

Emergency Preparedness Guide

for People with Disabilities

ontario.ca/BePrepared



Ontario



Acknowledgements

This Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities was prepared by Emergency Management Ontario in partnership with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

In order to produce a guide that promotes the values and protects the integrity, independence, and safety of all Ontarians, the following organizations were consulted for their subject matter expertise and insights, for which we are most appreciative:

- Diabetes Canada
- Canadian Hearing Society (now: Canadian Hearing Services)
- Canadian Red Cross
- Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT)
- CNIB Foundation
- Global Affairs Canada
- Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
- MedicAlert Foundation Canada
- Ministry of Community and Social Services Emergency Management Unit (now: Ministry of the Solicitor General)
- Ministry of Government Services (now: Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery)
- Ministry of Seniors Affairs (now: Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility)
- Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Toronto Chapter and Ontario Division
- National Organization on Disability (US)
- Office of the Fire Marshal
- Ontario March of Dimes Canada
- Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- SOS Emergency Response Technologies
- Spinal Cord Injury Ontario
- St. Demetrius Development Corporation
- Toronto Rehabilitation Institute

Emergency Management Ontario

Treasury Board Secretariat
ontario.ca/BePrepared

Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

ontario.ca/page/accessibility-in-ontario

Since not every emergency situation is similar or predictable, every person should rely on and use their best judgement when offering assistance to others in an emergency, without putting their own or other people's safety at risk.

© King's Printer for Ontario 2023

All material created in this guide is protected by Crown Copyright, which is held by the King's Printer for Ontario. No materials can be reproduced or copied in part or in whole without the expressed written permission of the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Contents

Introduction	4
Emergency preparedness kit	5
Service animal emergency kit	6
Important considerations	7
Categories	
 Mobility	10
 Vision	12
 Hearing	14
 Non-visible disabilities	16
 High-rise safety	19
 Travel considerations	21
For more information	22

Introduction

Emergencies can occur suddenly and without advance warning. Although Ontario has effective emergency management legislation and programs, individuals and households play a vital role in preparing for times of crisis when emergency services and other government resources may be strained. It is important that individuals and any members of their household prepare to be self-reliant for at least three (3) days during or immediately after an emergency. This guide provides emergency preparedness considerations and advice for the estimated 2.6 million Ontarians with disabilities.¹

Prepare Now

Develop and practice an emergency response plan and prepare an emergency preparedness kit. Individuals with a physical, visual, auditory and/or other non-visible disability, emergency preparedness should incorporate accommodations into their emergency response plan. To best prepare for an emergency according to one's needs, please refer to the appropriate category in this guide for a list of suggested emergency preparedness kit items and contingency planning considerations.

For more information on emergency management arrangements in your area, contact your municipal Emergency Management Coordinator through your local government office.

Using this Guide

This guide covers topics relevant to the emergency preparedness needs of people with visible and/or non-visible disabilities.

- Disabilities are identified as separate categories according to colour and a symbol shown on the top right-hand corner of each page.
- Each category provides information on how individuals should prepare for an emergency given their distinct needs, how the public can best assist a person with a disability, and additional suggested emergency kit items.
- The last page is an additional contact information resource for the reader.
- Copies of this guide are available in both English and French, in HTML, and in alternative formats upon request. Please contact:

Emergency Management Ontario

Tel: 416-326-8525

Email: AskEMO@ontario.ca

Ontario Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility

Tel: 416-326-7076 (Seniors' INFOline)

