

BE READY TO GO:

## Evacuation Transportation Planning Tips for People with Access and Functional Needs



Are you ready to safely leave your home, neighborhood, school, or work during an emergency? You may have to evacuate with some notice, with little notice or without any notice. That is why it is important that you create your own personal evacuation plan.

Being ready to go is your responsibility. And it could have a direct impact on your life safety, your family, your independence and your property.

Evacuation in an emergency can be more challenging for people with disabilities and activity limitations. Also, often during an evacuation, more people need transportation than available resources can support.

### IF YOU NEED TRANSPORTATION:

**Create a support team:** Support teams are groups of people who are willing to help you in an emergency. Often people think first responders like firefighters, police officers and paramedics will help us in a major emergency. The reality is that most of the time friends, coworkers and neighbors end up doing the first responding. You need to be sure your support people are aware of your specific needs in case of an emergency. Create support teams for home, work, school and wherever else you spend your time. This increases your chances of having help if you need it.

Be sure to ask if your support team can provide you with transportation. Ensure that they have room for you in their vehicle in addition to themselves and their family. Also be sure that their vehicles are accessible to you and your equipment.

**Contact local transportation providers:** Ask local transit providers if they will be able to help you in an emergency. Ask if they keep a list of those who will need help with transportation. Make sure that this is only one of your plans and not your only plan!





## IF YOU HAVE A VEHICLE:

**Prepare your vehicle:** Make a plan in advance identifying who will drive the vehicle. Be sure to fill up your gas tank early to avoid any shortages in fuel supplies.

Plan where you can go if you want to avoid staying in a shelter. If you are considering hotels or motels, call ahead for a reservation. Hotels will fill up quickly. Check their policies on service animals

and pets. Talk with friends and family about the option of staying with them in an emergency. Reconfirm these plans once a year and also confirm multiple options for places to stay. Make sure lodging options are varying distances and directions away (10 miles, 50 miles, neighboring city or state).

Be sure to pack your car and leave as soon as evacuation orders are given. Leaving early can help you beat the crowds and the traffic and spend less time in the car.

Check local news for updates on evacuation routes, detours and the location of evacuation centers and shelters. Be sure to leave a note at home saying that you have left and where you are going.

## Customize your evacuation kit:

It's a good idea to plan like you're going camping. Make sure to include the following in your grab-and-go car supply kit:

- Cash, cell phone and car charger
- Bottled water, food that will not go bad, and food for service animals as you may be stuck in traffic for hours without access to stores
- Medications, copies of or list of prescriptions, and doctor's contact information
- Extra warm clothes and shoes for cold weather
- Tissues and toiletries



- Several sizes of plastic bags which can be helpful if restrooms along the route are closed, out of order or overcrowded
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- State and local maps. You may end up far from home and detours are common.



## Get involved in planning!

Your local transit providers and emergency responders need your input on issues facing people with disabilities.

Consider offering input on issues facing people with disabilities. Transit providers benefit from getting real world advice from users and it prevents “a lot about us without us” planning.

## Additional Resources:

**Information about emergency supplies:** [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

**Information about disability-related emergency supplies:** [www.nusura.com/media/projects/Cal\\_EMA\\_Toolkit/resources/individuals/emergency\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.nusura.com/media/projects/Cal_EMA_Toolkit/resources/individuals/emergency_checklist.pdf)

**Information about individual preparedness for people with disabilities, families and support networks:** [www.jik.com/disaster.html](http://www.jik.com/disaster.html)

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