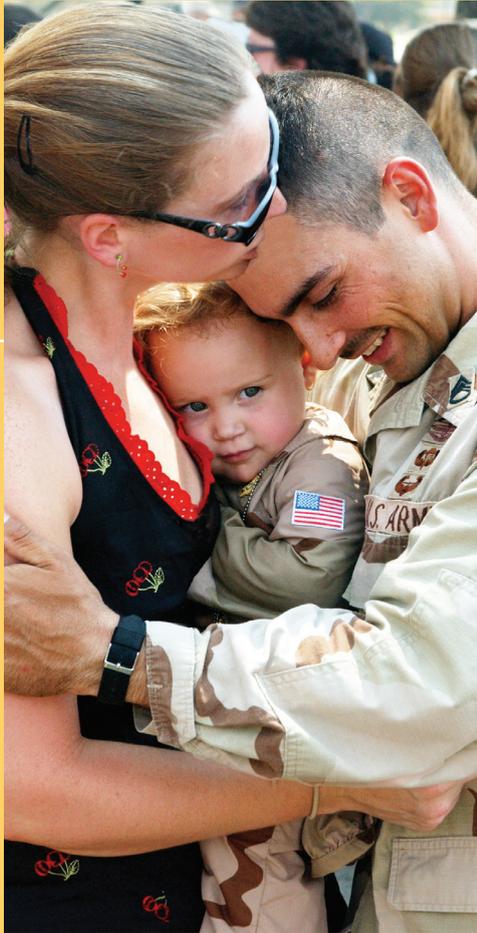


# Emergency Preparedness for Soldiers and Army Families



**READY  
ARMY**  
GET A KIT • MAKE A PLAN • BE INFORMED



# Ready Army

## *Are you and your family ready for an emergency?*

Emergencies affect hundreds of thousands of people every year. One may hit your installation and community and affect you and your family. When emergencies occur, military and civilian organizations respond, but it takes time to mobilize, and they focus on the most critical needs first. You should get ready to manage on your own for at least three days.

Failure to prepare can put yourself, your family, and your property in jeopardy!

***It's up to you. Prepare Strong.***

# Start Preparing Today

Take these three simple steps to prepare—***Get a kit, Make a plan, Be informed***

## Get a Kit

A ready collection of first aid supplies, food, water, medicines, and important papers can sustain you and your family until a crisis passes. Consider the needs of your family and pets, then assemble emergency supply kits in your home, car, and workplace.

## Make a Plan

You and your family members may not be together when an emergency strikes. Planning ahead for various emergencies will improve your chances of keeping in touch, staying safe, and quickly reuniting.

## Be Informed

Emergencies can arise from weather and other natural hazards, industrial and transportation accidents, disease epidemics, and terrorist acts. Anticipate the emergencies most likely to affect you and your family. Knowing what to do can make all the difference when seconds count.

This booklet helps you think through the basics of preparing yourself and your family for emergencies. In addition to checklists and sources for further help and information, there are detachable forms for an Family Emergency Plan and Emergency Contact Cards.

Play it smart. Preparing for emergencies doesn't take a lot of time or effort, but it brings peace of mind. And it could keep an emergency from becoming a disaster for you and your family.

# Get a Kit

When disaster strikes, the emergency responders address the most critical needs. While they work on behalf of the entire community, it is your responsibility to ensure your family's well-being during times of crisis. Emergency kits are an essential tool for meeting that challenge.

To prepare your family for an emergency, get one or more emergency kits that include enough supplies for at least three days. Keep a kit prepared at home, and consider having kits in your car and at work. These kits will enable you and your family to respond to an emergency more quickly. Your various emergency kits will be useful whether you have to shelter in place or evacuate.

Here are some basics for a home emergency kit:

- Water—at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days
- Food—nonperishable food for at least three days
- Formula and diapers for any infants
- Food, water, other supplies, and documents for any pets
- Manual can opener
- Flashlight, battery-powered radio, battery-powered cellphone charger, and extra batteries
- First aid kit with dust masks, disinfectant, and prescription medications
- Sanitation supplies such as moist towelettes, disinfectant, and garbage bags
- Important documents—personal, financial, and insurance
- Your family emergency plan, local maps, and your command reporting information



Additional items can be essential for those stationed abroad:

- Passports
- Birth abroad certificate for children born overseas
- Cash in local currency
- Card with local translations of basic terms
- Electrical current converter

Many other items could prove helpful:

- Fire extinguisher
- Any tools needed to turn off utilities
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Paper plates, paper cups, plastic utensils, paper towels
- Coats and rain gear
- Sleeping bags or other bedding
- A weather-appropriate change of clothes for each person
- Books, games, puzzles, toys, and other activities for children



On the Ready.gov Web site ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)), the Department of Homeland Security provides thorough checklists for emergency supply kits, as well as facts sheets about planning for children, pets, and other special needs.

