



My Emergency Preparedness Guide:

LGBTQ+ Community Members

Everyone Should Have a Plan

Disasters can strike anywhere, at any time. It is essential that everyone is prepared for when a hurricane, wildfire, earthquake, or another unexpected emergency occurs. Being prepared for emergencies can help you recover faster and may even save your life. For some members of the LGBTQ+ Community, particularly transgender people, disasters can be especially difficult as they navigate unfamiliar spaces.

As a member of the LGBTQ+ Community you cannot assume that your relationship, your family and/or your gender identity will be understood or welcomed when a disaster happens. Being prepared yourself will help you navigate through a disaster and hopefully make you stronger and more resilient on the other side.

Disaster planning consists of knowing what to do when a disaster strikes, having the supplies on hand that you may need, and having a plan for where you and your family may go if something happens in your community. Having this conversation with your family and/or your chosen family is important, so you all know what to do when a disaster strikes.

Be Informed

- During storms and outages, stay aware of alerts, warnings and local emergency services. Know the emergency plan for your area including evacuation routes, shelters and emergency numbers.
- Sign up for local emergency management alerts from your city, county, and/or state.
- Understand the specific hazards that may impact you and your community. For example, if you live in an area that could experience wildfires you may want to consider how that impacts your emergency plan and the contents of your disaster kit.

LGBTQ+ Emergency Preparedness Checklist

- Create an emergency plan that accommodates the needs of you and your family and talk about that plan with your friends and family so that it is widely understood.
- Think about what you will do if your neighborhood is evacuated, how will you communicate with each other, and where you will meet up if separated. Remember that sometimes immediately after a disaster, some communications, including cellphones, are not reliable.
- Prepare an emergency kit for your home that is portable, waterproof and insulated, which includes medications and supplies for 2 weeks. Remember to include supplies for your pets. Your kit should be checked every 2 – 3 months. Monitor expiration dates. More information about what to include in your kit can be found at [ready.gov/kit](https://www.ready.gov/kit)
- Keep your vehicle full of fuel with directions to the nearest shelter or evacuation route.
- For transgender people it is important that your disaster kit includes any necessary medical supplies, grooming items, razors, cosmetics, and binding or packing equipment you may need.
- Your disaster kit should contain copies of important documents including documentation of relationship status, gender identity, adoption, and other family documentation. If you don't have any identification that matches your gender you should include a letter from your doctor and/or therapist.
- If you rely on online networks to connect with your chosen family, consider other ways you would be able to connect if the internet is unavailable after a disaster.
- If you are in a relationship, make sure that each partner is listed on your insurance, whether you are married or not, and that you list each other as your emergency contacts at workplaces, schools, and medical providers.
- Keep a list of your medications, dosage amounts and frequency. Include the contact information for your medical providers, pharmacy, and insurance providers.

Your Emergency Supply Kit

In addition to your emergency kit, be sure to keep these items on hand for emergencies:



Water – one gallon of water per person, per day for at least three days



Food – at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food



Battery Powered Radio – and extra batteries



Flashlight – and extra batteries



First Aid Kit – one gallon of water per person, per day for at least three days



Whistle – to signal for help



Dust Mask – or cotton T-shirt, to help filter contaminated air



Plastic Sheeting and Duct Tape – to shelter-in-place



Wrench or Pliers – to turn off utilities when necessary



Can Opener – to open canned food



Infant Formula and Diapers – if you have an infant



Local Maps – including a map of your area and a map for where you plan to go if you are evacuated

During and After a Disaster

- If given the opportunity be an ally to other LGBTQ+ folk. Find each other, stick together, advocate for each other.
- If the emergency becomes a federally declared disaster the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hotline can help you start to recover. The FEMA Hotline can be accessed at **800-621-3362** or at [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)
- The vast majority of disaster shelters and responders are welcoming and compassionate, you should listen to all official emergency messages and feel safe to evacuate when you are instructed.
- Know that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accepts discrimination complaints through The FEMA Office of Equal Rights. You can call the FEMA hotline (**800-621-3362**) to start the process.
- Lambda Legal are another good source for help if you feel you have been discriminated against. Lambda Legal's national hotline is **212-809-8585** or you can visit them at [lambdalegal.org/helpdesk](https://www.lambdalegal.org/helpdesk)
- Be aware of your mental health. Disasters are very stressful events, conduct regular self-assessments and seek help if needed. The Disaster Distress Helpline is available for 24/7 support at **800-985-5990**.

More Information and Resources

- <https://health.maryland.gov/Pages/Emergency-Preparedness.aspx>
- [facebook.com/MarylandOPR](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandOPR)
- [mema.maryland.gov](https://www.mema.maryland.gov)
- [mdemergencypreparedness.org](https://www.mdemergencypreparedness.org)
- <https://transequality.org/issues/resources/hurricane-preparedness-info-trans-people>

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Homecare Association



WRITE THE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR HOME CARE/HOSPICE COMPANY IN THIS BOX.