Toll-free: 1-888-910-1999

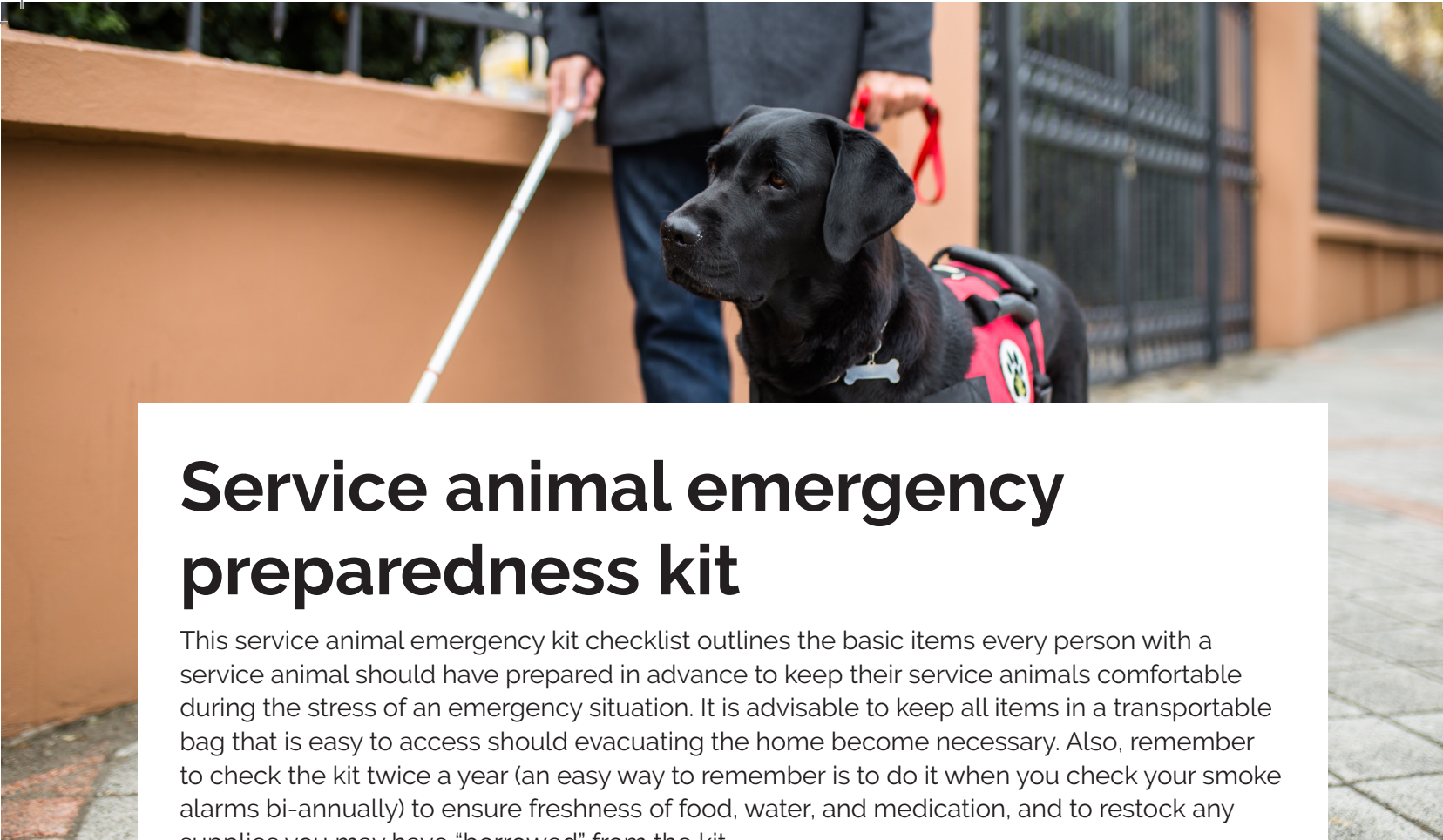
Toll-free TTY: 1-800-387-5559

¹ This statistic is from a 2017 survey.



This emergency preparedness kit checklist outlines the basic items every individual should keep in an easy-to-reach place to help them be self-reliant for at least three (3) days during or immediately after an emergency. Since emergency supply requirements vary for individuals with different disabilities, please refer to the appropriate category in this guide for additional suggested preparedness kit items.

- ☐ food (non-perishable and easy-to-prepare items, enough for three days) and a manual can opener
- ☐ water (4 litres per person for each day) and backup water purification tablets
- ☐ medication(s) with a list identifying reason (e.g., medical condition), dosage, frequency, and contact information of prescribing physician and other third party supports if applicable
- ☐ extra glasses or contact lenses and solution (if applicable)
- ☐ first-aid kit
- ☐ toilet paper and other personal items
- ☐ hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- ☐ personal protective equipment (PPE) such as medical masks and respirators
- ☐ flashlight or headlamp and glow stick
- ☐ radio (crank or battery-run)
- ☐ extra batteries
- ☐ back up chargers/power banks for cell phone or mobile device
- ☐ candles and matches/lighter
- ☐ whistle or personal alarm (to attract attention, if needed)
- ☐ zip-lock bag (to keep things dry)
- ☐ garbage bags
- ☐ duct tape
- ☐ extra car and house keys
- ☐ cash in small bills
- ☐ important papers (copy of your emergency plan, identification, contact lists, copies of prescriptions, copy of your medical insurance and medical records, etc.)
- ☐ MedicAlert® bracelet or identification (if applicable)



Service animal emergency preparedness kit

This service animal emergency kit checklist outlines the basic items every person with a service animal should have prepared in advance to keep their service animals comfortable during the stress of an emergency situation. It is advisable to keep all items in a transportable bag that is easy to access should evacuating the home become necessary. Also, remember to check the kit twice a year (an easy way to remember is to do it when you check your smoke alarms bi-annually) to ensure freshness of food, water, and medication, and to restock any supplies you may have “borrowed” from the kit.

Pet owners:

While service animals are accepted at shelters in an emergency, family pets may not. It is recommended for pet owners have prior arrangements made with family or friends to take care of their animal, should evacuating the home be necessary during an emergency. Therefore, it is advisable for pet owners to prepare a similar emergency kit for each family pet according to the needs of each animal (e.g., cat, rabbit, bird, etc.). In the case of cats, include a cat carrier, litter pan, litter, scooper, and plastic bags. For additional information on pets and emergencies, please visit the Emergency Management Ontario website at ontario.ca/EMO.