Make your basic home emergency kit portable, or create a portable emergency kit for situations requiring evacuation. Every member of your family should know where it is located and be able to access it easily.

Emergency kits should be evaluated regularly to ensure they will provide your family with basic needs during the emergency situations. Remember to update supplies periodically as medications and food expire.



# Make a Plan

Make and practice a family emergency plan.

Consider the range of potential emergencies and all the places you and your family might be. Some emergencies require different responses than others, but a family communications procedure will be helpful in any case. Knowing how to keep in touch and find one another will help your family stay safe and cope with the confusion and fear that come when emergencies strike. Complete the detachable **Emergency Contact Card** at the back of this booklet and see that every family member carries a copy.

## *Make a Plan*

Making a plan is simple...just think of the 5 W's!

- **Who:** Gather input from all members of your family to consider all possibilities and make them more likely to remember important steps when an emergency happens. Choose a contact person, a family member or friend living somewhere else whom you can all contact if an emergency strikes when you are separated.
- **What:** Plan for the various emergency situations or disasters that could strike your family, considering potential hazards and weather patterns in your region. Think through each possible emergency situation, and determine how your family should respond.
- **Where:** Think about all the places you and your family may be throughout the day, such as home, office, school, and in transit. Establish meeting places and discuss situations to use them.



- **When:** Because emergencies can happen at any time, make your family emergency plan immediately. You can use or model it after the detachable form at the back of this booklet. Review the plan annually and whenever there are major changes in your family situation, schedule, or activities.
- **Why:** Emergencies can be scary. By establishing and practicing a family emergency plan, you and your family are more likely to find each other quickly and help one another get through the emergency situation safely and with less worry.

### **Practice Your Plan**

Making an emergency plan is just the first step; you should practice it at least once a year. Describe to family members a hypothetical event and tell them to follow the family emergency plan. Practice gathering your emergency kit and important documents, communicating with one another, and meeting at a designated place. Afterwards, discuss the actions you took and how the plan would change in a different type of emergency.



## Be Informed

Identify and learn about the hazards that could affect you and your family.

Many events can trigger emergency situations with the potential to escalate into disaster. Hazards such as power outages or disease breakouts can happen anywhere at any time, so you should become familiar with the spectrum of possible dangers and how you will be notified about them. It also is important to give special consideration to any particular hazards that are more likely to affect your local area, such as hurricane, tornado, flooding, earthquake, or severe winter weather. Living abroad presents additional preparedness challenges and, in some areas, less familiar hazards, like volcanic eruption and tsunamis.

While the potential threats can seem overwhelming, keep in mind that most of what you address in your family emergency plan or put in your emergency kits will be useful regardless of the hazard. And in many cases, the same protective alternatives apply: evacuation or shelter.

On the Ready.gov Web site ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)), the Department of Homeland Security provides fact sheets on the following hazards, with useful information and coping strategies:

- Biological Threat
- Chemical Threat
- Earthquakes
- Explosions
- Extreme Heat
- Fires
- Floods
- Hurricanes
- Influenza Pandemic
- Landslide and Debris Flow (Mudslide)
- Nuclear Threat
- Radiation Threat
- Thunderstorms
- Tornadoes
- Tsunamis
- Volcanoes
- Wildfires
- Winter Storms and Extreme Cold



# Notification and Emergency Actions

You should understand the local mass warning system(s) and, when notified, be prepared to evacuate, move to a civilian shelter or designated safe haven, or temporarily shelter in place.

- **Mass Warning Systems:** Each local community is responsible for warning the public of impending danger due to an emergency. Army installations support this effort by developing mass warning and notification systems. Overseas, this system includes warning family members living off the installation, ideally in cooperation with local or host-nation authorities.

In the United States, the main agencies that warn of natural hazards are the National Weather Service (NWS) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). NWS uses the following terms for specific natural hazards:

- ▼ **Warning**—A hazardous event is occurring or imminent. Take immediate protective action.
  - ▼ **Watch**—Conditions are favorable for a hazard to develop or move in. Stay alert.
- **Evacuation:** If advance warning and other circumstances permit, the preference for nonessential and nonemergency personnel is evacuation using specified routes and transportation methods. Installation emergency management organizations have plans and procedures to direct evacuation or direct movement of personnel and family members to safe havens or civilian shelters.

Safe and effective evacuation requires planning ahead—there may be no advance warning. You should plan primary and alternative evacuation routes in advance, with appropriate maps to take along in your emergency supply kit.



