

Family Preparedness Information for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

This checklist will help you take steps to lessen the impact of a pandemic on you and your family. Many of these steps are good advice during any disaster, including a flood or tornado.

Being prepared at home

Store water, food and other essentials

Prepare to get by for at least a week on what you have at home. When ill or sheltered in place you may be unable to get to a store, or stores may not be open or may have limited supplies for weeks. Public services may also be disrupted, so be prepared with extra supplies of essential items such as nonperishable food and batteries. They can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and natural disasters.

Examples of nonperishable food:

- Canned meats, such as tuna, chicken, turkey and Vienna sausage
- Canned beans, fruits, vegetables and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Dried fruit
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Nuts and trail mix
- Crackers
- Comfort food, including cookies, candy, instant coffee and tea bags
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Baby formula and canned or jarred baby food

Examples of other emergency supplies:

- Pet food and cat litter
- Disposable diapers
- Feminine supplies
- Flashlight
- Portable radio
- Batteries for flashlights, radios, games and thermometers
- Manual can opener
- Plastic garbage bags
- Tissues and toilet paper
- Entertainment, including games, crafts, books, movies, etc.
- Supplies for people with special needs, such as the elderly or disabled
- Some extra cash

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Make household emergency plans

- Prepare for possible changes in healthcare. For example, medical advice and healthcare may be more difficult to obtain during a pandemic and healthcare providers and medical facilities may be overwhelmed. There may not be enough medical supplies, healthcare providers and hospital beds for all people who are ill.
- Decisions about who receives medical care and how much treatment can be administered might become a likelihood. Talk about these possibilities with your family and loved ones.
- In a pandemic, you may be advised to stay away from others and from public places as much as possible. Plan to limit the number of trips you take to shop or run errands. Also, remember public transportation routes and times may be limited.
- Think about how you would care for people in your family who have disabilities or limitations if support services are not available.
- Decide who will take care of children if schools are closed.
- For general preparedness, agree on a point of contact where all family members can check in if you are separated during any emergency.

Store sufficient medical and health supplies

Get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs. Ask your healthcare provider for a prescription. If your insurance will not agree to cover the extra supply, you may need to pay out of pocket. Keep health supplies and nonprescription drugs on hand.

Examples of medical and health supplies:

- Prescribed medicines and supplies, such as insulin, glucose meters and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water
- Alcohol-based hand cleaner
- Medicines for fever and pain, such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen
- Diarrhea remedy, such as Pepto-Bismol® or Kaopectate® (not generally recommended for children)
- Throat lozenges
- Cough syrup containing Dextromethorphan
- Thermometer(s)
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes, like Gatorade® and Pedialyte® (preferred for small children)

Being prepared at work

Prepare to stay home:

- Staying at home from work when you are sick is the most important thing you can do to protect others.

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Know policies:

- Ask your employer or union about sick leave and policies about absences, time off and teleworking.

Encourage planning:

- Every business, organization and agency should have a plan to ensure essential work can get done if large numbers of employees are absent over many months. You may be asked to perform duties that are not typically part of your job.

Explore other ways to get your work done:

Find ways to reduce personal contact, such as increased use of emails or phone conferences. Plan to work from home whenever possible. Be sure you can access your electronic documents.

Preparedness in your community

Know your neighbors:

- Talk with family, friends and neighbors to make sure everyone is prepared. Be ready to help neighbors who are elderly or have special needs if services they depend on are not available.

Know school policies:

- Know policies about illness and being absent. Be prepared for school closures.

Volunteer with community groups:

- Assist with planning for emergency response to disasters and pandemics.

Prevent the spread of the virus:

- Stay home from work and school when you are sick.
- Stay away from others as much as possible when they are sick.
- Wash hands frequently. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing. Try using the crook of your elbow or your shoulder for cover, instead of hands.
- Throw away used tissues right away. If you use tissues to cover your cough or blow your nose, dispose of them in the nearest waste bin immediately after use, then wash hands.
- Set an example for your children. Show them how to limit the spread of viruses and germs.

Resources

- For the most up-to-date information, visit www.cdc.gov/covid19.
- For more information about COVID-19 in Louisiana, visit www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus.