

**Florida Department of Elder Affairs**

**Office of Disaster Preparedness and  
Emergency Operations**

**Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams**

**MULTIAGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS  
Standard Operating Procedure**

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## **I. Introduction**

Natural and man-made emergencies and disasters impact homes, businesses and public infrastructure, often quickly overwhelming the response capabilities of local agencies. During such events, individuals who require assistance with activities of daily living may choose to evacuate to Special Need Shelters. A special needs shelter is a temporary emergency facility capable of providing care to residents whose medical condition is such that it exceeds the capabilities of the Red Cross General Population Shelter, but is not severe enough to require hospitalization.

The Secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) is required to convene Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams, at any time that he or she deems appropriate and necessary, or as requested by ESF 8 at the State Emergency Operations Center, to assist local areas that are severely impacted by a natural or manmade disaster that requires the use of special needs shelters. The teams are activated to provide resource and logistical support to local jurisdictions to assist with discharge planning and transition of clients to appropriate services and resources within the community.

Availability of emergency workers during disaster response and recovery operations is a factor that must be considered by all emergency response organizations. All such organizations must take all necessary initiatives to ensure availability of their work force. This includes taking active steps to facilitate the safety and welfare of workers' families.

It is the Department of Elder Affairs' mission to provide essential social and health services to the elderly, promote social, physical, economic, and emotional well being to encourage maximum independence and improve the quality of life for seniors and their caregivers.

## **II. Special Needs Shelter Clients**

### **A. Definition and Criteria**

#### **1. Client Definition**

- A person with special needs is defined as a person who during periods of evacuation, either mandatory or voluntary, will require assistance that exceeds the basic level of care provided at the general population shelter but will not require the level of skilled medical care provided at institutional facilities.
- One who would need assistance during evacuations and sheltering because of physical or mental handicaps (Chapter 252.355, F.S.).

2. Criteria for Special Needs Shelter client may include, but are not limited to:
  - A person with a stable medical condition that requires periodic observation, assessment, and maintenance (i.e. glucose readings, vital signs, ostomy care, urinary catheter)
  - A person requiring periodic wound care assistance (i.e. dressing changes).
  - A person with limitations that requires assistance with activities of daily living
  - A person requiring and needing assistance with oral, subcutaneous or intramuscular injectable, or topical medication
  - A person requiring minimal assistance with ambulation, position change and transfer (i.e. able to move more than 100 feet with or without an assistive device)
  - A person requiring oxygen that can be manually supplied
  - A person medically dependent on uninterrupted electricity for therapies including but not limited to oxygen, nebulizer, and feeding tubes. Ventilator dependent persons and persons with multiple special needs requiring a higher level of care, may need to be referred to a skilled medical facility
  - A person with mental or cognitive limitations requiring assistance who is accompanied by an appropriate fulltime caregiver for the duration of their stay in the shelter
  - A person requiring fulltime care who is accompanied by an appropriate fulltime caregiver for the duration of their stay in the shelter
  - A person whose weight does not exceed the safety weight restrictions of provided cots.
  - A person who can be safely transferred and does not require specialty lifting or transferring equipment. A person requiring a stretcher to be transported may need to be referred to a higher skilled medical facility.
3. Every reasonable effort should be made to avoid admitting clients with known infectious conditions or those who require isolation, i.e. Methycillin Resistant Staph Aureous (MRSA) or persons who require respiratory isolation such as infectious TB.
4. Counties with special needs shelters with resources that can safely accept a person exceeding the above criteria may choose to do so.

**B. Client Eligibility for Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team Assistance**

1. Each special needs shelter client who has been identified by the special needs shelter staff and/or the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Team (Response Team) as not having a viable post-event discharge plan is eligible for discharge planning assistance from the special needs shelter staff and/or the Response Team.
2. Criteria for eligibility include the following:
  - Pre-event residence is not habitable.
  - Societal under-pinnings (fire protection, emergency medical service [EMS], law enforcement, power, water, and sewer) are not available at pre-event residence.
  - Continuity of care cannot be assured at pre-event residence.
  - New medical conditions have presented or developed during the client's stay at the special needs shelter. As an example, the client may experience the onset of confusion or incontinence, both of which may be temporary, but should be addressed and taken into consideration before discharging the client to their pre-event residence without appropriate additional care or services.
3. It is the responsibility of assisted living facilities, nursing homes and adult family care homes to have emergency plans in place and provide for the relocation and continuity of care for their residents. Should assisted living facility, nursing home, or adult family care home residents seek shelter in special needs shelters, the individual will be admitted to the special needs shelter; however, the assisted living facility, nursing home, or adult family care home staff will be contacted by the shelter staff and/or Response Team and requested to come to the special needs shelter to assume responsibility for the resident. In most cases, it is inappropriate for individuals residing pre-event in assisted living facilities, nursing homes, or adult family care homes to be accommodated in special needs shelters due to the level of care required and limitation of services available.

