pa 17110
717-651-2001**

Center for Disease Control 1-800-232-4636

**Team leadership / lines of succession (with contact
Information) Program Administrative Staff:**

RHD Regional Director - Jessica Holdsworth, jessica.holdsworth@rhd.org
- 267-300-8517

RHD Assistant Regional Director - Amy Rush, amy.ricglane@rhd.org
- 484-294-1873

RHD Office - 484-298-1333

RHD On-Call - 484-298-1333, option 3

Contact list (numbers, addresses, e-mails, etc. for all external supports):

- **Northampton County Crisis-** 610-252-9060
- **Lehigh County Crisis-** 610-782-3127
- **Police, Fire, Ambulance-** 911
- **Poison Control-** 1-800-222-1222
- **Berks County MH/MR-** 610-478-3271
- **Northampton County AE –** 610-829-4750
- **Carbon-Monroe-Pike AE-** 570-420-1900
- **Luzerne County AE-** 570-825-9441
- **Lehigh County AE-** 610-782-3995
- **Quality Progressions –** 610-691-0215
- **Service, Access and Management-** 855-641-0856 Lehigh Valley Operations
- **Carbon, Monroe, Pike MH/MR-** 570-420-1900
- **Luzerne County MH/MR-** 570-825-9441
- **Regional Office of Developmental Programs-** 570-963-3586
- **Advocacy Alliance** (financial repayer for some consumers)- 1-877-315-6855
- **Advocacy Alliance** (educational components) 610-435-2700
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline** 1-800-273-8255 or 988

Why Prepare Now for Emergencies?

Emergency workers will help after a disaster strikes, but they may not be able to reach everyone right away. That's why it's so important to be ready to survive on your own for at least three days during an emergency. This may mean having another place to stay, extra food, water, first-aid and other basic needs. We can't control natural disasters, emergencies, or terrorist attacks, but we can be ready for them and know what to do to take care of ourselves and our loved ones. This guide will help you become better prepared by learning about:

- **Different kinds of emergencies**
- **How to create emergency plans and kits for your home, your vehicle and your workplace**
- **How to plan ahead if you have a special need**



Top 10 Possible Emergencies

#1 FLOODS



Flooding is the most common natural disaster in Pennsylvania and can happen in different ways. Some floods start slowly during a long period of rain, or if warm air follows heavy snow fall. Others, like flash floods,

can happen very quickly. Even small streams and dry creek beds can overflow to create flooding.

No matter where you live, you should always be ready for a flood emergency. Learn how to prepare for floods and what to do if a flash flood happens, whether you're at home, in your car or at work, at www.Ready.PA.gov. FEMA is another resource for flood information at www.ready.gov, www.floodsmart.gov.

#2 FIRES

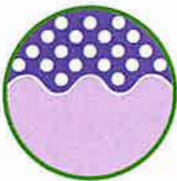


Fires can spread quickly, so they can become life threatening in two minutes and destroy a home in as little as five minutes. As the fire burns, poisonous gases are sent into the air that can make you feel drowsy and

less in control of your thinking and movements. The top reason people die in fires is from smoke inhalation (breathing in smoke), not burns.

Learn how you can help prepare for and prevent a fire emergency at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#3 WINTER STORMS



The National Weather Service refers to winter storms as the "deceptive killers" because most deaths aren't a direct result of the storms. People are injured or killed in traffic accidents on

icy roads, or suffer from hypothermia (low body temperature) due to being cold for a long period of time. Another major danger with winter storms is that they can knock out power.

Learn how to prepare for winter weather before it hits at www.Ready.PA.gov and from PENNDOT at www.PennDOT.gov.

#4 TROPICAL STORMS, TORNADOES AND THUNDERSTORMS



Tropical storms, tornadoes and thunderstorms can cause a lot of damage and very dangerous weather emergencies. Tropical storms bring high winds and sometimes serious flooding. Violent tornadoes can happen suddenly and without warning — sometimes you can't see them until a funnel cloud shows up. Thunderstorms bring dangerous lightning, one of the main causes of weather-related deaths in the United States each year.

Learn how to prepare yourself and your family for the dangers you face from tropical storms, tornadoes and thunderstorms at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#5 INFLUENZA (FLU) PANDEMIC



Like the seasonal flu many people get every year, pandemic flu spreads by sick people coughing or sneezing and touching surfaces like doorknobs, elevator buttons, etc. Unlike seasonal flu, people will have little or no protection against the new flu virus which causes a pandemic, and many more people will get sick.

When flu pandemics happen, they will likely go on for a while and cover a lot of area, causing changes in many parts of our everyday lives, including schools, work, transportation and other public services. During a flu pandemic, healthy people may have a higher risk for serious illness or complications.

Learn what you should do to prepare for a Flu Pandemic at www.Ready.PA.gov and help keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy.

#6 HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INCIDENTS



Hazardous materials are substances (like chemicals, liquids or gases) that if released or misused can pose a threat to the environment or people's health. Because hazardous materials are moved along our roadways, railways, waterways and pipelines every day, a hazardous material incident can happen anywhere and you need to be prepared in case an incident happens near you.

Learn how to prepare and what to do during a hazardous materials incident at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#7 EARTHQUAKES AND LANDSLIDES

Earthquakes and landslides are destructive natural disasters. An earthquake is the sudden, fast shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting



of rock deep underground. If an earthquake happens in an area with a lot of people, it can cause many deaths and injuries. Although most people usually think of our country's west coast when they

think of earthquakes, there are actually 45 states and territories throughout the United States (including Pennsylvania) that are at risk.

Landslides happen in all 50 states. During a landslide, large amounts of rock, earth or other items move down a slope (hillside, mountain, etc.). They can be started by storms, earthquakes, fires and man-made construction. Landslides can move quickly, striking with little or no warning at very fast speeds. They also can move several miles from where they start, growing in size as they pick up trees, boulders, cars and other materials.

Because of how fast and suddenly earthquakes and landslides happen, it is important for you and your family to be prepared ahead of time. Find out how at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#8 NUCLEAR THREAT

Nuclear power plants use nuclear heat to turn water into steam, which makes electricity. Although the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) closely



watches these plants, accidents are possible. An accident could mean dangerous levels of radiation, which could affect the health and safety of the people living near the nuclear power plant. Although the risk of an accident isn't high, knowing how to act during a nuclear emergency can reduce your risk of injury.

Residents living within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant should be aware of the evacuation routes set up for their area and have an emergency plan in place.

Learn how to prepare for a nuclear facility incident at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#9 DAM FAILURES

When a dam fails, huge amounts of water go downstream with great force. Dam failures can happen with little warning, sometimes within hours



of the first signs of failure. There are nearly 80,000 dams in the United States, and about one-third of these create a "high" or "significant" hazard to your life and property if there's a failure. But if you are prepared for what to do during a dam failure, you can greatly lower

the risk to you and your family. Learn how to prepare for a Dam Failure at www.Ready.PA.gov.

#10 TERRORISM

Terrorism is defined as the use of violence and intimidation to achieve a goal. Terrorists typically plan their attacks in a way that gets the greatest publicity (news coverage) for their causes and creates massive fear among the public. Acts of terrorism include threats of terrorism; assassination (killing) of



important people; kidnappings; hijackings (taking over a vehicle); bomb scares and bombings; cyber attacks (computer-based); and the use of chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological weapons.

Terrorism is a criminal act that is planned in advance. To stop this, we all need to be aware and take steps to prepare in advance. Learn how at www.Ready.PA.gov.

Emerging Issue Highly Infectious Diseases and Pandemic

What is a Highly Infectious Disease?

A Highly Infectious Disease (HID) is something that is transmissible from person to person, causes life-threatening illness and presents a serious hazard in the community and healthcare setting. Due to environmental factors, changes in lifestyle and many other unknown factors, the emergence of SARS-CoV-2(COVID 19) outbreak demonstrated what a HID can do to all aspects of society and the economy. Ebola, Influenza (flu) and SARS-CoV-2 COVID 19 revealed the need for preparedness planning to help families, communities and facilities manage future outbreaks of emerging or resurgent infectious diseases.

For more information on HID go to: <https://www.nfid.org/infectious-diseases>

What is a Pandemic?

A pandemic is a disease outbreak that spans several countries and affects a large number of people. Pandemics are most often caused by viruses, like Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), which can easily spread from person to person.

A novel (new) virus, like COVID-19, can emerge from anywhere and quickly spread around the world. Pandemics happen when new (novel) viruses, which are able to infect people easily and spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way, emerge. It is hard to predict when or where the next pandemic will emerge.

For further information, check out the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) pandemic website at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources>.

What happens when a pandemic virus emerges?

When a pandemic virus emerges, the virus can spread quickly, because most people will not be immune, and a vaccine might not be widely available to offer immediate protection.

Are there vaccines to protect against a pandemic?

The federal government has created a stockpile of some vaccines that can be used as protection against select influenza viruses with pandemic potential in the event of a pandemic. If a similar virus were to begin a pandemic, some vaccine would already be available.

How long would it take to develop a new pandemic vaccine?

If a new pandemic virus were to emerge, it is likely that a vaccine would have to be developed to protect against that virus. Enough supply of vaccine would need to become available for everyone who wishes to be vaccinated. It usually takes at least six months to produce large quantities of a vaccine.

Be Prepared at Home

If an emergency happens, it's important to have a plan of action for you and your family. Creating an emergency contact list, making a plan for your family and having an emergency kit on hand are the most important things you can do to be prepared.

HOW TO MAKE A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Your family may not be together when an emergency happens, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency. Below are tips to help you make an emergency plan for your family. Remember, your emergency plan should be looked at and updated several times a year.

1. Meet with family members and talk about the dangers of different emergencies, including things like floods, severe weather, nuclear accidents and flu pandemics.
2. Discuss how you and your family will respond to each possible emergency.
3. If your family is not together when an emergency happens, discuss ahead of time who will pick up the children and where you will meet if an evacuation is ordered. You should plan to meet as far away from the danger area as possible.
4. Discuss what to do in case the power is out or someone is hurt.
5. Draw a floor plan (map) of your home. List escape routes from each room.
6. Learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches in your home. If for any reason you turn off natural gas service to your home, call your gas company to have it turned back on when the emergency is over. Do not try to restore service yourself.
7. Put emergency contact numbers near all telephones. Pre-program emergency numbers into phones with auto-dial features.
8. Teach children how and when to dial 9-1-1 to get help during an emergency.
9. Teach children how to make a telephone call to a trusted friend or relative if they are not with you during an emergency. Because it is often easier to call long-distance numbers during an emergency than local numbers, one of your emergency contacts should be from outside your area.
10. Tell family members to turn on the radio, the weather radio or television for emergency information.
11. Pick two meeting places — a place near your home and a place outside your neighborhood — in case you cannot return home after an emergency.
12. Take a basic first aid and CPR class. Contact the American Red Cross for more information at www.redcross.org or call 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767).
13. Keep important family documents and recent photos (including photos of pets) in a waterproof and fireproof safe. Inexpensive safes can be bought at most hardware stores. Every year, photocopy the front and back of the cards in your wallet and place a copy in your safe and in your emergency kit.
14. Consider joining a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) that prepares people to help themselves, their families and their neighbors in the event of a disaster in their community. Through CERT, citizens can learn about disaster preparedness and receive training in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. For additional information on CERT or to find a program in your area, please contact the State CERT Program Manager at readypa@pa.gov.

Home Emergency Kit Checklist

Your home emergency kit should have food, bottled water and supplies to live on for at least three days or longer. Keep your emergency kit in the same place in your home and in an easy-to-carry container in case you need to leave quickly. Make sure that all family members know where the emergency kit is kept.

Below is a checklist of items that you should include in your emergency kit. As you start your kit, include items that best suit your family's unique needs.

- ☐ Bottled water — every person in your family needs at least one gallon each day for drinking and bathing for at least three days
- ☐ Food - At least a three-day supply that won't spoil
- ☐ Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- ☐ Flashlights (2) and extra batteries for each
- ☐ First aid kit
 - Sterile adhesive bandages (different sizes)
 - Sterile butterfly bandages or Steri-Strips
 - Sterile gauze pads (many 2"x2", 3"x3" and 4"x4")
 - Triangular bandages (4+)
 - Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
 - Antibacterial wet wipes
 - Antiseptic/Pain relief spray
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Hydrocortisone cream
 - Alcohol prep pads
 - Latex-free examination gloves (several pairs)
 - Trauma sheers or scissors
 - Sharp-pointed tweezers
 - Small folding knife
 - Safety pins (different sizes)
 - Chemical heat packs
 - Instant cold pack/compress
 - Mylar blanket (2)
 - Irrigation syringe
 - CPR mask
 - First Aid card/field guide
 - Non-breakable thermometer
 - Flexible splint or splinting materials
 - Cotton-tipped applicator sticks
 - Needle
 - Eye wash
 - Aspirin & non-aspirin pain reliever
 - Antacid
 - Laxative
 - Anti-diarrhea medication
 - Hand sanitizer gel & bar of soap
 - Magnifying glass
 - Elastic wrap (3 inch and 2 inch)
- ☐ Sturdy shoes or work boots
- ☐ Heavy socks (at least two pair)
- ☐ Hats and gloves
- ☐ Water purifying tablets
- ☐ Extra clothing, blankets & rain gear
- ☐ Cash — because ATMs may not work during an emergency



