

Backpack Emergency Card Instructions

Why should my child carry an emergency card in their backpack?

In case of an emergency, it is important that your child knows two things:

- How to get in contact with the people that can keep them safe.
- Where to go if they are separated from family.

An emergency card in your child's backpack will give them, or a teacher, a quick tool to understand who to call for your child when emergencies occur or where the family emergency meeting spaces are located.

The best way to fill out these cards is together with your children! Make them a part of the process, and make sure they are confident in where to go and who to call. Then, place a copy in your child's backpack and your own bag/wallet to have a handy reminder of who to contact if an emergency occurs.

Instructions

Each bullet below corresponds with a section on the card. Please feel free to use the suggestions below, but it is important that you tailor the card to fit your family's needs.

- **Date of Birth**—Feel free to only put the month and year in case your child's card is stolen.
- **Teacher** – If your child has one main teacher, write the contact information for that teacher. If your child has multiple teachers, decide with your family the teacher that you and your child feel comfortable contacting in an emergency.
- **Special Needs, Medical Conditions, Allergies, Important Information** – In addition to what is listed, write any information you think would be helpful for an adult/contact person to know.
- **In-Town Contact** – Choose a person that lives near your home or school that can quickly arrive and ensure your child's safety in case of an emergency. Pick the same person for each family member to contact.



- **Out-of-Town Contact** – Choose a person that may be further away from your home or school but will still be able to arrive in a reasonable amount of time. Remember to pick the same person for each family member to contact. Doing this ensures that if an emergency happens that affects the entire town or area, there’s someone outside of the area that might not be impacted that can help your family.
- **Emergency Pick Up Address** – Decide on a safe, familiar, and accessible place your child can stay until someone picks them up. Some examples could include a neighbor’s house, a community center, or a library.
- **Family Meeting Place (In Neighborhood)** – Where will you meet up with your family if you must get out of your house quickly? Decide on a safe, familiar, and accessible place where your family can go for protection or to reunite that is within your neighborhood but is a safe distance away from your home and emergency event. Some examples include a neighbor’s house, a big familiar tree, or nearby playground.
- **Family Meeting Place (Regional)** – Where will you meet if your neighborhood is being evacuated and you are not at home? Decide on a safe, familiar, and accessible place to reunite with your family that is outside your neighborhood. This meeting place can be a location within the city, town, or even county. Some examples include a library or place of worship.

Practice, practice, practice!

Please note that this emergency card will be most effective when the whole family practices and learns the information together! Take some time each month to work with your household on memorizing your emergency plan and contact information.

Have questions or want more resources?

Feel free to reach out to the **Howard County Office of Emergency Management** at (410) 313-6030 or emergencymanagement@howardcountymd.gov for any questions about this emergency card. We have more emergency preparedness resources on our website at www.howardcountymd.gov/emergency-management/readyhoco. You can follow us on social media on Facebook and X @HoCoOEM.