**III. SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS**

- A. Special Needs Shelters are refuges of last resort intended to maintain the current health, safety, and well-being of the medically dependent individuals who are not acutely ill, to the extent possible;

- B. Meet a multitude of human needs both physical and psychological under adverse conditions; and,
- C. Are generally intended to operate for a limited time of one to four days.
- D. The purpose of a Special Needs Shelter is to provide, to the extent possible under emergency conditions, an environment in which the current level of health of the clients with special needs can be sustained within the capabilities of available resources.
  - Persons eligible for the Special Needs Shelter may have physical or mental conditions that require limited medical/nursing oversight that cannot be accommodated or provided for in a general population shelter.
  - Medical eligibility for the Special Needs Shelter is based on a “leveling system” that takes into account the acuity of the condition and the skills required to provide care.
  - The Special Needs Shelter is not a hospital, a nursing home/restorative care center or a hotel.

#### **IV. Scope**

This procedure is limited to the responsibilities of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams (Response Teams). In addition, each agency shall maintain a roster of available and deployed employees including location and contact information.

#### **V. Purpose**

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to provide guidelines for activation and deployment of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams to implement the procedures within its scope of responsibility. This procedure also ensures a consistent mode of operations with other agencies and entities involved in Discharge Planning and Transition Services at Special Needs Shelters.

#### **VI. Assumptions**

- A disaster may occur with little or no warning and may escalate rapidly, depleting the resources of any single local response organization or jurisdiction to handle. Additional shelters may be needed due post event due to:
  - Duration of the event and/or post event conditions (extreme heat, lack of

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- Access to food and medical services/medicine), or
  - Lack of availability of societal underpinnings (fire protection, EMS, law enforcement, power, water, and sewer), or
  - Disruption of services to ensure the continuity of care.
- Under an Executive Order signed by the Governor, additional provisions may be relevant to Discharge Planning at Special Need Shelters or response efforts in an affected area.
  - Prior to emergency activation, a working relationship should be developed between the county emergency operations center and the county health department.
  - The Secretary of Elder Affairs is encouraged to proactively work with other state agencies prior to any natural disasters for which warnings are provided to ensure that Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams are ready to assemble and deploy rapidly upon a determination by state emergency management officials that a disaster area requires additional assistance or is deemed appropriate and necessary by the Secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.
  - Local emergency management officials will exhaust all efforts and resources and demonstrate due diligence in the discharge of special needs shelters clients before requesting the assistance of a Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team through Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF 8, Health and Medical Services) of the State Emergency Operations Center.
  - A Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team shall include at least one representative from each of the following state agencies:
    - Department of Elder Affairs
    - Department of Health
    - Department of Children and Family Services
    - Department of Veterans' Affairs
    - Department of Community Affairs
    - Agency for Health Care Administration
    - Agency for Persons with Disabilities
  - The Secretary of Elder Affairs may call upon any state agency or office to provide staff to assist a Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team.

- Each state agency represented on the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team should designate a primary contact for purposes of coordination and communication. The recommended point of contact is the agency's Emergency Coordinating Officer. This designated agency contact will be known as the **Agency Primary Contact**.
- The Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team should be comprised of representatives from each agency's local, regional or district locations due to their knowledge of local resources and services available to assist Special Needs Shelter clients. The safety of the employee is paramount and no employee should be deployed or activated until local emergency management officials have announced that roadways are safe to travel and that conditions are safe and secure for responders. Additional consideration should be given to ensure that the responding employee's family and residence are secured prior to deployment to the special needs shelter. In some cases, the decision may be made to deploy staff from Tallahassee or another identified centralized location if the local agency resources are unable to deploy as requested.
- The Department of Elder Affairs will designate an Elder Affairs representative (Comprehensive Assessment and Review for Long Term Care Services [CARES], Long Term Care Ombudsman [Ombudsman] or Area Agency on Aging [AAA]) to serve as the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team lead. This position will be known as the **Discharge Planning Response Team Lead in each county**. If emergency circumstances prevent a CARES, Ombudsman or Area Agency on Aging Response Team member from serving as the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead in a county, the Department of Elder Affairs may designate a Response Team member representing another agency to serve as the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for the county.
- The Secretary of Elder Affairs may determine that the nature or circumstances surrounding the disaster do not warrant participation from a particular agency's staff.
- An *Alternate Site Discharge Planning Resource Guide* will be developed and will include a listing of Response Team members, contact information and designation of Discharge Planning Response Team Leads for each county, along with resources available to assist in discharge and transition planning.

