



An Emergency Plan for Individuals

There are four basic steps to being prepared for any emergency:

GET INFORMED

MAKE A PLAN

BUILD A KIT

BE INVOLVED

This document will assist you as you develop your personal/family emergency plan. Think about how emergencies may affect you. Emergencies can range from house fires to hurricanes. Refer to the Community Hazard Handbook for the most common Howard County threats. Use this guide now to list what you might need during an emergency.

Get Informed

CREATE AN EMERGENCY SUPPORT NETWORK

You don't want to go through an emergency alone. Ask at least two people to be in your network — family members, friends, neighbors, caregivers, coworkers, or members of community groups. Remember, you will help each other in emergencies.

Your emergency support network should:

- Stay in contact during an emergency.
- Keep spare sets of your keys.
- Know where to find your emergency supplies.
- Know where to find your pets and how to care for them.
- Know how to operate your equipment or help move you in an emergency.

Support network contacts:

Pick an out-of-state friend or relative who family or friends can call during a disaster. If local phone lines are busy, long-distance calls may be easier to make. This out-of-state contact can help you communicate with those in your network.

Out-of-state contact: _____



DEVELOP A PLAN

Document important health and life-saving information:

- Allergies: _____

- Special medical conditions: _____

- Medications and daily doses: _____

- Eyeglass prescription: _____

- Blood type: _____

- Communication devices/Equipment: _____

- Health insurance plan: _____

- Preferred hospital: _____

- Individual #: _____

- Group #: _____

- Doctor/Specialist: _____ Phone: _____

- Doctor/Specialist: _____ Phone: _____

- Pharmacy: _____ Phone: _____
 - Address: _____



- Fax: _____

Transportation

Be prepared to make other transportation plans if your subway or bus is not running.

I will call (friend): _____

Phone (home/work/cell): _____

Taxi service: _____

Phone: _____

Make a habit of learning exits whenever you are in a new location (e.g., shopping malls, restaurants, movie theaters).

Include Communication in Your Plan

Take time now to plan how you will talk to friends or emergency workers in an emergency. During an emergency, your normal way of communicating may be affected by changes in environment, noise, or confusion. Know how and what you will need to communicate during an emergency.

- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, practice communicating your needs through gestures, note cards, text messages, or other means.
- If you are blind or have low vision, be prepared to explain to others how best to guide you.

Prepare something now that describes your needs in short, meaningful phrases. You may not have much time to get your message across. Prewritten cards or text messages can help you share information during a stressful or uncomfortable situation. Phrases can include:

- *I may have difficulty understanding what you are telling me. Please speak slowly and use simple language.*
- *I use a device to communicate.*
- *I am deaf and use American Sign Language.*
- *Please write down directions.*
- *I speak [insert language].*

KNOW HOW TO EVACUATE

- Evacuate immediately if your life is in danger, or if instructed to do so by public safety personnel.
- Evacuate immediately if you smell gas or see smoke or fire.
- Call 911 if you are stranded and need emergency assistance to evacuate your home.



- Remember to tune in to local radio and TV stations, and access Howard County Government and OEM via Facebook.

Meeting Place

Know where you will meet family, friends, or caregivers after an emergency. Pick two places to meet: one right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood, such as a library, community center, or place of worship.

Meeting place close to home: _____

Address: _____

Meeting place outside neighborhood: _____

Address: _____

Pick friends or family with whom you can stay in case you cannot stay at home.

I can stay with: _____

Practice evacuating regularly and consider different situations you may encounter, such as blocked paths or exits. Include service animals in your drills so they become familiar with exit routes.

Sheltering

For people who have no other place to stay, emergency shelters may be set up in schools, County buildings, or places of worship. They provide basic food and water. Shelters often DO NOT have special equipment (e.g., oxygen, mobility aids, batteries). Be prepared to bring your own. Some shelters will allow pets, and some will not. Shelters are subject to change depending on the emergency. Ask family members or someone in your emergency support network to go with you to the shelter.

Build a Kit and Go Bag

Everyone in your household should have a Go Bag, which is a collection of things you would want if you had to leave in a hurry. Your Go Bag should be sturdy and easy to carry, like a backpack or a small suitcase on wheels.

Use this list to pack your Go Bag:

- Copies of your important documents in a waterproof container (e.g., insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, photo IDs, proof of address, marriage and birth certificates, copies of credit and ATM cards)
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries



- List of the medications you take, why you take them, and their dosages
- Contact information for your household and members of your support network
- Cash, in small bills
- Notepad and pen
- Aerosol tire repair kits and/or tire inflator to repair flat wheelchair or scooter tires
- Supplies for your service animal or pet (e.g., food, extra water, bowl, leash, cleaning items, vaccination records, and medications)
- Back-up medical equipment (e.g., glasses, batteries)
- Other personal items:

PUT TOGETHER AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

In some emergencies, like coastal storms and tornadoes, you may have to stay at home. An emergency supply kit should have enough supplies for **at least three days**.

Check off items you have and add those you will need:

- One gallon of drinking water per person per day
- Nonperishables, ready-to-eat canned foods, and a manual can opener
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries, or wind-up radios that do not require batteries
- Whistle or bell
- Back-up medical equipment (e.g., oxygen, medication, scooter battery, hearing aids, mobility aids, glasses, facemasks, gloves)
- Style and serial numbers of medical devices (such as pacemakers) and usage instructions

Special Considerations

- If you rely on electric medical equipment, contact your medical supply company for information about backup power.
- Ask your utility company if you qualify as a life sustaining equipment customer, and see if you can sign up for priority power restoration.
- If you rely on oxygen, talk to your oxygen supplier about emergency replacements.
- If you receive treatments such as dialysis or chemotherapy, know your provider's emergency plan.
- Also, consider any need supplies or equipment for any dependents.



GET INFORMED

- Attend Howard County's quarterly Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Meetings: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/emergency-management/local-emergency-planning-committee>.
- Sign-up for Hands-Only CPR and Stop the Bleed Training: email outreach@hcdfrs.org or call 410-313-2016
- Email OEM's outreach team at by calling (410) 313-6030 or by emailing at emergencymanagement@howardcountymd.gov