

# Medical Needs Program

## About the program

Sarasota County residents with qualifying medical needs are encouraged to apply for registration as a medically-dependent person (MDP). It is important to apply in advance for this program so, if qualified, you will be on the county's registry for transportation and sheltering at a medically-dependent Evacuation Center during a disaster. Pre-registration helps us to help you when time is limited.

All MDPs must bring a caregiver to the designated medically-dependent evacuation center. The caregiver must be able to:

- Assist you with all activities of daily living, including dressing and toileting.
- Lift you to/from toilet and cot and wheelchair as needed.
- Assist you with walking (with or without walker), assist with wheelchair.
- Transport food from cafeteria to you as needed.
- Assist with medication and any treatments as needed.
- Monitor your oxygen usage.
- Provide evacuation center management with a discharge plan in the event the you cannot return to your home.

You are permitted to bring your spouse/significant other and dependents (limited to high school age and below, living in same household) with you in addition to your caregiver. Many times the caregiver is a spouse/significant other; please be sure he/she can fulfill the caregiver responsibilities outlined above.

There is no guarantee that household members will be housed in the same room as you or that bedding/cots are will be available for them.

## How to Apply

Submit an application to Sarasota County Emergency Management. Two ways to submit applications:

**If you only need transportation to an evacuation center complete the Transportation Dependent Registration form.**

1. Complete the Medically-Dependent Person online application form. **(online applications will stop being accepted at 60 hours prior to expected impact of storm).**
2. Complete a paper application and fax or mail it to emergency management. (NOTE: this method may delay the processing of your application. Here is the Medically-Dependent Person Application. **(paper applications will stop being accepted at 120 hours prior to expected impact storm.)**

Mail to:

Emergency Services  
6050 Porter Way  
Sarasota, FL 34232

FAX to: (941) 861-5501

*If you are having difficulties viewing the document in your current browser, please try using Explorer.*

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## What to bring with you

Evacuation center space can be limited depending on how many people seek evacuation. Please limit your belongings to: clothing and personal hygiene items for up to three (3) days. Limit one (1) suitcase/bag per person as space is limited. Bring clothing suitable for layering as the temperature of the evacuation center may vary.

- Pillow and quilt or heavier blanket.
- Two weeks of medications.
- Extra small “travel” bottles of oxygen, if applicable.
- Walker/cane if needed.
- Wheelchair or electric scooter and charger, if applicable (**NOTE:** the schools are very big and hallways are very long).
- Any medical equipment/supplies needed (i.e. sharps container, catheters, incontinence supplies, c-pap, etc.).
- Special dietary foods, in a cooler, as special diets cannot be accommodated.
  - There is no refrigeration space for food and only limited space for medications.

### Additional items to bring:

- List of current medications.
- Phone numbers for emergency contacts and doctors.
- Address and phone number of where you will go if you cannot go back to your home (due to damage or no power) when the storm is over. This is very important as the evacuation centers will close and a back-up place of residence may be needed.
- Extra battery for phones and personal electronic devices as only essential medical equipment will be plugged in if the power goes out and the evacuation center is on generator power.

Be sure to label (name and phone number) all equipment and belongings. This will help us make sure you receive your items if lost or left behind at the evacuation center.

Before you leave your home be sure to leave your answering machine on or a porch light on to make it easier to determine if your electric has been restored.

## Safety tips for medically-dependent people

- Install fire safety devices in the home.
- Test alarms and extinguishers regularly and replace smoke alarm batteries every six months.
- Keep a flashlight, whistle or bell handy to signal your whereabouts to others.

## 911 Use for hearing impaired callers

Sarasota County 9-1-1 Communications Center is equipped with the TTY/TDD system. (TTY: 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771).

Here are accepted abbreviations adopted to ensure accuracy.

- **GA** means 'go ahead'.
  - **SK** means 'stop keying'.
  - **Q** means 'question'.
- xxx** indicates a mistake.

A call to 9-1-1 will always be responded with "9-1-1, what is your emergency Q GA?"

The TTY/TDD's are designed to follow a few simple rules.

- Punctuation is not used.
- Contractions are written as one word.
- Apostrophes are replaced with a single space.
- "Hang up now" indicates help is on the way.

For more information about 911 services call the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for Public Safety Communications.



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