Service animal emergency kit checklist

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Minimum 3-day supply of bottled/bagged water and pet food | ☐ Muzzle (if required) |
| ☐ Portable water and food bowls | ☐ Blanket and favourite toy |
| ☐ Paper towels and can opener | ☐ Waste bags |
| ☐ Medications with a list identifying reason (e.g., medical condition), dosage, frequency and contact information of prescribing veterinarian | ☐ Up-to-date ID tag with your phone number and the name/phone number of your veterinarian (microchipping is also recommended) |
| ☐ Medical records including vaccinations | ☐ Current photo of your service animal in case they get lost or separated from you |
| ☐ Leash/harness | ☐ Copy of licence (if required) |

Important considerations

Remember...

- The emergency preparedness kit items listed in this guide are only a suggestion and may or may not apply to every emergency situation and/or person's specific disability. Therefore, you should decide which essential items to include for yourself and your household members.
- During an emergency, you may have no electrical power.
- During an emergency, you may need to go to an emergency evacuation shelter. It is recommended that you and your household have a designated contact person that resides outside of your immediate community. This way, in the event of an evacuation, you can easily notify each other by calling their designated contact person.
- Pack and store all emergency preparedness items (including medications, medical supplies and/or assistive devices) in an easy-to-access and easy-to-transport container should you need to evacuate.
- Select a network of individuals at work and at home that will be able to assist you during an emergency. Make sure you inform your network of where you keep your emergency preparedness kit.
- Prepare a list of any food or drug allergies you might have and all the medications you are taking. You may want to provide this list to your designated network and also keep a copy in your emergency preparedness kit, on your person, at home, at your workplace, and in your car (if applicable).
- On your list of medications, specify the reason for each medicine that you are taking (e.g., medical condition being treated) including the generic name, dosage, frequency, and the name and contact information of the prescribing physician, and any additional third-party support if applicable.
- If you have children with a disability, prepare a similar list for each of your children and provide it to their caregiver, school, emergency contact members, etc.
- If you have an allergy, chronic medical condition, or individual medical need, you may want to consider owning and wearing a MedicAlert® bracelet or identification as part of your emergency preparedness plan. For more information, visit: medicalert.ca.

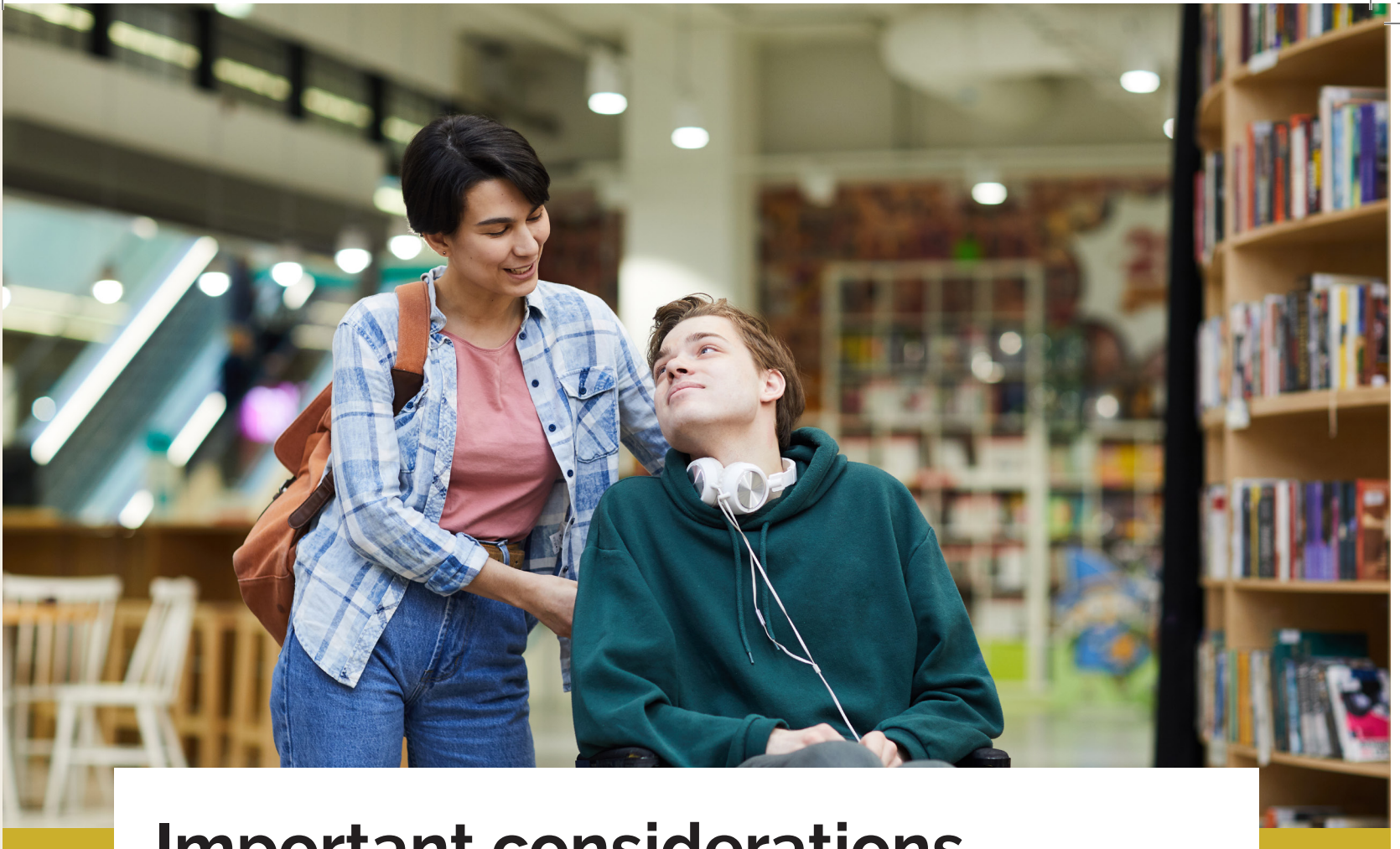


Important considerations

Remember...

