**General guidance for persons living overseas or on extended visits, particularly in high threat destinations and for locations with recurring civil unrest or insurgent activities.**

General Conference International Crisis Committee

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1. **EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR TRAVELERS AND EXPATRIATES**

**Prior to travel**

* Verify contact information for offices, schools, hotels, residences, transportation providers, and social engagements. Obtain detailed itineraries and notify contacts of any changes.
* Inform a family member or close associate of your itinerary and provide them with a list of your in-county contacts.
* Limit your social media usage.
* Make copies of your passport, tickets, credit cards, insurance cards, and other official documents. Ensure passports and visas are valid for at least six months.
* Set an alert code (a word/phrase that can easily be slipped into conversation to signal trouble) with a family member or trusted associate.
* Establish primary, alternative, contingency, and emergency methods of communications.
* Take copies of medication, eyeglasses, and other prescriptions with you and leave copies of these and medical points of with a trusted associate or family member.
* Register with your embassy, consulate or diplomatic mission in your destination or at the closest post to the area you will be operating in.
* Familiarize yourself with all facets of the country. Know what to expect with regard to local customs, security, communications and transportation systems, and medical care.
* Print out emergency contact information and useful numbers for your destination and keep them with you at all times.
* Establish a family/individual personal profile, including photos. Leave a copy with an associate.
* Establish a means to monitor your risk profile and develop an evacuation plan that addresses events that could pose a threat to you during your travel.

**Preplanning for in-country**

* Establish plans for residence and office emergency evacuation.
* Establish a primary and alternative meeting place away from your residence or office in case you or your family members have to evacuate while separated.
* Obtain maps of the area and those that support your evacuation plans. Do not rely solely on GPS.
* Keep an emergency kit in your residence capable of sustaining you for a week. The kit should include first-aid supplies, candles, matches, AM/FM radio, extra batteries, two-way communication devices, water, food that needs little or no preparation, and supplies for children and pets.
* Ensure you have a "go bag" packed for each family member.
* Have the means for signaling, shade, and shelter as well as extra blankets or sleeping bags.
* Have extra refills of prescription and non-prescription medicine, if possible.
* Maintain and test communications devices and keep emergency contact lists current.
* Keep personal records, passports, inventory of household/personal items and other important papers in a secure, fire-proof location. Keep copies of all these records in a separate location.
* Keep extra currency (local currency and the currency of your home country) and/or credit cards in a secure, fire-proof location in your residence and place of business. Have enough funds to cover the costs of your evacuation plan.
* Keep vehicles in good working condition and never let fuel get below half full.
* Avoid common awareness reducers like time pressure, fatigue, mental overload, or complacency.
* Have open-ended tickets (preferably first-class) for each family member. Establish primary, alternative, and contingency means of travel that considers airline, rail, and watercraft.
* Identify potential safe havens, and always assess your area for available entry/exit points.

1. **IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR CRITICAL SECURITY SITUATION**

* Immediately assess the situation and determine the impact to you and your family. Consider:
  + What is known (right now).
  + What is most probable (tracking & trending).
  + What is most dangerous (worst outcome).
  + Resources you control and those available but that may require coordination.
  + Developing an action plan or, based on situation, consider implementing evacuation plan.
* Contact your diplomatic mission, company security director, and/or security provider for guidance.
* Monitor for changes in your risk profile, especially in quickly developing situations.
* Consider the following as it relates to the threat and to your available responses:
  + Time
  + Distance
  + Shielding (minimizing exposure to the threat)
* Preposition your emergency kits and "go bags" to support a rapid departure.
* Monitor carriers and services for their potential availability.
* Designate a primary and alternative assembly point easily accessible to all family members.
* Do not have plans that contain "hope and wait" strategies from your government.
* Maintain adequate supplies of food and water.
* Keep vehicles fueled for immediate evacuation.
* If threat levels warrant, have open airline ticket(s) available.
* Have a preplanned, tested, and redundant communications system.