- ☐ Tools and supplies
 - Case/nylon bag/fanny pack
 - Mess kits or paper cups, plates, plastic utensils
 - Non-electric can opener
 - Propane cooking stove
 - Pot and pan for cooking
 - Aluminum foil
 - Multi-purpose tool/utility knife
 - Small fire extinguisher
 - Paper and pencil/pen
 - Tent
 - Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place (to be used when directed)
 - Pliers/wrenches
 - Pry bar
 - Compass
 - Light sticks
 - Signal flare
 - Whistle
 - Needles and thread
 - Scissors
 - Matches in a water-proof container or bag
 - Plastic storage containers or plastic storage bags
 - Medicine dropper
 - Dust mask (for dust/debris)
 - Hard hat
 - Work gloves
 - Battery-powered fan
- ☐ Extra keys for car and house
- ☐ Nylon cord
- ☐ Portable generator, if possible
- ☐ Spray paint
- ☐ Toilet paper/facial tissues/paper towels
- ☐ Wet wipes
- ☐ Personal hygiene items — toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.
- ☐ Feminine supplies
- ☐ Plastic garbage bags and ties
- ☐ Disinfectant
- ☐ Soap
- ☐ Towels/washcloths
- ☐ Household chlorine bleach
- ☐ Small shovel
- ☐ Plastic bucket with tight lid (indoor toilet)



Planning for Special Needs

Some people may need extra planning before an emergency to make sure special needs are met when an emergency happens. This includes, but isn't limited to, young children, older Pennsylvanians and people who have special needs. This section will also help you plan for the needs of your pets, service animals and livestock.

PLANNING FOR OLDER PENNSYLVANIANS AND PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS

Medications

- Always have at least a one-week supply or more of all of your medicines.
- Store your medicines in one place in their original containers.
- Have a list of all of your medicines and include the name, dose, how often you take it and the name of the doctor prescribing it.
- Periodically check expiration dates on medical supplies and batteries to be sure they are in working condition.

Medical Supplies

- If you use medical supplies such as bandages, ostomy bags or syringes, have an extra three-day supply available.
- Periodically check medical supplies and batteries to be sure that they are in working condition.

Intravenous (IV) and Feeding Tube Equipment

- Know if your infusion pump has battery back-up, and how long it will last in an emergency.
- Ask your home care provider how to infuse without electricity in case of a power outage.
- Have written operating instructions attached to all equipment.

Oxygen and Breathing Equipment

- If you use oxygen, have an emergency supply (for three days or more).
- Oxygen tanks should be firmly braced so they do not fall over. Check with your medical supply company regarding bracing directions.
- If you use breathing equipment, have a three-day supply or more of tubing, solutions, medications, etc.

Electrically Powered Medical Equipment

- For all medical equipment needing electrical power such as beds, breathing equipment, kidney dialysis equipment or infusion pumps, check with your medical supply company and get information regarding a back-up power source, such as a battery or generator.
- Check with your local utility company to determine that back-up equipment is properly installed.

Emergency “Go Bag”

Have a bag packed at all times in the event you need to leave your home with:

- A medication list.
- Medical supplies for at least three days.
- Copies of important medical papers such as insurance cards, Advanced Directive, Power of Attorney, etc.
- When you leave your home, be sure to take refrigerated medications and solutions.

PLANNING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Medical Supplies

- If you use a battery-operated wheelchair, life-support system or other powered equipment, call your power company before an outage happens. Many utility companies keep a list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers in case of an emergency. Ask them what other options are available in your area. Contact the customer service department of your local utility companies to learn if this service is available in your community.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter, have an extra battery. A car battery also can be used with a wheelchair but will not last as long as a wheelchair's battery. If possible, store a lightweight manual wheelchair for backup.

ASSISTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN A DISASTER

- People with disabilities often need more time than others to make necessary arrangements during an emergency.
- Because disaster warnings are often given by audible (easy to hear) methods such as sirens and radio announcements, people who are deaf or hard of hearing may not receive early disaster warnings and emergency instructions. Be their source of emergency information as it comes over the radio or television.
- Some people with vision disabilities, especially older people, may not want to leave their home when the evacuation notice comes from a stranger.
- A service animal can become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind or partially sighted may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their service animal, to safety during a disaster.
- Service animals are allowed to stay in emergency shelters with owners. Check with your local American Red Cross chapter or your emergency management officials for more information.
- People with mobility disabilities are often worried about being dropped when being lifted or carried. Find out the best way to move someone in a wheelchair and what exit routes from buildings are best.
- Some people with intellectual disabilities may be unable to understand the emergency and could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react.
- Many respiratory illnesses can be made worse by stress. In an emergency, oxygen and respiratory equipment may not be readily available.
- People with epilepsy, Parkinson's disease and other conditions often have very strict medicine needs that cannot be interrupted without serious consequences. Some may be unable to communicate this information in an emergency.

