

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

### **Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County**

1100 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33980

Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response

941-624-7200





# PURPOSE

## There's no better time than the present to prepare for the future.

Emergencies can happen anytime, even when you don't expect them. **Are you ready?** Now is a good time to make a plan to help you and your family stay safe.

This guide will help you create a simple emergency plan and prepare for a health emergency. Planning ahead makes it easier to know what to do, where to go, and what to bring.

### Public Health Emergency

Public health emergencies happen when a danger threatens the health of a community. These emergencies are usually declared by the Florida Department of Health or the governor, especially during natural disasters. Information is shared with the public through websites like **FloridaHealth.gov**, **Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov**, **CharlotteCountyFL.gov**, or local media.

Before any type of emergency situation, talk with your health care provider regarding existing medical conditions to make sure your needs are taken care of. Discuss if evacuation or sheltering in place is the safest option for you based on your health needs and the nature of the emergency. If your condition worsens following a disaster, seek medical care right away.

Examples of public health emergencies include:



# DOH-CHARLOTTE SERVICES

Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles and injury prevention, as well as detecting, preventing, and responding to infectious diseases. Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country or state.

By studying data and trends, public health experts create programs and policies that protect the well-being of Florida's residents and visitors.

The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County (DOH-Charlotte) leads the county's key public health efforts, including:

- Clinical Services
- Health Promotion
- Dental Services
- Environmental Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Public Health Preparedness
- Vital Statistics
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program



# DOH-CHARLOTTE SERVICES

## Our Philosophy

### Mission

To protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

### Vision

To be the healthiest state in the nation.

### Values

**Innovation:** We search for creative solutions and manage resources wisely.

**Collaboration:** We use teamwork to achieve common goals and solve problems.

**Accountability:** We perform with integrity and respect.

**Responsiveness:** We achieve our mission by serving our customers and engaging our partners.

**Excellence:** We promote quality outcomes through learning and continuous performance improvement.

## Locations

### Main Office

1100 Loveland Blvd.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980

### Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Englewood (Dental and WIC)

6868 San Casa Drive  
Englewood, FL 34224

### Hours of Operation

- Dental: Tuesday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- WIC: Tuesday, 8:15 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

**941-624-7200**

**[Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov](http://Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov)**



**Joseph D. Pepe, Ed. D., MSA**  
Health Officer  
Florida Department of Health  
in Charlotte County

# DOH-CHARLOTTE SERVICES

## Public Health Preparedness

DOH-Charlotte's Public Health Preparedness Program plans and responds to health needs during emergencies or disasters. They work with hospitals, first responders, and other local partners to make sure medical care continues and people get the help they need before, during, and after a crisis. Through planning, equipping, training, evaluating, and improving, DOH-Charlotte stands as a disaster-ready workforce to assist residents during public health emergencies.

### Response

DOH-Charlotte services may be impacted during emergencies. If the local Emergency Operations Center activates, staff may be called to respond as part of Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF-8), which handles public health and medical needs. This can include operating special needs shelters, distributing disease prevention measures, and more. For updates, visit [Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov](http://Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov).

### Types of Responses

 <b>Special Needs Shelter</b>	 <b>Medication Dispensing</b>	 <b>Mass Casualty</b>
 <b>Emergency Operations Coordination</b>	 <b>Epidemiological Outbreaks</b>	 <b>Environmental Health Concerns</b>

### Recovery

When activated, DOH-Charlotte may close, and regular services or appointments could be delayed or rescheduled. After an emergency, staff works to restore public health services. The timing of reopening depends on how much support the community still needs from public health responders. Once that need decreases, services will be restored.