1. **ACTS OF WAR**

Political situations can change rapidly and should be monitored continuously. Since war can have the same effect as a coup or extreme civil unrest, the actions above also apply. The obvious difference between a war and a coup is that you will definitely know who the belligerents are and their attitude toward you. If associated, or perceived to be associated, with any party in the war effort, you could be targeted by violence. In these types of events, evacuation plans should be immediately implemented.

1. **HEALTH AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES**

A medical first aid kit will help with minor injuries and provide a supply of common medications that may be difficult to acquire during high risks. Suggested items include the following:

* Over-the-counter pain reliever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
* Antacids and anti-diarrhea medication
* Medications for colds and allergies (when and where allowable by local laws)
* Bandages (adhesive bandages, gauze, tape)
* Tweezers
* Scissors (may not be allowed in carry-on bags)
* Alcohol swabs
* Antibacterial and antifungal ointment or cream
* Extra pair of glasses
* Thermometer
* Address and phone numbers of area hospitals or clinics

Outdoor Or Adventure Travel

* Insect repellent with DEET
* Blister protection (moleskin, skin blister kit)
* Sunscreen and lip protection
* Motion sickness medication (for cruises)
* Antihistamine or hydrocortisone cream for insect bites
* Calamine lotion (for poison ivy)
* Water purification kit or tablets
* Mosquito netting for sleeping
* High altitude preventive medication, if indicated
* Oral rehydration salts

Other

* Supplies for pre-existing medical problems (Epi Pens, Diabetic needles and glucose testing supplies, asthma inhalers, etc.); be sure to have physician's note on letterhead for customs
* Antibacterial hand solution
* Feminine products (Note that many countries have differing manufacturing process for feminine hygiene products, and preferred brands may be unavailable.)

**Supplies for children**

Make sure you have a copy of your child's immunization record and, if he/she has any medical conditions, a copy of pertinent medical records. Also pack if applicable:

* Your child's medications for fever, pain, colds, coughs, and allergies. Familiar medications are often expensive or unavailable abroad.
* Powdered formula to be reconstituted with bottled water.
* Sunscreen and insect repellant formulated for children.
* A supply of disposable diapers. Most developed countries have disposable diapers, but they may not be available in rural areas or in less-developed countries. Be prepared to use cloth diapers.
* Diaper rash cream.
* Baby wipes.
* Towelettes for quick wash-ups.
* Pain relievers, cold and cough medications in child-strength
* Diaper wipes
* Oral rehydration solution or packets of oral rehydration solution in case of diarrhea.

**Preventing ear discomfort during flight**

Children often have trouble equalizing ear pressure on take-off and landing, and that can cause pain. Congestion (cold or allergy) heightens the pain.

* If the child is congested, administer decongestants 30 minutes before take-off and, on long flights, before descent.
* Encourage swallowing - it helps relieve ear discomfort - with drinks, a bottle, or pacifier.

**Children and motion sickness**

Motion sickness is more of an issue with car and bus travel. Children usually outgrow motion sickness. Measures to alleviate motion sickness:

* Sit the child facing in the direction of travel.
* Provide good ventilation.
* Encourage looking out the window (straight ahead), discourage reading.
* Provide fluids and a light meal prior to travel. Avoid heavy meals before and during travel.
* Check with your pediatrician about using a preventative such as Dramamine or Benadryl.

**Children and Jet Lag**

Jet lag is a disruption in sleep patterns caused by crossing time zones. Usually, it is easier to adapt to east-to-west travel than to west-to-east travel. Children will adjust gradually to the changes, and may take several weeks to return to a normal sleep/wake pattern.

* Shift your child's schedule, meals, and bedtime to the new time zone.
* Participate in outside activities in the sunlight.

**Travelers Diarrhea and Children**

The same food and water precautions for adults apply to children. Frequent hand washing must be stressed for general sanitation issues.

