



Disaster Preparedness for Elders



ADMINISTRATION ON AGING: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE

This opening chapter sets the framework, for the presentation of disaster related materials to all involved at any level in the aging and emergency management networks. Though no two disasters are ever alike, the "system" of response must remain as uniform and consistent as possible to ensure that, regardless of where you work or to whom you report, all efforts complement rather than conflict with one another. The following information facilitates that system.

Chapter I: A Systems Approach to Disaster Preparedness for the Elderly

In the mid-1990s, the Administration on Aging (AoA) engaged in an intensive training effort to help the Aging Network prepare for and cope with care of the elderly in a disaster event. Since that time, the network has managed various kinds of disasters – hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, fires, winter storms, heat emergencies, and, most recently, terrorist activities. Many in the network have gained considerable expertise in meeting the demands of the elderly during such events; however, because staff changes occur and aging programs change over time, we must now review and renew our disaster preparedness efforts. Furthermore, human services programs have become more sophisticated and now rely heavily on technology for information and communication.

As a part of the training effort, AoA developed and widely disseminated the *Disaster Preparedness Manual*, also known as the *Red Manual*, to the Aging Network.

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In recent months, experienced national disaster and Aging Network experts have advised that AoA's technical assistance materials need to be updated to include new information about emergency preparedness. Since new information becomes available almost daily, it was decided that the *Red Manual* should be augmented with information from a variety of sources. Consequently, the FY 2004 disaster assistance materials are a combination of new AoA materials along with information from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross, the National Organization on Disability, and others. The materials contain many references to help people obtain more extensive information about specific elements of emergency preparedness.



The focus of the new technical assistance materials is a “systems” approach, because effective disaster preparedness and response is dependent upon a number of service delivery systems coming together for a common purpose.

These materials are designed to be of use to all members of the Aging Network, despite geographic differences and varying emergency management needs and approaches. They can serve as a checkpoint for covering essential areas of preparedness. Regardless of the cause of an emergency event, basic elements of every emergency preparedness effort and disaster response are universal.

When a Disaster Occurs

In the immediate moments after an event occurs, a host of activities begin in response to the event's consequences. The first responders, who include the police, fire departments, and medical personnel, are first to arrive at the site of the disaster and a command center is soon established. Almost simultaneously, media coverage begins. Thoughtful communications strategies with the media can help reduce panic and anxiety as well as convey useful information to those in harm's way.

Emergencies and disasters are now categorized as three types of events:

- NATURAL: hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other such events;
- MAN-MADE: large fires, accidents, explosions, and terrorist attacks; and

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- TECHNOLOGICAL: utility and IT failures.

Emergency management is based upon what is referred to as the “life-cycle” of the disaster situation. The five phases of disaster event response are:

- AWARENESS: educating businesses, communities, and individuals about safety precautions that can be taken to prevent avoidable disasters and improve emergency detection;
- PREVENTION: averting loss of life and property by improving construction, reducing hazard sites, and improving land use;
- PREPAREDNESS: having plans for saving lives, lessening the impact of an emergency, and facilitating response and recovery; educating the public about what they can do; evacuating designated persons and sheltering them until the threat passes;
- RESPONSE: activation of the emergency operations plan and first responders; and
- RECOVERY: damage assessment, financial assistance, outreach, ongoing care, and restoration of a functioning community.

The phases of greatest concern to the Aging Network are the preparedness, response, and recovery phases. In these stages, aging personnel need to join forces with emergency personnel to ensure the safety and ongoing care of elderly persons.

Established partnerships between the Aging Network and emergency personnel prior to a disaster facilitate execution of these phases. More specifically, it is critically important to have coordinated procedures for protecting human life already established with emergency response teams before an emergency occurs. Communication of vital information is extremely important in order to educate, inform, and locate citizens who have been identified as needing assistance.

When the President declares these disaster areas eligible for assistance, FEMA coordinates the federal response. FEMA and the Small Business Administration (SBA) respond with grants and loans that help disaster victims recover. Congress addressed disaster response for older persons in the OAA, authorizing the AoA to provide limited financial assistance for services through State Units on Aging (SUAs) (see Chapter VIII to apply for a Disaster Assistance Grant under the OAA).

When a disaster strikes, AoA’s National Disaster Preparedness and Response Office coordinates activities with FEMA and state emergency management agencies and works closely with private disaster response organizations, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Together, these organizations exchange information on

the impact of the disaster on older persons in their communities. AoA's national aging service system is poised to assist older persons, providing critical support, such as meals and transportation, information about temporary housing, and other important services upon which frail older adults often rely.

Special Needs of Older Disaster Victims

AoA responds to the special needs of older disaster victims. Older people often have difficulty obtaining necessary assistance because of progressive physical and mental impairments and other frailties that often accompany aging. Many older people who live on limited incomes, and sometimes alone, often find it impossible to recover from disasters without special federal assistance services. Older persons:

- Are often slower to register for disaster assistance and, once they are registered, may not follow through and complete the necessary applications to obtain assistance;
- May be at higher nutritional risk in the aftermath of a disaster and may forget to take necessary medications;
- Are often targeted by fraudulent contractors and “con men” who financially exploit victims following a disaster; and
- May be susceptible to physical and mental abuse as family stresses increase in later stages of the disaster.

Because of these and other potential problems, funds and support services are prioritized to help identify and assist older persons in registering and applying for loans and to link older people to federal, state, or local disaster advocacy services. If additional funds are available, other services may be provided to fill “gaps” or to strengthen local service delivery systems.

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This chapter is intended to provide fundamental guidance on the principles of emergency management for personnel from the local service provider network, Native American tribal organizations, Area Agencies on Aging, and State Units on Aging. An understanding of this chapter will enable those responsible for meeting the emergency needs of elder clients to coordinate their response with their counterparts within corresponding offices of emergency management.

Chapter II: Overview of Emergency Management Systems

The Aging Services Network – which includes the AoA, Native American tribal organizations, SUAs, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and local service providers – has a vital role in delivering assistance and resources to seniors during federal disasters and emergencies. Because senior populations pose special challenges for emergency management, it is imperative that the Aging Services Network and the entities comprising the federal, state, and local emergency management systems work hand-in-hand in all phases of disaster. Relationship-building between the Aging Services Network and emergency managers, combined with planning and open communication pre-disaster, will facilitate disaster responses that are better informed and include all sectors of the community. Forging partnerships with other federal, state, and local emergency managers prior to the incidence of disasters, will allow the agencies within the Aging Services Network to deliver efficient, timely, and consistent response and recovery services when a disaster occurs.

To achieve a well coordinated system of disaster and emergency response, every administrator of an aging program should familiarize him/herself with key components of emergency management, such as the Incident Command System

(ICS) used by FEMA, local fire departments, and other first responders (see note). Every administrator should also understand the Emergency Services Functions System (ESFs) utilized by FEMA in disasters. (See footnote 2 under Preparedness later in this chapter.)



Please Note: As of March 2003, President Bush consolidated several federal agencies to create the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). FEMA became the Emergency Preparedness and Response Division (EPR). Because the acronym FEMA is well-established in the Aging Network, this document continues to use that term.

This primer provides an overview of the emergency management system in the United States. It covers all five phases of emergency management, placing a special emphasis on preparedness.

Emergency Management Structure

The emergency management system is comprised of federal, state, and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and other private sector entities. To coordinate these efforts, offices of emergency management are established at the federal, state, and local levels. Aging networks and agencies should work hand-in-hand with their corresponding offices of emergency management to ensure that senior issues are addressed during all phases of disaster.

Local Offices of Emergency Management (OEM)

Local offices of emergency management (OEM) differ among jurisdictions. There may be offices at the town, city, or county level that reside within public safety agencies (i.e. fire department or law enforcement). Alternatively, there may be a separate agency that reports to the executive or governing body of that locality (to find local offices, contact a local public safety agency or state office of emergency management).

Disaster relief begins and ends at the local level. Each local jurisdiction has plans in place to deal with an assortment of emergencies including fire, property destruction, hazardous materials incidents, terrorist attack, and medical emergencies. Some jurisdictions have stronger, more practiced plans than others. It is the responsibility of the OEMs to understand how different disasters will affect local jurisdictions. This requires an intimate knowledge of the locality's industry, public works, transportation, infrastructure, special populations, socio-economic levels, hazard vulnerabilities, capabilities, resources, etc. Some of the principal responsibilities of the local office of emergency management are to:

- Coordinate the disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts of public and private entities within a locality;
- Initiate and support collaborative disaster planning initiatives and develop a comprehensive disaster plan;
- Provide opportunities for training, drills, and other exercises that test the capabilities of the jurisdiction;
- Develop and implement various public disaster preparedness and education programs;
- Establish communication systems among agencies to ensure effective and reliable means for communicating; and
- Maintain a comprehensive inventory of local resources and contacts.

An Example of How AAAs and Local Service Providers Work Together with Local Emergency Management



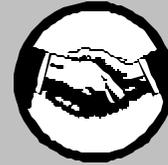
Extreme cold or heat can create dangerous conditions for citizens, especially seniors. Emergency management officials will often take measures to reduce risks, provide tips for keeping cool/warm, and provide information about cold or heat-related illnesses. Through the AAAs and local service providers, this information can reach seniors who often have pre-existing conditions that make them especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures. Additionally, officials often look to communities for assistance, often by opening pre-existing air-conditioned/heated centers within the community during peak hours. Officials can work through the AAAs to ensure that local service providers open air-conditioned senior centers to the public and extend hours of operation.

State Offices of Emergency Management (OEM)

Each state has an OEM that works closely with FEMA and the other local offices within the state. The state office is critical to the region in that it assists in the declaration of a state disaster or request for a presidential declaration. The OEM works with the governor, who is responsible for making a state declaration and forwarding a request to the federal government. Additionally, the primary responsibilities of the state OEM are to:

- Coordinate state emergency programs, usually with a range of programs operating in a variety of state agencies;
- Develop a comprehensive state plan for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery;
- Ensure state resources are in place to support local entities in all phases of emergency management;
- Serve as a link between local offices of emergency management and FEMA;
- Apply, monitor, and disseminate financial assistance from the federal government; and
- Carry out statewide emergency management activities.

An Example of How SUAs and State Emergency Management Offices Work Together



During disasters in which the state office of emergency management is involved, such as a major power outage throughout the state, the SUA and state emergency management officials should work closely to coordinate resources in order to support localities. While working with state officials, the SUAs could communicate information from the state to localities, and help direct the emergency response by gathering and disseminating critical information from the AAAs. This might include information on the impact of the disaster on local service delivery agencies, identification of isolated, homebound, or electrically dependent clients, as well as the functionality of local Meals on Wheels or other food delivery services.



FEMA provides a list of all state offices of emergency management at www.fema.gov/about/contact/statedr.shtm. This site will provide more information about a state's emergency management office.

Federal Offices of Emergency Management (FEMA)

The federal government provides assistance to states to supplement their resources. FEMA assistance may take the form of fiscal support, technical assistance, or information about materials, personnel resources, and research. Some of its primary responsibilities are to:

- Gather information from a state about impacted localities and inform the President about disaster declarations;
- Develop and, when necessary, activate the *Federal Response Plan* that details how federal agencies coordinate and mobilize resources when a presidential declaration is issued;
- Promote emergency management initiatives in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and prevention throughout the country;
- Develop training materials and information for state and local entities; and
- Advocate and allocate funding for state and local offices of emergency management.

An Example of How AoA and FEMA Work Together



As part of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), AoA will work within the *Federal Response Plan* ESF #8 and help to support other functions as necessary. An example of this would be following a terrorist attack. AoA will work with SUAs, Native American tribal organizations, and AAAs to define, present, and prioritize the needs of the impacted elderly to FEMA. This should ensure a quick release of funds to local services providers. At the local level, AoA agencies will work with more than one ESF, most likely ESF 6, 8, and 11, and in some jurisdictions agencies will work with the optional ESFs 14 and 15.

Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM)

Although offices of emergency management differ from state-to-state and locality-to-locality, they are all based on broad concepts that are defined primarily by FEMA. FEMA's approach, which is adapted at the state and local levels, is termed comprehensive emergency management (CEM). CEM is accomplished by establishing partnerships with all levels of government and the private sector. These partnerships consider all types of disasters and their impacts through organized analysis, planning, decision-making, and assignment of available resources to prepare for, respond to, mitigate, and recover from the effects of all hazards.

Disasters are usually grouped in the following categories:

- NATURAL: hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, volcano eruptions, wildfires, snow/ice storms, and extreme heat;
- MAN-MADE: large fires, hazardous material spills, explosions, major transportation accidents, terrorist events, use of weapons of mass destruction, and civil unrest; and
- TECHNOLOGICAL (often a subset of natural or man-made disasters): utility failures, IT failures, etc.

Phases of Emergency Management: Life-cycle of Disasters

To help agencies understand the functions of emergency and disaster management, FEMA established five phases of emergency management based on a "life-cycle" concept of disasters, which has since been adapted by state and local emergency management authorities. A disaster is described as a cycle, because its phases may flow into each other with no definitive beginning or endpoint. These five phases are described below:



Awareness

In order to prepare and respond effectively to an emergency situation, citizens need to be informed about the potential hazards and dangers of their geographic area and learn about the best responses to these conditions. Different parts of the country face unique climate extremes (e.g. floods, forest fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, heavy snows, or extreme cold or warm temperatures). In order to prepare for these conditions, people need to find out what has happened in their area in the past and learn how survivors coped with the conditions.

Prevention

One goal of prevention is to avert loss of life and property from natural disasters. Traditionally, this is more structural in nature and includes such measures as zoning and land use controls to prevent occupation of high-hazard areas (the most common example is floodplain management), barrier construction to deflect disaster forces (such as levees for flooding or snow sheds on railroads or highways), building codes to improve disaster resistance of structures, and insurance to reduce the financial impact of disasters. At FEMA, the Mitigation Division administers the following nationwide, risk-reduction programs and congressionally authorized efforts:

- The National Dam Safety Program;
- The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program;
- The National Flood Insurance Program;

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- The National Hurricane Program;
- The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program;
- Flood Mitigation Assistance Program; and
- Pre-Disaster Mitigation authorized by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

There are some emergencies, such as chemical explosions and hazardous materials spills and fires that can also be prevented. Emergency management agencies try to prevent emergencies and disasters by educating businesses and the public on what to do to avert these types of events before they occur. Some prevention activities that have been instituted at the national level include public announcements designed to encourage the public to use smoke detectors, prevent forest fires, and safely use space heaters. The emergency response network should work with its partners to identify the types of hazardous materials that are most likely to confront seniors and design education activities specifically targeted to this population.

Preparedness

Preparedness consists of the following elements:

- **PLANNING:** Plans developed by emergency management at the federal, state, or local level describe how emergency response and recovery will be carried out among agencies and organizations. Plans establish specific roles and responsibilities and identify critical resources to emergency management (i.e. personnel, equipment, shelters, and transportation). Plans take into account highly vulnerable populations and infrastructure within a community.
- All levels of the Aging Network should work closely with their emergency management counterparts to integrate response and recovery mechanisms, especially those designed to meet the anticipated needs of senior citizens during disasters.
 - At the federal level, the *Federal Response Plan*,¹ developed and maintained by FEMA, outlines the actions of the federal government in response and recovery and details agency responsibilities. This is a good example of an integrated emergency management response plan. The *Federal Response Plan* designates Health and Human Services (the parent agency of AoA) as the

¹ The *Federal Response Plan (FRP)* outlines the roles and responsibilities of federal government agencies and other entities during a federally declared disaster. Information on the FRP can be accessed at www.fema.gov/rrr/frp.

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primary lead federal agency for ESF #8² and as a supportive agency for six other ESFs.

- Each state is responsible for producing and maintaining EOPs as well as local offices of emergency management. The SUAs should work with state OEM management to offer a coordinated approach to working with seniors during all phases of disaster.
- Local offices of emergency management also have integrated emergency response plans. AAAs should collaborate with first responders (i.e. fire department, law enforcement, and emergency management) in their respective jurisdictions during planning processes.
- Business continuity planning (BCP) is essential for any entity (i.e. business, agency, or organization) wishing to ensure a smooth transition.
- Between disaster response and recovery. In order to continue to provide critical services to clients in the aftermath of a disaster, service providers must be prepared for potential of damage to facilities, loss of equipment, and destruction of vital records. BCP ensures that organizations can continue to meet their core missions, even in an emergency, by preparing contingencies for and redundancies to its operations in advance.
- The U.S. Department of Education has worked in collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security and many state and local emergency management agencies to design a school emergencies plan. This outlines what should be done in case of emergencies for school personnel.
- Community plans have also been developed by many local homeownership and community groups. These plans outline emergency procedures, including local meeting places, for the public. It is imperative that the Aging Network ensures that community plans also include special procedures to meet the needs of seniors.

² There are 12 Emergency Services Functions (ESFs) identified in the *Federal Response Plan* (Resource E). These functions group federal agencies into 12 types of assistance that a state is most likely to need during disaster response. The roles and responsibilities of these functions are detailed in the *Federal Response Plan*.

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- **TRAINING:** FEMA's national emergency training center provides opportunities for emergency managers, firefighters, elected officials, and other emergency personnel to take classes in many aspects of emergency management. Courses offer instruction on the design of emergency plans, emergency exercises, evaluation of building and community features that make them vulnerable to disasters, and all aspects of the emergency management. The center also provides special workshops and seminars for citizens. Similar courses are also offered by many states. The Aging Services Network can collaborate with the national center and state programs to develop training specifically tailored to the needs of seniors.
- **EXERCISES:** Plans do not work if they are not tested before they are put into practice. Exercises can range from discussions of specific problems to full-scale practice of procedures to be followed during a disaster scenario. Exercises bring together all emergency personnel, agencies, and, in some cases, community members that would respond and be affected in a real disaster. Government agencies, businesses, communities, and schools are encouraged to conduct drills to test the feasibility of their plans. Because seniors often experience difficulties with mobility, it is especially important for the network to help emergency management agencies ensure that their plans address the unique circumstances and needs of seniors.
- **INFORMATION:** It is imperative for emergency management agencies to provide information about what should be done if an emergency arises. The Aging Network should work with federal, state, and local organizations to make available information about special precautions and emergency procedures for seniors. By providing specific information about how seniors can prepare for disasters, the network can reduce loss of life and property.

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- **COMMUNITY AND FAMILY PREPAREDNESS:** Communities, individuals, and families can be better prepared for disasters by educating themselves and taking steps to have essential supplies, contact lists, etc. set aside prior to a disaster. FEMA, other federal agencies, and national emergency organizations have developed tools to help communities, individuals, and schools prepare themselves to function during an emergency before assistance can be provided.
 - All levels of the Aging Services Network should promote disaster preparedness and education among personnel. Remember that the quicker personnel can recover, the quicker they can help clients in need.
 - AAAs can provide information to local service agencies that can promote disaster preparedness and education for both personnel and clients.

Response

During this phase, the role of emergency management is to alert and notify both the public and partner agencies (when possible), protect citizens and property, provide for public welfare, and restore critical services. The emergency management players use key resources and activate the emergency plans during the onset, impact, and immediate restoration of critical services in the aftermath of a disaster.

Large disasters often overwhelm the capacity of the impacted locality, so state, and possibly federal, resources supplement the response of local emergency management agencies and volunteer organizations. In addition to local emergency first responders, non-government relief agencies (i.e. American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.) have a role and are usually on-scene to assist with feeding and sheltering immediately following a disaster. Some examples of activities that occur during response include:



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- Activating the emergency operations plan;
- Providing emergency rescue and medical care, fire fighting, and urban search and rescue;
- Providing emergency infrastructure protection and recovery of lifeline services (i.e. restoring electric power and other major utilities);
- Activating the emergency operations center;
- Evacuating impacted or threatened populations;
- Opening shelters and provision of mass care; and
- Managing fatalities.

Recovery

In this phase, actions are taken after the immediate impact of the disaster has passed. The goal of recovery is to stabilize a community and to restore some semblance of normalcy. This phase can often last years after a disaster. Although different disasters call for different types of recovery services, typical recovery actions include:

- Disaster debris cleanup;
- Damage assessment;
- Coordination and dissemination of financial assistance to individuals and governments;
- Rebuilding of roads, bridges, and key facilities;
- Sustained mass care for displaced human and animal populations;
- Permanent relocation services;
- Burial of displaced human remains;
- Full restoration of lifeline services;
- Mental health and pastoral care;
- Volunteer coordination and management; and
- Community outreach campaigns to provide information and ensure access to services for those affected by the disaster.

Emergency Escalation and the Declaration Process

Depending on the magnitude of the incident, a disaster situation can escalate from the local to the state or federal levels. The larger the scope of the emergency, the more resources are required to meet ensuing needs. When a disaster occurs, first responders (i.e. fire, police, and emergency medical teams), and any additional resources, are deployed using the incident command system (ICS).

The ICS is a universally accepted command and control system initiated at the disaster site. It establishes an incident commander and a hierarchy of support staff needed to deal with the situation. Using principles of communication, coordination, collaboration, and cooperation, all emergency personnel immediately know their roles and responsibilities in the hierarchy and to whom they are to report. These roles are often outlined within the emergency plans before the disaster occurs. Generally, resource allocation and mobilization are handled in the field at the disaster site; however, during large incidents or disasters, the local emergency management agency may open an emergency operations center (EOC)³ to facilitate coordination and communication. The EOC also utilizes the ICS.

When the local emergency management system is overwhelmed and resources are limited, the locality will often reach out to regional partners and/or to the state office of emergency management to request assistance. The governor may decide to declare a state emergency in order to release state resources (i.e. personnel, equipment, and funding) to the impacted locality. This decision is based on damage and needs assessment that measures the impact of the disaster on individuals, public facilities, and infrastructure. In some instances, where the need for state support is obvious, the release of resources may be instantaneous. In cases where the impact is marginal, it may take several weeks or months for the local jurisdiction to “prove” need to the state.

When a disaster overwhelms the capabilities of the state, the provisions of the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act* are implemented, and the governor, as mandated by the Act, must submit a request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration so that federal resources can be released. At times, the request may precede documentation (as is the case in a catastrophic disaster), but ultimately the

³ This is an operations center situated away from the disaster site staffed by critical government agencies and other select entities to enhance coordination, communication, and decision-making among agencies to support the response in the field. Some jurisdictions are equipped with state of the art EOCs with advanced communications, telecommunications, mapping capabilities, while others may have only the basics – a phone, radios, and a television.

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governor will need to provide a preliminary damage assessment (PDA) that documents the severity and magnitude of the events. Additionally, the State Emergency Plan must be activated; the nature and amount of state and local resources committed, or the amount that is expected to be needed to alleviate the impact of the disaster, must be described. An estimate of the type and amount of assistance needed under the *Stafford Act* must also be provided.

To make a case for a presidential declaration, the local and state emergency management will work with other entities to measure the impact. For instance, the American Red Cross will often provide the local or state emergency management agency with a damage assessment of residences that have been impacted and an estimate of recovery costs.

Based on the governor's request, the President may declare that a major disaster or emergency exists, thus activating those federal programs that are designated to assist in the response and recovery effort. The declaration process can be instantaneous (e.g. September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks) or could take several months or weeks. In order to find out the status of the disaster, groups must work with emergency management officials. Federal disaster assistance available under a major disaster declaration falls into three general categories:

- **INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE:** aid to individuals, families, and business owners. Individuals can access FEMA individual assistance through an 800 number that FEMA publishes after a disaster occurs. Eligibility requirements will be released at the time of the disaster. In addition to FEMA assistance, non-profit relief organizations and other governmental agencies may also be providing assistance to those impacted.
- **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE:** aid to public, and certain private non-profit entities, for specified emergency services and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged public facilities. Agencies involved in the response to or recovery from a disaster are eligible for reimbursement of the costs caused by the disaster. In order to obtain this assistance, it is necessary for agencies to have a written record and to keep track of expenditures, hours worked, etc. Agencies should work with emergency management officials to determine what types of expenditures should be tracked and how to best track them.
- **MITIGATION ASSISTANCE:** aid to improve infrastructure conditions that will lessen the impact of a similar disaster in the future.

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As service providers, it is critical to learn the specifics of the FEMA programs so that clients can be instructed on how to attain assistance after being impacted by a disaster. FEMA assistance may not be adequate for full recovery, so often the non-profit agencies and organizations within the community will work together to meet remaining needs and provide additional assistance.

Conclusion

This primer serves as an introduction to and brief overview of the complex emergency management system within the United States. It also shows how developing relationships with emergency management officials now will allow for better communication and collaboration when a disaster occurs. In turn, these relationships enable service providers to meet the needs of their clients in more effective ways.



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This chapter provides professional emergency managers, fire chiefs, and lay volunteers with key information on the community-based services found in the local aging network. Having read this chapter, emergency responders should have a grasp of the capabilities and availability of life-sustaining services in the Aging Network in times of disaster.

Chapter III: Overview of the Aging Network

The services system for the aging in each state is also a rich source of assistance in times of disaster – for helping older persons and caregivers respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters. In order to take full advantage of the capacity of the services system, it is critical to involve the SUA and/or AAA in your community in disaster planning.

The Older Americans Act

The passage of the OAA in 1965 by the U.S. Congress affirmed our nation's high sense of commitment to the well-being of older citizens. The goal of the OAA is to remove barriers to economic and personal independence and to ensure the availability of appropriate services for those older individuals who need them. More specifically, the OAA embraces the objective of ensuring older Americans the following:

- Adequate income;
- Best possible physical and mental health;
- Suitable housing;

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- Full restorative services for those who require institutional care, and a comprehensive array of community-based long-term care services to sustain older people at home;
- Opportunity for employment;
- Retirement in health, honor, and dignity;
- Civic, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities;
- Community services that provide a continuum of care for the vulnerable elderly;
- Benefits from research; and
- Freedom to plan and manage their lives.

While all older Americans may receive services, the OAA targets those individuals who are in greatest economic and social need – low-income, isolated – and those older persons disadvantaged by social or health disparities.

Implementing the OAA

To implement these objectives, the OAA created structures at the local, state, and federal levels. Taken together, the infrastructure is often referred to as the National Aging Services Network.



The goal of the Aging Network is to provide maximum opportunities for older people to live independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in their own homes and communities as long as possible and to protect their rights and ensure them the benefits guaranteed under law.

Today, the OAA Network on Aging includes the AoA, a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 56 SUAs – one in each state and territory; 655 AAAs – sub-state agencies designated by the state agency for local planning and funding of needed aging services; 243 Native American tribal organizations; over 29,000 local

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service provider organizations, and millions of volunteers who provide supportive, nutritional, and elder rights services to more than 7 million older Americans each year.

United States Administration on Aging (AoA)

The AoA is the federal government agency that administers the OAA and provides funding to the states for OAA services for persons age 60 and over. AoA also serves as the federal focal point and advocate agency for older persons and their concerns. In this role, AoA works to heighten awareness among other federal agencies, organizations, groups, and the public about the valuable contributions that older Americans make to the nation. AoA also advocates for the needs of vulnerable older people. Through information and referral and outreach efforts at the community level, AoA seeks to educate older people and their caregivers about the benefits and services available to help them.

State Units on Aging (SUAs)

SUAs are agencies of state and territorial governments designated by governors and state legislatures to administer, manage, design and advocate for benefits, programs, and services for the elderly and their families and, in many states, for adults with physical disabilities.



The term "state unit on aging" is a general term: the specific title and organization of the governmental unit will vary from state to state and may be called a department, office, bureau, commission, council, or board for the elderly, seniors, aging, older adults, and/or adults with physical disabilities.

These state government agencies all share a common agenda of providing the opportunities and supports for older persons to live independent, meaningful, productive, dignified lives, and maintain close family and community ties. SUAs administer many federal and state-funded service programs for older persons and their caregivers, including the OAA.

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The AoA awards funds for Title III and VII to the SUAs. This funding is allocated to each SUA through a formula grant based on the number of older persons residing in the state and is distributed in order to plan, develop, and coordinate systems of supportive in-home and community-based services. Most states are divided into planning and service areas (PSAs), allowing programs to be effectively developed and targeted to meet the unique needs of the elderly residing in that area.

Under Title VI, grant awards are directly made to 225 tribal and Native American organizations representing 300 Native American Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian tribal organizations to provide supportive and nutrition services.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)

AAAs are designated by the SUA and play a pivotal role in assessing community needs and developing programs that respond to those needs. These agencies also act as advocates for improved services for older persons and their families. AAAs often serve as portals to care, assessing multiple service needs, determining eligibility, authorizing or purchasing services, and monitoring the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of services. AAAs provide direct services and contract with local providers to furnish other services in the community.

AAAs receive funds from the SUAs to plan, develop, coordinate, and arrange for services in each PSA. Some AAAs may serve the needs of elderly people living in a number of counties, while other AAAs may service the elderly living in a single county.

AAAs contract with some 27,000 public and private agencies and organizations nationwide for the provision of services.

The Aging Network and Emergency Assistance

Since 1965, a broad range of programs and services has evolved from the efforts of the Aging Network. Below are highlights of some of the programs or services that the disaster preparedness community may wish to explore with aging agencies in planning for natural disasters or threats of terrorism.

- INFORMATION & REFERRAL/ ASSISTANCE SERVICES (I&R/A): Mandated under the *Older Americans Act (OAA)*, approximately 2000 I&R/A services, operating in every community across the country, handle over 13 million information and assistance

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service contacts each year. I&R/As assess the needs of individuals, identify the most appropriate services to address those needs, and link callers to agencies that provide needed services. They maintain extensive databases of local service providers and conduct ongoing outreach to older persons and their families. The local I&R/A should be considered a potential partner for educating older persons and their caregivers about personal preparation for potential disasters. Furthermore, during and following a disaster, I&R/As are a critical referral center for routing older persons and caregivers to available shelters, medical supports, food distribution centers, mental health services, and other community resources.

- **NUTRITION PROGRAM:** The congregate or group meals program serves over 1.7 million older persons annually. The program also provides nutrition education, health screening, and counseling services. Among the locations for delivery of these meals are senior centers and churches. The congregate nutrition sites can be an important resource for providing meals for seniors after a disaster.
- **IN-HOME SERVICES PROGRAM:** During a disaster, these programs are a critical link to homebound elders who may require evacuation and a range of services following the emergency. The programs also have the capacity to educate homebound older persons about how to prepare for various potential disasters.



Over 3 million homebound older persons receive in-home supportive services each year. In addition, home-delivered meals are provided to over 1 million older persons annually.

- **SENIOR CENTERS:** Thousands of senior centers across the country operate a broad range of programs for older persons, including educational programs that could incorporate disaster/ terrorism preparedness. Significant portions of senior centers maintain their own facilities, often with kitchens. Consequently, some may have the capacity to provide food and/or shelter during a disaster, as well as follow-up services after the crisis has passed.
- **TRANSPORTATION:** The Aging Network offers a variety of transportation options for older persons that could be of critical importance during a disaster. Senior vans,

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some of which have wheelchair lifts, are available in many areas, and could be used to transport not only seniors, but also other persons with health or mobility problems. Some local aging agencies also engage volunteer drivers who may serve as resources for evacuation during a disaster and transport following the disaster.

VOLUNTEERS: The OAA programs have over 500,000 volunteers assisting in the delivery of services across the country. These volunteers could be a valuable resource for providing services both during and following a disaster.

These are only some of the programs, services, and resources that the services system for the aging can bring to bear in addressing a disaster. Through dialogue and discussions between the emergency preparedness and aging communities, a well-conceived plan can be designed – one that ensures both the well-being of older persons during a disaster and the effective utilization of the resources of the services system for the broader community.



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This chapter is written to and for the service provider in the Aging Network. The central theme of this text is that plans will fail if you fail to plan. Applying the information in this chapter will enhance agencies' capacities to respond to disasters, and to do so faster and better than ever before.

Chapter IV: Emergency Assistance Preparation for Service Providers

Community Response by the Aging Network

The most crucial part of a successful emergency response system is what happens in the community where a catastrophe strikes. As the past few years have shown, a disaster event can occur at any time or any place. It is difficult to make preparations in advance because every event is different and, much of the time, completely unexpected. Planning and training staff and seniors can help relieve anxiety, pain, and suffering, and can save lives.

SUAs, tribal organizations, AAAs and aging service providers must work with the state and local offices of emergency preparedness, the American Red Cross, the state health department and community health care providers and emergency services personnel (fire, police and emergency rooms) to know each other and to learn how they can work together to support each other's efforts. Lack of communication and working relationships can be one of the biggest barriers to successful emergency response.

This chapter is devoted to ways the Aging Network at the community level can be better prepared to confront emergency events. There are recommendations for AAAs

and service provider preparedness that can be adapted to meet local needs and to help ensure that various aspects of preparedness have been addressed.

Preparing for an Emergency or Disaster

Developing plans and procedures for responding to emergencies should involve those agencies and organizations that will become part of the emergency response network. Localities may have different names for some of these agencies, organizations, and committees, but all types of community resources (e.g. public schools, hospitals, faith-based and civic organizations, restaurants, retailers) should be considered potential partners for assistance in times of disaster. The procedures listed below should be included in a comprehensive plan to address the emergency needs of older adults.



It is important that every AAA and OAA Service Provider be involved in the development and implementation of county comprehensive emergency management plans (CEMP). This will enable the county to include aging programs in claims for federal reimbursement in the event a national disaster is declared.

- **DEVELOP A PHONE TREE:** for immediate communication with staff members (See Chapter V);
- **EDUCATE AND TRAIN AAA AND SERVICE PROGRAM STAFF:** including volunteers, to fulfill designated responsibilities during an emergency. General emergency preparedness plans and procedures for potential disasters should be reviewed, including chemical spills, power outage/other utility problems, storms, civil disturbances, earthquakes, fires, floods, nuclear problems, bomb threats, bioterrorism, and ecological disasters;
- **EDUCATE COMMUNITY AGENCIES:** of the special needs of older adults and appropriate responses during an emergency through staff participation on local emergency planning committees and in Critical Incident Command training;
- **CONDUCT TRAINING EVENTS FOR SENIORS:** regarding emergency preparedness at congregate dining, senior centers, and other community events;

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- **DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A LIST OF OLDER PERSONS:** who may be at risk during an emergency in cooperation with the local office of emergency management (OEM) and local fire departments (see the next segment, “Identify Individuals at High-Risk and With Special Needs”);
- **COOPERATE WITH THE OEM:** in periodic testing, evaluating, and updating of local emergency disaster operations plans;
- **CREATE SECURE PHOTO ID SYSTEM:** to identify service personnel and enable service providers to access their offices, service delivery sites and clients who need help. Coordinate plans with local police and community service personnel, including health care workers and trained volunteers;
- **PARTICIPATE IN EMERGENCY PREVENTION OR MITIGATION PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS:** as requested and/or required by the SUA, state and local OEM, etc.;
- **DEVELOP, PERIODICALLY UPDATE, AND PRACTICE EMERGENCY PLANS AND PROCEDURES:** AAAs should have their own plans, which may include select service providers. In densely populated areas, each contractor or grantee should its own plan that interfaces with the AAA plan. In addition, the AAA plan should interface with the SUA plan. The plan and procedures should identify or address the following:
 - Ways to work with first responders and emergency services to assist individuals with critical and immediate needs;
 - Maintenance of a list of volunteers who are willing and able to help in an emergency;
 - Maintenance of an up-to-date staff roster with contact information, current emergency procedures (manual);
 - Ways to keep stocked emergency first aid kits and emergency services kits at all service program sites. Emergency kits include: flashlights, batteries, battery-operated radio, staff name badges cleaning supplies, and rubber gloves;
 - Methods of encouraging staff and senior involvement in developing creative solutions for problem solving, and gaining their commitment and understanding of innovative ways to address emergencies; and
 - Inclusion of emergency planning in requests for proposals and contract solicitations (including information and assistance), meal and transportation providers.
- **HAVE A BACK-UP SYSTEM FOR COMPUTER FILES:** to ensure that essential computer files are saved on a regular basis and copies are kept in more than one location;

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- PLAN FUND RAISING EVENTS: to fund the purchase of emergency supplies and equipment; and
- PURCHASE BUSINESS DISRUPTION INSURANCE.

Identify Individuals at High-Risk and With Special Needs

High-risk older adults are those who lack the ability to manage activities of daily living without assistance and who lack families, friends, and neighbors who can and will assist when an emergency occurs. Those older persons identified as high-risk should be given priority in an emergency situation. Their immediate medical needs and food supply should quickly be assessed and addressed.

- Identify those with need special assistance needs ahead of time, including older persons who are isolated or homebound. Give thought to the needs of older persons residing in board and care facilities, senior housing units, nursing homes, and other special care facilities. Maintain emergency contact, caregiver designee, or physician information in all participant files;
- Be attentive to individuals who are visually impaired and/or deaf or who have mobility or mental health needs;
- Give special consideration to medication-dependent people, such as those with heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, end-stage renal disease, and other conditions. Be aware that individuals with mental retardation or cognitive impairment may be unable to understand the emergency situation or could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react. Encourage seniors to keep current records of medications, doctors who care for them, and medical conditions. Seniors should always have at least a three-day supply of medications and food available in the home, as well contact information for emergency personnel;
- Develop contingency plans with local officials for moving people (including those in wheelchairs), emergency supplies, and medication. Advise local emergency preparedness organizations of senior transportation equipment that could be quickly mobilized. Devise ways to transport the less mobile using evacuation chairs, canes, walkers, and other supportive devices; and
- Alert OEM officials about optional service sites, including senior centers, congregate meal sites, and senior housing facilities, and inform OEM about service providers that could be mobilized quickly, utilizing the I&A system.

Responding to an Emergency or Disaster

During an emergency or disaster, the AAA and service provider must respond to meet the immediate needs of those affected. Most often, the AAA or service program director will be first informed of an impending or potential emergency by the local OEM. When staff is alerted, they should immediately contact their director. In his/her absence, the next individual in the chain of command should be contacted and proceed as follows:

- Communicate with other departments and agencies through the local OEM to ensure coordination of status reports, resources available, and assistance needs;
- Relocate to a designated EOC as necessary;
- Institute evacuation and/or sheltering procedures as necessary (see next segment, “Implementing Evacuation or Sheltering Procedures”);
- Provide the EOC with information and support to assist older persons during the emergency;
- Maintain contact with staff via the service program director and others to provide direction, materials, and support as needed;
- Ensure that all congregate dining and senior centers, kitchens, program offices, and drivers are contacted;
- Ensure that staff contact high-risk older adults when there are service disruptions (e.g., no home-delivered meals) to check on their status. Any problems or concerns should be directed to appropriate staff;
- Contact the local OEM to obtain Ham, CB, and/or police department assistance in the event telephones are inoperable; and
- Provide other assistance as necessary:
 - Crisis counseling for older adults, caregivers, and staff;
 - Adequate shelter, toilet facilities, as well as water and food;
 - First aid and medical care to anyone who is hurt or becomes ill; and
 - Care to individual’s pet(s) as some persons may refuse to leave without them.

Implementing Evacuation or Sheltering Procedures

Written evacuation procedures must be in place and practiced regularly at all congregate dining and senior centers in the event of a fire or other emergency that

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requires a quick exit. Congregate dining centers, senior centers, and other facilities may become temporary shelters and/or food preparation sites, serving people of all ages. Plans for such assistance would consider the facility's capacity to become a shelter, the type of food items available (e.g. sandwiches, soups, beverages), and the capabilities of staff and volunteers.

The AAA and/or service program director (or designee) should serve as a liaison with the local OEM to determine if and when facilities should be evacuated and/or when sheltering in place is appropriate. This person would alert appropriate service program staff to implement these procedures.

Using a Congregate Dining or Senior Center for Sheltering

The AAA and/or service program director in coordination with the local OEM decides when sheltering in place is appropriate. This person (or designee) will contact appropriate staff when it is necessary to use a program facility as a shelter. Sheltering in place procedures include:

- Using these facilities as an emergency measure until the local on-scene commander (generally the Fire Chief) determines that older adults can be relocated to a Red Cross shelter or be taken home;
- Closing all windows and doors. In the event of a chemical or hazardous materials disaster, doors, and windows should be sealed immediately with masking or duct tape and doorways blocked with towels, rags, or blankets;
- Listening to the radio for further instructions; and
- Making individuals as comfortable as possible by providing meals and activities (i.e. cards, games, music, reading, etc.).

Providing Food Services in Emergencies

Upon notification from the local OEM and/or Red Cross, the AAA and/or nutrition program director notifies appropriate staff to keep open or re-open the kitchen(s). The nutrition program director (or designee) would then:

- Instruct staff to prepare sandwiches, soup, beverages, and other foods for shelter operations;

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- Maintain contact with the local OEM to determine when to serve food to emergency responders;
- Assist with other shelter operations as assigned by the director and/or local OEM;
- Maintain a log of foods and disposable items used, as well as a record of the number of meals provided and to whom; and
- Prepare necessary records for billing/reimbursement purposes and forward to appropriate agencies at the conclusion of the emergency.

AAAs and nutrition programs providers should have the following available for emergencies:

- A plan to provide food to the community (e.g. in emergency shelters, senior housing);
- Arrangements to use alternative food/catering services (e.g. restaurants, schools, hospitals, etc.);
- A plan for alternative cooler space. Food purveyors may provide freezer/cooler trucks for emergencies. Ask them for support and product discounts;
- Food and transport equipment on hand at kitchen(s), including hot and cold food carriers, disposable pans and utensils, Sterno®, hot blocks, and blue ice;
- Menus for one or more days using in-stock food items that do not require cooking or heating in the event of a power outage;
- At least three days worth of food on hand;
- Supplies such as water, portable radios, batteries, floodlights and flashlights, first aid kits;
- Program kitchens designated “A” to be a priority for electrical service;
- Dual power sources, such as gas and electric are helpful. Back-up generators or leasing arrangements may help in areas that have frequent problems; and
- Food suppliers that can respond in an emergency.

Implementing the Recovery Phase

The recovery phase offers sustained care to assist individuals in re-establishing their lives after the emergency or disaster has occurred. This phase also includes the work necessary to bring back the services that were disrupted during the emergency and

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provide support to staff, volunteers, and older adults, their families and caregivers. This phase would include:

- Outreach and advocacy to assist older adults in accessing services to address immediate, short, and long range needs;
- Agency communication with EOC members to identify needs and provide resources;
- Written reports and/or evaluations following the emergency. This may include:
 - Type/scope and location of the disaster/emergency,
 - Numbers of older adults impacted, or
 - Services provided, resources utilized, and phone log; and
- Notification of the SUA within 24 hours with the following information:
 - Number of older adults affected,
 - Services needed,
 - Description of services, and
 - Need for relocating services.

Preparing Older Adults for Emergencies

The American Red Cross and other volunteer agencies provide individuals with food, water, and clothing. People should listen to the radio or watch a local television station for the location of the nearest shelter or emergency facility. The AAA and/or Nutrition Program should ensure that:

- Older adults are knowledgeable about food and environmental safety when there are power outages, water supply disruptions, severe weather emergencies, and other threats to their safety;
- Older adults have information on the types of foods and other necessities to have on hand for emergencies; and
- Nutrition program participants identified as high-risk have shelf-stable meal packages available. A number of shelf-stable and/or frozen meals can be provided to high-risk congregate and homebound participants at least annually. Several food distributors package shelf-stable food items for every day or emergency use. Many food service companies prepare and assemble frozen meal packages. Also available are shelf-stable entrées with specially designed pouches to heat the food.

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Such products may be planned to meet OAA Nutrition Programs nutrition requirements. Sample shelf-stable meals follow:

- Beef ravioli, orange juice, vanilla pudding, whole wheat crackers, raisins, nonfat dry milk;
- Lasagna, high energy bars, pineapple-orange juice, applesauce, nonfat dry milk;
- Beef stew, fruit cup, orange juice, whole wheat crackers, nonfat dry milk;
- Chicken and dumplings, applesauce, grape juice, crackers, nonfat dry milk; and/or
- Ham and scalloped potatoes, fortified cereal, orange juice, applesauce, nonfat dry milk.

It is recommended that older adults store at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable food. Foods that require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking and little or no water are best. If foods must be heated, pack a can of Sterno®. These foods should be used and replaced frequently to keep the supply fresh. An emergency food supply may include:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables;
- Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water);
- Staples, such as sugar, salt, and pepper;
- High-energy foods, such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix;
- Vitamins, infant food, and food for special diets; and
- Comfort/stress foods, such as cookies, hard candy, instant coffee, and tea bags.

Store water in clean plastic containers. A 3-day supply of water should be available for every family member. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more. Store 1 gallon per day per family member (2 quarts for drinking and 2 quarts for food preparation/ sanitation). Replace water every 6 months. The hot water heater is an excellent source of water in emergencies. Turn off the power that heats the tank and let it cool. When water is needed, place a container underneath the tank, and open the drain valve on the bottom of the tank. Also, have water disinfection tablets on hand.

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The essence of this chapter underscores the vital importance of communications within the Aging Network in times of disaster. The who, what, where, when and how of communications processes are discussed here. Failing to apply proper communication techniques will diminish agencies' capacity to manage the responsibilities and expectations that arise when addressing a disaster.

Chapter V: Emergency Communications for the Aging Network

The essence of the effective management of an emergency is establishing command and maintaining control in what could be some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable. Central to the success of this process is communication. Knowing whom you need to communicate with and what vital information needs to be exchanged will have a fundamental effect on individual's or organization's ability to manage an emergency.

Without exception, every organization within our nation's vast Aging Network must have an individual who is trained and assigned to serve as their emergency coordinating officer (ECO). The ECO needs to coordinate processes and disseminate information both inside and outside of the Aging Services Network. It is essential that the ECO take actions that are coordinated and consistent with the corresponding level of emergency management. The Aging Network must acknowledge and support the expertise of their emergency management counterparts. It is equally important that emergency management values and welcome the Aging Network as a member of their team. This relationship will provide the needed level of familiarity with other key players such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Homeland

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Security (DHS). It is the responsibility of the Aging Network to educate the emergency management community about the complexities and diversity of our elder population.

As a service provider in the Aging Network it is important to communicate to staff the specific responsibilities they become responsible for when the ECO implements the disaster plan. The basic tasks of an emergency coordinating officer are as follows:

- Serve as the on-call staff to be notified of disaster or impending disaster by emergency management and initiate notification/call down procedures throughout the Aging Network;
- Maintain ongoing communications with your point of contact within emergency management and your counterparts with the voluntary organizations active in disaster (VOAD);
- Obtain and transmit situation reports generated by emergency management that provide current information regarding disaster-specific situations that have impacted or could impact elders within your service area; and
- Draft and distribute disaster notices consistent with situation reports in order to serve and protect elders in your service area.

In addition to identifying a primary person to complete these tasks, an alternate must be assigned if the primary is unavailable. To ensure the staffs' availability and capabilities in times of disaster all staff members should complete an Aging Network staff disaster survey (Resource J).

As emphasized earlier in this paper, communication in this context is the exchange of vital, accurate, and timely information that will directly influence the movement of staff and resources in order to protect vulnerable populations. As these actions are communicated to the public, the presentation of that information must reflect the segment of the population that has visual, auditory, or cognitive limitations to ensure effective communication with all who need the information. These and other related tasks will be the responsibility of the staff person tasked to serve as the public information officer (PIO). It is crucial that all media requests and contacts be managed by a single source, the PIO.

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The standard and established means of emergency communication during a disaster is the “situation report.” It is incumbent upon every ECO at any level within the Aging Network to use this form of communication. Having established effective communication about the needs and issues of the elderly and special needs population will ensure that these needs and issues are incorporated into those reports as they are generated. An example situation report from Hillsborough County, Florida illustrates how they are composed (Resource K).

To ensure that these reports are accurate and inclusive, the Aging Network ECO must adhere to emergency management deadlines to ensure that information on elder programs and elder victims is included. Upon receipt of these reports, the ECO must have a mechanism in place for transmitting these reports quickly inside and outside of his/her organization. The movement of this time sensitive information is clearly dependent on technology.

Communication Methods & Procedures

In a systems approach to preparation for emergencies, one element that is vital to a successful preparedness plan is a strong communication system. Effective communications are necessary for the Aging Network staff members to collaborate within their organizations and to work in a coordinated fashion with other service and rescue organizations.

In developing an emergency plan, Aging Network offices need to have systems in place for contacting each other and delegating responsibilities.



Generally, the media are the first source of information regarding an emergency situation. However, the emergency may affect access to messages from the media, as is the case when power lines are affected. Therefore, as part of its emergency plan, each office within the Aging Network needs to have a process for maintaining ongoing communications with other groups who are providing emergency services, including first responders.

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Equally important in preparedness planning is the acquisition of contact information for persons who are fragile, elderly, or disabled.

