

FEMA Disaster Preparedness Guide for Caregivers: Webinar Resources and Q&As

In this webinar, FEMA shared the *Disaster Preparedness Guide for Caregivers* and held discussions with caregivers and emergency management experts who highlighted key considerations and essential steps to develop a robust preparedness plan. This document includes resources and responses to questions from the webinar.

Resources

- [Disaster Preparedness Guide for Caregivers](#) includes tailored information, key considerations, and resources for caregivers to use to identify their care recipient's needs and how they may change during a disaster.
- [FEMA's Ready Campaign](#) educates and empowers people to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate emergencies and disasters. Resources include:
 - [Disaster Preparedness Kit](#)
 - [Emergency Alerts Information](#)
 - [FEMA App](#)
 - [Make a Plan Form](#)
 - [Low and No Cost Preparedness Resources](#)
- [Disaster Preparedness Guide for Older Adults](#) supports older adults and their caregivers in preparing for emergencies and provides easy-to-read, user-friendly worksheets to create disaster preparedness plans.
- [Prepared Caregivers: Toolkit for Caregivers of Veterans for Disaster Preparedness](#) consists of plans, insight, and conversation prompts for caregivers of Veterans, with checklists to create a plan suited to caregivers' needs.
- [Homeland Security Grant Program](#) includes a suite of risk-based grants to assist state, local, tribal and territorial efforts in preventing, protecting against, responding to and recovering from acts of terrorism and other threats. The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) within the Homeland Security Grant Program provides funding to enhance regional preparedness and capabilities in designated high-threat, high-density areas.
- [Administration on Aging](#) within the Administration for Community Living promotes the well-being of older individuals by providing services and programs designed to help them live independently in their communities.



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- [Surviving in Place: Emergency Planning and Preparedness Programs](#) within the University of Colorado Denver's Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering includes trainings and information on emergency go kits and battery backup power systems to help home and community based service providers in Colorado prepare for potential emergencies and disasters.
- [Community Inclusion: Assisting Persons with Access and Functional Needs](#) identifies five areas that everyone needs to be able to get or do in emergencies. Integrating access and functional needs means ensuring our emergency systems support the different ways that Colorado populations achieve these five needs.

Questions and Answers

How can I share Disaster Preparedness Guide for Caregiver guide with others?

The guide and resources for caregivers are available at ready.gov/caregivers. The webpage is available in English and Spanish. The guide is [available online as a PDF](#) that can be printed. It will soon be available in Spanish.

Can care facilities and group homes use the guide?

There are not separate guides for those facilities. However, this guide was developed with considerations in mind for all types of caregivers. Much of the information you'll find in it should be applicable across all types of caregiving. For additional information and resources on caregiving, please visit ready.gov/caregivers and www.rosalynncarter.org.

How can I learn about becoming a paid caregiver?

Some government programs pay family or friends of people with disabilities to help with daily activities, including personal care, giving medicine, cooking, cleaning, and more. Learn more at www.usa.gov/disability-caregiver.

How can caregivers support care recipients with pets?

If your care recipient has a service animal, make sure to also include items such as food, water, medications, and identification for the animal in the emergency kit. For more information on preparing service animals for disasters, visit ready.gov/pets.

In an emergency, a service animal must be allowed to come inside a shelter, clinic, or any other facility related to the emergency with their owners. If you have a pet and cannot bring them with you, make sure to plan for who will care for your pet if you leave your home.

Are their considerations during evacuation that jurisdictions should implement to help facilitate a more inclusive and equitable experience?

Check out [FEMA's evacuation and shelter-in-place resources](#) to review relevant concepts, considerations, and principles that can inform jurisdictions in planning for evacuation and/or shelter-in-place protective actions.

How can caregivers prepare for emergencies with non-verbal autistic children and adults who struggle to communicate?

Caregivers know their care recipients' needs best, and the guide provides guiding questions to walk through questions to identify and address needs. It may be helpful to connect with first responders and emergency managers before a disaster to share your care recipients' needs.

You can create a profile that can help first responders learn about the needs of your care recipient using [Smart911](#) or [RapidSOS Home](#). You can also create a hard copy needs list in your disaster preparedness kit.

Caregivers can call or visit their local emergency management offices to connect with emergency management professionals and learn more about local emergency processes. In some cases, caregivers and their care recipients may arrange a tour of the local disaster shelter for their emergency sheltering plans.

How can I help my care recipient receive medical attention or prescriptions during a disaster?

Medication needs and prescription refill processes will vary, but there are program and resources available. Learn about programs and resources before you need them; talk to your care recipient's doctor and support network.

- Each state has different laws that authorize pharmacies and pharmacists to refill prescriptions early in the event of a declared emergency. Familiarize yourself with the laws in your state by visiting: [Healthcare Ready's A Review of State Emergency Prescription Protocols](#) and [CDC's A Prescription for Preparedness](#).
- Locate an open pharmacy or healthcare facility during and after a disaster. Healthcare Ready's [Rx Open](#) provides information on the operating status of healthcare facilities in areas impacted by a disaster.
- [Emergency Prescription Assistance Program](#) helps people in a federally identified disaster area who do not have health insurance access prescription drugs, vaccinations, medical supplies and equipment.

Additionally, caregivers should review their care recipients' medical needs and answer:

- Do you have the money to cover expenses such as relocation, extra medications, or other associated costs you may encounter in a disaster?
- Do I or members of my support team have a full understanding of the medication and equipment needs of the person I am taking care of?
- What medications or assistive devices enable my care recipient to function independently? Does my support network know how to use this technology or administer these medications?

Caregivers should include medication and medical related items in the disaster preparedness kit such as:

- Complete list of medications and specialty pharmacies. Make a personalized wallet card documenting prescriptions and medical information through [Healthcare Ready's Rx on the Run](#).
- Cooler and ice packs to keep refrigerated medications cool.
- Medical supplies, assistive devices, and mobility aids.

Do you have examples of items included in the Medicaid and disability specific go-kits?

The University of Colorado Denver Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering has an example list for a [Surviving in Place Emergency Go Kit](#). There are also resources for building a kit at [Ready.gov Build a Kit](#).

What is CMIST?

CMIST stands for Communications, Maintaining Health, Independence, Support, Safety & Self-Determination, and Transportation and is a memory tool to remember these important access and functional needs. Learn more about Colorado's work on [ensuring community inclusion](#) for people with disabilities and others with access and functional need.

Are there any best practices for disaster preparedness for clinicians who travel from home to home?

Clinicians can increase their awareness and preparation for potential emergencies. Best practices include knowing your travel route, preparing for an extended stay at any care recipient's home, keeping a bag with extra clothes, food, candles, water, shovel, etc. in your car. Consider your location and the most likely disasters for that area.