* Exercise caution with dairy products. Make sure they are pasteurized or boiled. Avoid ice cream or frozen ices from street vendors.
* Diarrhea-related dehydration occurs suddenly and is very dangerous in small children. Oral hydration solutions (such as Pedialyte) are helpful.
* Prevent toddlers from swallowing bath water. Use bottled water when brushing teeth.

**Breast-feeding while traveling**

Breast-feeding is desirable during travel and should be considered as long as possible. Breast-feeding lowers the incidence of infant diarrhea. Nursing mothers with travelers' diarrhea should continue to nurse while increasing their fluid intake.

**Protecting your infant or child from malaria**

The kind of anti-malarial medication your child will receive will depend on the area of the world you are traveling and any medical conditions your child may have. Because malaria can occur despite taking antimalarials, the use of insect repellent in conjunction with antimalarial medications is essential.  
  
If your child becomes ill with a fever or flu-like illness while traveling in a malaria-risk area or up to 1 year after returning home, seek immediate medical care.

* Overdosage of antimalarials can be fatal. Keep drugs in childproof containers and out of reach.
* Give antimalarials to children exactly on schedule without missing doses.
* Use insect repellents that contain 20-35% DEET. Microencapsulated nonalcohol formulations are preferred. DEET is safe to use on infants and children.
* Spray living areas and sleeping areas with permethrin to kill mosquitoes. Permethrin will repel insects for several months.
* Use a mosquito net if your child or infant is not sleeping in well-screened or air-conditioned housing.

**Other Tips**

In many parts of the world, animals carry diseases - including rabies. Dogs or cats on the street can pose a risk. A child's natural curiosity and desire to touch and pet animals should be carefully watched. Less commonly, rabies can also be transmitted through licking into open wounds or mucous membranes such as eyes or mouths.

* Affix identification labels to children's clothing. Include name, date of birth, nationality, passport number, and contact information.
* Some daily medications for children may require special permissions for entry through customs. Prescription and even non-prescription medicines for conditions ranging from allergies to attention-deficit disorder may not be allowed in some countries without prior approval from the Ministry of Health. Be certain to check well in advance of travel to obtain necessary documents.

**Basic Health Precautions to Avoid Infection.**

Although some pathogens are spread through insects or close personal contact, many other diseases are transmitted from human to human more directly - through the air, or through contaminated food and water. When vaccination is unavailable to prevent infection, basic health precautions can reduce the likelihood of exposure to many of these illnesses.

**Hand Hygiene**

Maintaining clean hands is one of the most important tools for reducing the risk of infection. Individuals should regularly wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available. Hand washing is especially important after touching commonly handled items such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, and handrails, before and after preparing food, and before and after eating. Individuals should also limit the number of times they touch their face, eyes, and mouth.  
  
**Social Distancing**

Another important health precaution is social distancing. When in areas experiencing infectious disease activity, consider avoiding crowded areas, where the risk of encountering a sick person is highest. Be cautious when interacting with obviously ill people. In some regions, people may wear paper masks in public. It is important to realize that these masks are designed only to prevent transmission of pathogens *from*the wearer; although wearing a mask may be better than nothing, paper masks are not intended to prevent transmission of pathogens *to*the wearer. For such protection, individuals must obtain properly fitted respirator masks.

Occasionally, during periods of increased transmission of particular diseases or outbreaks of specific illnesses, some hospitals may limit visitation of friends and family to reduce the chance of disease transmission to and from patients. Hospital wards may close; at times, entire facilities may close to non-patient visitors. This is often used as a public health precaution to limit disease spread in a community.

1. **FOOD AND WATER SAFETY**

Food and water are common vehicles of pathogen transmission, especially in areas without ready access to improved sanitation. Take precautions to avoid potentially contaminated food and water by using only bottled, boiled, or otherwise purified water, and ensuring that all food has been carefully prepared and served. When eating out, individuals should eat only food that is well-cooked and served hot.