- Regularly check expiration dates on all medications, bottled/bagged water, and canned/package food in your emergency preparedness kit. It is best to replace food and water at least once a year.
- Prepare a contact information list of all your emergency contact persons and provide a copy to your designated network at work and/or home.
- Provide written instructions for your network on how best to assist you and your service animal (if applicable) during an emergency.
- Label all of your assistive devices and equipment, and attach laminated instruction cards on how to use, retrieve and/or move each assistive device during an emergency.
- Since your medications, assistive devices, etc. may change over time, it is advisable for you to regularly assess your needs and incorporate any changes to your emergency preparedness kit supplies and your emergency plan.
- If your personal needs require regular attendant care and/or life sustaining apparatus, arrange with your network to check on you immediately if an emergency occurs or if local officials issue an evacuation order.
- If you rely on any life sustaining equipment/apparatus, develop an emergency back-up plan that will ensure the equipment/apparatus works in the event of a power outage.
- Carry a personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts.
- Install working smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas.
- Test alarms monthly by pushing the test button. Replace batteries once a year or whenever the low battery warning sounds.
- Install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms outside all sleeping areas if your home has a fuel-burning appliance, fireplace or attached garage.
- Develop and practice a home fire escape plan or refer to your building's fire safety plan so that everyone in your home knows what to do in the event of a fire.
- Employers have requirements related to providing individualized/accessible emergency planning information to their employees with disabilities. For details, visit: ontario.ca/page/How-Provide-Accessible-Emergency-Information-Staff.
- Practice your emergency plan with your network at least twice a year.
- If during an emergency your support network cannot assist you for whatever reason, ask other individuals around you to help you. Remember to inform them of your individual needs and how they can best offer any assistance to you.





Important considerations

Helping a person with a disability

- Ask first if the person needs or wants your help – do not just assume that they do.
- Allow the person to identify how best to assist them.
- Do not touch the person, their service animal and/or their assistive device/equipment without their permission.
- Follow instructions posted on their equipment and/or assistive device during an emergency.
- Avoid attempts to lift, support, or assist in moving someone unless you are familiar with safe techniques.
- Never administer any food or liquids to an unconscious or unresponsive person.
- Be aware that some people who have disabilities may request that you use latex-free gloves to reduce spread of viral infection to them.
- Ask the person if areas of their body have reduced sensation and if they need you to check those areas for injuries after a disaster.



Mobility limitations

Mobility limitations may make it difficult for a person to use stairs or to move quickly over long distances. Limitations can include reliance on mobility devices such as a wheelchair, scooter, walker, crutches or a walking cane. In addition, people with a heart condition or various respiratory difficulties can experience certain levels of mobility limitations.

Emergency plan for mobility:

- Ask your network to practice moving your assistive devices and equipment during your emergency practice plan. This will help your network become more comfortable handling or using your equipment during an emergency.
- If you use a wheelchair or scooter, request that an emergency evacuation chair be stored near a stairwell on the same floor that you work or live on, so that your network can readily use it to help you safely evacuate the building.
- In your instruction list for your network, identify areas of your body that have reduced sensation so these areas can be checked for injuries after an emergency, if you cannot check them yourself.
- Check with your local municipal office to find out if emergency evacuation shelters in your area are wheelchair accessible.

Dos & don'ts

for mobility assistance

Dos

- ✓ Use latex-free gloves when providing personal care whenever possible. For example, people with spinal cord injuries have a greater risk of developing an infectious disease during an emergency. Gloves help control secondary medical conditions that can easily arise if personal care is disrupted during an emergency.
- ✓ Ensure that the person's wheelchair goes with the person.

