Safety And Fire Prevention

A guide to help Direct Support Professionals prepare for, respond to and prevent emergencies in a licensed residential home setting.

Outcomes:

- Direct Support Professionals (DSP) will understand how to prepare and respond to weather emergencies.
- DSP will understand how to prepare and respond to utility failures.
- DSP will understand how to prepare, respond, and prevent fire emergencies.
- DSP will understand how to support each individual to ensure safety.
- DSP will understand how to support each individual to respond successfully in routine drill situations.
- DSP will understand documentation requirements related to safety and fire prevention.

SAFETY AND FIRE PREVENTION



Emergency Information and Supplies:

During orientation you will become familiar with emergency policies, practices and specific needs of the individuals residing in the home. You will need to learn what emergency supplies should be available and where these supplies are located. If you have a suggestion to improve safety in the home discuss it with your supervisor. There may be a consumer residing in the home that would enjoy the opportunity to contribute to safety practices by monitoring, or assisting with the monthly monitoring of safety equipment.

What supplies must be available in a specialized residential group home?

All homes must have complete Blood Spill Kits. It is not acceptable to have the required contents scattered or stored in different areas of the home. These items must be stored as a unit (all items in one container). The kits must be monitored monthly to assure they remain intact. Each provider will have a form that can be used to document this monitoring.

The following list is minimum required contents of a blood spill kit:

- 1. pair disposable latex gloves
- 2. disposable apron or gown
- 3. scoop/scrapers
- 4. red biohazard bags with ties
- 5. disposable towel
- 6. isolation mask

- 7. pair protective eyewear
- 8. antiseptic wipes

All specialized residential settings must have contingency plans for emergencies. You must review these plans and know where they are located. Plans must be available for medical emergency, death of a consumer, missing consumer, emergency lodging, water shortage, inclement weather and flood. You may want to obtain information related to your community emergency plan as well.

Emergency Supplies:

All homes must have complete emergency kit bags. An emergency kit bag is also recommended for the vehicle. The kits must be monitored monthly to assure they remain intact. Each provider will have a form that can be used to document this monitoring.

Emergency Kit Bag Contents

At minimum, emergency bags should include the following:

- Battery powered radio and extra batteries (or wind –up) radio
- First aid kit
- Depends (if applicable)
- Flash light and extra batteries (or wind –up) flashlight
- Keys for van and home
- Gloves
- Rain ponchos
- Thermal blankets
- Wet wipes
- Bottled water, also dated
- Emergency numbers
- Snacks per individual preferences, health and dietary concerns (these snacks must be dated).
- Consumer profiles

Any confidential information in the consumer profile must be protected. This information must be locked. Small wheeled bags can be used if it is easier for people to pull the bag than to carry one. If a fire, smoke or similar emergency requires evacuation of the home, remember that evacuation of consumers and staff is a priority. DSP's cannot re-enter the home once everyone is out. If the bag is too large to take out of the home at the same time as the DSP's are assisting people in evacuation – leave it behind.



A **severe storm** is a storm with high winds, dangerous lightning, and possibly hail. It could cause power outages, and damage to homes and property.

Thunderstorms – Advance warning of a coming storm is critical to prevent being caught in a storm. Make sure you are aware of the weather forecast when planning outdoor activities. If you are outside when a thunderstorm threatens, get inside a home, large building or an automobile.

Lightning - Lightning often occurs during thunderstorms. Precautions can be taken to reduce your risk of being struck.

- > Stay away from tall isolated trees, telephone poles, hilltops or other high areas that act as natural lightning rods.
- In a forest, seek shelter under a thick growth of small trees. In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley.

- Seek shelter in a home large building or an automobile.
- Get away from open water, metal equipment or metal objects such as bicycles, motorcycles or golf carts.
- > Stay away from wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes and rails. If you are walking in a group, spread out and try to stay several yards apart.

REVIVING A VICTIM OF ELECTRICAL SHOCK

If a victim is not breathing, start mouth to mouth resuscitation immediately to prevent damage to the brain.