All international staff are strongly advised to drink only sealed bottled water from a known brand in order to avoid diseases caused by pathogens, other unfamiliar microorganisms, and varying municipal treatment measures that might upset individual digestive systems. However, if bottled water is unavailable, the following water treatment methods can be used to ensure that drinking water is safe for consumption  
  
**Heat**  
Boiling is the most reliable method to make water safe for drinking. Water is safe to drink by the time it has reached a full boil. Beverages made with boiled water, such as tea, should be safe to drink, provided the container is not contaminated. Altitude should not make a difference.

**Water Filtration**

Water filtration is an appealing alternative, because it is easy to do and does not add taste to water. However, filtration systems tend to clog easily when using muddy or cloudy water, and such systems are often expensive and bulky to carry. Furthermore, most systems will remove bacteria and parasites but are unable to remove the smaller-sized viruses that can pass through the filter pores. Therefore, disinfection with iodine or chlorine is recommended after filtration to kill viruses. Reverse-osmosis type filters also provide protection against viruses but are more expensive and larger in size, making them less suitable for backpackers or most travelers. Disinfection with iodine or chlorine is recommended after filtration to kill viruses.

**Water Clarification**

Water clarification is achieved by allowing water to settle by gravity in one to two hours, or by adding alum and letting it settle. The water is then passed through filter paper to remove clumps. This process removes some dissolved metals and most microorganisms, and improves the clarity and taste.  
  
**Charcoal**  
Granular activated charcoal removes organic pollutants, chemicals, and radioactive particles by absorption. Charcoal does not remove all microorganisms, but it does improve taste, smell, and color. Care must be taken to perform this process properly to completely remove harmful contaminants.  
  
**Halogens (Chlorine and Iodine)**

Halogens are excellent disinfectants for bacteria, viruses, and some parasites. These chemicals are readily available and inexpensive. Carefully follow manufacturer's instructions, as water temperature and cloudiness affect treatment dosage and time. However, this process often results in unpleasant taste and color. Chemical water treatment is generally intended for short-term use only.

**Ozone and Chlorine dioxide**

Ozone and chlorine dioxide offer effective protection against bacteria, viruses, and some parasites. These are both highly effective disinfectants used in water treatment plants that are currently being developed for use in the field.

**Ultraviolet**  
Ultraviolet (UV) lights offer effective protection against bacteria, viruses, and some parasites. UV lights do not change the taste, odor or color of the water. The manufacturer's instructions should be carefully followed, as water cloudiness reduces the effectiveness of UV purification.

1. **INHALATION OF TOXIC CHEMICALS**

**What is Hazardous Chemical Inhalation Exposure?**

Hazardous chemicals generally take the form of either gases or liquids, depending on how they are stored. In many regions of the world, chemicals are transported by rail or vehicle in compressed tanks, following strict guidelines as set forth by international chemical regulations and recommendations. However, despite manufacturers' attempts to follow these regulations, unforeseen circumstances such as weather, road or rail conditions, sabotage, or other accidents can cause an unintentional release and emit harmful vapors or fumes that can cause damage to human health. Some chemicals stored as solids are much less volatile in nature, and present less of an inhalational hazard. The WHO reports that between 2000 and 2009, there were 3,200 technological disasters with close to 1.5 million people affected.  
  
**How Does Inhalation Exposure Occur?**

Hazardous inhalation exposure can occur when a material deemed hazardous to human health is released through a leak or rupture in the containment vessel causing a "plume," cloud, or stream into the surrounding air. This can be highly localized or dispersed over a wider arena depending on:

* Size of the release
* Atmospheric conditions
* Interaction with other chemicals
* Timeliness of response

Many chemicals have distinctive odors, tastes, and colors; however, there are many discrete chemicals and compounds that do not have these properties and can be harmful to human health if inhaled. Some chemicals, such as ammonia, chlorine, or bromine are directly released, and some are by-products of other chemical reactions, such as carbon monoxide. Generally, industrial chemicals that are directly released will have some type of odor or color associated with them.