Don'ts

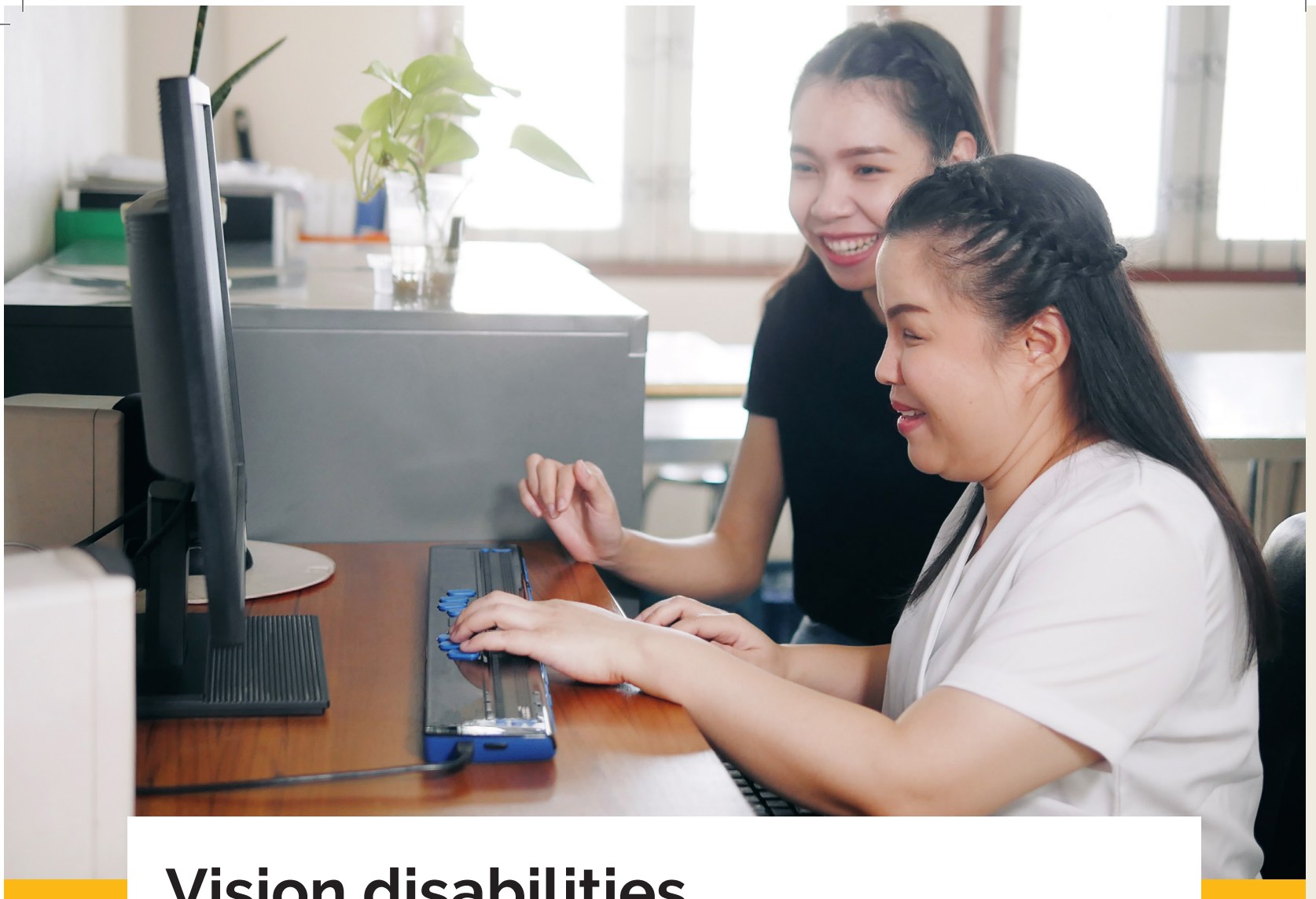
- ✗ Do not push or pull a person's wheelchair without their permission.



Additional emergency preparedness kit items for mobility



- ☐ Tire patch kit.
- ☐ Can of seal-in-air product (to repair flat tires on your wheelchair or scooter).
- ☐ Supply of inner tubes.
- ☐ Pair of heavy gloves (to protect your hands while wheeling or making your way over glass or other sharp debris).
- ☐ Latex-free gloves (for anyone providing personal care to you).
- ☐ Spare deep-cycle battery for motorized wheelchair or scooter.
- ☐ A lightweight manual wheelchair for backup to a motorized wheelchair (if feasible).
- ☐ Spare catheters (if applicable).
- ☐ An emergency back-up plan that will ensure any life sustaining equipment/apparatus is operable in the event of a power outage.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your individual needs.



Vision disabilities

Vision loss can include a broad range of conditions ranging from complete blindness to partial or low vision that cannot be corrected with lenses or surgery. A person's ability to read signs or move through unfamiliar environments during an emergency may be challenged, creating a feeling of being lost and/or being dependent on others for guidance.

Emergency plan for vision:

- Have a long cane available to readily manoeuvre around debris on the floor or furniture that may have shifted after an emergency.
- Mark all emergency supplies in advance with fluorescent tape, large print or in braille. Mark gas, water and electric shutoff valves in advance with fluorescent tape, large print or in braille.
- Familiarize yourself in advance with all escape routes and locations of emergency doors/exits on each floor of any building where you work, live and/or visit. Include these locations in the emergency plan you share with your support network.

Dos & don'ts

for vision assistance

Dos

- ✓ Always ask first if you can be of assistance to them.
- ✓ For people who are deaf-blind, use your finger to draw an "X" on their back to let them know you are there to help during an emergency.
- ✓ To communicate with a deaf-blind person, try tracing letters with your finger on the palm of their hand.
- ✓ To guide the person, offer them your arm instead of taking theirs and walk at their pace. Keep half a step ahead of them.
- ✓ If the person has a service dog, ask them where you should walk to avoid distracting the animal.
- ✓ Provide advance warning of upcoming stairs, curbs, major obstacles, or changes in direction.
- ✓ Watch for overhangs or protrusions the person could walk into.