- The first step in this process is to identify persons who require support frequently, if not daily;
- The second step is to organize this information into a useable report and store it in several locations. Electronic, as well as hard copies, need to be updated regularly and maintained in offices as well as homes or automobiles of persons connected with the Aging Network;
- Thirdly, this information needs to be available to all who will need it in emergency conditions including first responders (Note: Privacy rights require that medical and contact information regarding the frail and elderly be made available only to those who have a right to that information for health and safety reasons); and
- Finally, the elderly person needs to have the telephone numbers and other contact information for family members and emergency service providers clearly posted for easy access in case of an emergency.

Telephone Trees

Families of the elderly and fragile should be encouraged to set up telephone trees with some form of a back-up communication system. In a family telephone tree, several family members take responsibility for contacting two or three other members who, in turn, contact two or three additional members. This pattern of passing on information is repeated until all persons have been contacted. It is wise to circulate a written diagram showing the names of each family member and the person they are to call.

Offices and other organizations involving staff members who work together on a regular basis need to have a similar telephone tree in place with the contact information printed and distributed among the staff. The telephone tree should be organized so that those who need information receive it first. It is recommended that a practice session be held to see where the tree breaks down and what alternate contact information needs to be added.

Local Agencies and Service Groups

- Fire;
- Law enforcement;
- Medical assistance;
- FEMA; and
- The American Red Cross.

Other organizations that may provide services to the frail and elderly include the Salvation Army, social services, professional organizations, places of worship, and state and local government offices. The Aging Network needs to maintain periodic contact with representatives of these groups through meetings or electronic communications. These connections help each organization to understand the services and procedures of the other groups. That understanding, along with established relationships, will greatly enhance the coordination among groups in emergencies.

Communication Tools

Examples of Communication Tools

The communication tools that will enable first responders and other caregivers to contact each other as well as the frail and elderly include:

- Wired telephones including pay phones;
- Wireless telephones;
- Pagers;
- Computers/internet;
- Blackberry; and
- Ham radios (amateur radios).

While each of these forms of communication is effective in most situations, some may not be a reliable means of communication during a crisis or disaster. Consequently, a system of alternative forms of communication needs to be planned for to allow emergency personnel to know who may be in need of assistance, their location, and special needs so that the proper assistance can be provided. Families also need to have a back-up communication system planned so that they can maintain communication.

Wired telephones

The telephone is often the first form of communication for families and service providers. However, this form of communication is easily disturbed by conditions that cause damaged or fallen telephone lines that result in an overload of calls. When this happens, it is necessary to turn to another form of communication. Pay phones have proven useful in disaster situations in cities when office telephones were destroyed and cellular telephones were not operating. However, they are obviously not a viable option for emergency personnel to communicate with each other due to their expense and non-strategic placement.

Wireless telephones

Cellular telephones operate very much like radios with land-based microwave transmission towers and can be extremely useful to Aging Network staff as they change locations.

However, there are various weaknesses to the cellular telephone in an emergency. If there is damage to the transmission towers, as was the case in New York City on September 11, 2001, the phones will not function. Even if the transmission towers are functioning, the systems may become jammed as thousands of people attempt to contact each other at the same time. For this reason, cellular phones may not be a reliable means of communication to dispatch services to the elderly and fragile.

Another concern with cellular phones is the possibility of their interference with emergency response systems. For example, heavy use of cellular phones in a small geographical area may cause disruptions in police and emergency response systems. In addition, the cellular telephone is only useful provided the battery is always charged, which is something that cannot be guaranteed during an unexpected emergency.

Pagers

Pagers are another option for communication. They can be used to alert others through voice messages and may allow for two-way messaging of more detailed communication. However, pagers rely on wired and cellular telephones to send messages, so these devices may also be rendered useless in the event of telephone line disruption.

Computers/Internet

The Internet can be a good source of communication between individuals and service organizations during a disaster. The most obvious downfall to this system is that the computer must be turned on and the connection made. Again, large volumes of users can severely slow or crash systems. Computers also rely on electricity, telephone, and/or cable connections. During a power outage, the Internet connection would be rendered useless. A battery-operated laptop would function only if the telephone lines were intact. Other problems with this form of communication are computer viruses that can interrupt service at critical moments.

Blackberry

Blackberry systems were thought to be a solution to the unreliability of telephones, pagers, and the Internet. It is a mobile system connected to a wireless network using satellites. This system works well within a team setting because systems can be set up where the members of the group can easily communicate with one another. Reported problems with the blackberry systems include 10 to 15 minute message delays and the tendency to have to return the device to its docking station to synchronize it with computer programs. This limits the usage and mobility of the device and can cause problems during a situation in which mobility and quick response are key to effectively assisting the elderly.

Ham radios (amateur radios)

Ham radios run on a frequency below AM radio waves. FCC licensed operators use these radios to communicate with other operators across the nation and world. They have been used in the past to relay information and keep people informed during floods, fires, and other disasters. There are 675,000 amateur radio operators in the United States. One only needs to locate a person who is able to operate the radio who can then find another operator to send a message to and continue this pattern until the message reaches the appropriate person. The American Radio Relay League can assist with locating the proper people in a particular area. Use of the ham radio system needs to be planned in advance of an emergency so that the operators are identified and ready to assist.



Ham radios can be more effective than other forms of communication because they can transmit voice messages as well as Morse code when there is difficulty transmitting audible messages.

The Aging Network needs to develop a communication system that can make use of multiple communication channels – telephones (wired and wireless), the Internet, pagers, and radio. In any emergency, planning for a back-up system of communication

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improves the likelihood that human contact will be maintained when the primary communication system fails.

All personnel in the Aging Network assigned responsibilities during a disaster must always carry with them critical information on personnel they may need to contact. A suggested format follows in Resource L.

When a threat has diminished and operations have stabilized, critiques of how the work was done must be conducted. This activity should occur at all levels inside and outside of the Aging Network so that lessons learned will be applied.



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The information in this chapter will benefit both emergency management staff and those working in the Aging Network. Under normal circumstances, older and frail persons are the targets of many forms of financial exploitation – far more than any other group. Regrettably, when a large-scale disaster occurs, some tradespeople with criminal intent descend on the declared area to victimize our older citizens. Reading this chapter and implementing its recommendations will ensure that the needs of older citizens are better understood and the risk of financial exploitation anticipated.

Chapter VI: Avoiding Exploitation of Older Persons Following a Disaster

As AAAs and service providers assist older persons and their caregivers restore their lives following a disaster, they should be aware of unscrupulous individuals and organizations that may attempt to take advantage of the elderly. The combination of interactions between these individuals and the elderly, and the haste to restore normalcy, may open the door for potential exploitation and financial fraud. The predictability of exploitative tactics should be taken into account in setting up a process for how affected individuals will get the help they need.



Exploitation of the disabled and the elderly due to a disaster is defined as any activity that takes advantage of a disaster circumstance in order to improperly, and/or illegally utilize funds, assets, or property of that person via fraud, forgery, coercion, or deception, etc.

Potential exploiters are those who may assume financial responsibility or who assist with restoration of normal living. Examples of these individuals are unscrupulous

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attorneys, landlords, and/or contractors. Disaster situations often involve property damage where a contract is necessary to remedy property damage. In many circumstances, an eagerness to remedy the situation creates additional vulnerability to fraudulent practices. Precautions must be taken when entering all contracts, particularly with those professionals who are unknown to the client.

Indicators of Exploitation

The following signs and symptoms of financial or material exploitation can indicate exploitation. It is important to be particularly wary of these signs following a disaster.

- Sudden changes in bank account or banking practices, including an unexplained withdrawal of large sums of money by a person accompanying the elder;
- The inclusion of additional names on an elder's bank signature card;
- Unauthorized withdrawal of the elder's funds using the elder's ATM card;
- Abrupt changes in a will or other financial documents;
- Unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions;
- Substandard care being provided or bills unpaid despite the availability of adequate financial resources;
- Discovery of an elder's signature being forged for financial transactions or for the titles of his/her possessions;
- Sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to an elder's affairs and possessions;
- Unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family;
- The provision of services that are not necessary; or
- An elder's report of financial exploitation.

Guidelines for Dealing with and Reporting Financial Fraud and Abuse

Local police, sheriff's offices, prosecuting attorneys, and state attorneys general may investigate and prosecute exploitation, particularly in cases where financial abuse is of concern. More specifically, if you or someone you are assisting has been the victim of a disaster exploitation, you may contact the following agencies for assistance:

FEMA

One of FEMA's primary objectives in the area of disaster response and recovery is to prevent and detect exploitation. Immediately following a disaster, FEMA takes steps to learn what the applicable current issues and priorities are before they offer advice about disaster activities or delivery of services. More specifically, the Inspector General's Investigations Division includes special agents who look into allegations involving many programs of FEMA – from Disaster Assistance, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, to the National Flood Insurance Program – and conduct investigations of internal affairs and procurement fraud. Field inspections are carried out to verify losses and damages for those who apply to FEMA for individual assistance. Potential cases of fraud or misuse are referred for prosecution as federal offenses.

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To report all exploitation within a FEMA program call the Fraud Hotline at (800) 323-8603. The hotline is in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Written alerts, or complaints, can be mailed to:

Office of Inspector General
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

If civil rights have been violated while receiving disaster assistance, contact FEMA's Equal Rights Office. Officers ensure equal access to all FEMA disaster programs. The FEMA Equal Rights Office can be contacted at (202) 646-3535, (TTY: (202) 646-2745).

Adult Protective Services (APS)

APS is the principal public agency responsible for investigating reports of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. It can provide the first link for elderly in seeking help from related authorities and services. In most jurisdictions, either APS or the county's Department of Social Services is designated as the agency to receive and investigate allegations of elder exploitation. If the investigators find exploitation, they arrange for services to help protect the victim and refer the case to law enforcement. Reports of consumer fraud should be directed to your state's office of consumer affairs or attorney general's office. Each state has an APS elder abuse hotline. For a complete list, visit the national center on elder abuse website at www.elderabusecenter.org. You can also contact the eldercare locator at (800) 677-1116 (9am-8pm EST) or www.eldercare.gov.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

The AAA can link older persons and their caregivers to legal and social services providers. (Some states have senior legal hotlines.) With the zip code of the person

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

needing assistance, they can direct callers to the most appropriate service. This hotline can be particularly helpful in a disaster in preventing financial abuse and exploitation. The Eldercare Locator telephone number is (800) 677-1116.

Alternatively, residents of long-term care facilities can contact their local Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center phone number is (202) 332-2275. They can also access the center's website at www.ltcombudsman.org/static_pages/help.cfm, which provides directions on how to contact local/state level long-term care ombudsmen.

The Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association

The Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association, through an agreement with FEMA, provides free legal advice for low-income individuals. Individuals, families, and businesses may be eligible for federal assistance if they live, own a business, or work in a county declared a major disaster area, incur sufficient property damage or loss, and, depending on the type of assistance, do not have the insurance or other resources to meet their needs. When the President declares a disaster the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association develops a toll-free number specifically for that disaster area.

Consumer Concerns for Older Americans

For more in-depth information regarding "Home Improvement" scams please refer to the attached document (Resource H) entitled "*Consumer Concerns for Older Americans; Home Improvement Scams Alert.*"⁴ This attachment explains and cites examples of deceptive financing schemes, problems with contracted work, and deceptive sales tactics, etc. It details many practical schemes and enables aging service providers and older Americans to further familiarize themselves with consumer frauds.

⁴ *Consumer Concerns for Older Americans* is a publication of the National Legal Resource Initiative for Financially Distressed Older Americans/National Consumer Law Center.

ADMINISTRATION ON AGING: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE

This statement of understanding acknowledges the unique areas of expertise of both the Administration on Aging and the American Red Cross. By committing their combined capabilities to written and agreed upon Methods of Cooperation, we are better able to serve America's elders in the event of a major disaster. AAAs are encouraged to meet with their local chapters of the Red Cross and use this Statement of Understanding as a guide when entering into an agreement to meet elders' needs at the service level.

Chapter VII: Statement of Understanding between the American Red Cross and the Administration on Aging

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Statement of Understanding (SOU) is to continue the working relationship between the American National Red Cross (hereinafter referred to as the American Red Cross or the Red Cross) and the AoA in preparing for and responding to disaster relief situations at all levels. This agreement provides the broad framework for cooperation between the two organizations in rendering assistance and service to victims of disaster, as well as other services for which cooperation may be mutually beneficial.

II. Concept of Operations

Each party to this SOU is a separate and independent organization. As such, each organization retains its own identity in providing service, and each organization is responsible for establishing its own policies and financing its own activities.

III. Definition of Disaster

A disaster is an occurrence such as a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, earthquake, volcanic eruption, drought, blizzard, pestilence, famine, fire, explosion, building collapse, transportation accident, or other

situation that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.

IV. Authority of the American Red Cross

In providing disaster relief, the American Red Cross has both a legal and a moral mandate that it has neither the authority nor the right to surrender. The American Red Cross has both the power and the duty to act in disaster, and its prompt action is clearly expected and supported by the public.

The American Red Cross' authority to perform disaster services was formalized when the organization was chartered by the Congress of the United States in 1905. Among other provisions, this charter charged the Red Cross:

to continue and carry on a system of national and international relief in time of peace and apply the same in mitigating the sufferings caused by pestilence, famine, fire, floods, and other great national calamities, and to devise and carry on measures for preventing the same.

-U.S. Congress, act of January 5, 1905, as amended, 36 U.S.C.

The authority of the American Red Cross to provide disaster services was reaffirmed by federal law in the 1974 *Disaster Relief Act* (Public Law 93-288) and in the 1988 *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act*.

V. Organization of the American Red Cross

The national headquarters of the American Red Cross is located in Washington, DC. National headquarters is responsible for implementing policies and regulations that govern American Red Cross activities, and for giving administrative and technical supervision and guidance to the chartered units. Chartered units include chapters and Blood Services regions. The Board of Governors has delegated to the duly-constituted volunteer governing board of each chartered unit the authority and responsibility for: (a) governance of the chartered unit; (b) delivery of authorized services in the territorial jurisdiction of the chartered unit; and (c) meeting corporate obligations in conformance with and subject to the limitations stated in corporate regulations.

The American Red Cross provides the following five (5) services: Armed Forces Emergency Services, Biomedical Services, Disaster Services, Health and Safety Services, and International Services.

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Each chartered unit has the authority and responsibility for carrying out the purposes of the American Red Cross; for delivering local American Red Cross services; and for meeting corporate obligations within the territorial jurisdiction assigned in conformity with corporate regulations. The chartered units (chapters) coordinate their work through voluntary state councils. There are approximately 1200 chapters across the United States.

Each chapter is responsible for providing disaster planning, preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. Each chapter has a disaster leadership team or committee. This team or committee studies the hazards of the locality and surveys local resources for personnel, equipment, supplies, transportation, emergency communications, and facilities available for disaster relief. The chapter disaster leadership also formulates cooperative plans and procedures with local government agencies and private organizations for carrying out relief operations should a disaster occur. Through its nationwide organization, the American Red Cross coordinates its total resources for use in large disasters. Services will be provided to those in need regardless of citizenship, race, religion, age, sex, or political affiliation.

VI. Authority for the Administration on Aging

In response to the growing number of older people and their diverse needs, the OAA of 1965 was enacted to provide a range of programs that offer opportunities and services to older Americans, especially those at risk of losing their independence. The Act established the AoA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which is headed by the Assistant Secretary for Aging.

The AoA is the focal point and advocate agency for older persons and their concerns at the federal level. In this role, the AoA informs other federal agencies, organizations, groups, and the public about the valuable contributions that older Americans make to the nation and alerts them to the needs of vulnerable older people. Through information and referral and outreach efforts at the state and community level, the AoA works to educate older people and their caregivers about the benefits and services available to help them.

The authority and responsibility of the AoA and the Aging Network to provide disaster services is found within the charge of the *Older Americans Act* to serve older persons in greatest need (Title III, Sec. 310, Disaster Relief Reimbursements), which provides for limited resources to fund disaster response services.

VII. Organization of the Administration on Aging

With headquarters in Washington, DC and partnerships with 9 regional offices, the AoA is responsible for developing and implementing policies and regulations that govern activities under areas of responsibility implemented with the OAA. The AoA works closely with its nationwide network of SUAs, AAAs and tribal organizations to plan, coordinate, and develop community-level systems of services that meet the unique needs of individual older persons and their caregivers. The AoA collaborates with federal agencies, national aging organizations, and business representatives to ensure that, whenever possible, their programs and resources are also targeted to the elderly and coordinated with those of the Aging Network.

The AoA administers key programs at the federal level that are mandated under various titles of the OAA. The programs help vulnerable older persons to remain in their own homes by providing supportive services. Other programs offer opportunities for older Americans to enhance their health and to be active contributors to their families, communities, and the nation through employment and volunteer programs. A more detailed description of programs and services offered under the OAA is provided in Chapter III, Overview of the Aging Network.

To respond to presidential, declared national disasters, the Aging Network provides two basic types of disaster assistance services which are:

- **ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH:** These services assure that older persons have access to and the assistance necessary to obtain needed services. These services include locating older persons; getting medical attention if needed, including medications and assistive devices; assisting in the completion and filing of applications for financial and other assistance; and follow-up monitoring to assure needs are met.
- **GAP-FILLING:** Older persons may be reluctant to ask for help, and many have unique needs which require individualized time and attention. Relief funds may not cover some of the special care needs in the timeframe required. OAA funds can be used for chore, homemaker, transportation, nutrition, legal, and other temporary or one-time only expenses that help older persons retain maximum independent living.

VIII. Methods of Cooperation

For the best use of available resources, the American Red Cross and the AoA agree to the following:

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

1. The American Red Cross national headquarters and the AoA will maintain a close relationship through conferences, telephone, and electronic communication. Each organization will share current data regarding disasters, declarations, and changes in legislation. The same interaction and liaison will be encouraged at all levels of both organizations.
2. Red Cross chapters and the Aging Network are encouraged to participate in training and exercises, as appropriate. Also, these units may perform other cooperative efforts such as disaster planning and preparedness, first aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), health courses, and community disaster education (CDE), as well as providing disaster relief services and supplies.
3. The Red Cross will encourage its chapter leaders on disaster operations to share non-confidential damage assessment surveys, appropriate referral information, and other vital statistical data with AoA and Aging Network personnel. To the extent feasible, this information will include data on the state of older persons affected by the disaster.
4. AoA personnel, SUAs, AAAs, and tribal organizations will be encouraged on an on-going basis to provide Red Cross units with statistical and other data on the elderly population in their jurisdiction. This could include identification of senior citizen complexes or other concentrations of elders, homebound individuals, nutrition sites, and day care locations, etc. The Red Cross will utilize this information in its planning efforts, and the data will be included in the demographic section of the unit's disaster response plan.
5. The AoA will continue to encourage SUAs and AAAs to establish disaster advocacy and outreach programs to serve elderly victims. They will assist clients in completing necessary forms to obtain assistance, explaining/interpreting assistance programs, and arranging/providing transportation for elderly clients.
6. The AoA will encourage the SUAs, AAAs and tribal organizations to make their congregate and home-delivered meals programs available to the general public during a disaster upon receiving an official request from the American Red Cross. If approved in writing in advance by Disaster Services at Red Cross national headquarters, the Red Cross may reimburse the SUA or local AAA for the cost of the meals used in fulfilling an official request.
7. The AoA, the Aging Network, and the American Red Cross personnel will work closely to ensure the physical and mental health needs of elderly disaster victims are addressed. This will involve encouraging local and national counterparts to coordinate their planning activities so that their capabilities to respond to the needs of the elderly are enhanced.

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8. During disaster operations, liaison should be maintained between the national headquarters of the two organizations to ensure cooperation, to expedite services to those in need, and to minimize unnecessary duplication of services. SUAs, AAAs, tribal organizations, and Red Cross chapters will be encouraged to maintain liaison for similar purposes.
9. The American Red Cross will encourage its service delivery units to communicate with SUAs, local AAAs and local service providers to explore opportunities for collaboration in providing community disaster education (CDE) within their respective communities. Cooperative efforts could include distributing CDE materials to targeted populations within the community through their nutrition sites, senior centers, and meal delivery services, preparing the AoA's volunteers as CDE presenters, or joint development and implementation of a CDE plan for their local community.
10. Recognizing the need for advising the public of the work of both organizations, the American Red Cross and the AoA will make every effort, through their public information offices and Aging Network members during times of disaster, to keep the public informed of their cooperative efforts.
11. The American Red Cross and the AoA will inform their chapters, SUAs, AAAs, tribal organizations, and other administrative offices of this agreement and urge full cooperation with each other. The agreement will be widely distributed and may be replicated as appropriate.
12. The AoA will encourage participation and coordination of services between the SUAs, AAAs, tribal organizations, and the American Red Cross for mutual services to the community and for disaster response. In support of this activity, both the AoA and the American Red Cross will share respective contact persons with each network and encourage development of ongoing liaison and creation of local Statements of Understanding as appropriate.
13. The American Red Cross and the AoA will actively seek to determine other areas/services within their respective organizations where cooperation and support will be mutually beneficial and to amend this Statement of Understanding accordingly to include such agreements.
14. The two organizations agree that any expenses incurred as a result of cooperation or collaboration under the terms of this Statement of Understanding will be apportioned as agreed to in writing by both parties prior to incurring such expenses.
15. The use of the name and emblem of the American Red Cross by the AoA shall be allowed only in the case of particular projects undertaken pursuant to prior

expressly written consent of the American Red Cross and when such projects are in conformity with American Red Cross regulations.

IX. Periodic Review

Representatives of the American Red Cross Disaster Services and the AoA will meet annually, on or around the anniversary date of this agreement, to jointly evaluate progress in the implementation of the Statement of Understanding and revise and develop new plans or goals as appropriate.

X. Term of Statement of Understanding

This SOU shall be effective on February 15, 2001, and terminate on February 14, 2006. Six months prior to termination, the parties shall meet to review the progress and success of the SOU and determine whether it shall be extended for an additional five years. In no event shall any extension of this SOU be for a period exceeding five years.

It is understood by both parties that at any time this Statement of Understanding may be terminated by written notification from either party to the other.

XI. Miscellaneous

This Statement of Understanding does not create a partnership or a joint venture, and neither party has the authority to bind the other.

ADMINISTRATION ON AGING: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE

State Agencies on Aging and Title VI funded Tribal organizations are eligible to request reimbursement for additional expenses incurred in the aftermath of a disaster. The explanation below describes the application process and how funds may be used.

Chapter VIII: Applying for a Disaster Assistance Grant under the Older Americans Act

The OAA, under Section 310, (see box at the end of chapter) authorizes the Assistant Secretary for Aging to award funds to reimburse State and AoA funded Tribal organizations for expenses related to a national disaster declared by the President. This authority relates to the Stafford Act which outlines the perimeters of Federal involvement in disasters. Depending on the type and location of a disaster or emergency event, Emergency Management Teams (first responders) are quickly set up to take charge of the response activities in the disaster area. The State and/or local OEM, health care providers, FEMA, the Red Cross and other relief programs are usually involved in the first responder teams and are funded in a variety of ways. As the Aging Network becomes involved, it becomes readily apparent that the many and complex needs of the elderly are not quickly resolved in these circumstances.

If the disaster event is catastrophic and affects many citizens, the Governor will request the President to declare a national disaster for the geographic area affected. When the President makes such a declaration, State Agencies and Tribal organizations may apply for a grant for disaster assistance from AoA. The first step is to contact the appropriate AoA Regional Office to provide an overview of the situation and elderly affected by the disaster. AoA will then help with the preparation of a disaster assistance application.

Only SUAs and Title VI Tribal organizations are eligible applicants for AoA funds. Since these funds are intended as a reimbursement for additional expenses incurred during a disaster event, it may take some time to determine the number of older people affected and the needs that must be met by the Aging Network.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

Using past experiences as a guide, the most pressing needs are the provision of information, establishment a system of communication and the provision of outreach, food/water, transportation and emergency health and safety services for older individuals and their caregivers. The Aging Network will become a valued team member by partnering with Emergency Response Teams and health care workers about the severity of need and the location of older persons and their caregivers who need help. Following the initial efforts of the Emergency Response Teams, there is an intensified need for the many services generally provided by OAA funded programs. Typically, grant applications to AoA are to request funds for assisting with the expenses incurred above and beyond available funds.

The elderly and their caregivers often need assistance for a much longer period after the event. Younger individuals have a built-in resiliency that helps them move along with their lives. For older persons, who generally live on fixed incomes and who have multiple health issues, restoration to a balanced and comfortable living arrangement is more difficult to achieve.

Funding Authority and Amounts:

Under the OAA, the Assistant Secretary for Aging has authority provide disaster funding to SUAs and to Title VI funded Tribal organizations when the President declares disaster area. AoA funding is in the form of a direct grant to either of these entities and no match is required. The grant award is for a period of one year with the possibility of an extension if circumstances warrant more time.

The amount of funding available to applicants is determined by three factors: (1) the number of older persons affected; (2) the amount and severity of need and (3) the amount of disaster funds available in the AoA set aside. As prescribed by the OAA, at the beginning of the Federal Fiscal Year, AoA sets aside an amount of Title III funds equal to two percent of the allocated Title IV funding for the year. That amount is variable from year to year but generally averages \$500,000 to \$800,000 per year. Grant awards vary depending upon the factors above with a general range of \$3,000 to \$150,000 per year. Submission of applications during the ten days of September is discouraged because the processing time is insufficient. However, since disasters can occur at any time, late year requests are often funded from funds for the next Fiscal Year. Early in the Fiscal Year, the award amount is usually small since it is not possible to predict the number of events or extent of damage throughout the year.

Funding History



During the period of 1993 through 2005, AoA has awarded approximately \$19 million for Disaster Assistance for older persons. The AoA funding set aside each year as required in Section 310 of the Older Americans Act averages \$500,000-800,000. Congressional appropriations have enabled supplemental funding following the major disasters associated with earthquakes, the terrorist attacks and Coastal Hurricanes.

Applying for funds:

AoA encourages applicants to submit proposals electronically via www.grants.gov. For assistance with www.grants.gov, please contact AoA's Grants.gov helpdesk at 202-357-3438. At www.grants.gov, State Agencies and Title VI funded Tribes will be able to download a copy of the application packet, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov website.

To prepare an electronic submission, all applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). (See the website for full details about applying electronically.)

A brief narrative must be submitted and should provide a clear and concise description of the number of older persons affected, the severity and the types of assistance needed. Plans for how the SUA or Tribal organization will use these funds should be indicated. The legislation indicates that OAA should be used to reimburse the applicants for costs incurred in responding to the event. Typically applicants request funds for OAA gap-filling services: outreach, information and assistance, counseling, case management, advocacy on behalf of older persons unable or reluctant to

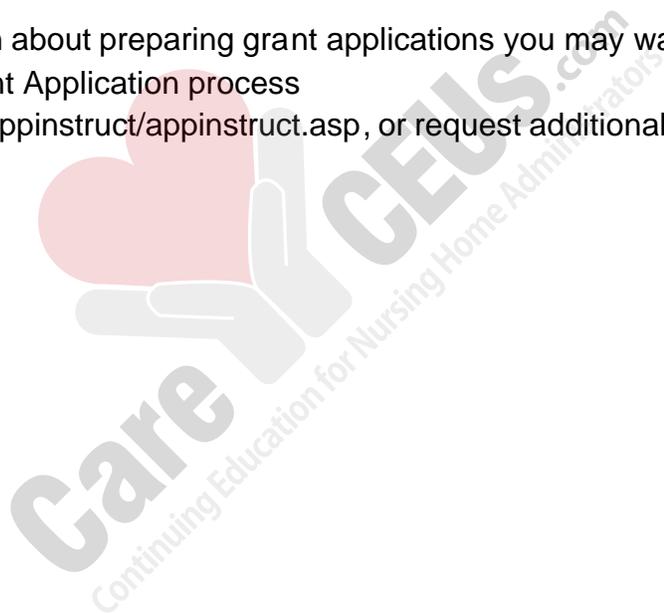
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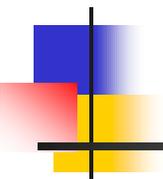
Speak for themselves, and staff overtime. Funds may be used for additional food, supplies, extra home delivered meals, home clean-up and safety, emergency medications, transportation and other such immediate needs.

The amount of funds requested should be discussed with AoA staff before the application is completed and sharing a draft of the application is helpful. This will expedite the application and award process.

If the submission of a paper application is required, AoA staff will assist applicants. Blank forms are available on the AoA website in the discretionary grant section. In any case, AoA will need an original signature copy for the grant file and AoA staff will work out the details when time is so limited.

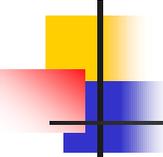
For additional information about preparing grant applications you may want to view the AoA Website on the Grant Application process www.aoa.gov/doingbus/appinstruct/appinstruct.asp, or request additional guidance by calling: (202) 357-3440.





EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Suggestions for the
Aging Network

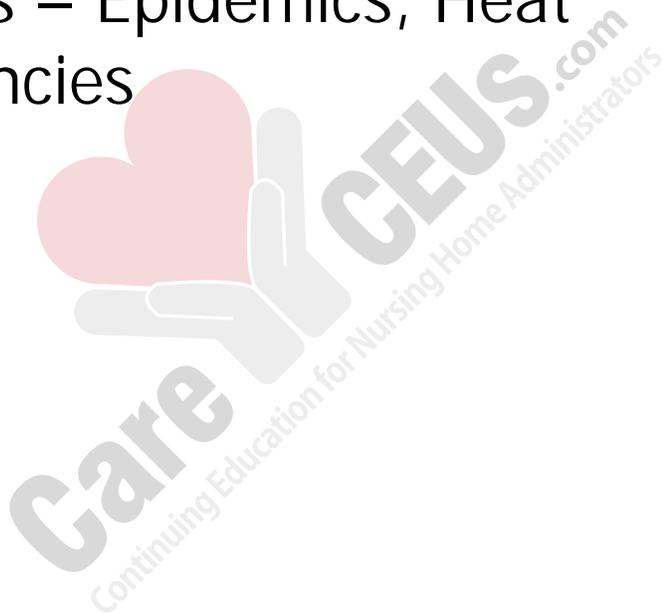


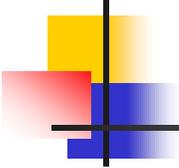
Types of Emergencies

- Natural – hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, wildfires, floods, snow/ice storms, volcanic
- Man-made – large fires, transportation accidents, hazardous materials, explosions, terrorist attacks, WMD, civil unrest

Types of Emergencies (continued)

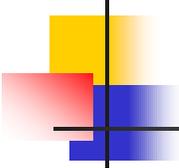
- Technological – utilities, IT failures
- Public Health Emergency Infectious Diseases – Epidemics, Heat Emergencies





Disaster Statistics

- American Red Cross
 - 2001 – 73,000 disasters (including single family fire)
 - 69,000 people sheltered
 - 122,000 received financial assistance



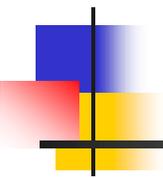
Phases of Disaster

- Awareness
- Prevention / Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery



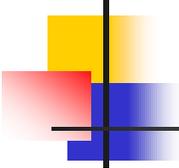
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

**IN EVERY EMERGENCY
THE FIRST &
HIGHEST PRIORITY**



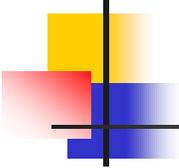
**PRESERVATION
OF HUMAN LIFE**

Care & CEAS.com
Continuing Education for Nursing Home Administrators



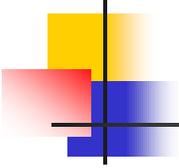
Preparedness

- Activation of emergency operations/command center – information, shelter, services – mass care
- Evacuation if needed



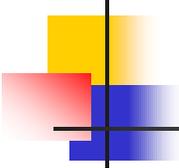
Preparedness (continued)

- Management of fatalities
- Client Preparation & notification First responders to the scene – medical care, search and rescue



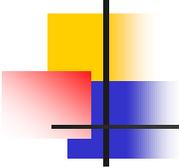
Response & Recovery

- First Responders to the Scene = medical care, search and rescue
- Damage assessment
- Restore functioning infrastructure



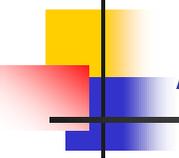
Response & Recovery (continued)

- Outreach – volunteers
- Financial assistance to governments, individuals
- Ongoing care – medical, food and shelter, counseling



Special Needs

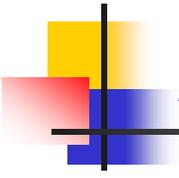
- 54 million US people with limitations who may need assistance– Who are they, where located, type of need?
- Older and fragile persons plus caregivers need to have contingency plans