**Prevention**  
The safest way to prevent inhalational exposure in the event of an accidental release is through:

* Avoiding the offending agent, which will largely depend on your location in relation to the accident, your ability to safely and efficiently evacuate the area in question, and the conditions surrounding the release
* For short-term releases (less than 4 hours of expected exposure time) shelter-in-place
* Preventing toxic fumes entering into your living space
* Turn off external ventilation systems
* Seal windows
* Take shelter if outdoors
* Cover mouth and nose with cloth
* Protect eyes as much as possible while maintaining visibility
* Phone for emergency assistance and poison control if exposure has occurred
* When evacuation is an option, move to an area upwind and higher ground than the area of incident

Know that environmental conditions can change, and be prepared for additional movement if necessary. This is especially true of a chlorine gas incident.

Chlorine accounts for more than 50 percent of all chemical processes in the world outside of the fuel and metals industries.

A significant respiratory irritant, it is heavier than air and will settle when vaporized. Behavior of the release is dependent on weather conditions, terrain features, and how the release occurred, among other factors.  
  
Other chemicals may behave differently in the environment. However, the most important factor during an accidental chemical release is to remain as calm as possible.

Increased respiratory demand secondary to panic will increase potential exposure to the offending agent by an increased respiratory rate.

Respirators carry with them physical and psychological demands, many that may be unforeseen by the user until the device is actually in place. A crisis is not the time to find that added demands of a respirator place an undue burden on an employee and their fellow colleagues. Many countries require that respirators are fit to individuals, a medical exam has been performed to ensure fitness, and adequate training has been provided.

**Assessment**  
If you can smell or taste a "chemical," there is a chance you may be able to partially identify the agent and report it to authorities, poison control, and/or a medical provider for specific advice.

Each chemical and compound will have an MSDS Sheet (Material Safety Data Sheet) regarding the safe handling and health procedures specific to that chemical.

For initial respiratory exposures, getting to fresh air and oxygen to protect the airway for breathing is of primary importance.

Coughing, runny nose, and tearing are common body defenses to offending agents.

Exposures may exacerbate underlying medical conditions, particularly pulmonary or renal conditions.

For any inhalation exposure, have a medical provider determine if additional testing or treatment is necessary.

Delayed onset of symptoms are not unusual.

Some treatment options are not always advisable for all chemicals.

A preliminary exam may include a physical assessment, bloodwork, a chest X-ray, and urine sample, depending on the extent and nature of the release.

**Treatment**

* Acute symptoms are treated first
* Prevention of infection would be addressed as a secondary measure
* Treatment will be highly individualized depending on chemical and any underlying conditions
* Initial cardio-vascular and respiratory stabilization would be addressed first

If evacuation with adequate sheltering is possible, minimal exposure is likely, and short- as well as long-term consequences should also be minimal.

The WHO keeps a listing of International Poison Control Centers accessible at:

[www.who.int/gho/phe/chemical\_safety/poisons\_centres/en/](http://www.who.int/gho/phe/chemical_safety/poisons_centres/en/)

1. **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TIPS**

* Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days by putting together an emergency kit, including:  non-perishable food, water, a flashlight, a portable, battery-operated radio or television, batteries, medicines, anti-bacterial hand wipes or gel, first aid kit, money, seasonal clothing, and sanitation supplies.
* Conduct practice drills so you and your family know the safe locations in your home for each type of emergency.  Decide how and where your family will reunite if separated. Choose an out-of-state friend or relative that separated family members can call to report their whereabouts and conditions.
* Learn first aid and CPR from your local Red Cross chapter or other community organizations.
* Learn how to shut off gas, water and electricity in case the lines are damaged. Make sure insurance coverage is up-to-date and reflects present property values. Check on flood insurance.
* Compile an inventory of home contents. Take pictures and/or video. Store in a safe place.
* Check chimneys, roofs, walls and foundations for stability. Make sure your house is bolted to its foundation.
* Secure your water heater and major appliances, as well as tall, heavy furniture, hanging plants, picture frames and mirrors (especially those over beds).
* Make arrangements for pets.
* Organize your neighborhood to be self-sufficient after a disaster.

**During a Disaster! If you are evacuated:**

* Follow directions of local officials. Carry your disaster supplies kit with you.
* Unplug appliances; turn off electricity, gas, and main water valve. (Safety note: do not attempt to re-light the gas pilot. Call the utility company.)
* If time permits, elevate or move furniture to upper floors.
* Tell someone outside of storm area where you are going.
* Lock home and leave.

**If you stay at home:**

* Listen constantly to a battery-powered radio or television.
* Stay inside away from windows, skylights and glass doors.
* If power is lost, turn off major appliances and keep refrigerators and freezers closed.

**After a Disaster!**

Unless there is an immediate life-threatening emergency, seek to refrain using the phone. Be sure to:

* Stay calm.  Check on neighbors, especially elderly or disabled.
* Turn on your portable radio or television for instructions and news reports.  For you own safety, cooperate fully with public safety officials and instructions.
* Use a flashlight to cautiously check for gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring or sewage lines.  If there is damage, turn the utility off at the source. Immediately report gas leaks to your utility company.  Check for downed power lines; warn others to stay away.
* Check your home for cracks and damage, including the roof, chimneys and foundation.
* Do not use your vehicle unless there is an emergency.  Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles.  If you must drive, watch for downed power lines, flooded streets and highways and undermined roads.
* Take pictures of the damage, both house and contents, for insurance claims.
* When electricity is lost for several hours or days, frozen and refrigerated food may not be safe to eat.  Do not re-freeze thawed food.  Throw away all food that has been under flood waters, except canned food, but wash and sanitize the cans before opening.  All food that cannot be saved should be double-bagged for normal trash disposal or buried at least 2-feet deep.
* Conserve water if your septic system is flooded.
* If your system lost pressure, boil water for 3 minutes before consuming.
* In warm weather, empty water out of birdbaths, tires, flower pots and other containers to limit mosquito larvae growth.

**Things You Need:**

* Water - You need clean safe water to drink. Store 1 gallon per day for each person in your home for drinking and cooking. Experts say it is best to plan for three days. You can buy bottled water from the grocery store or bottle it yourself. If you bottle it yourself, choose a clean washed container like a soda bottle. A container (bigger than a water bottle - 4L) to get water in and to purify the water. A small container of bleach (250ml) for treating water. Add four drops bleach (sodium hypochlorite) per quart of water. Don’t use the scented bleaches. You may also need water to flush the toilet if your home has a well with an electric pump. If you have any warning time before the power goes off, run your bathtub and your washing machine full of water for flushing the toilet. To flush the toilet when the power is off, just remove the tank lid and fill the tank with water. Now flush, the tank will empty as the water goes out of the bowel; afterwards fill the tank up.
* Food - You will need food that will not spoil or go bad if it is not kept cold. Have several days worth of canned foods on hand that could be eaten without heating if need be. Keep some foods that will keep for several days without heat or cold. Have on hand foods like peanut butter, crackers, fruit, vegetables, bread, and cereal. Food in your refrigerator and freezer will keep for a while depending on many factors. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Remember that you can cook on an outdoor grill if the weather is safe but you must do it outdoors.
* Shelter - Staying dry and warm is most important in the case of winter storms. If your home has a safe fireplace, you have a good source of warmth for your family. Keep a stack of dry firewood in preparation for storm-related power failure. Gas logs will also work without power. Keep warm by dressing in layers. Wrap up in blankets for sleeping or sitting still. If you get wet, get dry as soon as possible. Make sure that your feet and hands stay warm and dry and check the hands and feet of children and older folks.
* Transportation - In case of emergency, you need to be able to get to help, or get a message to help so that they can get you. If it is safe to drive your car, help is available at your community fire department. A Deputy Sheriff will be stationed at fire departments when communications lines are down. If you have to walk to help, remember to take care of yourself so you don’t become the victim instead of the rescuer. Dress in layers, take water and food, and take the safest route even if it may take longer.
* Radio - Most radio stations will broadcast even if your home power is off. Keep a battery powered radio available with extra batteries to receive emergency information.

**Escape Routes**

Draw a floor plan of your home. Use a blank sheet of paper for each floor. Mark two escape routes from each room. Make sure children understand the drawings. Post a copy of the drawings at eye level in each child’s room.

**Where to Meet**

Establish a place to meet in the event of an emergency, such as a fire. Record the locations below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Location | Where to Meet​ |
| Near the home | ​For example, the next door neighbor's telephone pole |
| ​Outside the immediate area | For example, the neighborhood grocery store parking lot​ |

1. **BASIC DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT**

Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Most of the items are inexpensive and easy to find, and any one of them could save your life. Headed to the store? [Download a printable version](https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/ready_emergency-supply-kit-checklist.pdf) to take with you. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what [unique needs](https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan) your family might have, such as supplies for [pets](https://www.ready.gov/animals), or [seniors](https://www.ready.gov/seniors).

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own [food](https://www.ready.gov/food), [water](https://www.ready.gov/water) and other [supplies](https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/ready_emergency-supply-kit-checklist.pdf) to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

* [Water](https://www.ready.gov/water) - one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
* [Food](https://www.ready.gov/food) - at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
* Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
* Flashlight
* First aid kit
* Extra batteries
* Whistle to signal for help
* Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to [shelter-in-place](https://www.ready.gov/shelter)
* Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
* Wrench or pliers to [turn off utilities](https://www.ready.gov/safety-skills)
* Manual can opener for food
* Local maps
* Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
* Download the [Recommended Supplies List](https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/ready_emergency-supply-kit-checklist.pdf)(PDF)

**Additional Emergency Supplies**

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

* [Prescription medications](https://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs)
* Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
* Glasses and contact lenses solution
* Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream
* Pet food and extra water for your pet
* Cash or traveler's checks
* Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
* Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
* Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
* Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water
* Fire extinguisher
* Matches in a waterproof container
* Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
* Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
* Paper and pencil
* Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

**Maintaining Your Kit**

After assembling your kit remember to maintain it so it’s ready when needed:

* Keep canned [food](https://www.ready.gov/food) in a cool, dry place
* Following a disaster, there may be power outages that could last for several days. Stock canned foods, day mixes to last for several days
* Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers
* Replace expired items as needed
* Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family’s needs change.

**Kit Storage Locations**

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

* Home: Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.
* Work: Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Your work kit should include food, water and other necessities like medicines, as well as comfortable walking shoes, stored in a “grab and go” case.
* Vehicle: In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies [in your car](https://www.ready.gov/car).

1. **PROTECTIVE ACTIONS FOR LIFE SAFETY**

When there is a hazard within a building such as a fire or chemical spill, occupants within the building should be evacuated or relocated to safety. Other incidents such as a bomb threat or receipt of a suspicious package may also require evacuation. If a tornado warning is broadcast, everyone should be moved to the strongest part of the building and away from exterior glass. If a transportation accident on a nearby highway results in the release of a chemical cloud, the fire department may warn to “shelter-in-place.” To protect employees from an act of violence, “lockdown” should be broadcast and everyone should hide or barricade themselves from the perpetrator. Protective actions for life safety include:

* Evacuation
* Sheltering
* Shelter-In-Place
* Lockdown

Your emergency plan should include these protective actions. If you are a tenant in multi-tenanted building, coordinate planning with the building manager.

**Evacuation**

Prompt evacuation of employees requires a warning system that can be heard throughout the building. Test your fire alarm system to determine if it can be heard by all employees. If there is no fire alarm system, use a public address system, air horns or other means to warn everyone to evacuate. Sound the evacuation signal during planned drills so employees are familiar with the sound.

Make sure that there are sufficient exits available at all times.