Don'ts

- ✗ Do not assume the person cannot see you, or that they need your help.
- ✗ Never grab or touch a person with vision loss.
- ✗ Do not touch, make eye contact or distract the person's service dog as this can seriously endanger the owner.
- ✗ Do not shout at a person with vision loss. Speak clearly and provide specific and precise directions.
- ✗ Avoid the phrase "over there". Instead, describe locating positions such as, "to your right/left/straight ahead/ behind you", or by relaying clock face positions (for example: 12 o'clock).

Additional emergency preparedness kit items for vision



- ☐ Extra white cane, preferably a cane that is longer in length.
- ☐ Talking or braille clock.
- ☐ Large-print timepiece with extra batteries.
- ☐ Extra vision aids such as an electronic travel aid, monocular, binocular or magnifier.
- ☐ Extra pair of prescription glasses – if you wear them.
- ☐ Any reading devices/assistive technology to access information/portable CCTV devices.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your individual needs.





Hearing disabilities

A person can be d/Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. The distinction between these terms is based on the individual's language and means of communicating rather than the degree of hearing loss.

In an emergency, the method in which emergency warnings are issued becomes critical to how a person with hearing loss is able to respond and follow instructions to safety.

Emergency plan for hearing:

- If your network is unavailable during an emergency, seek the assistance of others to whom you can communicate your hearing loss by spoken language, moving your lips without making a sound, pointing to your ear, using a gesture, or if applicable, pointing to your hearing aid.
- Keep a pencil and paper handy for written communication.
- Obtain a pager that is connected to an emergency paging system at your workplace and/or the building that you live in.
- Install a smoke-detection system that includes smoke alarms and accessory flashing strobe lights or vibrators to gain your attention if the alarms sound.
- Test smoke alarms on a monthly basis by pushing the test button.
- Replace batteries in battery-operated smoke alarms every six months and whenever the low-battery warning sounds.
- Keep a laminated card on your person and in your emergency kit that identifies you as d/Deaf or hard of hearing and explains how to communicate with you.

Dos & don'ts

for hearing assistance

Dos

- ✓ Get the person's attention via a visual cue or a gentle touch on their arm before speaking to them.
- ✓ Face the person and make eye contact when speaking to them as they may rely on speechreading.
- ✓ Communicate in close proximity.
- ✓ Speak clearly and naturally.
- ✓ Use gestures to help explain the meaning of what you are trying to communicate to the person.
- ✓ Write a message if there is time and keep a pencil and paper handy.

Don'ts

- ✗ Avoid approaching the person from behind.
- ✗ Refrain from shouting or speaking unnaturally slowly.
- ✗ Do not make loud noises as hearing aids amplify sounds and can create a physical shock to the user.



Additional emergency preparedness kit items for hearing



- ☐ Extra writing pads and pencils for communication.
- ☐ Flashlight, whistle, or noisemaker.
- ☐ Pre-printed key phrases you would use during an emergency.
- ☐ Assistive devices unique to your needs (e.g., hearing aid, pager, personal amplifier, etc.).
- ☐ Portable visual notification devices that allow you to know if a person is knocking on the door
- ☐ Extra batteries for assistive devices.
- ☐ A CommuniCard (produced by Canadian Hearing Services) that explains your hearing loss and helps identify how rescuers or assisters can communicate with you during an emergency.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your individual needs.

Note: Typically, people who are deafened or hard of hearing will need information presented in a text format.



Non-visible disabilities

Non-visible disabilities can include communication, cognitive, sensory, mental health, learning or intellectual disabilities in which an individual's ability to respond to an emergency is restricted. They can also range from allergies, epilepsy, hemophilia, diabetes, thyroid condition, multiple sclerosis, pulmonary or heart disease and/or dependency on dialysis, sanitary or urinary supplies. Individuals with non-visible disabilities may have difficulty performing some tasks without appearing to have a disability.

Emergency plan for people with non-visible disabilities:

- Prepare an easy to understand list of instructions or information for yourself that you think you may need in an emergency.
- Keep an emergency contact list on your person of key people that are aware of your needs.
- Inform your designated support network of where you store your medication (if applicable).
- Keep a pencil and paper or portable electronic recording device handy to write down or record any new instructions provided to you in an emergency.
- Consider owning and wearing a MedicAlert® bracelet or identification because it will help notify emergency responders about your non-visible disabilities. For more information visit: medicalert.ca.
- Request a panic pushbutton to be installed in the building you work and/or live in, so that in the event of an emergency you can notify others of your whereabouts and that you need assistance.
- People with multiple sclerosis: Symptoms are often made worse by heat and humidity. Be prepared to keep cool and dry.
- People with diabetes: Keep frozen water bottles or ice packs in your freezer. Have an insulated bag or cooled thermos ready to store your insulin, should there be a power outage or you need to evacuate.