AoA Systems Approach

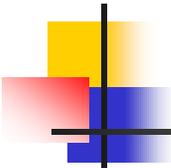
Interface & Support **First Responders**

- Police, firefighters, emergency medical providers
- American Red Cross
- FEMA Emergency Response Teams



Aging Network Focus

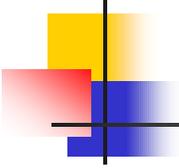
- Preparedness – plan of action for elderly – continuity of services
- Collaboration – Federal, State and Local emergency preparedness teams – Guide and assist with recovery – older persons
- Outreach/counseling



Communication System

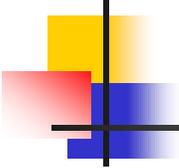
Locate / Help Those Who Need Immediate Assistance

- Local TV/radio (if working) source of info and instructions – Contact info
- Phone Tree – Voluntary Registry
- Broadcast E-mail
- Cell phones, pagers, Blackberries
- Eldercare locator



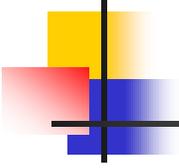
Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act (1993)

- National guidelines for Federal, State and local Emergency management
- Local – Mayor's Office, County and multi-jurisdictional districts have operational systems and emergency plans



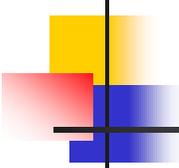
State and Community

- State – Governor’s Office manages Statewide system and emergency planning
- Governor may request the President to declare a national emergency



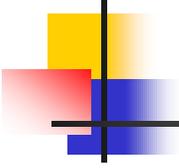
Federal Response Plan

- **Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)** – Develops & integrates emergency management nationwide
- **Federal Agencies Collaboration** – DHHS Office of Emergency Preparedness, DoT, EPA, DoJ, CDC, and others



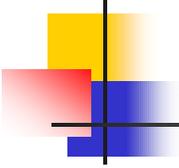
Be Prepared

- Have staff, boards, constituents, partners help create an Emergency Response Plan,
- Update 6-12 mos.
- Train staff & practice Plan
- Evaluate and improve – ongoing



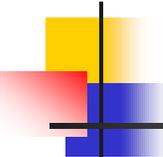
Emergency Plan Includes

- Established Partners
- Communication with staff, media, volunteers, older persons
- Evacuation plans
- Identified alternate work sites



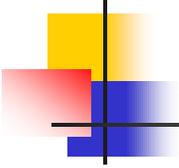
AoA TA Material

- Systems Approach
- AoA Disaster Preparedness Manual...(1995)
- Regional Office & SUA contacts
- Grants--SUAs, Tribes in Presidentially declared disaster



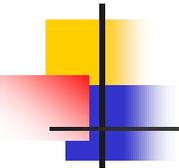
AoA TA Material (continued)

- Overview – Aging Network
- Overview – Emergency Mgt. System
- Emergency and Disaster Prep. & Response – AAAs/Service Providers
- Avoiding Exploitation



AoA TA Material (continued)

- Statement of Understanding – AoA/ARC
- Quick Reference Guide for Human and Medical Disaster Services
- Safety Check List



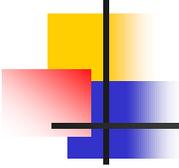
Technical Assistance (other sources)

- FEMA's "ARE YOU READY? – A Guide to Citizen Preparedness
- National Organization on Disability – Emergency Preparedness Initiative Guide for Emergency Managers, Planners & Responders

Technical Assistance (other sources, continued)

- American Red Cross (ARC) "Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors"
- SBA Loans and Individual Family Grants





AoA Grants

- State Units on Aging, Tribal Organizations
 - Apply through RO
 - One year duration
 - Funding range – \$3,000 to \$150,000 based on need

Resource B: Disaster Assistance Round Table Advisory Group

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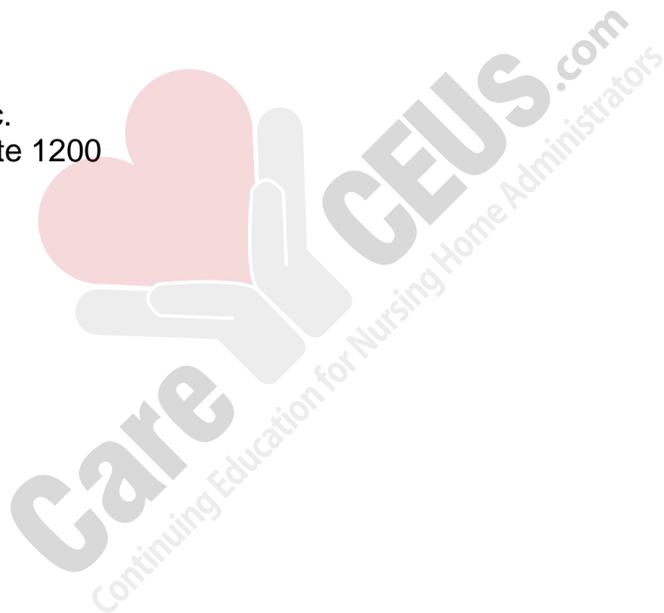
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Resource C: Glossary of Key Terms and Acronyms

For the purposes of the National Incident Management System, the following terms and definitions apply.

- **AWARENESS:** The continual process of collecting, analyzing, and disseminating intelligence, information, and knowledge to allow organizations and individuals to anticipate requirements and to react effectively.
- **EMERGENCY:** Any natural or man-made situation that results in or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population or substantial damage to or loss of property.
- **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS (EOCs):** Also called Expanded Dispatch, Emergency Command and Control Centers, etc. EOCs are used in varying ways at all levels of government and within private industry to provide coordination, direction, and control during emergencies. EOC facilities can be used to house Area Command and MACS activities as determined by agency or jurisdiction policy.
- **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP):** The plan that each jurisdiction has and maintains for responding to appropriate hazards.
- **EVACUATION:** Organized, phased, and supervised dispersal of civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.
- **FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN (FRP):**
 - The plan designed to address the consequences of any disaster or emergency situation in which there is a need for federal assistance under the authorities of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.
 - The FRP is the federal government's plan of action for assisting affected states and local jurisdictions in the event of a major disaster or emergency.
- **FIRST RESPONDER:** Local police, fire, and emergency medical personnel who first arrive on the scene of an incident and take action to save lives, protect property, and meet basic needs. First responders may include federal, state, or local responders.
- **FUNCTIONAL AREA:** A major grouping of the functions and tasks that agencies perform in carrying out awareness, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

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- **HOMELAND SECURITY PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE-5 (HSPD-5):** A presidential directive issued on February 28, 2003, and intended to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system.
- **INCIDENT:** An occurrence, either man-made or natural phenomena, that requires action by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.
- **INCIDENT COMMAND POST (ICP):** The location at which the primary command functions are executed. The ICP may be co-located with the incident base or other incident facilities.
- **INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEMS (ICS):** A standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. Some jurisdictions use the term Incident Management Systems (IMS) to describe such an organization. For purposes of the NIMS, the terms are intended to be synonymous.
- **INCIDENT MANAGER (IC):** The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.
- **JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER (JOC):** Following a significant terrorist threat or an actual incident that falls within the criminal jurisdiction of the United States, the FBI, acting on behalf of the Department of Justice (DOJ), will establish a Joint Operations Center, depending on the size and complexity of the incident, to bring together the necessary investigative/law enforcement assets to respond to and resolve the threat or incident.
- **LIFE-CYCLE OPERATIONS:** Examples of mechanisms for awareness, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery include:
 - Threat, risk, and vulnerability assessments;
 - Information management and intelligence coordination;
 - Grant assistance; and
 - A national training and exercise system.
- **MAJOR DISASTER:** As defined under the Stafford Act, any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high-water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion, in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and

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magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under the Stafford Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of states, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused by the disaster.

- **MITIGATION:** Those activities designed to alleviate the effects of a major disaster or long-term emergency or long-term activities to minimize the potentially adverse effects of a future disaster in affected areas.
- **MOBILIZATION:** The process and procedures used by all organizations federal, state, and local for activating, assembling, and transporting all resources that have been requested to respond to or support an incident.
- **NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS):** A system mandated by HSPD-5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among federal, state, and local capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies these as the incident command system; multi-agency coordination systems; unified command; training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certifications; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.
- **FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN (FRP):** A plan mandated by HSPD-5 that integrates federal government domestic awareness, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery plans into one all-discipline, all-hazards plan.
- **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OEM):** The office at state and local levels where all emergency management functions are housed and coordinated.
- **PREPAREDNESS:** The activities necessary to build and sustain performance across all of the other domains. Preparedness is part of the life cycle of a specific incident in that it includes the range of deliberate, time-sensitive tasks that need to occur in the transition from prevention to response. Preparedness can also be characterized as a continuous process or cycle. Preparedness involves efforts at all levels of government and within the private sector to identify risks or threats, to determine vulnerabilities, to inventory resources available to address those vulnerabilities, and to identify requirements or shortfalls, resulting in a preparedness plan to remedy shortfalls over time.
- **PREVENTION:** Actions to avoid an incident, to intervene to stop an incident from occurring, or to mitigate an incident's effects. It involves actions to protect lives and

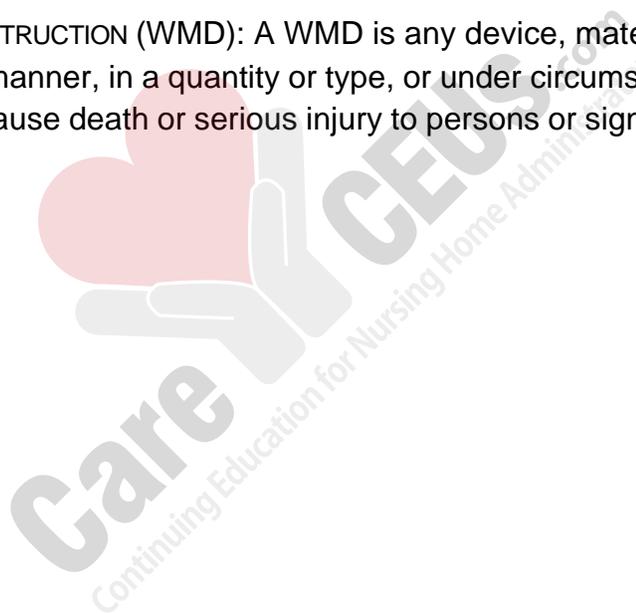
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

property and to defend against attacks. It involves applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities that may include such countermeasures as deterrence operations; heightened inspections; improved surveillance and security operations; investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat; public health surveillance, and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and law enforcement operations aimed at deterring, preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity.

- **PRIVATE SECTOR:** Non-governmental organizations, including voluntary organizations, provide essential services to victims regardless of their eligibility for federal or state assistance. Volunteers enhance community coordination and action at both the national and local levels.
- **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO):** Official at headquarters or in the field responsible for preparing and coordinating the dissemination of public information in cooperation with other responding federal, state, and local agencies.
- **RECOVERY:** Those actions necessary to restore the community back to normal and to bring the perpetrators of an intentional incident to justice. It entails the development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans; the reconstitution of government operations and services; individual, private-sector, and public assistance programs to provide housing and to promote restoration; long-term care and treatment of affected persons; additional measures for social, political, environmental, and economic restoration; evaluation of the incident to identify lessons learned; post-incident reporting; and development of initiatives to mitigate the effects of future incidents.
- **RESPONSE ACTIVITIES:** To address the immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs.
- **RESOURCES:** All personnel and major sources of equipment, supplies, and facilities available, or potentially available, for assignment to incident or event tasks on which status is maintained.
- **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:** Efficient incident management requires a system to identify available resources at all intergovernmental levels in order to enable timely and unimpeded access to resources needed to prepare for, respond to, or recover from an incident. Resource management under the NIMS includes mutual-aid agreements, the use of special federal teams, and resources mobilization protocols.
- **STAGING AREA:** Staging areas are locations set up at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment. Staging areas are managed by the Operations Section.

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- **TERRORISM:** Terrorism includes the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.
- **UNIFIED COMMAND:** An application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction. Agencies work together through their designated Incident Commanders at a single ICP to establish a common set of objectives and strategies, and a single Incident Action Plan.
- **UNIFIED AREA COMMAND:** A Unified Area Command is established when incidents under an Area Command are multi-jurisdictional.
- **VOLUNTEER:** Any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency, which has authority to accept volunteer services (examples: See 16 U.S.C. 742f(c)). A volunteer is subject to the provisions of the authorizing statute and the NCP.
- **WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD):** A WMD is any device, material, or substance used in a manner, in a quantity or type, or under circumstances evidencing intent to cause death or serious injury to persons or significant damage to property.



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List of Acronyms

AAA	Area Agencies on Aging
AoA	Administration on Aging
BCP	Business Continuity Planning
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CDE	Community Disaster Education
CEM	Comprehensive Emergency Management
CEMP	Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
ECO	Emergency Coordinating Officer
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plans
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESF	Emergency Service Function
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HAZMAT	Hazardous Material
HIS	Indian Health Services
HSPD-5	Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
I&R/A	Information & Referral/ Assistance Services
JOC	Joint Operations Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRP	National Response Plan
NSA	National Security Agency
OAA	Older Americans Act
OEM	Offices of Emergency Management
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment
PIO	Public Information Officer
SBA	Small Business Administration
SUA	State Units on Aging
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
USCG	United States Coast Guard
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Resource D: Emergency Management Resources

Federal Emergency Response Agency (FEMA)

For information about FEMA or about emergency management, go to www.fema.gov. FEMA has independent study courses that can be downloaded from the website at <http://training.fema.gov>. Some recommended courses include IS-1 Emergency Management: An Orientation to the Position, IS-2 Emergency Preparedness, IS -230 Principles of Emergency Management, and IS 292 Disaster Basics. Information on the *Federal Response Plan* and federal assistance can be accessed at www.fema.gov/pdf/plan/7-ch.pdf. FEMA provides a list of all state offices of emergency management at www.fema.gov/fema/about/contact/statedr.shtml, and these sites will provide more information about your state's Office of Emergency Management.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

For more on the newly created agency in which FEMA now falls under, see www.dhs.gov.

General Preparedness

For more information on personal preparedness, advice and checklists, see FEMA's website at www.ready.gov, the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared and the National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness Initiative at www.nod.org/emergency/index.cfm www.nod.gov.

Business Continuity Planning

For more information on business continuity planning, see the Small Business Administration website at www.sba.gov/starting_business/planning/basic.html, and the NPower New York guide "Preparation, Planning and Peace of Mind" at www.npowerny.org/tools/planningprepreport.htm, and FEMA's Emergency management guide for business and industry at www.fema.gov/pdf/library/bizindst.pdf.

Resource E: Emergency Management Suggested Checklist

- Determine how your jurisdiction carries out emergency management.
- Set up meetings with essential players (i.e., Office of Emergency Management, fire department, law enforcement, and emergency medical services).
- Establish working relationships by sharing contact information and setting up notification systems.
- Identify resources and skill sets that will be useful for both senior service agencies and emergency management officials.
- Participate in plan development, drills and exercises, and other preparedness activities.
- Be sure to develop an internal Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for your agency to ensure that your mission can be carried out with special emphasis on communications, back-up systems for data, emergency service delivery options, and transportation.
- Identify other partners including the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, other members of the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), and any other senior-focused agencies/organizations.
- Work with partner agencies to identify potential areas of unmet needs and plan for them.
- Have a system in place to track emergency expenditures as they *may* be reimbursable.
- Talk to similar agencies in other jurisdictions. They may have systems and literature in place that you can adapt for your locality.