## VII. Authorities and References

- Chapter 252, Florida Statutes

- Section 381.0303, Florida Statutes
- Chapter Law 2006-71
- Rule (Insert Rule as promulgated by Department of Health)

### **VIII. Role of the Emergency Coordinating Officer, Florida Department of Elder Affairs**

#### **A. Mission**

At the direction of the Secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the Emergency Coordinating Officer is responsible for implementation of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team and achieving operational objectives.

#### **B. Responsibilities**

1. Implements the operational objectives of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team
2. Ensures staffing levels and numbers of employees designated to serve on the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team are appropriate based on the magnitude of the event.
3. Keeps the Secretary of Elder Affairs informed of response activities.
4. Coordinates with designated members of each represented agency regarding the efficient flow of verbal information to and from impacted county emergency operation centers (EOCs).
5. Manages the deployment of Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) which includes maintaining a roster of names, contact numbers, locations, and expected deployment dates based on information provided by each agency.
6. Promotes the training and preparation activities for all activations of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team.
7. Tasks and follows up on missions to ESF 8.
8. Must have a thorough understanding of Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team operations, the Incident Command System, and the emergency support function (ESF) process.
9. Must be proficient in the use of the emergency management (EM) Tracker

## 10. Information Management System.

### C. Activation Duties

1. Obtain situational briefings from the Operations Section Chief at the State Emergency Operations Center to include:
  - a. The nature and scope of the event.
  - b. The Area(s) of Operation.
  - c. Immediate and forecasted risks to life and property.
  - d. State and local response actions currently underway and planned.
  - e. Locations of Special Needs Shelters (names, locations, and contact numbers maintained by ESF 8).
  - f. Relevant information regarding weather, Intel forecasts, hazard analyses.
  - g. Status of State and federal declarations.
  - h. SEOC activation level, hours of operation, briefing schedule.
  - i. Participate in state emergency operation center (SEOC) teleconference briefings with county emergency operations centers
2. Ensure that the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) is ready to activate and receive reports from the Agency Primary Contact.
  - a. Activation will occur in two phases:
    - **Phase One:** Preparation to begin the activation at the time that a Hurricane Warning is issued for a county;
    - **Phase Two:** Activation of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) upon request from ESF 8 at the SEOC, or upon determination of need for assistance made by the Secretary of Elder Affairs.
  - b. Agency Primary Contact Activation and Deployment Responsibilities
    - Upon notification from the Emergency Coordinating Officer from the Department of Elder Affairs, each Agency Primary Contact shall place their designated employees on stand-by for deployment in local districts and regions and confirm contact information, as well as Special Need Shelter phone numbers and key contact information for the County ESF 8 point of contact for each mission and any other guidance document such as the *Special Needs Discharge Planning Procedures* that may be useful in their fulfilling their role and provided requested assistance to local emergency management officials.

- Once deployed, the Agency Primary Contact will ensure the roster of deployed personnel is kept current and provide information to the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs as requested.
- c. County Discharge Planning Response Team Lead
- The Department of Elder Affairs will serve as the lead agency in each county where a Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) has been activated and deployed.
  - Designated representatives of the Department of Elder Affairs (CARES, Ombudsman, or Area Agency on Aging) will have primary responsibility to lead and direct the efforts of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) at each affected Special Needs Shelter in each county.
  - If emergency circumstances prevent a CARES, Ombudsman or Area Agency on Aging Response Team member from serving as the County Discharge Planning Response Team Lead, the Department of Elder Affairs may designate a Response Team member representing another agency to serve as the County Discharge Planning Response Team Lead.
3. Ensure that calls or briefing sessions are scheduled to keep Agency Primary Contacts updated and to facilitate communication with deployed Response Teams.
  4. Based on the anticipated magnitude of the event, deploy additional Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) for a county or counties.
  5. Serve as the single point of contact for receiving requests for resources and assistance in discharge planning from the State Emergency Operations Center ESF 8 or an impacted county and for providing status reports and information to the SEOC, ESF 8 and the impacted counties once Response Teams have been deployed.
  6. Responsible for ensuring that tracker messages are updated with status of deployment and all activities related to the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s).
  7. Provide ESF 8 with SITREP (Situation Reports) information as required.

8. Maintain contact with County Discharge Planning Response Team Leads (DOEA CARES, Ombudsman, and/or Area Agencies on Aging) who have been activated and/or deployed to the counties.
9. Based on operational tempo, coordinate with the agency primary contacts regarding the feasibility of deactivating the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s).
10. Ensure that SEOC, ESF 8, and impacted counties are made aware of any implemented changes and update information in tracker.
11. Participate in action planning sessions and SEOC briefings if scheduled.