Dos & don'ts

assisting people with non-visible disabilities



Dos

- ✓ Allow the person to describe what help they need from you.
- ✓ Find effective means of communication. For example, provide drawn or written instructions. When giving directions use landmarks instead of terms "go left" or "turn right".
- ✓ Be patient, flexible and maintain eye contact when speaking to the person.
- ✓ Repeat instructions (if needed).
- ✓ Ask the person about their medication and if they need any help taking it. Never offer medicines not prescribed by their physician.
- ✓ Keep people with multiple sclerosis cool and dry to avoid making their symptoms worse.
- ✓ Use latex-free gloves when providing personal care whenever possible for added safety and comfort. For example, people with obsessive compulsive disorder or any anxiety-related disorders may have phobias regarding germs and infections. Gloves help control the spread of germs that can easily arise during an emergency and ensure the comfort of the person with the disability.
- ✓ When providing personal care, describe what areas on the body you will be in contact with and for what purpose.

Don'ts

- ✗ Avoid shouting or speaking quickly. Instead, speak clearly but not so slowly as to offend the person.
- ✗ Do not restrain a person having a convulsion. Instead, roll them on their side to keep their airway clear and place something soft (for example, your jacket) under their head to protect it from injury. Once the convulsion passes and they become conscious, help them into a resting position.



Additional emergency preparedness kit items for non-visible disabilities

- ☐ Supply of food items appropriate to your disability or dietary restrictions.
- ☐ List of instructions that you can easily follow in an emergency.
- ☐ Personal list and minimum three days supply of all needed medications, medical supplies and equipment (e.g., ventilator for asthma, nitrolingual spray for heart condition, Epinephrine pen against allergic reaction/anaphylactic shock, etc.).
- ☐ Detailed list of all prescription medications with a list identifying the reason (e.g., medical condition), dosage, frequency and contact information of prescribing physician and other third party supports if applicable.
- ☐ MedicAlert® identification.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your needs.



For example: people with diabetes

- ☐ Extra supply of insulin or oral agent.
- ☐ Extra supply of syringes, needles, and insulin pens (if used).
- ☐ Small container for storing used syringes/needles (if applicable).
- ☐ Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM) and/or insulin pump supplies (if applicable)
- ☐ Blood glucose testing kit, extra batteries, and record book.
- ☐ Supply of blood glucose and urine ketone testing strips.
- ☐ Fast-acting insulin for high blood glucose (if applicable).
- ☐ Fast-acting sugar for low blood glucose.
- ☐ Extra food to cover delayed meals.
- ☐ Ice packs and thermal bag to store insulin (if applicable).



High-rise safety

High-rise buildings present unique challenges for people with disabilities when evacuation is necessary during an emergency.

Residents should make themselves aware of:

- Building superintendent's name and phone number.
- Who sits on the Building Safety Committee.
- Who the floor monitors are.
- Who conducts evacuation drills, and how often.
- Location of fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator units, and oxygen tank.
- Location of emergency evacuation device(s).
- Location of emergency exits.

Emergency plan for high-rise safety:

- Advise your building manager/superintendent of your individual needs and/or requirements during an emergency.
- Familiarize yourself with your building's evacuation plan.
- Know where all escape routes and location of emergency doors/exits are on each floor.
- Know the location of emergency buttons in the building and exits that are wheelchair-accessible (if applicable).
- Request that an emergency evacuation chair be installed on the floor you live or work on, preferably close to the stairwell (if applicable).
- If you live in a high-rise building, create a 'buddy' system with your neighbours and regularly practice your emergency response plan with them.
- If you rely on any life sustaining equipment/apparatus, develop an emergency back-up plan that will ensure the equipment/apparatus is operable in the event of a power outage.
- Obtain large printed signs from the building manager that you can place in your window in the event of an emergency, indicating that you need assistance.

Dos & don'ts

for high-rise safety

Dos

- ✓ Check on neighbours and/or co-workers to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation.
- ✓ Listen actively to what the individual is saying.
- ✓ During an emergency evacuation (if time permits), offer to carry the person's emergency preparedness kit for them along with any equipment or assistive devices they will need.
- ✓ Review previous categories in this guide on how to assist people with specific disabilities.

Don'ts

- ✗ In general, avoid attempts to lift, support or assist in moving a person down the stairs, unless you are familiar with safe techniques.



Additional emergency preparedness kit items for high-rise safety



- ☐ Personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts.
- ☐ Supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions.
- ☐ Supply of medications and assistive devices appropriate to your disability.
- ☐ Supply of plastic bags for storing garbage/personal waste.
- ☐ Names and contact information of your neighbours, superintendent and property/building manager.
- ☐ Laminated copy of your building's evacuation plan and diagram of escape routes and location of emergency doors/exits on each floor.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your needs.



Travel considerations

Whether travelling locally or internationally, people with disabilities should take extra time to research and plan their trip in the event of an emergency.

