

## ABOUT DPC

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The Center for Disabilities and Special Needs Preparedness (DPC) provides resources to assist local emergency planning organizations (both public and private) in planning for individuals who need specialized communications, transportation, and medical supports.

The center's primary focus is on emergency preparedness

- Training
- Planning
- Curriculum development
- Advocacy

for people with disabilities. The DPC addresses preparedness issues ranging from initial warnings to evacuation, emergency shelter accessibility and extended special needs of people with disabilities during recovery.



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## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS *ON THE JOB* FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



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[www.disabilitypreparedness.org](http://www.disabilitypreparedness.org)

# GUIDELINES

Protecting yourself in your workplace – when disaster strikes – requires planning by both you and your employer. This checklist can help you get started. Keep in mind that your employer is required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to include you in organizational plans and to make “reasonable accommodation” for your disability. Coordinate your planning with others by participating in the planning committee.

## GET INFORMATION

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- Find out how you would be warned of an emergency. If the warning is by means not accessible to you, suggest alternatives.
- Determine aid that might be available to you in an emergency.
- Contact your local fire department or emergency management office to see if they maintain a register for people with disabilities so help can be provided quickly in an emergency.

## CREATE A PLAN

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- Meet with your supervisor to discuss what plans your business has for emergencies that might occur.
- Ask your supervisor what provisions have been made to assist you in emergencies (an ADA requirement).
- Discuss what measures you may have to take in different kinds of emergencies.
- Learn what you will need to **know** for each kind of emergency. For example, what is the evacuation plan, what are the escape paths, where is emergency equipment located, where is the designated meeting place, where you will be evacuated to, etc.
- Learn what to **do** for each kind of emergency. For example, if you use a wheelchair can you access the “safe area” for a tornado (usually the basement), or must you go to an alternate place?
- Be self-reliant. Assume responsibility for your safety – even if your business has a plan that takes into account your disability.
- Learn escape routes and how to exit the building without help if necessary.

- Establish two evacuation routes in case the primary one is blocked.
- Practice evacuating the building on your own as well as in the company's drills.
- Determine alternative “safe areas” with input from the fire marshal.
- Arrange how your family can contact you and how you can contact them if you must evacuate from your workplace.
- Find a secure place to store things you may need that can be easily accessed in an emergency.
- Obtain and use Health & Information Cards that contain critical information about you, such as your ID, people to contact, and any medical issues affecting you.
- Determine any special aid you may need from emergency responders to compensate for your disability.
- Acquire a cell phone with a GPS. Program in emergency numbers so they can be activated without speech.
- Consider acquiring a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized.

## PREPARE A DISASTER KIT

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Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffel bag. Tailor this kit to your specific needs. Your emergency kit should include these items:

- Battery powered radio, flashlights, lighter, candle, matches and extra batteries.
- A first aid kit, medications and copies of prescriptions.
- Water purifying tablets.
- Change of clothing & rain gear.
- Personal hygiene items.
- Special equipment you may need, such as augmentative communication equipment, insulin supplies, cane, food and water for sight dog, etc.
- Hearing aid batteries
- The style and serial numbers of medical devices you use.
- Blanket and a sleeping bag
- A list of family, physicians, and a relative or friend who should be notified if you are injured, along with a back up person living outside the immediate area.