



HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLAN

This document will help you to develop your personal or household emergency plan. There are four basic steps to being prepared for any emergency:

GET INFORMED
MAKE A PLAN
BUILD A KIT
BE INVOLVED

Use this guide to think through how emergencies may affect you and to become better prepared.

GET INFORMED

Getting informed means understanding the common threats that could occur in your area. Check out the following ways you can learn about hazards that may impact Howard County and stay updated on current conditions.

- [Review the Community Hazard Handbook](#) to understand the most common threats that may impact Howard County.
 - Follow Howard County Government and Howard County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) on [Facebook](#) and [X](#).
 - Use your favorite weather app to stay aware of severe weather in the area.
 - Tune in to your local TV news station before, during, and after a hazard event.
 - Get a NOAA Weather Radio for real-time severe weather alerts, even during a power outage.
 - Keep your cell phone near you for Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) about severe weather and other emergencies.
-

MAKE A PLAN

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 medical equipment or help move you in an emergency.

Support Network Contacts

Pick an in-state contact who you can reach out to in case of an emergency.

In-state contact: _____

Pick an out-of-state friend or relative who you can call during a disaster. If local phone lines are busy, long-distance calls or texts 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 the following important health and life-saving information:

Allergies: _____

Special Medical Conditions: _____

Medications and Daily Doses: _____

Eyeglass Prescription: _____

Blood Type: _____

Communication Devices and
Other Equipment: _____

Health Insurance Plan: _____

Insurance Policy #: _____

Insurance Group #: _____

Preferred Hospital: _____

Health Care Provider 1 Name: _____

Health Care Provider 1 Phone #: _____

Health Care Provider 2 Name: _____

Health Care Provider 2 Phone #: _____

Pharmacy Name: _____

Pharmacy Phone #: _____

Pharmacy Address: _____

Pharmacy Fax #: _____

Transportation

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

Friend's Name: _____

Friend's Phone #: _____

Taxi Service: _____

Taxi Phone #: _____

Include Communication in Your Plan

Take time now to plan how you will communicate with 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.
- Always check for exits whenever you are in a new location (e.g., shopping malls, restaurants, movie theaters).
- For updates during an emergency, tune in to local radio and TV stations or visit [Howard County Office of Emergency Management's Facebook page](#).

Meeting Place

Know where you will meet family, friends, or caregivers after an emergency. Pick two safe 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. While all shelters will allow service animals, only some shelters will allow pets. 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 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. Make sure to check expiration dates annually.

Use this list to pack your go bag:

- ☐ Bottled water
- ☐ Non-perishable food, such as granola bars
- ☐ Copies of your important documents in a waterproof container (e.g., insurance cards, photo IDs, proof of address, bank account records, etc.)
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ☐ Fully charged portable chargers with extra power cords
- ☐ Battery-operated or crank AM/FM radio
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Emergency blanket
- ☐ Map of the area
- ☐ Lightweight rain gear
- ☐ Change of clothes and comfortable shoes
- ☐ Cash (\$200, including small bills)
- ☐ Notepad and pen
- ☐ List of the medications you take, why you take them, and their dosages
- ☐ Several days' supply of prescriptions and over-the-counter medications
- ☐ Contact information for your household and members of your support network
- ☐ Aerosol tire repair kits and/or tire inflator to repair 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, contacts, contact solution, batteries, etc.)
- ☐ Other personal items:

BUILD A HOME EMERGENCY KIT

In some emergencies, like coastal storms and tornadoes, you may have to stay at home. A home emergency kit should have enough supplies for **at least three days**. Check expiration dates and update your emergency kit every year as your family's needs change.

Check off items you have and add those you will need in your home emergency kit:

- ☐ One gallon of drinking water per person per day
- ☐ 3-day supply of nonperishable canned foods and a manual can opener
- ☐ Copies of your important documents in a waterproof container (e.g., insurance cards, photo IDs, proof of address, bank account records, etc.)
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ☐ Fully charged portable chargers with extra power cords
- ☐ Battery-operated or crank AM/FM radio, NOAA weather radio
- ☐ Whistle or bell
- ☐ Emergency tools (e.g., wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, fire extinguisher, first aid kit)
- ☐ Matches in a waterproof container
- ☐ Cash (\$200, including small bills)
- ☐ Personal hygiene items (soap, feminine hygiene products, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- ☐ Comfort items (e.g., change of clothes, blankets, pillows)
- ☐ Back-up medical equipment (e.g., oxygen, scooter battery, hearing aids, mobility aids, glasses, contacts, contact solution, facemasks, gloves)
- ☐ Style and serial numbers of medical devices (such as pacemakers) and usage instructions
- ☐ List of the medications you take, why you take them, and their dosages
- ☐ Several days' supply of prescriptions and over-the-counter medications
- ☐ Supplies for your service animal or pet (e.g., food, extra water, bowl, leash, cleaning items, vaccination records, and medications)
- ☐ Books and games to entertain children
- ☐ Other items:

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 needed supplies or equipment for any dependents.

BE INVOLVED

- Attend Howard County's quarterly [Local Emergency Planning Committee \(LEPC\) Meetings](#).
- Sign up for *Hands-Only CPR* and *Stop the Bleed Training* by emailing outreach@hcdfrs.org or calling (410) 313-2016.
- Contact OEM's outreach team by emailing emergencymanagement@howardcountymd.gov or calling (410) 313-6030.