#### During the recovery period:

- Fewer staff may be available
- Only select services may be offered
- Some appointments or services may be delayed

#### To help serve you better:

- Schedule an appointment if your service allows
- Bring all required paperwork and allow extra time for your visit as wait times may be longer than usual
- Be patient as staff work to support the health and safety of the community during times of recovery

## DOH-Charlotte Post-Disaster Services

### Clinical Services

- Immunization related to disaster preparedness or response (e.g. injuries requiring tetanus immunization)

### Community Health Promotion

- Public health risk communication messaging
- Community outreach on disaster recovery information

### Dental Services

- Children's dental services and emergency dental for adults

### Environmental Public Health

- Food safety inspections of group homes, shelters, schools, assisted living facilities, and disaster recovery sites
- Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS) assessments and repair inspections
- Private well testing
- Pool inspections and closures
- Foodborne and waterborne disease outbreak monitoring
- Sanitary nuisance complaint investigations
- Beach water sampling

### Epidemiology

- Disease surveillance and investigation of cases from hazards to prevent outbreaks

### Public Health Preparedness

- ESF-8 public health and medical coordination with local emergency management
- Mobilizing public health responders for threats affecting community health status

### Vital Statistics

- Birth and death certificates

### Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- Nutrition education and services
- Prenatal, new infant, migrant, and homeless certifications
- Direct distribution of medical-grade formula
- High-risk appointments
- Benefit issuances
- Laboratory work

# SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER

## Special Needs

The Charlotte County Special Needs Shelter is a shelter of last resort for people with medical needs that exceed the capabilities of a general shelter. The shelter provides for safety and limited basic medical needs assistance during an emergency.



**Advance  
Registration  
is Required**

[SNR.FLHealthResponse.com](https://SNR.FLHealthResponse.com)

To pre-register, visit [SNR.FLHealthResponse.com](https://SNR.FLHealthResponse.com), or contact Charlotte County Emergency Management:

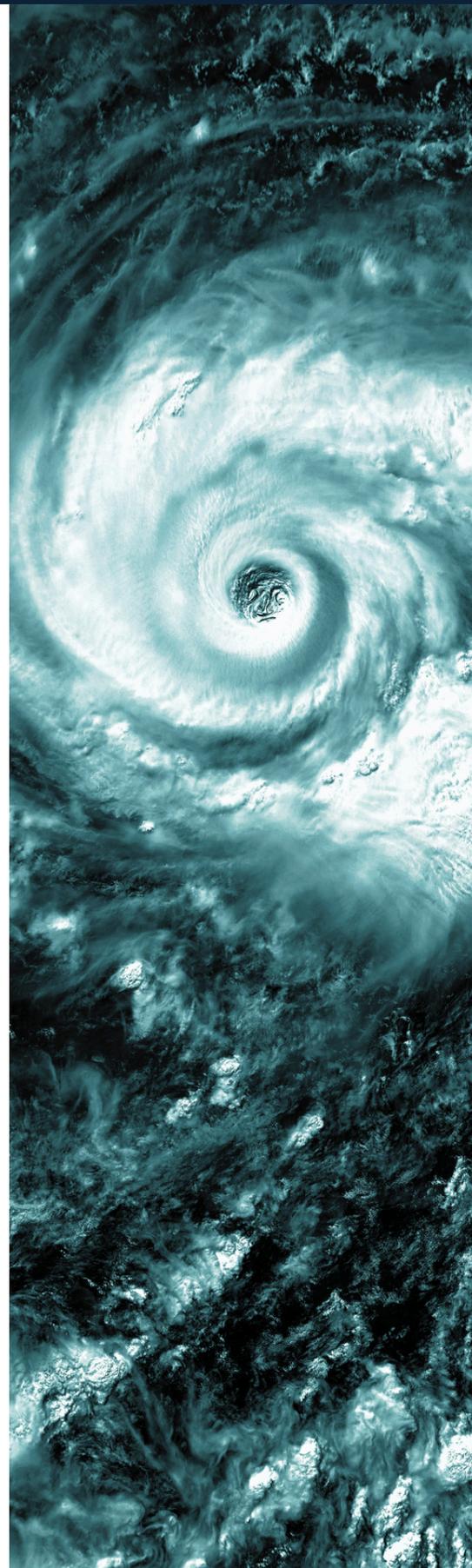
- 941-833-4000
- [Emergency.Management@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Emergency.Management@CharlotteCountyFL.gov)

Completion of an application does not guarantee the availability of a shelter or medical treatment during an event. Whenever possible, alternate plans for evacuation that do not include public shelters should be made.