Resource F: FEMA Emergency Support Functions (ESF)

ESF Number, Name Description, Lead Agency

ESF #1 TRANSPORTATION: Assists federal agencies, State and local governmental entities, and voluntary organizations requiring transportation capacity to perform response missions following a major disaster or emergency. Also serves as a coordination point between response operations and restoration of the transportation infrastructure. Department of Transportation

ESF #2 COMMUNICATIONS: Ensures the provision of federal telecommunications support to federal, state, and local response efforts following a presidential declared major disaster, emergency, or extraordinary situation under the Federal Response Plan (FRP). This ESF supplements the provisions of the National Plan for Telecommunications Support in Non-Wartime Emergencies. National Communications System

ESF #3 PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING: Provides technical advice and evaluation, engineering services, contracting for construction management and inspection, contracting for the emergency repair of water and wastewater treatment facilities, potable water and ice, emergency power, and real estate support to assist the state(s) in meeting goals related to lifesaving and life-sustaining actions, damage mitigation, and recovery activities following a major disaster or emergency. Department of Defense, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

ESF #4 FIREFIGHTING: Detects and suppresses wild land, rural, and urban fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, a major disaster or emergency requiring federal response assistance. Department of Agriculture

ESF #5 INFORMATION & PLANNING: Collects, analyzes, processes, and disseminates information about a potential or actual disaster or emergency to facilitate the overall activities of the federal government in providing assistance to one or more affected states. Fulfilling this mission supports planning and decision making at both the field/regional operations and headquarters levels. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

ESF #6 MASS CARE: Coordinates federal assistance in support of state and local efforts to meet the mass care needs of victims of a disaster. This federal assistance will support the delivery of mass care services of shelter, feeding, and emergency first aid to

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disaster victims; the establishment of systems to provide bulk distribution of emergency relief supplies to disaster victims; and the collection of information to operate a Disaster Welfare Information (DWI) system for the purpose of reporting victim status and assisting in family reunification. American Red Cross.

ESF #7 RESOURCE SUPPORT: Provides logistical and resource support to other organizations through purchasing, contract, renting and leasing equipment and supplies in a potential or actual Presidential declared major disaster or emergency. General Services Administration.

ESF #8 HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES: Provides coordinated federal assistance to supplement state and local resources in response to public health and medical care needs following a major disaster or emergency, or during a developing potential medical situation. Resources will be furnished when state and local resources are overwhelmed and public health and/or medical assistance is requested from the federal government. Department of Health and Human Services.

ESF #9 URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE: Rapidly deploys components of the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System to provide specialized lifesaving assistance to state and local authorities in the event of a major disaster or emergency. US&R operational activities include locating, extricating, and providing on-site medical treatment to victims trapped in collapsed structures. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

ESF #10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS / ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: Provides federal support to state and local governments in response to an actual or potential discharge and/or release of hazardous materials following a major disaster or emergency. Environmental Protection Agency.

ESF #11 FOOD AND WATER: Identifies, secures, and arranges for the transportation of bulk food, water, and ice to affected areas following a major disaster or emergency or other event requiring federal response. Department of Agriculture.

ESF #12 ENERGY: Helps restore the Nation's energy systems following a major disaster, emergency, or other significant event requiring federal response assistance. Department of Energy.

Source: www.fema.gov/rrr/

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In addition to these twelve ESFs enforced in all states, some state governors have elected to add three additional functions, and some have elected to add the five. These include:

- Military Support;
- Public Information;
- Volunteer Donations;
- Law Enforcement and Security; and
- Animal Protection and Agriculture.



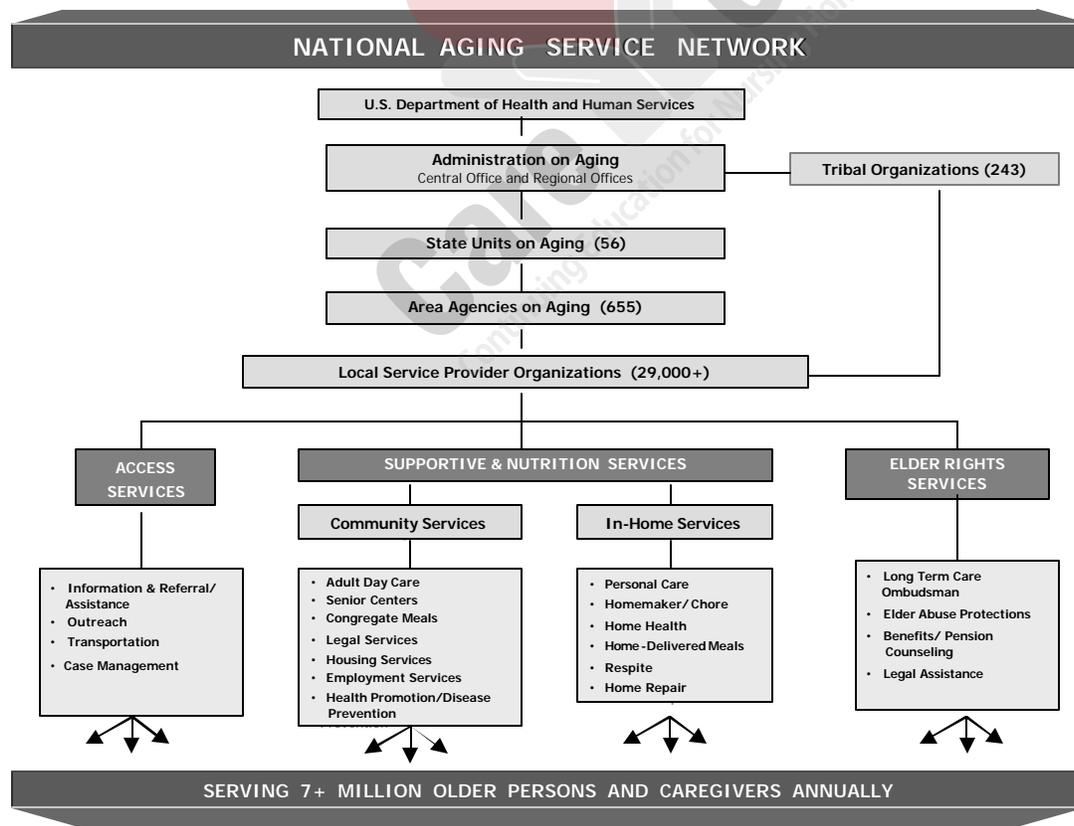
Resource G: Aging Services Resources

Administration on Aging

- On the Web: www.aoa.gov
- By Phone: (202) 619-0724

Locating Your State and Area Aging Agencies

- On the Web: To locate your state agency on aging and/or the area agency on aging on the web, go to: www.eldercare.gov. Click on the “Eldercare Quick Search” feature and enter the appropriate state and zip code for your area.
- By Phone: Call the toll-free *Eldercare Locator* – 1 (800) 677-1116 – Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Time, and ask the information specialist for the State and Area Agency on Aging for your community.



Resource H: Consumer Concerns for Older Americans*

*Developed by the National Consumer Law Center (www.consumerlaw.org)

Home Improvement Scams Alert

Many low-income elderly homeowners are targeted by scam artists who use high-pressure tactics to sell unneeded and overpriced contracts for "home improvements." Often these scam artists charge more than their quoted prices or their work does not live up to their promises. When the senior refuses to pay for shoddy or incomplete work, the contractor or an affiliated lender threatens foreclosure on the senior's home. In an effort to fight such scams, the National Consumer Law Center focuses this issue of *Consumer Concerns for Older Americans* on the practices of unscrupulous home improvement contractors.

A Case Study

Mrs. T is an 80-year-old homeowner living on a fixed income. Although money is tight, she takes great pride in her home and garden. Until his death five years ago, Mrs. T's husband handled the majority of the home maintenance.

Last fall, Mrs. T was approached by a friendly contractor who told her that some of her roof shingles looked water-soaked. Since Mrs. T had noticed a small leak in her bedroom, she asked for an estimate. The contractor went up to the roof, pulled off some roof shingles, and put up a tarpaulin. He told Mrs. T that he had found a major leak and that he needed to replace some roof beams as well as the entire roof. When Mrs. T expressed concern about the cost, the contractor told her that he would give her a senior citizen discount price of \$8,000 and arrange for "market rate financing."

The contractor began work the next day and pulled off much of the roof. A few days later, he brought Mrs. T a loan contract from "We Care Finance Company." Mrs. T discovered that the loan was for \$27,500 at 16% interest. When she reminded the contractor that the price was supposed to be \$8,000 financed at a market rate, he told her that the work was more extensive than he had originally thought and that the finance company had imposed some "points and fees" that raised the price of the loan. He claimed that since the work was "half done," she had to sign the loan contract to pay for the work. He threatened to "abandon the project and put a mechanic's lien on the house." Since winter was coming, Mrs. T panicked and signed the papers presented.

Six months later, the new roof is leaking more than the old one ever did. Mrs. T's floors and walls are damaged. She stopped making loan payments because the work was so bad. "We Care Mortgage" has sent foreclosure papers to the home. An employee of "We Care" told her, "You hired the contractor and we are not responsible. The loan you signed with us is a separate matter. You have to pay us and then sue the contractor for your money."

Deceptive Sales Tactics

Home improvement contractors use several methods of targeting seniors: high-pressure phone calls, flyers, advertisements, and door-to-door sales. Unscrupulous contractors often employ one or more of the following sales tactics:

- "Bait and Switch" – offering low prices for installed items like windows and home siding, and then telling the senior the item is out of stock and can only be replaced with a high-priced substitute;
- Misrepresenting the urgency of a needed repair;
- Claiming the item is more expensive than advertised because it has to be "custom made" to fit the senior's home;
- Misrepresenting that the consumer is receiving a discount because the home is selected to model the repair when, in reality, the consumer is paying market price or more;
- Misrepresenting the energy savings, health benefits, and value added to the home; and/or
- Misrepresenting the terms on which financing is likely to be arranged.

Deceptive Financing Schemes

Unscrupulous contractors often use deceptive tactics to hide the true cost of paying for the work. These tactics may include:

- Using more than one contract for a single repair in an attempt to confuse the home owner;
- Claiming that there is a "cash" contract that doesn't contain financing terms although the deal is intended to be financed;
- Adding extra hidden charges above the negotiated price;

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- Providing expensive (high rate) financing or arranging with a third party to finance the work; and/or
- Obtaining hidden kickbacks from lenders or loan brokers for referrals.

Problems with Contracted Work

In the end, consumers are often left with shoddy work or unfurnished work even though the homeowner has fully paid.

Issues to Consider When Problems Occur

Mortgages and Liens: When a Senior's Home May Be at Stake

Home improvement sales often result in the contractor or a related lender obtaining a mortgage on the consumer's home as part of the credit sale. Even where the contract does not provide for a mortgage, the law generally gives the contractor a right to put a lien against the property. The most common of these liens is called a "mechanic's" lien. In either situation, if the senior refuses to pay because of a dispute, the contractor or lender will probably rely on the lien to try to force the senior to pay and may even try to foreclose. If a lien or a foreclosure is involved, state law regarding liens and foreclosures must be carefully examined.⁵ Remedies may be limited if a foreclosure sale occurs.

The Senior's Ability to Cancel a Contract by Giving Written Notice

Canceling a home improvement contract may be the consumer's preferred remedy, particularly where the consumer realizes that the contract is a bad deal, where the seller is slow or never performs, where the work is very shoddy or worthless, or where the seller takes a security interest in the consumer's home. The consumer has a number of alternative bases to cancel the contract.

The federal government, through the FTC Cooling-Off Rule, and all states have passed laws designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous door-to-door salespeople.⁶ These laws may allow a senior to cancel a contract within a certain amount of time

⁵ See generally National Consumer Law Center, *Repossessions and Foreclosures* Ch. 14 and 20 (fourth ed. 1999).

⁶ FTC Rule Concerning Cooling-Off Period for Sales Made at Homes or at Certain Other Locations, 16 C.F.R. § 429.

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(usually 3 business days) after a sale in the senior's home by giving written notice to the contractor or lender. These laws usually require that a written notice of these rights and a cancellation form be given to the consumer at the time of sale. If the notice is not given or not given properly, the time to cancel may continue until 3 days after a proper notice has been given. Thus, the senior's opportunity to cancel may remain open. It is, therefore, important to determine at the earliest possible time whether the senior still has a right to cancel the contract.

Another source of consumer cancellation rights is the rescission notice required by the federal Truth in Lending Act (TILA)⁷ in most transactions where a creditor takes a security interest in the debtor's home.⁸ When applicable, TILA requires a very accurate disclosure of credit terms and requires the contractor to provide a notice of the senior's right to cancel the contract within three business days. This right remains open beyond the three days (but only up to three years) if the notice is not given or is defective. If the contractor violated TILA, the senior may be able to void the lien and reduce any amount owed. The senior may even be entitled to recover money from the contractor or lender as damages.

In 1994, Congress amended TILA by passing the Home Ownership and Equity Protection Act (HOEPA),⁹ which covers certain high cost loans.¹⁰ For loans that qualify as high cost, HOEPA requires that additional disclosures be given to the consumers. HOEPA also prohibits certain abusive practices. Violations of HOEPA's disclosure provisions may create rescission rights under TILA. HOEPA violations may also trigger TILA monetary damages and enhanced damages for some violations.

A UCC Article 2 rejection or revocation of acceptance is available where the goods in the transaction are defective and the court applies the UCC to that component, even where the transaction is predominantly a service. The consumer can then return the goods and eliminate liability for at least part of the purchase price.

⁷ 15 U.S.C. § 1601 et seq. The FTC Cooling-Off Rule explicitly states that it does not apply in situations where the TILA rescission notice is required. In contrast, state cooling-off statutes do apply, unless they are inconsistent with the TILA requirements.

⁸ The right to rescind under TILA does not apply to purchase money transactions. This means that TILA rescission rights do not apply where a mortgage was created to purchase a home.

⁹ Subtitle B of Title I of the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994 (H.R. 3474), Pub. L. No. 103-325, 108 Stat. 2160 (Sept. 23, 1994) primarily codified at 15 U.S.C §1639.

¹⁰ See National Consumer Law Center, Truth in Lending Ch. 10 (fourth ed. 1999).

Another ground for canceling a contract is fraud or misrepresentation. If the consumer was misled as to the nature of an agreement, that agreement is not enforceable under basic common law principles.

Warranties

The terms of the contract specifying the work to be done should be closely examined to see whether they contain any provisions that promise a standard of performance, materials or products, specifications, or a guarantee. Any of the above may give the senior a claim for the contractor's breach of warranty.

Even when a contractor does not make any oral or written guarantees regarding work quality, implied warranties apply. Generally, there is an implied warranty that the contractor will complete all work according to the standards of the trade or in a "workmanlike" manner. Part of this standard generally includes the requirement that all work must comply with applicable building codes. Failure to meet these standards could be grounds for the senior to refuse to pay the entire amount. However, if the contractor and lender have no business relationship, the borrower may in some circumstance remain obligated on the loan contract.

Unfair Practices

Every state and the District of Columbia have enacted at least one statute broadly applicable to most consumer transactions aimed at preventing consumer deception and abuse in the marketplace. UDAP statutes may be used to challenge unfair, deceptive, or fraudulent practices. A contractor may have violated the state's UDAP statute by lying about the true nature, benefits or cost of a proposed job during the sales pitch; tricking a senior into signing a completion certificate or signing over the loan check before completion; or lying about cancellation rights. If any of the above occurred, the senior may have a claim against the contractor or a defense if the contractor is suing the senior.¹¹

Third Party Lenders

Most home improvement contracts are financed. Often the contractor arranges for the senior to get a loan through a finance company or a bank. A common home improvement situation is a creditor attempting to collect payments for shoddy or

¹¹ For a list of state UDAP statutes, see National Consumer Law Center, *Unfair and Deceptive Acts and Practices* App. A (fourth ed. 1997).

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incomplete work. Most home improvement loans state in the note that the holder is subject to all claims and defenses the consumer can raise against the seller. This notice is required by the FTC Holder Rule where the home improvement contractor is the originating lender or refers the consumer to the lender.¹² Any holder of the note with this notice included is subject to the consumer's claims against the home improvement contractor.

If the notice is not included in the home improvement contract and was not required, the connections between the contractor and the lender must be examined in order to hold the lender liable for the contractor's deceptive practices. Things to look for include:

- Whether there has been an ongoing relationship between the contractor and the lender;
- Frequency with which this lender finances this contractor's work;
- Documents by one party containing the other party's name preprinted into them;
- Knowledge by the lender of previous problems with this contractor's work for other customers;
- Commissions or kickbacks from one party to the other; or
- Ownership of one party by the other.¹³

¹² FTC's Rule Concerning the Preservation of Consumers' Claims and Defenses, 16 C.F.R. § 433.

¹³ See National Consumer Law Center, Unfair and Deceptive Acts and Practices § 6.6 (fourth ed. 1997 and Supp.).

Home Improvement Contractor Litigation Tips¹⁴

- Analyze a complete set of the documents and conduct a thorough client interview.¹⁵
- Hire an expert (architect, engineer, local building inspector, reputable contractor, or other private building inspection expert) to look at the work for quality and compliance with specifications. The expert can also provide an estimate regarding the fairness of the price for work completed, the extent of physical damage, and its cost to repair.
- Obtain detailed pictures of the work or damage left by the contractor.
- Try to find former employees of the contractor/lender willing to testify as to its practices.
- Try to find other customers of the contractor who suffered similar problems or who encountered similar sales tactics.