#### D. Stand Down

1. Coordinate with the ESF 8 regarding the deactivation plan for the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s).
2. Ensure that tracker messages are updated and completed.
3. Receive reports from each Discharge Planning Response Team Lead to determine outcomes and issues that still need to be resolved.
4. Develop after-action items for future discussion.

### **IX. Concept of Operations**

#### A. Agency and Mission Assignment

1. A request is received by ESF 8 in the SEOC to support local emergency management officials with the continued operations or closure of a special needs shelter(s) after determining that all local efforts and resources have been exhausted (due diligence). The Secretary of Elder Affairs is encouraged to proactively work with other state agencies prior to any natural disasters for which warnings are provided to ensure that Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Teams are ready to assemble and deploy rapidly upon a determination by state emergency management officials that a disaster area requires additional assistance or is deemed appropriate and necessary by the Secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.
2. ESF 8 receives the request from an impacted county EOC or County Health

Department and ensures all essential information is provided to the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs. The resource request should include:

- Information on the number of clients needing discharge planning assistance
  - Location of the special needs shelter(s)
  - Shelter phone number (dedicated line)
  - Duration of operations or date of anticipated closure of the shelter
  - Shelter contact person with phone numbers
  - A brief description of the request and the mission
  - County ESF 8 local point of contact information for the official requesting the mission in tracker including a direct telephone number for the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead in each county to use in coordinating the response efforts
3. When the information is complete, ESF 8 tasks the mission to the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs to activate the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) as appropriate.
  4. The Emergency Coordinating Officer for the Department of Elder Affairs will contact the Agency Primary Contact to provide information and the tracker message number of the ESF 8 request for deployment of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s), along with details for the activation.
  5. The Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs will monitor the progress of all missions within their area(s) of responsibility and maintain regular communications with deployed Response Team members.
  6. The Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs will update the status of missions in EM Tracker and will provide regular updates to county Emergency Operations Centers and SEOC officials as required.
    - The county may be able to monitor its resource request(s) on EM Tracker unless it does not have or cannot get access to EM Tracker.
    - The resource request in EM Tracker for discharge planning assistance at county special needs shelters must not be checked complete (✓) until the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs has been notified by the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead within the

county that all special needs shelter clients have been placed. In the event that additional resources are required or unmet needs are identified, the mission will not be checked as complete.

#### B. Activation Protocols and Notification to Agencies

Activation will occur in two phases:

1. Phase One – Preparation to Activate: Notification will be made to the Agency Primary Contacts to begin preparation for activation at the time that a Hurricane Warning is issued for a county;
2. Phase Two – Activation: Notification will be made to each Agency Primary Contact to activate the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) upon request from ESF 8 at the SEOC, or upon determination of need for assistance made by the Secretary of Elder Affairs.

#### C. Role of Agency Primary Contact

Each Agency Primary Contact is responsible to ensure a state of readiness is maintained by:

1. Ensuring the development and maintenance of a roster of personnel who will serve on Discharge Planning Response teams including names, contact numbers, locations, areas to which the individual could be assigned and expected deployment duration and provide the information to the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs as requested. Each member of the agency response team will be given the contact information for the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for the Response Team to which the individual is assigned and instructed to make contact to provide information regarding estimated time of arrival at the Special Needs Shelter and obtain any additional updates that may be available regarding deployment.
2. Ensuring that members of the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) are provided current copies of the *Standard Operating Procedures for Response Teams*, the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* and the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures*.
3. Encouraging agency Response Team members to complete CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training and to obtain County Emergency Operations Center identification badges to facilitate the members'

ability to purchase fuel on a prioritized basis, obtain supplies, and travel within the declared impacted area after curfew.

D. Recommended materials and supplies for the Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team(s) members (see Appendix 1 for additional recommended supplies):

1. Telephone (cell, satellite, blackberry if available)
2. GPS (if available)
3. Laptop with wireless internet access
4. Writing pads, pens and pencils
5. *Multiagency Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team Standard Operating Procedures*
6. *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Form and Procedures*
7. County EM, ESF 8, and County Health Department contacts and phone lists
8. State agency internal/external contact phone list
9. Response Team rosters including home, office and work cell (if applicable) phone list
10. *Alternate Site Discharge Planning Resource Guide*

B. Reporting of Discharge Assistance

The ECO of Elder Affairs will update the status of missions in EM Tracker and will provide regular updates to ESF 8, county EOCs and SERT (State Emergency Response Team) Liaisons, as required based on information received from the lead designated area coordinators (CARES, Ombudsman, or Area Agency on Aging).

- The county may be able to monitor its resource request on EM Tracker unless it does not have or cannot get access to EM Tracker.
- The resource request must not be checked complete (✓) in tracker until the Emergency Coordinating Officer of the Department of Elder Affairs has been notified that all clients have been placed. In the event that additional resources are required or unmet needs are identified to place the remaining clients, the mission will not be checked as complete until all clients have been placed.

**X. Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Response Team Procedures**

- A. Purpose: The Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Procedures establishes the framework for an effective system to ensure that clients

sheltering in special needs shelters will be assisted in:

1. Identifying and relocating to post-event housing; and,
2. Ensuring continuity of care should the individual be unable to return to the pre-event residence due to damage to the structure, lack of societal underpinnings (fire protection, EMS, law enforcement, power, water, and sewer), and/or lack of services for continuity of care.
3. The Special Needs Shelter Discharge Planning Procedures encourage the utilization and identification of all available community resources to achieve a comprehensive, client-based approach to the discharge and transition planning process for special needs shelter clients who require discharge planning assistance.

#### B. Initial Actions

1. The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for a county will make initial telephone contact with the local county ESF 8 designated official listed in the tracker message to obtain any updated information and to provide an estimated time of arrival at the Special Needs shelter.
2. The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for each county will be provided with a roster of deployed agency representatives to facilitate communication and to provide to team members upon their arrival at the shelter.
3. Upon arrival at the special needs shelter, Response Team members will identify themselves to each other and present their identification badges (agency badges, SERT, or CERT) to the special needs shelter unit leader (SpNS Unit Leader).
4. Inquiry should be made by the discharge planner to determine if a county guide is available to identify local resources that can assist clients with services such as housing, transportation, basic living activities, debris removal, nutrition, and community and volunteer outreach.
5. The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for a county will brief the SpNS unit leader on the responsibilities of the Response Team.
6. The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for a county will request the SpNS unit leader to identify clients who require Response Team discharge planning assistance.

7. The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for a county will request access to all pre-registration and intake/admission forms that have been completed for clients who have been identified as requiring discharge planning assistance.
8. Response Team members will confer to review the client information provided by the SpNS unit leader.
9. Response Team members will determine the assignment of each client to specific members of the Response Team for discharge planning.
10. Response Team members will review the records of assigned clients and begin completing the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* for each assigned client inserting requested information that is available from pre-existing client records such as special needs shelter registrations or intake forms. (Refer to the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures*)

#### C. Discharge Planning

1. Response Team members will use the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* to determine if the client has a viable relocation plan should the client be unable to return to their pre-event residence once the special needs shelter closes.
2. Response Team members will identify themselves to assigned clients (ensuring that photo identification badges are displayed at all times) and explain to the client the role of the Response Team.
3. Response Team members will determine if the client requires the assistance of the client's caregiver (if available) to provide the necessary information for discharge planning.
4. Response Team members will complete the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* by conducting one-on-one interviews with the client and/or the client's caregiver.
5. The Response Team member will determine if the **client is able to return to their pre-event residence** (refer to Section I of the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures* for methods of determining the status of the pre-event residence). Criteria for returning to the pre-event residence include:

- a. The pre-event residence is habitable;
  - b. Societal under-pinnings (fire protection, EMS, law enforcement, power, water, and sewer) are available at the pre-event residence; and,
  - c. Continuity of care and additional services as appropriate can be assured at the pre-event residence.
6. If the Response Team member determines that the **client cannot return to the client's pre-event residence** (refer to the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures* for methods of determining the status of the pre-event residence), the Response Team member must determine if the client has a viable plan for alternative housing. Every effort should be made to take into consideration the client's preferences for relocation options. A viable alternative plan must ensure:
- a. Continuity of care and access to transportation, medical services and medical care;
  - b. Availability of food, water, power, sewer, fire protection and law enforcement; and
  - c. A habitable residence.
7. If the Response Team member determines that the client does not have a viable alternate plan for post-event housing, the Response Team will complete Section II of the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* to identify viable post-event housing that will ensure continuity of client care (refer to the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures* for completion of Section II).

#### D. Post-event Housing

1. To determine the viable options for a client's post-event housing, the Response Team member should complete the Comprehensive Assessment form appropriate for the client receiving discharge services. (DOEA Form 701B Comprehensive Assessment, DCF Form CF-ES 2237 ACCESS Florida Application, or other agencies' assessment forms as appropriate.)
2. Response Team member will identify viable housing resources available to discharge the client to the appropriate setting.