### Special Needs Shelter Eligibility

- 24/7 oxygen dependence below 8L/minute
- Use an electricity dependent durable medical equipment device
- Have cognitive impairments such as Alzheimer's, dementia, or Parkinson's

**For questions regarding your medical eligibility for the special needs shelter, please call DOH-Charlotte at 941-624-7200.**



# SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER

Before an emergency threatens the state, have a plan in place. People with unique abilities or special needs may face obstacles that require more detailed planning. Here are recommendations that may assist you!

## DETERMINE SHELTER OPTIONS

Obtain emergency preparedness information from state and local agencies. If your community shelter cannot accommodate your needs, you will need to go to a special needs shelter, which provides a level of medical care appropriate for your condition.

Speak with your physician regarding practical plans for your safety. If you receive regular treatments, consult your service provider regarding their plans for continuing services during an emergency.

## SIGN UP FOR FLORIDA SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRY

Florida emergency management services keeps a current database of individuals with disabilities or special needs. Contact your local office and advise them of your specific needs. Each county has its own process and forms for registration, and many forms are downloadable from websites. You must update your form annually to be certain your information is up to date.



Go to [floridadisaster.org/shelters](http://floridadisaster.org/shelters) for information regarding special needs registration by county.

## REGISTER FOR VITAL SERVICES

Make certain you or a loved one are included in your county's Special Needs Registry.

If you must have electricity for your medical needs, or have a condition that cannot be provided for at a general population shelter, you should pre-register for your county's special needs emergency sheltering and transportation program.

If you require transportation to your assigned location, make these arrangements in advance.



## PREPARE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Have a list of people in your Personal Support Network, including contact information for each. These individuals should all be aware of your functional abilities and limitations.

Create a document with all current health information (medical conditions, doctors, insurance policy numbers, hospital preferences, list of all medications, etc.).

## PREPARE EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Place identification labels on all medical support equipment you plan on taking to the shelter with you.

Collect your emergency equipment early.

Have at least a 3-day supply of bottled water (one gallon per day per person) and non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food.

Keep a 7-day supply of any prescription or non-prescription medications on hand.\*

If you can drive, fill up your car's gas tank.

## ARRANGE FOR SERVICE ANIMALS

Service animals are allowed in shelters if they meet requirements. It must have a collar with identification, proof of up-to-date vaccinations, and written instructions for the animal's care. You are responsible for care of your service animal during your shelter stay.



\*Florida law allows you to obtain a 30-day refill of prescription medications regardless of the date of the last refill so long as you reside in a county that is under a hurricane warning, a state of emergency declared by the governor, or has activated its Emergency Operations Center.

# BEFORE THE STORM SAFETY

LEARN MORE: [weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness](http://weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness)

## IF YOU MUST EVACUATE

**Have a plan** in place for evacuation. Know the location of your nearest public evacuation shelter.

**Special needs shelters** are for those with disabilities or who require medical care that exceeds basic first aid.

Know the location of the special needs shelter closest to you.

**Bring change of clothing:** rain gear, toiletries, sleeping bags, blankets, pillows, books and any special dietary needs.

**Have a pet?** Make sure your shelter accepts them. Have a leash and collar, two weeks of food and water, bowls, a crate and medications ready, along with veterinary records. For cats, kitty litter and an appropriate container.

**Fill your car with gas** as soon as possible. Power outages will prevent gas pumps from working.

**Charge your cell phone** and any other electronic devices you may need.

**Have some cash** and important papers, like insurance policies, in a waterproof folder or container.



## PERSONAL HEALTH

An ANSI-compliant first aid kit that includes:



Compresses



Adhesive Bandages



First Aid Tape

Have a 30-day supply of any **prescription medications** you or your family requires on a daily basis.

**Prepare a list** of your family's doctors' names and contact information.

Also include a list of **personal medical conditions** for appropriate family members in case of emergency.

**For pets** that require specific medications, have a 30-day supply on hand.



Antiseptic Wipes



Gauze



Pain Relievers  
(Aspirin, Acetaminophen  
or Ibuprofen)



Hand Sanitizer



Latex Gloves



## EVACUATION ✓ LIST

- Shelter location
- Special needs shelter location
- Change of clothing
- Rain gear
- Toiletries
- Sleeping bags, blankets, pillows
- Books or other reading material
- Special dietary needs
- Pet supplies and medication
- Car filled with gas
- Charged cell phone
- Cash and important papers

## PERSONAL HEALTH ✓ LIST

- First aid kit (ANSI-certified)
- 30-day supply of medications
- Doctor contact information
- List of medical conditions
- Pet medications

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# PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

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# PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness is the protective actions that you and your family can take before a disaster or emergency situation occurs. To protect the health and safety of you and your loved ones during emergencies, the key is to be prepared.

## 1

### Gather Important Documents

Your cell phone may not work during an emergency. That is why it is smart to write down important phone numbers such as your family, doctor, school, etc., and keep them in a safe place. This way, you can still reach people even if your phone does not work.

#### Pack Important Papers

If you ever have to leave your home quickly in an emergency, take important papers with you. Examples of important papers include:

- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Insurance documentation
- Medical records

Put these papers in a strong box with a lock so they stay safe. Keep the box somewhere easy to grab in case you need to leave fast.

## 2

### Assess Your Situation

Before you make an emergency plan, write down the items you need to live your daily life. Then think about how you would take care of those items to support your needs during an emergency.

Needs may include transportation, electricity, dietary restrictions, caregiving duties, assistive devices, medication refill, fixing your house to make it safer, landscape trimming, etc.

During an emergency, these needs may become even more important. Planning ahead helps you stay safe and ready.

# PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

## 3

### Know Your Risk

Become familiar with the hazards that may affect your community to help inform your decision making before, during, and after emergencies. Below are Charlotte County's top hazards that may impact the area and your health.

- **Hurricanes:** Charlotte County is at increased risk for hurricanes during Atlantic Hurricane Season (June 1 - November 30) and high risk for flooding during severe weather, especially in its low-lying areas of Evacuation Zone A.
- **Tornadoes:** There has been a total of 65 tornadoes in Charlotte County since 1950.
- **Heat:** Charlotte County can experience extreme heat due to long summers and high humidity. Peak temperatures in Charlotte County can be in the mid-90s in the summer months.
- **Wildfires:** Charlotte County experiences brush fires annually with the highest risk being January through May during the dry season.

## 4

### Gather Your Supplies

Do you have all the supplies you need to shelter in place in an emergency? What if you need to evacuate? View our recommended kit items in this guide to ensure you have everything you need for any emergency.

Be sure your kit is in a temperature-controlled environment and in a watertight container to prevent items from becoming damaged. Check these items annually to be sure they have not expired.

Take advantage of Florida's Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Exemption to get the items you need at a discounted price. Visit the Florida Department of Emergency Management's website for more information.

# PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS



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## Know Your Resources

Knowing where to get important information can help you act fast and stay safe during a disaster.

Review the available emergency preparedness resources on [FloridaHealth.gov](http://FloridaHealth.gov), [Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov](http://Charlotte.FloridaHealth.gov), and [CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://CharlotteCountyFL.gov). These websites are critical to make sure you are prepared to protect your health and safety during emergencies.

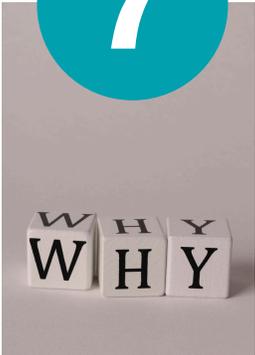


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## Plan, Communicate, and Practice

If you do not have a plan for emergencies, now is a great time to make one. Use the following pages to make a plan to help your family talk about what to do during a disaster.