- **Moving to Civilian Shelter:** A shelter is a publicly identified, certified, supplied, staffed, and insured mass care facility where endangered people can find temporary protection for a limited time. Army installations coordinate shelter needs with appropriate state, local, host-nation, and private agencies. The American Red Cross is the principal U.S. resource for development, management, and operation of certified shelters.



- **Moving to Designated Safe Haven:** A local safe haven is a facility on the installation that provides temporary protection during sudden incidents, such as earthquakes and tsunamis. A remote safe haven is a facility on a geographically distant DOD installation or facility that provides short- to medium-term lodging of displaced personnel during large-scale incidents, such as hurricanes and extended wildfires.
- **Sheltering in Place:** In some instances, when evacuating or moving to a shelter or safe haven is more dangerous than remaining where you are, such as with short- or no-notice emergencies like hazardous materials events, you may be directed to shelter in place, that is, take temporary protection in a structure or vehicle, typically your workplace or residence. It is important to know for different emergencies which part of a building is safest and how best to keep the air safe to breathe.

On the Ready.gov Web site ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)), the Department of Homeland Security provides information about evacuating and sheltering in place. You need to learn about systems in your particular area to alert people about real or impending emergencies, as well as area evacuation procedures and shelter options, especially if you are stationed abroad.

### ***Additional Considerations for OCONUS***

- The emergency number is probably not 911 and may differ on and off installation. You and your family members should know the operable numbers.
- If you live off base, make friends with host-nation neighbors who can inform you about an ongoing emergency in case you don't have AFN TV/radio reception or local media cover it before AFN.
- If you live off base, threat levels or other circumstances may keep you from getting back on base following an emergency for day-to-day activities, so keep some local currency, know alternative places to shop, and learn some basic phrases in the local language.
- A rendezvous point may require more thought and ingenuity than CONUS. It may include a call-in alternative in case the usual phone numbers or e-mail systems are down. The deployed soldier and family members can each call the same person to make contact and plans. A contact person in country but in a different city is less likely to be affected by the same event.
- For any emergency that occurs "outside the fence," response (evacuation, shelter instructions, etc.) will be led by the local government. Cooperate with the host-nation responders, and follow their instructions.

### ***Be Part of the Solution***

No matter where you are when an emergency strikes—

- Leave the response to the professionals. Do not put yourself in harm's way and become part of the problem.
- Enable responders to focus on the most critical needs first.
- Do your best to remain flexible and cooperative. Stay alert for instructions.
- Do your best to take care of yourself and your family; help neighbors and visitors if you can.



# Resources

The following Internet sites offer more information, including useful links and checklists:

**Ready.gov ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov))**—Information, checklists, and printable forms to educate and empower Americans to prepare for emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Defense.

- *Listo America* ([www.listo.gov/america](http://www.listo.gov/america)) is the Spanish version of Ready.gov
- *People with Disabilities and Other Special Needs* ([www.ready.gov/america/getakit/](http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/)) provides information and an instructional video
- *Pet Items* ([www.ready.gov/america/getakit/pets.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/pets.html)) provides tips, downloads, and a video

**American Red Cross ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))**—Preparedness guides and information for home, school, work, and community

- *All Disaster Types* provides specific guidance for the range of natural and manmade disasters.
- *Safe and Well List* (<https://disastersafe.redcross.org>) provides a way for disaster victims to communicate with family members about their well-being.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))**—*CDC is the principal federal agency for protecting the health and safety of all Americans (under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)*

- *Emergency Preparedness and Response* ([www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)) provides information on agents, diseases, and other threats.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency ([www.fema.gov/plan](http://www.fema.gov/plan))**—FEMA's "Plan Ahead" site offers information on the range of natural and manmade disasters and guidance for protecting your family and property

- *Are You Ready?* ([www.fema.gov/areyouready](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready)) is a comprehensive online and downloadable resource on individual, family, and community preparedness.

**PandemicFlu.gov/AvianFlu.gov ([www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov))**—The most current information on pandemic and avian flu from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**World Health Organization ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int))**—Resources for epidemic and pandemic alert and response issues

# Family Emergency Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan what you will do in different situations and plan how you will contact one another.

## Family Evacuation Procedure

Where the family will meet near home: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (if any): \_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate plan if access is blocked: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

## Family Communications Procedure

- Fill in the information below. Add other important information to suit your family's circumstances.
- Keep this plan with your emergency supplies kit, along with your command's standard and emergency muster procedures.
- Make sure every family member has the most important contact information on a current Emergency Contact Card.

## Where the family spends time

<b>Work:</b>	<b>Work:</b>	<b>School:</b>
Address: _____	Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

<b>School:</b>	<b>Other:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
Address: _____	Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

## Contact information

Out-of-Town Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Family members

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_ Passport #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prescriptions/Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_ Passport #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prescriptions/Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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