3. Resources to assist in discharge planning for housing can be found in the *Alternate Site Discharge Planning Resource Guide* and include the following:
  - Red Cross Assistance – The Red Cross may be able to provide emergency temporary housing assistance to individuals requiring housing assistance. A Red Cross Case Manager must be contacted and complete the necessary paperwork to obtain the emergency temporary housing assistance.
  - Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) generates and provides a census of local health care facility bed availability information through their Emergency Status System (ESS) Health Care Provider database: <http://ahcaxnet.fdhc.state.fl.us/essweb>
  - Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) helps Floridians obtain safe, decent housing that might otherwise be unavailable to them.
  - The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides financial assistance and, if necessary, direct services to eligible individuals and households who, as a direct result of a major disaster, have necessary expenses and serious needs and are unable to meet such expenses or needs through other means. Individuals can register with FEMA by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) and/or calling the FEMA Housing Locator at 1-800-762-8740 (TTY 1-800-462-7585) to get assistance and find places to call home.
  - Local religious establishments and/or places of worship. (i.e. churches, synagogues, etc)

#### E. Transportation

1. Prior to discharging the client, the Response Team member will determine if the client has an acceptable mode of transportation that will accommodate the client and ensure the safe transport of any medical equipment or supplies.
2. If the client's transportation is not appropriate or if the client does not have transportation, the Response Team member will work with the SpNS unit leader to arrange transportation.

#### F. Discharge

1. Prior to discharging the client, the Response Team member must complete the *Discharge Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation* (see *Discharge*

- Planning Tool for Rapid Needs Evaluation Procedures*), sign the form, include the discharge time and date, and give all completed forms to the Discharge Planning Response Team Lead designated for each county. Forms will be stored in a secured location in compliance with State Guidelines and Record Retention Schedules.
2. Response team members should make special effort as appropriate to ensure that services necessary for the continuity of care for the special needs shelter client will be available to the client upon transition to the post-event residence. In some cases, it will be appropriate to recommend that additional follow-up actions are taken or arrangements made to contact the client after they are discharged (including home visits) to verify that services have resumed.
  3. If it is determined that the client requires relocation to a health care facility (e.g. nursing home, assisted living facility, community residential home, or hospital if medically necessary) and financial assistance is not available from any other source (e.g. Medicaid, Medicare, other 3<sup>rd</sup> Party insurer, FEMA Independent Family Grant Program, etc.) to cover any FEMA eligible associated costs, the Response Team member must complete a Florida Department of Health's Reimbursement Form (attached TBA). The Discharge Planning Response Team Lead for each county will submit the form to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' Emergency Coordinating Officer or his or her designee, who will then forward the request to the Florida Department of Health. Upon approval of the placement and associated costs by DOH, the client can be discharged to the approved receiving facility.
  4. Medical Necessity: If a health care professional determines at any time that the shelter client's medical condition has deteriorated and hospitalization may be necessary, Response Team members should arrange for appropriate transportation to the hospital emergency department.

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## APPENDIX 1

### RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES FOR DEPLOYMENT

Single air mattress

Air mattress pump (can be shared among all deployed personnel)

Bedding

    Sheets, light weight blanket or sleeping bag

    Pillow

Bug spray (containing DEET)

Sunscreen

Toiletries

    Shampoo

    Soap

    Deodorant

    Toilet paper

    Toothpaste

    Toothbrush

    Shaving supplies

    Tissue

Medications

Hat

Sunglasses

Comfortable clothing

Comfortable shoes

Hand Sanitizer (gel or wipes)

Fanny pack or small backpack

Towel, washcloth

Flip-flops for shower

Flashlight, extra batteries and bulb



# Fact Sheet: Using a Generator When Disaster Strikes

The following information, developed by the Red Cross with technical advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Fire Protection Association (publisher of the *National Electric Code*®) and the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, is provided to address questions about using a generator when disaster strikes.

## **Purchasing a Generator**

If you choose to buy a generator, make sure you get one that is rated for the amount of power that you think you will need. Look at the labels on lighting, appliances, and equipment you plan to connect to the generator to determine the amount of power that will be needed to operate the equipment.

For lighting, the wattage of the light bulb indicates the power needed. Appliances and equipment usually have labels indicating power requirements on them. Choose a generator that produces more power than will be drawn by the combination of lighting, appliances, and equipment you plan to connect to the generator including the initial surge when it is turned on. If your generator does not produce adequate power for all your needs, plan to stagger the operating times for various equipment.

If you can not determine the amount of power that will be needed, ask an electrician to determine that for you. (If your equipment draws more power than the generator can produce, then you may blow a fuse on the generator or damage the connected equipment.)

## **Using a Generator**

The primary hazards to avoid when using a generator are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire. Follow the directions supplied with the generator. Every year, people die in incidents related to portable generator use.

**Under no circumstances should portable generators be used indoors**, including inside a garage, carport, basement, crawlspace, or other enclosed or partially-enclosed area, even with ventilation. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home. The CO from generators can rapidly lead to full incapacitation and death, but CO can't be seen or smelled. Even if you cannot smell exhaust fumes, you may still be exposed to CO. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get to fresh air **RIGHT AWAY - DO NOT DELAY**.

Because you may have windows open to get fresh air while the power is out, be sure to place the generator away from windows, doors, and vents that could allow CO to come indoors. To avoid electrocution, keep the generator dry and do not use in rain or wet conditions. To protect the generator from moisture, operate it on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure, such as under a tarp held up on poles. Dry your hands if wet before touching the generator.

It is a good idea to install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with battery back-up in your home, according to the manufacturer's installation instructions. If CO gas from the generator enters your home and poses a health risk, the alarm will sound to warn you. Test the battery frequently and replace when needed.

**Be sure to turn the generator off and let it cool down before refueling.** Gasoline spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.

Store fuel for the generator in an approved safety can. Use the type of fuel recommended in the instructions or on the label on the generator. Local laws may restrict the amount of fuel you may store, or the storage location. Ask your local fire department for additional information about local regulations. Store the fuel outside of living areas in a locked shed or other protected area. Do not store it near a fuel-burning appliance, such as a natural gas water heater in a garage. If the fuel is spilled or the container is not sealed properly, invisible vapors from the fuel can travel along the ground and can be ignited by the appliance's pilot light or by arcs from electric switches in the appliance.

**Plug appliances directly into the generator. Or, use a heavy duty, outdoor-rated extension cord** that is rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Check that the entire cord is free of cuts or tears and that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin. Never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet, a practice known as “backfeeding.” This is an extremely dangerous practice that presents an electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors served by the same utility transformer. It also bypasses some of the built-in household protection devices.

### **Future Considerations**

The only recommended method to connect a generator to house wiring is by having a qualified electrician install a power transfer switch. This switch must be installed in accordance with the *National Electrical Code*® (NEC), which is published by the National Fire Protection Association, and all applicable state and local electrical codes. Call a qualified electrician or check with your utility company to see if they can install the appropriate equipment.

For power outages, permanently installed stationary generators are better suited for providing backup power to the home. Even a properly connected portable generator can become overloaded. This may result in overheating or stressing the generator components, possibly leading to a generator failure. Be sure to read instructions that come with the generator to make sure you operate it within its limitations for power output.

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This information was developed by the American Red Cross with technical advice from the National Fire Protection Association (publisher of the National Electric Code®) and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

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## Hoja informativa: El uso de generadores en casos de desastre

Esta hoja informativa se facilita al público para responder a preguntas sobre el uso de generadores en casos de desastre. La información fue elaborada por la Cruz Roja con el asesoramiento técnico de los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de las Enfermedades (CDC), la Asociación Nacional de Protección contra Incendios (NAFP) –que publica el Código Eléctrico Nacional (*National Electric Code*®)– y la Comisión para la Seguridad de los Productos de Consumo de los Estados Unidos (CPSC).

### Cómo comprar un generador

Si decide comprar un generador, asegúrese de que tenga la potencia que usted cree que va a necesitar. Mire las etiquetas de las lámparas, aparatos y equipos que va a conectar al generador para averiguar la potencia que será necesaria para que el equipo funcione.

Para las lámparas, la potencia necesaria está indicada por los vatios que figuran en la bombilla. Los aparatos y equipos suelen llevar etiquetas que indican los requisitos de potencia. Elija un generador que produzca más potencia que la que exigirá la suma de las luces, aparatos y equipos que va a conectar al generador, incluida la subida de tensión inicial, cuando se enciende. Si su generador no produce suficiente potencia para cubrir todas sus necesidades, planifique la forma de alternar el funcionamiento de los diferentes aparatos.

Si no puede calcular cuánta potencia será necesaria, pídale a un electricista que lo haga. (Si su equipo necesita más potencia de la que puede producir el generador, podría hacer saltar un fusible del generador o dañar el equipo conectado.)

### Cómo usar un generador

Los principales riesgos que debe usted evitar al usar un generador son la intoxicación por monóxido de carbono (CO) producido por los gases de escape tóxicos del motor, la descarga eléctrica o la electrocución, y los incendios. Siga las instrucciones que vienen con el generador. Todos los años hay personas que pierden la vida en incidentes relacionados con el uso de generadores portátiles.