PLANNING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Medical Supplies

- Have extra batteries for hearing aids and implants and keep them in your emergency kit supplies.
- Maintain TTY batteries (consult manual).
- Store extra batteries for your TTY and light phone signaler. Check the manual for proper battery maintenance.
- Store hearing aid(s) in the same location so they can quickly be found and used during a disaster.
 - For example, consider keeping them in a waterproof container by your bedside, attached to the nightstand or bedpost with string or velcro. Missing or damaged hearing aids will be hard to replace or fix immediately after a major disaster.

Communication

- Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if there is no interpreter or if you do not have your hearing aid(s). Keep extra paper and pens in your emergency kit.
- Consider carrying pre-printed copy of key phrase messages with you such as “I speak American Sign Language (ASL) and need an ASL interpreter.” “I do not write or read English.” “If you make announcements, I will need to have them written or signed.”
- Install both audible (easy to hear) and visual smoke alarms that are battery-operated.

PLANNING FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Before, During and After a Disaster

- Practice what to do during and after a disaster. Practice leaving places where you spend time (job, home, school, etc.) until you are sure you know what to do during and after a disaster.
- Keep a written emergency plan with you and in several locations. Make sure your emergency plan is easy to read and understand.
- After a disaster, information often comes at you quickly. Think through ways to do things you will need to do after a disaster. A small tape recorder, calendar with room for notes, to do lists, etc., will help you remember things.
- Give copies of your written emergency plan to the people in your personal support network.

Communication

- Think through what a rescuer might need to know about you and be ready to say it briefly, or keep a written copy with you that says things like:
 - “I cannot read. I supplement my hearing with another communication device. I can point to simple pictures or key words, which you will find in my wallet or emergency supply kit.”
 - “I may have difficulty understanding what you are telling me. Please speak slowly and use simple language.”
 - “I forget easily. Please write down information for me.”

PLANNING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE VISUAL DISABILITIES

Medical Supplies

- If you use a cane, keep extras in the same location at your job, home, school, volunteer site, etc. to help you move around.
- Keep a spare cane in your emergency kit.
- If helpful, mark emergency supplies with large print, fluorescent tape or Braille.

Alternate Mobility Cues

- If you have low vision, place battery-operated security lights in each room to light your way. These lights plug into electrical wall outlets and light up automatically if there is a loss of power. They will, depending on type, continue to operate automatically for one to six hours and can be turned off manually and used as a short-lasting flashlight.
- Store high-powered flashlights with wide beams and extra batteries.
- If you wear soft contact lenses that have to be cleaned using electricity, you should have another way to clean them during a power outage.
- Service animals may become confused, panicked, frightened or disoriented during and after a disaster. Keep them safely confined or securely leashed or harnessed. A leash/harness is an important item for managing a nervous or upset animal. Be prepared to use other ways to move around until your service animal has calmed down.
- Plan for possibly losing the auditory (hearing) clues you usually rely on after a major disaster. An example would be audible street crossings, etc.

PLANNING FOR CHILDREN

- Make sure your emergency kit includes enough baby formula, baby food, diapers, bottles, toys and games to keep your children safe and comfortable after a disaster.
- If children go to preschool, daycare or school, it is important for parents or guardians to know the school's emergency plan. Review and update information on your child's emergency card often.
- Allow a trusted friend or relative that lives near you to pick up your children from school in case you are unable to travel to the school after a disaster.
- Tell trusted neighbors when your children are home alone so they can take care of them if you are not there when a disaster happens.



After an Emergency

After an emergency is over, there can still be danger. When you plan what you will do before and during a disaster, be sure to include a plan for afterward as well. What you do next can save your life and the lives of others:

- Stay calm. Help family members or neighbors who may need help.
- Check the area around you for safety. In the case of biological, chemical or radiological threats, listen for instructions on local radio or television stations about safe places to go.
- Some natural hazards, like severe storms or earthquakes, may continue to happen over the next several days. Continue to be careful and follow safety instructions.
- Stay tuned to your local emergency station. Information may change quickly after a major disaster, so listen regularly for updates. If the power is still out, listen to a battery-powered radio, television or car radio.
- Wash small wounds with soap and water. To help prevent infection, use bandages and replace them if they become dirty, damaged or soaked through with water.
- Unless told by officials to evacuate your area, stay off the roads so that emergency vehicles (like ambulances and fire trucks) can quickly get where they need to go.
- Avoid using the telephone (cellular or landlines) if a large number of homes in your area have been affected by a disaster. Emergency responders need to have the telephone lines available so they can quickly help people. During the immediate post-disaster time period, only use the telephone to report life-threatening conditions and to call your out-of-town emergency contact.
- Turn off sensitive electrical equipment such as computers, DVD player and televisions to prevent them from being damaged when electricity is restored. You should also turn off major electrical and gas appliances (like stoves, refrigerators and washing machines) that were on when the power went off to help prevent power surges when electricity comes back on.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep in cold. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more information on food and water safety after a disaster.
- Do not use the stove to heat your home — this can cause a fire or deadly gas leak.
- Use extreme caution when driving. If traffic signals are out, treat each signal as a stop sign — come to a full stop at every intersection and look around you before driving through it.
- DO NOT call 9-1-1 to ask about a power outage or to get other information about the emergency. Even during or after a disaster 9-1-1 should be used only for emergencies. In case of a power outage, use battery-operated equipment to listen to news and radio stations for updates.



CHILDREN NEED ATTENTION AFTER AN EMERGENCY

- Encourage children to talk about their fears. Let them ask questions and tell you how they're feeling. Listen to what they say, as a family when possible.
- Reassure them with love.
- Reassure them that they are safe and answer their questions honestly.
- Tell them, in simple language, what is happening. Tell them that they are not responsible for what happened. Limit the amount of news they hear on the radio or see on the TV.
- Hold and hug them often.
- When they go back to school, encourage them to also talk about their problems with teachers or school counselors and to play games, ride bikes and do all of the other things they did before the disaster.

Important Contact Information

IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 9-1-1.

There are many things you can do to help your family and community be prepared for a public health emergency. To learn more, call the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH, 1-877-724-3258, visit www.health.pa.gov or contact your county/municipal health department.

- Pennsylvania ReadyPA: www.Ready.PA.gov
- Pennsylvania Department of Health: 1-877-PA-HEALTH, 1-877-724-3258, www.health.pa.gov
- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: www.pema.pa.gov
- American Red Cross: 1-800-435-7669, www.redcross.org
- Ready America: www.ready.gov
- Pennsylvania Poison Control Centers: 1-800-222-1222

Emergency Management Agency (EMA)/Department of Health (DOH) Contact List

It is important to know who in your community will be able to help you during a disaster, particularly if you have special needs. Your county emergency management agency can help you get ready for emergencies before they happen.

Emergency Contact List (form to be filled out)

Create an Emergency Contact List. Ask several friends or family members who live outside your area to act as an emergency contact for information about you and your family after a disaster. It is often easier to place an out-of-state, long distance call from a disaster area, than to call other people within the area. All of your family members should know to call the contact person to tell them where they are and how they are. In turn, you should have your contact person get in touch with your other friends and family. This will also help to limit the number of calls that are coming into and out of a disaster area after the phones start working again.

- Page 20 — County contact information
- Page 21–23 — Special needs emergency plan template

EMA/DOH Contact List

It is important to know who in your community will be able to help you during a disaster, particularly if you have special needs. Your county emergency management agency can help you get ready for emergencies before they happen:

