

So, you're in the path of a natural disaster and you're caring for people with disabilities.

Are you prepared?

The checklist below has been adapted from a presentation at the Association for Professional Developmental Disabilities Administrators on April 23, 2018 in San Antonio, Tx. Presenters included emergency response leaders who successfully evacuated residents of state-supported living centers in Texas during Hurricane Harvey.

Things to think about in advance and be prepared to do:

- ☐ Quickly secure buildings and homes
- ☐ Be ready with special emergency housing locations and floor plans
- ☐ Open a command post with phones, computers and Incident Command System forms
- ☐ Set up communications between the command post and staff
- ☐ Assemble workers, enough to rotate shifts (Advise staff in advance that they may need to evacuate with the organization and/or come to work during an emergency)
- ☐ Advise whether staff can take families along (Identify accommodations for staff and/or staff families if able to come along)
- ☐ Mobilize para-transit vehicles such as buses and shuttles (Have Memorandums of Understanding in advance with transportation companies or other organizations that can assist)
- ☐ Make provisions for securely transporting/accessing medical information
- ☐ Have supplies ready to go, including including lights, air mattresses, linens, fans, generators, water and extra clothes
- ☐ Make sure you have storage for supplies
- ☐ Plan ahead for meals
- ☐ Ensure staff accountability, such as with sign-in sheets, timekeeping and the documentation of dispensing meds
- ☐ Plan for communicating with families
- ☐ Be able to mobilize receiving teams at emergency locations
- ☐ Allow time for staff to fortify their own homes
- ☐ Consider how emergency locations will accommodate daily routines, from rising to bedtime.
- ☐ Figure time for loading supplies
- ☐ Before departure, make sure no one is left behind
- ☐ Plan for security of all private health information entrusted to you

Note that one alternative may be to shelter people in place, and that requires similar advance planning. And don't forget to have enough coffee!

Need Help?

Learn about special offers – developed with OPRA's HR Committee – to give Developmental Disability providers as much or as little help as needed to achieve HIPAA compliance.

Go to **HIPAA.OPRA.org**

Call **(234) 281-4310**

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