

AAC & Emergency Preparedness

Plan, Prepare, Practice for Your Safety

Be sure to include your AAC user in this process. Part of knowing what to do in the event of an emergency or disaster is understanding the plan. Being part of the preparation can also help them manage their emotions. Doing this together gives everyone an opportunity to ask questions, suggest ideas, and include items/preferences that are important to them. Think now about how to make the experience as safe and comfortable for all.

PLAN	
YES	Checklist of Items To Do
	Do you have a support team? Does everyone know what to do?
	Do you have an evacuation plan? For home and school or work?
	Do you have a "Go Bag" packed? <i>See PREPARE section below.</i>
	Do you have a list of frequently used items to grab on your way out (e.g., keys, wallet/purse, phone + charger, etc.)?
	Do you have a "Stay Box" packed? For home and work? (Are you prepared to shelter in place for 7 days?) <i>See PREPARE section below.</i>
	Do you have a plan for specialty medical, feeding, care, and communication supplies?
	Do you have a laminated paper communication display with you at all times ?
	Do you have written instructions (also laminated) about how to communicate with you? Is it with you at all times ?
	Do you have a copy of important health information (critical medical information , insurance card, prescriptions, etc.) in a waterproof bag with you at all times ?
	Do you have " in case of emergency " (ICE) set up on your phone?
	Does your AAC user know what to do in an emergency? Do they have access to words and messages allowing them to communicate about the emergency? Do they know personal and emergency information (own address, phone number(s) for contacts, etc.)?
	Have you reviewed and updated your plan within the last 4 months?

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PREPARE	
YES	Checklist of Items To Do <i>Pack your "Go Bag", "Stay Box" (home and work), and items to always have with you!</i>
	Have you labeled all equipment (things get lost easily in shelters)?
	Do you have apps (e.g., Red Cross, FEMA) and/or a battery-operated radio (with batteries) to stay informed?
	Do you have a plan to charge/power equipment and devices (e.g., generator, power banks)?
	Do you have important documents in a binder or folder (stored in a waterproof container)? Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies of insurance and identification ○ Copies of birth certificates ○ Emergency contact list ○ Supplies checklist ○ List of all prescriptions ○ Important medical information / Personal Emergency Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remember allergies, medications, likes/dislikes, etc. ○ Information on how to replace your assistive technology equipment (including AAC devices) that gets damaged or lost. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include information such as serial numbers, names and vendors of all items ○ Photos of family and pets ○ Other papers important to you
	Do you have any other needed written instructions (feeding, lifting, special care needs, etc.)?
	Do you have a list of all communication equipment you will need to take with you? Including all accessories?
	Do you have a backup copy of the AAC system packed?
	Do you have a list of other needed equipment you will need (e.g., feeding, medical, etc.)?
	Do you have a printed map with evacuation routes marked?
	Do you have cash (small bills) in your "Go Bag"?
	Do you have flashlight(s) and batteries?
	Do you have first aid supplies?

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	Do you have clothes packed (think about a variety of seasonal needs)?
	Have you considered toiletries/hygiene items?
	Have you considering cleaning/sanitizing needs?
	Have you considered sensory/comfort items?
	Do you have food and water to shelter in place for at least several days?
	Have you connected with your local fire and police to let them know someone has special consideration?
	Have you registered with your local emergency services (if possible)?
	Have you registered with your electricity company regarding special power needs?
PRACTICE	
YES	Checklist of Items To Do
	Have you run through your plan to work out the kinks?
	Have you practiced recently so that everyone remembers what to do and how to do it?

For more information and resources to help you prepare, visit:
<https://nwacs.info/aac-and-emergency-preparedness>

For residents of the US and its territories:

If you lose some or all of an AAC user's communication tools and technology in a disaster, reach out to the **USSAAC AAC Disaster Relief Project** to see how they can help replace lost or damaged items. Email the committee at disasterrelief@ussaac.org. Provide relevant information and your contact information so they can respond to learn more about your needs.