TORNADOES

A **tornado** is a column of violently rotating winds that extend down from a thunderstorm cloud and touch the earth. A tornado can occur anytime but are most common during the months of April, May, June and July.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WATCH AND A WARNING!

A "watch" means: conditions are favorable for a severe storm or tornado to occur.

A "warning" means: that a severe storm or tornado is actually happening – TAKE COVER.

TORNADO PROCEDURES:

- 1. When a "watch" is issued, prepare to move to your safe area. Monitor the local radio station for sudden weather changes or bulletins.
- 2. If any of the following occur:
 - High winds in excess of 30 miles per hour
 - A fire siren is blown
 - A funnel cloud is spotted
 - A TORNADO WARNING is issued SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!
- 3. Close interior and exterior doors to minimize the chance of injury due to flying glass. Stay away from windows and outside walls!
- 4. Stay tuned to the local station while you are in your safe area.
- 5. When the storm has passed leave the safe area with caution. If any potentially dangerous conditions exist (broken glass, windows, or other damage) contact the proper person.

If you are traveling when conditions are favorable, drive to the nearest large building that can be used as a shelter. Stay near a shelter until the threat has passed. If you are driving and a warning is issued, seek shelter in a large building. If a building is not available, you may need to lie down in a ditch or ravine. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle!



Winter storms call for special precautions. Snowfall, blizzards and ice storms can trap people inside for days. Snow and ice can break power lines and cause loss of electricity and heat.

A winter storm may also cause utility failure. Extended exposure to cold temperatures may cause injury or death. Knowing what to do to prepare for and respond to a winter storm can save your life!

WHAT PRECAUTIONS CAN YOU TAKE?

A battery-powered radio is your best source of information in an emergency. Remember to have extra batteries on hand! Listen to the radio to keep posted on weather reports.

Draw water into as many containers as possible. Gather battery-powered lanterns, flashlights, etc. in case you lose your power. Make sure your home has a corded phone!

If candles are used, **BE CAUTIOUS!** Candle-holders should surround the candle totally (like a glass globe or a fish bowl). Do not leave a candle burning unattended. Battery operated candles or camp lights are recommended.

If you experience heat failure, dress in layers and keep moving!

If your home has fuel delivery, remember to assure an adequate supply of fuel is available at all times, especially if a winter storm is predicted!

<u>Portable heaters are not permitted for use in licensed settings under any circumstances.</u>

EQUIPMENT YOU MAY NEED: Battery operated candles Bottled water Warm clothing Flashlight/extra batteries Food supply Warm Blankets

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- If you experience a heating failure you may need to keep a steady trickle of water flowing from each faucet to prevent the pipes from freezing.
- ➤ If the temperature inside falls to below 55 degrees it may be necessary to contact someone so that you can evacuate.

FLOODS

Floods usually occur in Michigan during the Spring and Fall when rainfall and water runoff are at their peak. Flash floods are particularly hazardous because they can occur quickly and without warning. Swiftly moving water can damage or destroy buildings and structures. This can lead to injuries and drowning. Floods can interrupt power and make roads impassable. Severe floods occur rarely, but knowing how to prepare and respond can prevent disaster.

Notification and warning

Notification of a flood watch or warning is received by:

- 1. Radio and television
- 2. Sirens and alert monitors
- 3. Emergency personnel who go door to door
- 4. National Weather Service or local emergency jurisdiction



If a flood warning is issued for your area, local government officials will issue evacuation instructions over the television or radio.

Never drive through an area where water is covering the road or moving swiftly across the road. Turn around and find another route.

WATER SHORTAGE PRECAUTIONS

- Water supply must be stored in clean dated containers and exchanged every 6 months.
- If there is room in your freezer water can be frozen and melted as needed.
- Keep a supply of bottled water.
- Fill bathtubs if a water shortage is possible. This will allow water for filling toilets, washing dishes, personal care, etc.

If water is contaminated or questionable, treat it with "potable" water tablets. These tablets make water safe to drink and can be purchased at hardware or drug stores.

Purify water with household bleach. Use bleach that contains hypochlorite as its only active ingredient. Use 8 drops of bleach per gallon of water. If water is cloudy use 18 drops of bleach. Make sure you stir or shake this water and let it set for at least one hour before you drink it.

