

# What if I need extra help during an emergency?

*Preparing for an emergency for seniors, individuals with disabilities or residents with medical concerns.*

## Fact Sheet: Preparing if you have special needs.

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER (JIC). THE JIC IS LED BY GUAM HOMELAND SECURITY/OFFICE OF CIVIL DEFENSE AND SUPPORTED BY MULTIPLE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS DEALING WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY.



### Assess your situation to develop your plan

- Are you in good health?
- Are you pregnant?
- Are you 36 weeks or more pregnant?
- Can you move around your home without assistance?
- Do you live in a concrete structure?
- Can you leave your home in the event of an evacuation?
- Do you need a specially equipped vehicle for transportation?
- Are you able to call for help if needed?
- Do you need life-support equipment that needs power?
- Are you able to perform personal care on your own, such as bathing/showering and getting dressed?
- Do you use assistive devices to help perform personal care?
- Can you cook your own meals?
- Do you need someone or assistive devices to help you eat your food?  
Do you have a service animal or any pets?
- Can you care for those pets on your own

### Being prepared for any emergency situation is easy.

#### Be honest and plan for YOUR situation.

What can you handle on your own? What do you need help with? The answers to these questions may affect your emergency plan and the supplies in your emergency kit. Are you caring for anyone that needs help?

Remember, your plan and kit should be something you can use for any emergency. Include medications, medical equipment, and other items you would need for an emergency.

#### Talk with family, friends, neighbors to make your plan.

Make a family plan with people who know your situation. They will help you plan for shelter, supplies and what to do if there is a loss of power and water. The people who help you every day can help you plan for medical needs during an emergency. Keep a list of your personal support individuals with their contact information.

#### Prepare for a 10 day emergency.

Depending on the emergency, you may need supplies to last for hours, a few days or potentially more than a week. If you have supplies to hold you for ten days, you are likely to have the things you will need during an emergency of any length with or without emergency services. This is very important for people who need medication, have medical concerns or time-sensitive needs. Always keep a large supply of potable water.

#### If an emergency happens, stay calm and follow your plan.

The most important thing you can do during any emergency situation is **stay calm**. Use your plan and supplies during an emergency. Stay connected by listening to the radio and TV. Always keep your phone nearby.

# I may need help.

JIC\_April2013\_005

## I have a hard time seeing, hearing, moving or have a disability.

### Stay calm; Be informed.

#### People who have visual impairments or are blind.

- Keep a radio or television station on so you can stay informed about the situation.
- If you use a cane, make sure you have one ready to use and stored in a place you can find it easily.
- Be prepared to calm your service animal and keep them on a secure leash. Make sure you have a section in your emergency plan to care for your service pet.
- Prepare to respond if your service animal is not available.
- Instead of regular flashlights, store high-powered flashlights with wide beams.
- Mark your emergency supply kit with Braille, large print or fluorescent tape.

#### People who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- If you use hearing aids, make sure to store them in the same location so you can find them during an emergency. If possible, store an extra hearing aid in your emergency kit. Keep an extra supply of batteries on hand for your hearing aid.
- Determine which news stations use closed captioning.
- Plan on how to communicate without a hearing aid during an emergency. Keep pencils or paper with your emergency supplies. Consider having cards with a message that says for example, "I use American Sign Language."

### Make a good plan for your situation

#### Talk with your family and friends.

- If you or someone you care for will need help, ask family, friends and others before an emergency. Give them information about your medical providers. Make sure they know where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Show friends how to use your equipment (ex: wheelchair) so they can move you if necessary. Teach them how to use any lifesaving equipment or administer medicine in case of an emergency.

#### Create a plan to shelter in place.

- In most emergency situations, home may be the safest place. Sheltering in place is often the best option, especially for those who work or live in concrete structures. See Fact Sheet #2 about how to shelter in place. Make sure you can get to a room that has few or no windows.

#### Create a plan if you must be moved.

- Although home or work buildings may often be the safest option, there are certain emergencies (ex: flooding) that may require you to be evacuated. Include information about how you would evacuate in your plan. Be familiar with routes to key areas.
- **If you have mobility issues**
  - o People who are confined to a bed will need to decide the best transportation option (ambulance or other) available.
  - o People using a wheelchair need to plan for evacuation using the wheelchair and evacuation if the wheelchair cannot be used. Remember, do not use the elevator during a fire or earthquake.
  - o If you need to use stairs, discuss lifting and carrying techniques with those who may help you (family, neighbors) during an evacuation.

#### Plan for possible power and water outages in your area.

- Make sure you have backup plans for powering equipment you need that requires electricity like beds, breathing equipment or infusion pumps. This includes having batteries, possibly a generator or following your plan to move to a medical facility.