After you make your plan, share it with family members who do not live with you. This helps them know how to reach you during an emergency. Make copies of your plan and keep the copies in easy to find place like your emergency kit and car. Practice your plan once a year so your family knows what to do and can act quickly if you need to leave your home. Please note, do not include passwords, credit card and bank account numbers or other sensitive information on your personal plan document.



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## Why Should I Prepare?

- Keep you and your family safe
- Limit property damage
- Enable quicker decisions and actions
- Keep yourself informed
- Ensure you have everything you need when you need it most
- Make sure you know how to reach help if needed

# MY PERSONAL PLAN

Please note, do not include passwords, credit card and bank account numbers or other sensitive information on your personal plan document

GENERAL	
<b>Home Address</b>	
<b>Evacuation Zone Color/Zone Letter</b>	
<b>Neighbor Name/Address/Phone Number</b>	
<b>Landlord Name/Phone Number</b>	
<b>Closest Gas Station/Address</b>	

## STEPS TO PREPARE HOME BEFORE EVACUATING

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

# MY PERSONAL PLAN

Please note, do not include passwords, credit card and bank account numbers or other sensitive information on your personal plan document

HOME INFORMATION		
Name	Account Number	Phone Number
Electric		
Water		
HVAC		
Landline Phone		
Additional Information		

# MY PERSONAL PLAN

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

INSURANCE		
Insurance Type	Policy Number	Phone Number
Homeowner's		
Renter's		
Flood		
Auto		
Medical		
Pet		

MEDICAL	
Primary Care Office	
Primary Care Physician	
Address	
Phone Number	
Other	

# MY PERSONAL PLAN

## EVACUATION PLANS

My family will be evacuating if the storm severity is a category (circle):

**Tropical Storm**      1                      2                      3                      4                      5

EVACUATING FAMILY MEMBERS	
Name	Relationship

PETS		
Name/Type	Medications	Microchip Number and Collar Color

EVACUATION OPTIONS			
	Address	Transportation	Point of Contact
1			Name: Phone Number:
2			Name: Phone Number:
3			Name: Phone Number:

# MY PERSONAL PLAN

## COMMUNICATION PLAN

PERSONAL	
<b>Mobile</b>	
<b>Work Mobile</b>	
<b>Home Phone</b>	
<b>Other:</b>	

INTERNAL HOUSEHOLD		
	Name	Point of Contact
1		Cell Phone Number: Other Number:
2		Cell Phone Number: Other Number:
3		Cell Phone Number: Other Number:

IN-STATE FAMILY			
	Name	Address	Phone Number
1			
2			
3			

OUT-OF-STATE FAMILY MEMBER		
Name	Address	Phone Number

# EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST

## SHELTER IN PLACE/ EVACUATION KIT

### SUPPLIES

- First aid kit
- 2-week supply of medications
- Flashlight
- Batteries and portable phone charger
- Cash
- 7-days of water and non-perishable food
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper products (plates, bowls, utensils, etc.)
- Tarp/plastic sheeting
- Water purification tablets
- Fire extinguisher
- Disinfecting products
- 7-days of clothing
- Rain gear (coats and boots)
- Spare keys
- Spare glasses and contacts
- Personal hygiene supplies
- Bedding (sleeping bag/cot/blanket/pillows)
- Cooler
- Mosquito repellent
- Weather radio
- Food and beverage storage containers
- Trash bags
- Health supplies (tissues, thermometer, medicine, etc.)

### IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Insurance policies and cards
- Banking account information
- Medical records
- Social Security cards
- Birth/marriage certificates

### SENIORS

- Hearing aid with batteries
- Mobility device (walker, cane, wheelchair, etc.)
- Incontinence products
- Glasses
- Dentures
- List of doctors, medical suppliers, specialists, and medications with dosage

### PETS

- Carrier/crate
- Food/treats
- Shot records
- Leash
- Water
- Cleaning products





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