Emergency plan for travel:

- Before travelling, visit the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website at travel.gc.ca where you can register and find other helpful travel information and safety tips.
- Discuss your particular accommodation needs with your travel agent.
- Discuss your trip with your doctor to prepare contingency plans in case of illness.
- Obtain necessary travel medical insurance.
- Carry a copy of the booklet **Bon Voyage, But...**, that contains contact information for your destination's Canadian office and Emergency Operations Centre. You can order it free of charge at travel.gc.ca.
- Keep your medications and medical supplies in your carry-on baggage in their original labelled containers. Bring copies of your prescriptions with you.
- Always wear your MedicAlert® bracelet.
- Inform your travel companion(s) on how to assist you in an emergency.
- If travelling alone, establish a network (for example, hotel staff) that can assist you during an emergency.
- If you have difficulty using stairs, request a room on a lower floor.
- Review the hotel emergency exit plan.
- If needing to evacuate, bring your emergency preparedness kit and any assistive devices you may need.

Dos & don'ts

for travel

Dos

- ✓ Check on fellow travellers with disabilities to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation.
- ✓ Listen actively to what the individual is saying and how they might need your help.
- ✓ If they speak in a language that you do not understand, try to communicate using gestures.
- ✓ During an emergency evacuation, if time permits, offer to carry the person's emergency preparedness kit for them along with any equipment or assistive devices they will need.
- ✓ Review previous categories in this guide on how to assist people with specific disabilities.

Don'ts

- ✗ Do not let the person be separated from their wheelchair or mobility aids.



Additional emergency preparedness kit items for travel



- ☐ Supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions.
- ☐ Supply of medications/assistive devices appropriate to your disability (e.g., Glucagon injection if you manage your diabetes with insulin and you are travelling to a remote location that does not have ambulance services).
- ☐ Laminated personal information card that you keep on your person at all times when travelling. Card identifies your specific needs, lists all medications you are taking, any food/drug allergies you might have, your treating physician's name and contact information, and your next of kin.
- ☐ Copy of your travel medical insurance and other important travel documents.
- ☐ A personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts.
- ☐ Small container that can store or disintegrate syringes or needles safely (if applicable).
- ☐ Anti-nausea and anti-diarrhea pills and pain medication.
- ☐ Sunblock.
- ☐ Insect repellent.
- ☐ Dictionary to help you communicate in a foreign language.
- ☐ Any other contingency supplies unique to your disability.

For more information

Specific disabilities

Diabetes Canada

Tel: 416-363-3373
Toll-free: 1-800-226-8464
Email: info@diabetes.ca
diabetes.ca
Twitter: @DiabetesCanada

Canadian Hearing Services

Toll-free: 1-866-518-0000
TTY: 1-877-215-9530
Email: info@chs.ca
chs.ca
Twitter: @cdnhearing

Canadian Red Cross

Tel: 613-740-1900
Toll-free: 1-800-418-1111
Email: wecare@redcross.ca
redcross.ca
Twitter: @redcrosscanada

Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) Inc.

Tel: 416-599-2458
TTY: Dial 711 for Bell Relay Service
Email: cilt@cilt.ca
cilt.ca
Twitter: @CIL_Toronto

CNIB Foundation

Tel: 416-486-2500
Toll-free: 1-800-563-2642
Email: info@cnib.ca
cilt.ca
Twitter: @CNIB

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Tel: 416-929-4311
Email: resource@LDAO.ca
ldao.ca
Twitter: @LDatSchool

March of Dimes Canada

Tel: 416-425-3463
Toll-free: 1-800-263-3463
marchofdimes.ca
Twitter: @marchofdimescda

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – Toronto Chapter and Ontario Division

Toll-free: 1-800-268-7582
National: info@mssociety.ca
Twitter: @MSSocietyCanada

Ontario SPCA (Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) and Humane Society

Tel: 905-898-7122
Toll-free: 1-888- 668-7722
Email: info@ontariospca.on.ca
ontariospca.ca
Twitter: @OntarioSPCA

Spinal Cord Injury Ontario

Tel: 416-422-5644
Toll-free: 1-877-422-1112
Email: info@sciontario.org
sciontario.org
Twitter: @SCI_Ontario

Toronto Rehabilitation Institute

Tel: 416-597-3422
uhn.ca
Twitter: @UHN

For more information

Accessibility initiatives

Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

Tel: 416-849-8276

Toll-free: 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-325-3408

Toll-free TTY: 1-800-268-7095

Email: accessibility@ontario.ca

ontario.ca/msaa

Twitter: @ONAccessibility

For travel advice and registration services when travelling abroad

Global Affairs Canada

Toll-free: 1-800-267-8376

international.gc.ca

Twitter: @GAC_Corporate

Emergency preparedness

Emergency Management Ontario

Tel: 416-326-8525

Email: AskEMO@ontario.ca

ontario.ca/BePrepared

Twitter: @OntarioWarnings

For information on MedicAlert® bracelets or identification

MedicAlert® Foundation Canada

Tel: 416-696-0267

Toll-free: 1-800-668-1507

Email: customerservice@medicalert.ca

medicalert.ca

Twitter: @MedicAlertCA

This guide is courtesy of:

© King's Printer for Ontario, 2023 ISBN 978-1-4868-7088-2

Disponible en français ISBN 978-1-4868-7089-9