

PERSONS WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

To ensure personal safety in emergency situations, persons with disabilities, children under the age of 15, seniors over the age of 65, people who are under medical care or adult supervision, and people who speak English as a second language should observe the following guidelines in advance of an emergency:

- If you are having an emergency, call 911.
- Pre-planning and notifying your friends, neighbors, or co-workers of the type of assistance you may need during an emergency will increase the likelihood of a positive outcome. Although you may best know your abilities during an emergency, others trying to help may not. It is up to you to let them know if you need assistance.
- For people with access and functional needs, it is extremely important to have an emergency kit that meets your specific needs, including medical supplies and support items. Emergency evacuation and even shelter-in-place responses could mean being isolated for several hours and even days. Access to critical supplies may not be possible, so make sure you have them in your emergency kit. And have three emergency kits: at home, at work or school, and one in your usual transport vehicle, if possible.
- During fire emergencies, immediate and complete evacuations of the building are preferred if they can be accomplished in a safe manner. If immediate and complete evacuation is not possible, try to get to a safe area, such as an enclosed stairwell, until emergency personnel arrive and can assist in completing the evacuation. Before emergencies strike, work with emergency personnel to pre-identify “safe evacuation areas” in your building or home. Should an emergency occur, notify emergency personnel of your location and the type of assistance you require.
- If you are with others, ask for evacuation assistance or help in getting to a safe location.
- In the event of a tornado warning, shelter-in-place by immediately moving to the lowest possible floor of the building, preferably to a room or hallway with no windows. Be sure to request assistance from your friends, neighbors, roommates, or significant other, if needed.

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- In the event of a chemical, biological or radiological event, be sure to follow instructions from first responders and/or the county emergency alert system, Alert Prince George's. Sign up for emergency alerts at <http://alertmypgc.us>. If we can't reach you, we can't alert you!
- Got a service animal? Make sure your emergency kits include necessary items for your service animal, including food, water, medicines, and waste disposal items.
- Need help in drafting your emergency plan? Go to www.ready.gov and use the "Family Emergency Plan" template. The template will provide a step by step guide in developing your written emergency plan. The website does not save your personal information, so be sure to save the file to your laptop, computer, or personal device.

Pre-planning is essential to being safe before, during and after emergencies. If you have an access or functional need, you best know your skills and abilities during an emergency. Additionally, timely and accurate emergency information is critical to responding to the event in the best way possible. If you need to be evacuated, help yourself and rescuers by providing them with information about your needs and the best ways to assist you. Build a kit, make a plan, and stay informed!