Adams County (717) 334-8603	Delaware County (610) 565-8700	Monroe County (570) 992-4113	Wyoming County (570) 836-2828
Allegheny County (412) 473-2550	Elk County (814) 776-5314	Montgomery County (610) 631-6530	York County (717) 840-2990
Armstrong County (724) 548-3431	Erie County (814) 451-7922	Montour County (570) 271-3047	Pennsylvania's public health network consists of 60 State Health Centers and 10 County and Municipal Health Departments. For public health preparedness information, call your designated health department listed below.
Beaver County (724) 775-1700	Fayette County (724) 430-1277	Northampton County (610) 746-3194 ext. 2226	
Bedford County (814) 623-9117	Forest County (814) 755-3541	Northumberland County (570) 988-4217	
Berks County (610) 374-4800	Franklin County (717) 264-2813	Perry County (717) 582-2131 ext. 2256	
Blair County (814) 940-5903	Fulton County (717) 485-3201	Philadelphia County (215) 686-4465	1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) Allegheny County Health Department (412) 578-8352 Allentown Bureau of Health (610) 437-7510 Bethlehem Health Bureau (610) 865-7083 Bucks County Department of Health (215) 345-3321 Chester County Health Department (610) 344-6083 Erie County Department of Health (814) 451-6700 Montgomery County Health Department (610) 278-5117 X6713 Philadelphia Department of Public Health (215) 685-6741 Wilkes-Barre City Health Department (570) 208-4268 York City Bureau of Health (717) 849-2441
Bradford County (570) 265-5022 ext. 200	Greene County (724) 627-5387	Pike County (570) 296-6714	
Bucks County (215) 340-8700	Huntingdon County (814) 643-6613	Pittsburgh, City of (412) 255-2633	
Butler County (724) 284-5211	Indiana County (724) 349-9300	Potter County (814) 274-8900	
Cambria County (814) 472-2050	Jefferson County (814) 849-5052	Schuylkill County (570) 622-3739	
Cameron County (814) 486-9352	Juniata County (717) 436-7730	Snyder County (570) 372-0535	
Carbon County (570) 325-3097	Lackawanna County (570) 307-7300	Somerset County (814) 445-1515	
Centre County (814) 355-6745	Lancaster County (717) 664-1200	Sullivan County (570) 946-5010	
Chester County (610) 344-5000	Lawrence County (724) 658-7485	Susquehanna County (570) 278-5460	
Clarion County (814) 226-6631	Lebanon County (717) 272-7621	Tioga County (570) 724-9110	
Clearfield County (814) 765-5357 ext. 1	Lehigh County (610) 782-4600	Union County (570) 523-3201	
Clinton County (570) 893-4090 ext. 209	Luzerne County (570) 820-4400	Venango County (814) 432-9745	
Columbia County (570) 389-5720	Lycoming County (570) 433-4461	Warren County (814) 563-2220	
Crawford County (814) 724-2552	McKean County (814) 887-5070	Washington County (724) 228-6911	
Cumberland County (717) 218-2902	Mercer County (724) 662-2603	Wayne County (570) 253-1622	
Dauphin County (717) 558-6801	Mifflin County (717) 248-9645	Westmoreland County (724) 600-7301	

Emergency: When to Seek Care

Special Considerations for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ID/A)

- Often have **multiple medical conditions**.
 - May face **communication barriers**, making it harder to express symptoms.
 - Behavioral changes may be the **first sign of illness**.
 - Up to **85%** of people with developmental disabilities referred for psychiatric care have **undiagnosed or undertreated medical issues**.
-

Key Principles

1. Prevention

- Regular checkups can reduce emergency visits.
- Caregivers play a vital role in both **preventive** and **emergency care**.

2. Observation

- Watch for changes in **baseline behavior**, activity level, or physical health.
- Early recognition and reporting can save lives.

3. Documentation

- Accurate and timely reporting ensures **continuity of care**.
 - Know **who to report to** and **when**.
-

When to Seek Emergency Care

Breathing Emergencies

- Sudden shortness of breath
 - Wheezing or gasping
 - Blue lips or fingernails
 - Rapid, shallow breathing
 - Inability to speak full sentences
- Urgency:** Brain death can occur within 10 minutes without oxygen. Immediate care is required.

Chest Pain

Types of Pain:

- Sharp, dull, achy, tightness, crushing, squeezing

Possible Causes:

- Heart attack
- Lung issues
- Digestive problems

- Musculoskeletal strain
- Anxiety or panic attacks

Associated Symptoms:

- Sweating, nausea, dizziness, shortness of breath
- Change in pulse rate
- Loss of consciousness

Stroke Symptoms (B.E.F.A.S.T.)

- **Balance:** Sudden loss of coordination
- **Eyes:** Blurred or double vision
- **Face:** Drooping on one side
- **Arm:** Weakness or numbness
- **Speech:** Slurred or incoherent
- **Time:** Act fast—call 911 immediately

Seizures

- First-time seizure
- Seizure lasts more than 5 minutes
- Series of seizures
- Injuries during seizure
- Difficulty breathing
- Significant change in seizure pattern
- Individual has diabetes

Shock

- Cool, moist, pale, blue skin
- Rapid heart rate
- Weakness, fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Enlarged pupils
- Restlessness or irritability
- Rapid, shallow breathing

Severe Pain

Neck:

- Numbness down arms/legs
- Fever, headache, confusion
- Vomiting, stiff neck, light sensitivity

Lower Back:

- Loss of bladder/bowel control

- Radiating pain down leg

Arm/Leg:

- Deformity or swelling
- Red streaks, warmth

Knee:

- Deformity or displacement
- Swelling, redness, heat

Head Injuries

- Bump or bruise
- Confusion, dizziness
- Fatigue, blurry vision
- Severe headache
- Repeated vomiting
- Memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Unequal pupils
- Drainage from ears/nose

Bone, Muscle, Joint Injuries

- Deformity
- Swelling or bruising
- Inability to move normally
- Bone protruding through skin
- Numbness or coldness