### Make a useful emergency kit

#### Do you have supplies and medication for 10 days?

- Use the supply list in Fact Sheet #2 to make your kit. Make sure you have food and water and medicine for ten days.

#### Make copies of important documents and keep them in the kit.

- Make sure you have copies of the following:
  - o Medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards
  - o A list of prescriptions needed and dosages
  - o Family records (wills, power of attorney, deeds, social security cards, credit cards, bank information and tax records)
  - o Insurance papers.

#### What else would help during an emergency?

- Have extra batteries for any items you need. Have paper and pencil handy in your kit to communicate. Have written instructions for operating any equipment you need. Have instructions on how to manually infuse pumps or equipment.

# I may have health concerns. How do I plan for an emergency?

## Make sure your plan and kit include the following:

### Medications

- If you take medicine, receive medical treatment, or use medical equipment be sure to have what you need for ten days.
- Keep a copy of your prescriptions including name of medication, dose, frequency, and the name and contact information of the prescribing doctor.
- Store your medications in one location in their original containers.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about what else you should do to prepare.

### Medical supplies you use every day

- Have an extra ten day supply of any medical supplies you use, such as bandages, colostomy bags or syringes.

### Medical equipment you need

- Work with your doctor or home health care provider to make an emergency plan or backup plan that includes your equipment. Ask important questions like, “How can I get back-up services,” or “What can I do to get ready for power outages if my equipment needs electricity?”
- **If you use electrically-powered medical equipment**
  - o This includes those who use electric beds, breathing equipment or infusion pumps; check your medical supply company and get information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery or generator.
- **If you use oxygen or breathing equipment**
  - o Have enough for at least a seven-day period.
  - o Oxygen tanks should be securely braced so they do not fall over. Call your medical supply company regarding bracing instructions. If you use breathing equipment, have a ten day supply or more of tubing, solutions and medications.
  - o If you use Intravenous (IV) and feeding tube equipment, know if your infusion pump has a battery back-up, and how long it would last using the battery.
  - o Ask your home care provider about manual infusion techniques in case of a power outage.
  - o Have written operating instructions attached to all equipment.
  - o Practice the use of medical equipment with people who will personally support you during an emergency.

### Keep your documents together.

- Make sure you have copies of the following:
  - o Family records (power of attorney, deeds, social security cards, credit cards, bank information, tax records and wills)
  - o Medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards
  - o Instruction manuals for any equipment that you need and use
- Make sure you know the phone numbers to the following:
  - o Family Clinic

---

  - o Family member or caretaker

---
- Put all of these documents in a waterproof container.

### Decide if you need to stay and shelter in place, or go

- If you are pregnant, you should not go to the hospital unless directed by emergency officials. The only time you may be directed to go to the hospital is if you are 36 weeks pregnant or further.
- If you have medical concerns, do not leave or evacuate until directed by emergency officials or your health care provider.

### Make an emergency bag to use if you decide to go

- If you have to leave your home, keep a portable bag with a handle packed that you can carry with you to a medical facility:
  - o Extra clothes
  - o Medications and copies of your important documents listed above
  - o An extra phone charger or radio so you can stay informed

# Shelter in place

## Stay informed

- Listen to island news sources, visit [ghs.guam.gov](http://ghs.guam.gov) or call 475-9600 for the latest. Keep a radio with you at all times.

## Stay where you are

### If you are at home and told to shelter in place

- Close and lock all windows and exit doors. Shut your typhoon shutters if you have time.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains. Always face away from the blast.
- Turn off all fans and air conditioning systems.
- Get your family kit and a working battery-powered radio.
- Go to an interior room without windows.
- Bring your pets with you. Be sure to bring additional food and water supplies for them.
- Take a phone with you, preferably a landline. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room.
- Keep listening to your radio or TV until you are told that all is safe or you are told to evacuate.

### If you are at work and told to shelter in place

- Close the business. Bring everyone inside. Shut and lock doors to the outside. Close and lock all the windows. If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains. Always face away from the blast.
- If there are customers, clients, or visitors in the building, ask them to stay – not leave.
- Ask employees, customers, clients, and visitors to call their emergency contacts to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- If the business has voice mail, change the recording to indicate that the business is closed, and that staff and visitors will be in the building until authorities advise it is safe to leave.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
- Select a room, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to sit in. Pick several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because this equipment may not be able to be sealed from the outdoors.

## What is Shelter In Place?

- Sheltering in place is an easy way to keep people safe during an emergency situation.
- Shelter-in-place means going to a small, interior room, with no or few windows during the emergency.
- It **does not** mean sealing off your entire home or office building.

## Why you may need to shelter in place?

- Shelter in place is the best way to protect people during emergency situations that might include chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants in the environment.

## How to seal your windows