**En ninguna circunstancia debe utilizar un generador portátil dentro de la casa**, ni siquiera en garajes, estructuras abiertas para estacionar (techadas o bajo toldos), sótanos, espacios para conductos/cables/tuberías, y otros espacios cerrados o parcialmente cerrados, aunque tengan ventilación. Abrir puertas y ventanas o usar ventiladores no impide que se acumule el monóxido de carbono en la casa. El monóxido de carbono de los generadores es invisible y no tiene olor, lo cual aumenta el peligro ya que puede producir rápidamente la incapacidad y la muerte. Es posible que se exponga al monóxido de carbono aunque no huelga a gas. Si empieza a sentir náuseas, mareo o debilitamiento mientras usa un generador, **SALGA AL AIRE LIBRE DE INMEDIATO, SIN DEMORAS.**

Dado que probablemente tenga las ventanas abiertas para que entre aire fresco mientras no haya electricidad, asegúrese de colocar el generador lejos de ventanas, puertas y rejillas de ventilación que puedan permitir que el monóxido de carbono pase al interior. Para evitar la electrocución, mantenga el generador seco y no lo use bajo la lluvia o con humedad. Para protegerlo contra la humedad, ponga el generador sobre una superficie seca alejada de la vivienda bajo una especie de toldo, por ejemplo bajo una lona impermeable sostenida por varas o colgada de cuerdas. Si tiene las manos húmedas, séqueselas antes de tocar el generador.

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Una buena idea es colocar alarmas de monóxido de carbono que funcionen a pilas o alarmas de monóxido de carbono eléctricas con pilas de refuerzo, siguiendo las instrucciones de instalación del fabricante. La alarma sonará si entra monóxido de carbono del generador en su casa y peligrará su salud. Asegúrese de probar las pilas con frecuencia y cambiarlas cuando sea necesario.

**Asegúrese de apagar el generador y dejarlo enfriar antes de agregar combustible.** La gasolina derramada sobre las piezas calientes del motor podría causar un incendio.

Guarde el combustible para el generador en un envase de seguridad aprobado. Utilice el tipo de combustible recomendado en las instrucciones o en la etiqueta del generador. A veces las leyes locales limitan la cantidad de combustible que puede almacenar o el lugar de almacenamiento. Pida a su departamento de bomberos más información sobre las normas locales. Guarde el combustible FUERA de las zonas destinadas a vivienda, en un cobertizo bajo llave o en otra zona protegida. No lo guarde cerca de un aparato que use combustible, como un calentador de agua de gas natural en un garaje. Si se derrama el combustible o el envase no está bien cerrado, los vapores invisibles que salen del envase pueden moverse por el piso y encenderse con la llama piloto del aparato o con los arcos eléctricos (descargas visibles semejantes a relámpagos) de los interruptores eléctricos y provocar un incendio.

**Conecte los aparatos directamente al generador. O use un cable muy resistente para exteriores** cuya capacidad (en vatios o amperios) sea al menos igual a la suma de las cargas de los aparatos conectados. Compruebe que no hay cortes ni roturas a lo largo de todo el cable y que el enchufe tiene las tres patas, en especial la de puesta a tierra. Nunca intente dar energía a la red eléctrica de la casa conectando el generador a un enchufe de pared (práctica conocida como “retroalimentación”). Esta práctica es muy peligrosa por el riesgo de electrocución para los trabajadores de la compañía eléctrica y los vecinos que conectan con el mismo transformador de servicio público. Además, no todos los dispositivos de protección incorporados del hogar lo detectan.

### **Para el futuro**

El único método recomendado para conectar un generador a la red eléctrica de una casa es que un electricista acreditado instale un conmutador de transferencia. Este conmutador debe ser instalado con arreglo al *National Electrical Code*<sup>®</sup> publicado por la NFPA, y todos los códigos eléctricos estatales y locales aplicables. Llame a un electricista acreditado o pregunte a su compañía eléctrica si pueden instalarle el equipo adecuado.

En caso de interrupciones en el suministro de electricidad, los generadores fijos instalados de forma permanente son más adecuados para proporcionar energía de reserva al hogar. Incluso un generador portátil debidamente conectado puede sobrecargarse. Esto podría sobrecalentar o sobrecargar los componentes del generador y hacer que funcione mal. Lea con cuidado las instrucciones incluidas con el generador para asegurarse de que lo utiliza dentro de sus limitaciones de potencia.

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Información elaborada por la Cruz Roja Americana, con el asesoramiento técnico de la Asociación Nacional de Protección contra Incendios (NFPA) –que publica el Código Eléctrico Nacional (*National Electric Code*<sup>®</sup>)– y de la Comisión para la Seguridad de los Productos de Consumo de los Estados Unidos (CSPC).

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