* Check to see that there are at least two exits from hazardous areas on every floor of every building. Building or fire codes may require more exits for larger buildings.
* Walk around the building and verify that exits are marked with exit signs and there is sufficient lighting so people can safely travel to an exit. If you find anything that blocks an exit, have it removed.
* Enter every stairwell, walk down the stairs, and open the exit door to the outside. Continue walking until you reach a safe place away from the building. Consider using this safe area as an assembly area for evacuees.

Appoint an evacuation team leader and assign employees to direct evacuation of the building. Assign at least one person to each floor to act as a “floor warden” to direct employees to the nearest safe exit. Assign a backup in case the floor warden is not available or if the size of the floor is very large. Ask employees if they would need any special assistance evacuating or moving to shelter. Assign a “buddy” or aide to assist persons with disabilities during an emergency. Contact the fire department to develop a plan to evacuate persons with disabilities.

Have a list of employees and maintain a visitor log at the front desk, reception area or main office area. Assign someone to take the lists to the assembly area when the building is evacuated. Use the lists to account for everyone and inform the fire department whether everyone has been accounted for. When employees are evacuated from a building, OSHA regulations require an accounting to ensure that everyone has gotten out safely. A fire, chemical spill or other hazard may block an exit, so make sure the evacuation team can direct employees to an alternate safe exit.

**Sheltering**

If a tornado warning is broadcast, a distinct warning signal should be sounded and everyone should move to shelter in the strongest part of the building. Shelters may include basements or interior rooms with reinforced masonry construction. Evaluate potential shelters and conduct a drill to see whether shelter space can hold all employees. Since there may be little time to shelter when a tornado is approaching, early warning is important. If there is a severe thunderstorm, monitor news sources in case a tornado warning is broadcast. Consider purchasing an Emergency Alert System radio - available at many electronic stores. Tune in to weather warnings broadcast by local radio and television stations. Subscribe to free text and email warnings, which are available from multiple news and weather resources on the Internet.

**Shelter-In-Place**

A tanker truck crashes on a nearby highway releasing a chemical cloud. A large column of black smoke billows into the air from a fire in a nearby manufacturing plant. If, as part of this event, an explosion, or act of terrorism has occurred, public emergency officials may order people in the vicinity to “shelter-in-place.” You should develop a shelter-in-place plan. The plan should include a means to warn everyone to move away from windows and move to the core of the building. Warn anyone working outside to enter the building immediately. Move everyone to the second and higher floors in a multistory building. Avoid occupying the basement. Close exterior doors and windows and shut down the building’s air handling system. Have everyone remain sheltered until public officials broadcast that it is safe to evacuate the building.

**Lockdown**

An act of violence in the workplace could occur without warning. If loud “pops” are heard and gunfire is suspected, every employee should know to hide and remain silent. They should seek refuge in a room, close and lock the door, and barricade the door if it can be done quickly. They should be trained to hide under a desk, in the corner of a room and away from the door or windows. Multiple people should be trained to broadcast a lockdown warning from a safe location.

Set meet up points for you and your family that are based off of the proximity of the locations you spend the most time at. For example, your child’s school, your home, and your place of work should all be factors when determining meet up locations.

Depending on the disaster or emergency you’re dealing with, your meet up location may be destroyed or become inaccessible. Choose at least one alternative location that is far from town or a populated area. A favorite camping spot or a trail off the beaten path is ideal.

**Tips on disaster preparedness in relation to evacuation plans:**

* Place a long distance hand radio with plenty of fresh batteries at all of your meeting places. If something happens to your regular systems of communication or your cell phone dies, this is one way you can stay in contact.
* Run drills of your escape routes and evacuation plans—this is an essential part of your disaster preparation. If you grow complacent, it could compromise the level of disaster preparedness you and your family have in the event of a catastrophe.
* Don’t forget to replenish and restock all of your evacuation locations at least once every 6 months (an important aspect of disaster prep).