

Emergency Preparedness for Vulnerable Residents

Before an emergency threatens, all Broward County residents should have a plan in place to help ensure their safety. All residents should be prepared if basic services such as water, gas, electricity or telephones are cut off for an extended period of time. Local governments and relief workers should know if you or a member of your family is vulnerable in an emergency.

There are many resources on this web site and in your community to assist you. If you are unable to prepare an emergency plan for yourself, ask a family member or friend to help you. Before a weather emergency or other disaster strikes, you should know what you need to do and where you need to go to be "Ready. Set. Safe". Follow this simple five-step plan.



Gather Information



Pre-Register for Important Services



Make Arrangements for Animals



Prepare Important Documents



Prepare Equipment and Collect Supplies



Gather Information

- Seek emergency preparedness and response advice from your local, state and federal government, and community organizations. Find out what emergency plans are in place in your community and workplace, and with your service providers. See if those plans accommodate your special needs. Visit www.broward.org/hurricane for general preparedness information from Broward County.
- Talk to your physician or health care provider about a realistic plan for your safety. Know what you can and can't do.
- If you undergo routine treatments administered by a physician's office, clinic or hospital (such as dialysis), are a home healthcare client, or require oxygen supplies, call your service provider to discuss their plans for continuing service to you in an emergency.



Pre-Register for Important Services

- Register with Broward County's [Vulnerable Population Registry](#). This registry allows people who are disabled, frail or have health issues to register in advance with their city so that emergency workers may plan a better response to vulnerable residents in a recovery effort following a hurricane or other emergency. Each city may use the Vulnerable Population Registry list in a different way, based on their city's recovery effort. For more information or to register, call 954-831-4000.

- Consider your [sheltering options](#) and decide on a sheltering plan that is appropriate for you. You should have a plan, even if your plan is to shelter at home. Shelters do not require pre-registration; however, if you plan on going to a Special Medical Needs Shelter, pre-registration is encouraged to ensure that the shelter is adequately prepared to meet your needs. If you pre-register, you are not obligated to go to the shelter in an emergency. You can change your plans without notice if you make other arrangements.
- Pre-register for paratransit transportation, if you think you may need it. As with shelter registration, you are not obligated to take advantage of the service if your plans change. To pre-register, call Broward County Human Services Department at 954-357-6385 (TTY 954-357-5608).



Make Arrangements for Animals

- If you have a service animal, make sure the animal has a collar with identification. In your shelter kit, have proof that the animal's vaccinations are up to date, and a copy of written instructions for your animal's care. You are responsible for caring for your service animal during your stay in a shelter.
- Make other arrangements for any pets you may have, as pets other than service animals cannot be accommodated in the shelters.
- If you plan to stay in a Mass Care shelter, Broward County has one pet-friendly Mass Care shelter at Millennium Middle School in Tamarac. Pre-registration of pets is required, and owners are expected to shelter with their pets and provide care for them.
- If you plan to stay in a Special Medical Needs shelter, call the Broward County Human Services Department in advance at 954-357-6385 (TTY 954-357-5608) and they will help you make arrangements for the care of your pet.



Prepare Important Documents

- Make a list of your Personal Support Network – the people you can count on to help you before, during and after an emergency. Document contact information (home, work and cell phone numbers) for each person on the list, including family members, friends, coworkers and neighbors. The individuals in your Personal Support Network should be familiar with your functional abilities and limitations.
- Create a Personal Information Card with all your health information (doctors, insurance policy numbers, hospital preferences, current medications, medical conditions, etc.) Identify your disability-related or special medical needs.



Prepare Equipment and Collect Supplies

- Place identification labels on any medical support equipment you would take to the shelter with you, such as wheelchairs, walkers and nebulizers.
- Collect your emergency supplies early. Supplies will vary, depending on whether you choose to go to a shelter or stay at home. Broward County has created a convenient shopping guide that can help you spread the expense of purchasing emergency supplies over eight weeks. View and print the guide in [English](#), [Spanish](#), or [Creole](#).
- Keep ample supplies of prescription and non-prescription medications on hand, especially during hurricane season, June 1 through November 30.



Working to Make Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities

Communication

- Extensive, ADA-compliant disaster preparedness web site – www.broward.org/hurricane and www.broward.org/atrisk
- Vulnerable Population Registry
- Sign Language Interpreters at Press Conferences
- Preparedness Information in large print
- TTY for Agencies Providing Emergency-Related Services
- eMail Emergency Notification System
- Hearing Assist Devices for Meetings and Presentations

Evacuation and Transportation

- Broward County Transit (BCT) Bus Transportation to Shelters – all are wheelchair accessible
- Paratransit (TOPS) Transportation to Shelters – for persons with physical, cognitive, emotional, visual or other disability which prevents them from using BCT's fixed-route service
- Transportation services to and from your pre-planned shelter destination (Mass Care, Special Medical Needs or hospital), including transfer assistance
- Online Bus Route Timetables in Text-Based Format for the Visually Impaired

Sheltering

- American Red Cross Mass Care Shelters – with accommodations for the disabled
- Special Medical Needs Shelters – ADA - accessible and staffed by trained medical personnel
- One 24-Hour Oxygen Support Shelter
- One Children's Shelter
- Homeless Shelters