

**Emergency Preparedness:
Addressing Disability Issues
in the Workplace**

**A Guide for
EMPLOYEES**

**“Our mission is to empower you,
help you expand your opportunities,
and improve your quality of life.”**

Joan Willshire, MSCOD Executive Director

Stay INFORMED

Keep abreast of emergency procedures in your workplace, and educate yourself on what to do in case of specific emergencies, such as fire, tornado, flood, chemical incident, etc.

There are some resources online that you may find useful:

www.disability.state.mn.us

www.PrepareNow.Org

www.codeready.org

www.ready.gov

www.redcross.org

These web sites include practical tips and information on specific disasters, suggestions for your emergency kit, and more.

Beyond WORK

It's a good idea to have additional emergency plans and kits for your home, and for any other locations where you spend significant time on a regular basis (such as school, club, community organizations, etc.). Become familiar with the emergency procedures of each of these locations.

PREPARING for Emergencies

While we can't prevent certain emergencies, we can plan ahead for them and be ready. This document includes three simple steps to emergency readiness. Two separate plans need to be developed, an **Evacuation Plan** or **"GO" Plan** in case you need to evacuate your workplace, and a **"Stay" Plan** in case you need to shelter-in-place.

- 1. Develop a Plan:** The first step in developing an Emergency Plan is **Communication** between you and your employer/supervisor. Those in charge must know ahead of time that you will need assistance during an emergency. If emergency evacuation equipment is needed and individuals need to be trained, then that needs to be part of the overall Emergency Plan. **Communication** is a vital part of a good plan.

- 2. Build the Kit:** Your Emergency Kit includes emergency supplies for yourself and your service animal, if you have one. Make sure your service animal is easily identifiable with a harness, so that first responders know right away that it's not a pet.

Your first step in building your kit is making a list of the items that will go in it. In the **BUILD the Kit** section of this guide we provide a checklist to get you started.

- 3. Stay Informed:** Familiarize yourself with emergency procedures in your workplace in case of emergencies such as tornadoes, chemical spills, fires, and floods. (Tip: Fire is, by far, the most common and dangerous disaster.)

When developing your plan, be sure to consider a wide range of possibilities, including what you would do if working alone, late in the evening, or on weekends.



BUILD the Kit

Your workplace emergency kit includes basic items such as:

- > A small supply of food and water, and any medications, for yourself and your service animal, if you have one
- > Flashlight, radio, extra batteries
- > A small first-aid kit
- > A whistle in case you need it to get the attention of co-workers or emergency personnel
- > A copy of your Plan, which should include emergency phone numbers and other information that you and/or first responders will need, including:
 - A list of individuals to contact in case of an emergency.
 - Any instructions for the first responders, including any medicine they need to know you are taking.

Also, make a “Go Kit” that contains things you will take with you in case of evacuation. Make this “Go” kit transportable (such as in a small bag or backpack) because you need to take it with you as you leave your workplace.



DHS, DEED, MSCOD

A partnership effort between the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the Minnesota State Council on Disability, Pathways to Employment will create a coordinated statewide strategy to facilitate the competitive employment of Minnesotans with disabilities.



MSCOD is a state agency that advises the governor, the state legislature, state agencies and the general public on public policy issues affecting persons with disabilities. We work to advance the rights of Minnesotans with disabilities.

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