Spinal Cord Symptoms

- Intense nerve pain
- Loss of movement or sensation
- Breathing difficulty
- Twisted neck/back
- Tingling in extremities

Burns

- Caused by electricity or chemicals
- Cover large areas
- Involve face, hands, feet, airway
- Form large blisters or expose skin layers

Fever

- Over 103°F in adults
- With headache, nausea, confusion
- Rash, stiff neck/jaw, muscle spasms
- No sweating after heat exposure

Abdominal Issues / Pain:

- Tenderness
- Blood in vomit or stool
- Difficulty breathing
- Lasts several days
- Fever
- Bowel Obstruction:**
 - No gas or bowel movement
 - Vomiting, bloating
 - Severe cramps
 - Loss of appetite

Diarrhea

- Lasts >2 days
- Blood or pus in stool
- Fever, dehydration
- Black/tarry stool
- Weakness, dizziness

Nausea & Vomiting

- With headache, stiff neck, light sensitivity
- Vomit with blood or fecal smell
- Blurred vision, nosebleed, numbness
- Lasts >2 days

Bites

- Animal or human bites
- Spider or insect stings

Allergic Reactions

- Severe itching, hives
- Swelling of eyes or throat
- Chest tightness, wheezing
- Anaphylaxis (life-threatening)
- Flushing, anxiety, loss of consciousness

Urination Problems

- Fever, chills
- Back or pelvic pain
- Burning sensation
- Blood in urine
- Dark or foul-smelling urine

Shortness of Breath

- Sudden onset
- With fever, rash, chest pain
- Lightheadedness, blurry vision
- Wheezing, leg swelling

Coughing

- Severe breathing difficulty
- Bloody phlegm
- Chest pain, hives, fever
- Exposure to TB or whooping cough

Eye Injuries

- Vision loss or sudden change
- Swelling, redness
- Pain with headache or nausea
- Foreign object or chemical exposure

Oral Injuries

- Tooth knocked out
- Bleeding from mouth won't stop

Foreign Bodies

- Inhaled or swallowed objects – battery, magnets, absorbent items
- Embedded objects—do not remove

Psychiatric Emergencies

Suicidal Behavior

- Expressing intent to die or harm oneself.
- Making threats or plans for suicide.
- Engaging in self-harming behaviors (e.g., cutting, overdosing).
- Giving away possessions or saying goodbye.

Homicidal Behavior

- Threatening to harm others.
- Expressing violent thoughts or plans.
- Acting aggressively with intent to injure.

Severe Self-Neglect

- Refusing to eat, drink, or take medications.
- Poor hygiene or living conditions.
- Ignoring medical needs or safety risks.

Assaultive Behavior

- Physical aggression toward others.
- Destroying property.
- Escalating verbal threats or intimidation.

Challenging Psychosocial Behavior

- Sudden, extreme changes in mood or behavior.
- Disorientation or confusion.
- Hallucinations or delusions.
- Inability to communicate or respond appropriately.

Medical/Psychiatric Emergencies Related to Medications

Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome (NMS)

- Rare but life-threatening reaction to antipsychotic medications.
 - High fever & Muscle rigidity
 - Altered mental status
 - Rapid heart rate, blood pressure changes

Serotonin Syndrome

- Caused by excess serotonin, often due to medication interactions.
 - Agitation, confusion
 - Rapid heart rate
 - Muscle twitching or rigidity
 - Sweating, fever
 - Diarrhea

Overdose of Psychiatric Medications

- Intentional or accidental ingestion of excessive doses.
 - Drowsiness, confusion
 - Slurred speech
 - Seizures
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Respiratory depression

Withdrawal from Psychotropic Medications

- Abrupt discontinuation can cause:
 - Anxiety, agitation
 - Insomnia
 - Nausea, tremors
 - Psychosis or mood instability

Allergic Reaction to Psychotropic Medications

- Rash, hives
 - Swelling of face or throat
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Anaphylaxis
-

Other Psychiatric Emergency Situations

- Victim of Assault or Rape:
 - Requires immediate medical and psychological support.
 - May present with trauma symptoms: fear, withdrawal, hypervigilance
-

Calling for Help – ALWAYS!

- When in doubt, call 911.
- Better safe than sorry!



Information for Emergency Room Staff

- Medical conditions and medications – found on RIS & MAR
 - Allergies – found on RIS & MAR
 - Lifestyle factors (e.g., smoking)
 - Baseline behaviors
 - Emergency contacts – found on RIS & MAR
-



Conclusion

- Know the individual's baseline.
- Recognize distress signals.
- Report and document changes.
- Follow agency protocols.
- Share vital info with emergency providers.