Preventative Counseling for Senior Homeowners

Seniors should take the following basic steps to prevent problems:

- Never deal with any door-to-door contractors. Deal with local tradespeople recommended by friends or reputable building supply stores.
- Before agreeing to hire any home improvement contractor, get at least a second estimate for the same work from another contractor.
- Get references for the contractor and speak to those references. Ask about satisfaction and any problems that arose.
- Take a look at other work performed by the same contractor.
- Get a written contract describing explicit specifications of the work, the price (including details of any financing or credit terms), the responsibility for cleaning up, and the hourly rate for any added work. Ask for guarantees and other promises to be made in writing. Do not agree to final payment until the project is finished.
- If the written documents are different from oral promises, do not sign them.
- Remember the 3-day right to cancel that applies to door-to-door sales and home improvement loans even after the papers have been signed.

¹⁴ For more tips, see National Consumer Law Center, Consumer Warranty Law § 16.7.8 (1997).

¹⁵ For a sample client interview sheet, see National Consumer Law Center, Consumer Warranty Law Appendix H.2 (1997).

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- Do not allow a contractor to begin work until financial arrangements to pay for the work are complete.
- Never endorse the check over to the contractor before all work is satisfactorily completed. Note: when a creditor finances a home improvement contract, the payment must be made either to the consumer or in a jointly payable instrument.
- Do not consolidate other debts with a home improvement loan.
- If problems with a contractor or home improvement lender arise, get help from a lawyer or housing counselor immediately.

Model Home Improvement Contractor Statute

State regulation of home improvement contractors varies widely. Not surprisingly, most states have significant gaps in their regulatory framework. In order to address the significant and widespread abuses committed against consumers by dishonest home improvement contractors, NCLC, in collaboration with AARP, drafted a model statute regarding home improvement contractors and summarized the state statutes. To order a copy of AARP's Home Improvement Contractors: A Model State Statute, contact AARP at (202) 434-3912. You can also access it on their web at http://research.aarp.org/consume/d16911_contractors.html.

References for Consumers

National Consumer Law Center, *Surviving Debt: A Guide for Consumers* (3rd ed. 1999)

References for Lawyers

National Consumer Law Center, *Consumer Warranty Law* (1997 and Supp.); National Consumer Law Center, *Repossessions and Foreclosures* (fourth ed. 1999); National Consumer Law Center, *Unfair and Deceptive Acts and Practices* (4th ed. 1997 and Supp.); National Consumer Law Center, *The Cost of Credit* (1995 and Supp.); National Consumer Law Center, *Truth in Lending* (fourth ed. 1999).

About NCLC

Since 1992, NCLC has received funding from the Administration on Aging to conduct the National Legal Resource Initiative for Financially Distressed Older Americans, intended to improve access to and the quality of consumer representation for older Americans. Founded in 1969, NCLC provides legal advocates with technical and expert

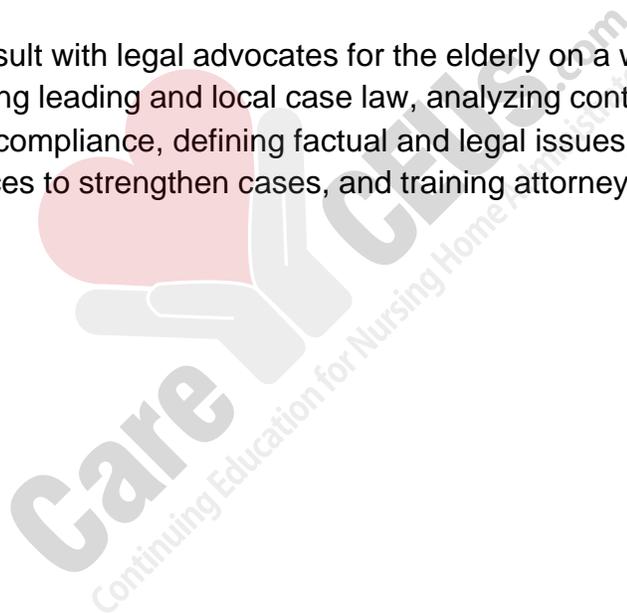
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assistance, training, and publications that cover all major topics in consumer law. NCLC has established itself as the nation's consumer law specialist, making its legal expertise available to the attorneys for low-income clients. These services are now available to advocates representing older Americans.

Making Use of Consumer Law

Consumer law is a powerful shield but is very complex. In any given transaction, several defenses may exist against creditor or seller claims, but detailed research and calculations are required in order to spot defenses. With financially burdened clients, it is important to recognize that the emotional stress caused by indebtedness can impair decision-making or lead to other difficulties beyond the debt crisis. That recognition can help head off other legal problems that could quickly develop.

NCLC is available to consult with legal advocates for the elderly on a wide range of consumer issues, providing leading and local case law, analyzing contract documents for federal and state law compliance, defining factual and legal issues, identifying experts and legal resources to strengthen cases, and training attorneys in consumer law.



Resource I: Links to Emergency Services Websites

U.S. Government website. Consumer guidance on emergency preparedness.

www.ready.gov

US Department of Homeland Security. Develops and coordinates the implementation of a comprehensive national strategy to secure the United States from terrorist threats or attacks. www.dhs.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Primary government website for emergency preparedness and response; Current status of nationally designated emergencies. www.fema.gov

- **FEMA – Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness:** up-to-date information for the public about hazard awareness and emergency education. <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>
- **The Extension Agent's Handbook for Disaster Preparedness and Response.**
For emergencies or as an aid in preparedness education activities. www.fema.gov/txt/library/eprhb.txt

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Disasters and Emergencies. Lead federal agency for health and medical services within the Federal Response Plan. <http://www.dhhs.gov/>. Click on Disasters and Emergencies.

- **Administration on Aging.** Resources, Eldercare Locator, MOU with Red Cross. www.aoa.gov/naic/elderloc.html
- **Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health and Emergency Preparedness and Response.** Information and resources. www.bt.cdc.gov/

US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Homeland Security Council. Guidance for consumers, professionals on food security, emergency preparedness.

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Security_&_Emergency_Preparedness/index.asp

- **USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Food Distribution Division.** Supplies food to disaster relief organizations for mass feeding or household distribution. www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fd-disasters/

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GUIDE:

US Department of Transportation (USDOT), Office of Emergency Transportation.

Coordinated crisis management for multimodal transportation emergencies.

www.its.dot.gov/eto/

Small Business Administration (SBA). Information on disaster recovery, SBA Loans, IFG Grants; Financial assistance for older disaster applicants.

www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/index.html

- How to Apply for SBA Disaster loan Assistance after a Declared Disaster.
http://www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/loaninfo/dloanassit.html
- Disaster Loans for Home and Personal Property
http://www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/loaninfo/property.html

Other Resources

American Red Cross. Guidance and resources for consumers and professionals.

www.redcross.org/more/commserv/seniors.html

- *Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors*
<http://redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/seniors.html>

National Policy and Resource Center Nutrition and Aging. Resources

http://www.fiu.edu/~nutreldr/SubjectList/E/Emergency_Preparedness.htm

Emergency Preparedness Guide For New York City's Aging Service Providers.

Overview; Compact Disc can be customized, Guide includes training sessions.

www.cscs-ny.org/welcome.html

National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness Initiative. to ensure emergency managers address disability concerns; people with disabilities are included in all levels of emergency preparedness- planning, response, and recovery.

<http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=11>

- *Guide for Emergency Managers, Planners & Responders:* comprehensive description of how to help persons with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies. <http://www.nod.org/resources/PDFs/epiguide2005.pdf>

Resource J: Aging Network Staff Disaster Survey

This document could be adapted for use to determine the availability of Aging Network, Area Agency on Aging, and Service Provider staff members for deployment, reassignment and overtime, either within or outside your area, in the event a disaster or other emergency impacts the aging network's mission to deliver services to elders.

Name: _____

Current Position: _____

Agency/PSA: _____

Agency Address: _____

Work Number: _____ Home Number: _____

Cellular Number: _____ E-Mail: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

If your home were to be damaged or destroyed due to a disaster, is there a relative or friend in another part of the county or state with whom you could relocate temporarily or could be contacted in case of an emergency?

Name: _____

Relation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Number: _____ Cellular Number: _____

Resource K: Sample Situation Report

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

SITUATION REPORT (PRE-STORM) EVENT: Tropical Storm Henri

SITUATION REPORT # 2_ DATE/TIME 9/5/03 /1530

SITUATION: Tropical Storm Henri is located about 100 miles due west northwest of Tampa and has become nearly stationary. Henri is still expected to come ashore along the Hernando / Citrus County border around 2:00 AM tomorrow morning with winds around 50 mph.

The entire Tampa Bay remains under a Tropical Storm Warning and a Flood Watch. Flooding remains our major concern. The Little Manatee is predicted to crest on Saturday at 18 feet, 7 feet above flood stage. The Alafia is expected to crest at 15.6 feet at Lithia; this is 2.6 feet above flood stage. A storm surge of 2 to 4 feet is expected. The latest National Weather Service is predicting as much as 6 to 12 inches of rain for the Tampa Bay Area by late Saturday. Although we have not yet experienced heavy rainfall, strong storms are still predicted late tonight and early tomorrow as Henri nears landfall.

At present, the EOC is not planning to open Red Cross or Special Needs Shelters.

Sandbags are available at the 4 Transportation Maintenance units:

West, 9805 W. Sheldon Rd. Phone: 554-5006

Central, 4115 S. 66th St. Phone: 744-5518

East, Turkey Creek & Sydney Roads, Phone: 757-3861

South, 7820 Big Bend Rd. Phone: 671-7619

As a backup, select fire stations are distributing sandbags. Call the EOC at 272-6900 for the locations and phone numbers of the participating fire stations.

The EOC has begun 24-hour operations with EOC staff. Currently, there is no plan to fully activate the EOC. All concerned agencies should closely monitor the situation and be prepared to respond to the possibility of significant flooding over the weekend.

WEATHER INFORMATION

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WEATHER ADVISORY DATE / TIME (Local): 9/05/03 0500 local

STORM POSITION LAT: 28.5 N: LONG: 83.9 W SPEED: Stationary

DIRECTION: E, NE

EYE: DISTANCE FROM TAMPA: 100

STATUTE MILES MAX WINDS: 45 MPH

HURRICANE WINDS, MILES FROM CENTER: n/a

RESPONSE LEVEL: TROP. STORM WARNING FLOOD WATCH until Saturday at 5:00 PM

COUNTY ACTIONS

EOC STATUS: 24 hour OPNS (EOC staff only)

EVACUATION: NONE VOLUNTARY MANDATORY

M/H LEVEL: A B C D E

EVACUATION STATUS:

IN PROGRESS, ESTIMATE % COMPLETE, COMPLETE

STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY DECLARED?

NO YES, AS OF _____

RED CROSS SHELTER STATUS: # OPEN 0 SPECIAL NEEDS / DIALYSIS

SHELTER STATUS: # OPEN 0

COUNTY OFFICES: OPEN TAMPA: OPEN SCHOOLS: OPEN

All Roads and Bridges are open

AIRPORTS: % OPERATIONAL: MACDILL: 100 % TIA: 100 % (expect delays as rainfall and storms intensify)

STATE ACTIONS

STATE EOC STATUS: Level 2, Partial Activation STATE OF EMERGENCY

DECLARED: NO

PROBLEM AREAS / AREAS OF CONCERN: Major problem will be river flooding along Alafia and Little Manatee Rivers and in low lying areas. Low lying coastal areas may see flooding caused by a 2 - 4 foot storm surge.

Resource L: Sample Individual Critical Information Form

Individuals can be asked on a voluntary basis to provide the following information which can be kept with identity papers in wallets, in the home and at the place of employment. Agencies that provide services to clients who are quite dependent on these services, such as home delivered meals providers, may also want this information.

It is recommended that every supervisor ask employees if they can keep a private file of this information on staff.

This information would also be useful for family members to share.

Name:

Home Address:

Home Phone:

Home Fax:

Cell Phone:

Home email:

Emergency Contact:

Name:

Relationship (family member or friend)

Physician:

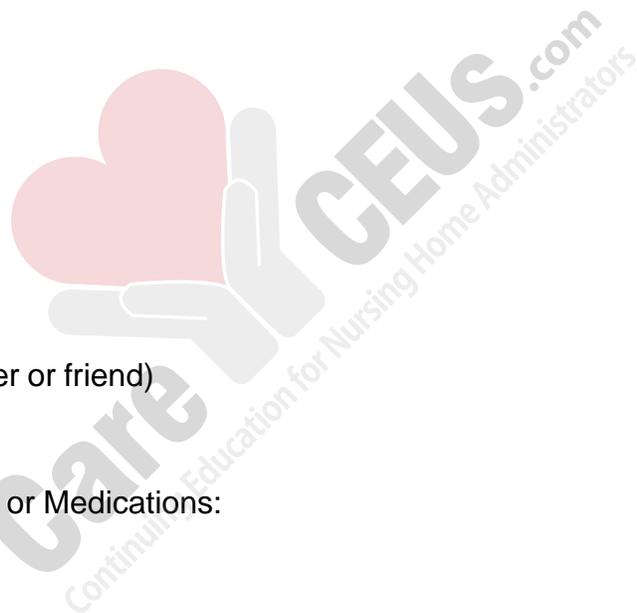
Special Medical Conditions or Medications:

Daytime phone:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Please update this form when the information submitted is no longer accurate.



Resource M: Emergency Backpack Supply List

- Towel
- Fluorescent armbands: can be purchased at most sporting goods stores
- Fluorescent vest: can be purchased at most sporting goods stores
- Ear plugs
- Aspirin
- Goggles for eye protection
- Bottles of water (2)
- Cold packs
- Hot packs
- Mini first-aid kit
- Glucose tablets, and/or hard candy
- Laminated map of exits throughout your building
- Laminated map of streets in local town and city
- Cash
- Two-way radio
- Radio
- Extra batteries for the radio
- Heat blanket
- Glow sticks (4): can be purchased at most toy stores or novelty shops
- CPR mouthpiece: can be purchased at your local Red Cross chapter store or ordered on-line at the American Red Cross website
- Emergency aluminum blankets (2): can be purchased at Army Surplus stores or wherever military field and survival gear is sold
- Rubber gloves
- Wool blanket for extreme cold
- List of employees or staff persons and a pen
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Whistle
- Insect repellent
- Wet wipes

Resource N: Post-Disaster Safety Checklist

Uncertainty about what and what not to do immediately following a disaster can intensify an already critical situation. Different types of disasters may call for different precautions before and during an emergency. Whether natural or man-made, the first priority following a disaster is the personal safety of everyone involved. Post-disaster measures can be taken to increase the safety of individuals affected by a disaster as well as those in positions to offer help. The following information is intended as a guide to protect individuals and their families in the immediate aftermath of disaster. This guide is in no way a comprehensive emergency safety document or plan. Local officials and emergency relief workers will arrive on the scene after a disaster, but depending on the damages, they may not be able to get to everyone quickly. Taking the precautions discussed below could prevent additional injury and damage, protect individuals and families, and make the home safe until help arrives.

For your personal safety:

- Check yourself for injuries immediately following a disaster. You will be better able to care for others if you are uninjured or have taken care of your own first-aid needs.
- Do not venture out until an “all-clear” is broadcast.
- Avoid drinking tap water and/or well water until local emergency management officials declare that the water is safe to drink.
- Avoid contaminated foods.
- Avoid touching fallen or low-hanging wires or trees and objects in contact with or near power lines.
- Avoid using elevators until advised by local emergency management officials that the elevators are safe.
- Beware of roads, bridges, and porches that may have weakened and are at risk of collapsing.
- Turn off all utilities to prevent further damage and minimize future hazards.
- If you are away from home when disaster strikes, do not return home until local officials say that it is safe to return to your dwelling.

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- ☑ Open closet doors and cabinet doors with caution. Contents inside may have shifted and could fall causing further damage or injury.
- ☑ Use the telephone only to report life-threatening situations, and to manage and execute your responsibilities in the disaster.
- ☑ Check out damages in your home using a flashlight. Do not use lights, matches, or candles, and do not turn on electrical switches.





“This course was developed from the public domain document:
Administration on Aging: Emergency Assistance Guide –
Department of Health and Human Services.”