

Family Preparedness Plan

Protect what Matters Most

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Introduction



Emergencies can strike at any time—whether it’s a storm, a power outage, a health crisis, or something entirely unexpected. This guide was created to help your family:



- Take control of your emergency preparedness,
- Build a plan that reflects your household’s unique needs,
- And preserve your peace of mind in uncertain times.

You don’t need fancy equipment or a big budget to be ready. You just need a plan. Whether you’re caring for small children, aging parents, or chosen family, this plan is for you.

10 Steps for Basic Family Preparedness



01

Discuss & Tailor Your Plan

- Identify Local Risks
 - List the emergencies most likely to affect your area: hurricanes, wildfires, blizzards, power outages, etc.
 - Learn your local hazards by checking with your local emergency management agency and signing up for emergency alerts.
- Know Your Household Needs
 - Consider family members with:
 - Medical needs or medications
 - Mobility or sensory impairments
 - Language barriers
 - Pets or service animals
- Assign Responsibilities
 - Assign tasks to each person (e.g., who grabs the emergency kit, who handles the pets).
 - Make sure children know their roles and practice them.

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02

Create a Communication Plan

- Choose Emergency Contacts
 - Designate an out-of-town contact who may be easier to reach during regional disasters.
 - Make sure everyone knows the contact's phone number and email.
- Establish Communication Tools
 - Agree on methods (texting is often more reliable than calling).
 - Use group chats or emergency apps (like the Red Cross Emergency App).
- Include local police, fire, poison control, utility, school, and caregiver contacts.
- Print & Share
 - Use printed wallet cards for each family member.
 - Save contacts in phones and on paper in emergency kits.

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03 Choose Meeting Places

Identify three key meeting spots:

- Indoor Meeting Place (for shelter-in-place emergencies)
- Neighborhood Location (e.g., the corner of your street or a trusted neighbor's house)
- Out-of-Area Location (if you must evacuate to another city/state)

Make sure everyone knows how to get to these locations and practices multiple routes.

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04

Plan for Evacuation

- Map Multiple Routes
 - Know several ways out of your home, neighborhood, and city.
 - Keep printed maps in your emergency kit and car.
- Prepare a Go-Bag
 - Pack lightweight, essential supplies for each family member.
 - Store near exits or in vehicles.
- Transportation & Accessibility
 - Plan for those without personal transportation or with disabilities.
 - Register with local emergency services if applicable.

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05

Build Emergency Kits & Go Bags

Each kit should include:

- Water: 1 gallon per person per day for at least 3 days
- Food: 3-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- First aid kit
- 7-day supply of medications
- Personal hygiene items
- Copies of insurance, ID, and important documents
- Cash in small bills
- Local maps
- Chargers or backup power banks (solar powered are good options)
- Items for infants, seniors, and pets
- Any other necessities or comforts

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06

Practice and Update

- Drill: Conduct emergency drills at home every 6 months (fire, evacuation, shelter-in-place).
- Review: Go over your plan and kit contents at least twice a year.
- Update: Revise your plan as family situations change (e.g., new school, new medical needs).

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07

Include People with Special Needs

- Register with emergency assistance programs in your area if needed.
- Back-Up Power: Plan for power outages affecting medical equipment. You may be able to sign up with your local utility company to have priority restoration service, moving you to the front of the line for service calls.
- Communicate Needs: Prepare written cards describing conditions or needs (for shelters or first responders).
- Evacuation Support: Coordinate with neighbors or community groups if extra help is needed.

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08 Stay Informed

- Sign up for alerts from your local emergency management agency (text or app-based).
- Download apps: Red Cross, local weather alerts.
- Know warning systems: outdoor sirens, local radio, social media.

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09

Organize Important Documents

- Keep copies (physical and digital) of:
 - IDs, birth certificates, and insurance policies
 - Medical prescriptions and immunization records
 - Financial records, wills, deeds, and legal papers
 - Emergency contact list
- Store them in:
 - A waterproof/fireproof document holder
 - Encrypted flash drive or cloud-based backup

10 Steps for Basic Family Preparedness



10 Customize for Work, School & Community

- Know school/daycare emergency policies
- Include caregiver plans if you're separated during the day
- Plan for emergencies while at work or commuting
- Talk with neighbors about shared plans (especially for children, elderly or those with disabilities)



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