POWER OUTAGE CONCERNS:

AIR CONDITIONING FAILURE

Air conditioning failure can pose a serious threat to the elderly or those with other health conditions. The following tips will help you keep cool in an air conditioning failure:

- Shut all curtains
- Don't open windows unless it will let cooler air in.
- Go to a lower level of the home if possible to stay cool.
- Keep individuals well hydrated- offer fluids frequently.

FOODS THAT SPOIL

If a power failure continues for a long time, food may begin to spoil. A loaded freezer will keep foods frozen 36 – 48 hours if the door is kept shut.

Avoid opening freezer and refrigerator doors more than necessary. Transfer foods you will use soon to an insulated chest type freezer. If you can obtain ice, transfer as much as possible into coolers. Cold foods are to be kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.

GAS LEAKS

If you think there is a gas leak do the following:

- 1. Evacuate immediately!
- 2. Do not turn any electrical switches on or off.
- 3. Do not use the telephone.
- 4. Do not use any matches or lighters.
- 5. Go to a neighbor's and call the gas company right away.

CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Carbon monoxide is a clear, odorless gas. The symptoms may be headaches, dizziness, and sleepiness.

If your carbon monoxide detector goes off, or you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, you must evacuate immediately!

OTHER EMERGENCIES:

- Know the symptoms and treatment of Frostbite and Hypothermia.
- Know the symptoms and treatment of Hyperthermia.
- Know the procedures for responding to a suspected Poisoning.



As a Direct Support Professional, you must understand how to react to a fire or smoke emergency.

- Evacuation is your absolute FIRST PRIORITY in a fire or smoke emergency. GET EVERYONE OUTSIDE!
- > EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY Time is the most important factor!

If you smell smoke, see flames or smoke, or hear the fire alarm, you must evacuate immediately! In a residential setting there are no "false alarms". That means even if you know the toaster set off the smoke alarm...just evacuate!

- ➤ Do not look for the fire! Do not attempt to fight the fire! A fire doubles in size every 19 seconds! Just get out! Go to your **designated** meeting place.
- Do not waste time getting dressed!
- > Do not try to save property or possessions!
- ➤ Have regular fire drills to prevent panic and assure proper action!

DON'T RE-ENTER THE HOUSE – Once you are out, stay out! Call the fire department and other emergency numbers from a neighbor's.

FIRE EXTINGUISHMENT

You must never use a fire extinguisher to put out a fire! Putting out a fire is the job of a professional fire fighter! There are **only two reasons** you will ever use a fire extinguisher:

RESCUE – If you need to get to someone to evacuate them and there is a fire between you and them.

ESCAPE – A fire may be blocking your exit and you need to use the extinguisher to suppress the flames long enough to get this person out.

An ABC (multi-purpose) extinguisher will put out most fires that start in a home. An extinguisher is useless unless you know how to operate it!

Using a fire extinguisher:

- 1. Hold extinguisher upright. Pull the pin out.
- 2. Stand at least 6-8 feet from the fire. Do not get closer!
- 3. Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire and squeeze the handles.
- 4. Sweep side to side slowly, moving closer as the flames diminish.

Fire extinguishers last only about 8-10 seconds! Fires can and do re-ignite. If you need to use an extinguisher for **RESCUE** or **ESCAPE** do it quickly and **GET OUT!**

HOME SPECIFIC PROTECTION PLAN

w the protection plan for your home. Be sure you know all the following nation!
Specific evacuation procedures for all individuals who reside in the home.
Evacuation procedures staff must follow for each specific home– know your role!
Location of the meeting area or destination where the "head count" is completed. This area should be just outside the primary exit door – in case someone is not accounted for!
Location of the place of safety. This is a place far enough away from the home to keep everyone safe from the fire and emergency vehicles. It should be in the front of the home if possible.
Primary exits from all rooms.
Alternate exits.

Where your emergency kit bag is located.
Emergency numbers and who should be contacted.

Each protection plan should contain the **KNOWLEDGE OF FIRES** section. This is information all Direct Support Professionals must know!

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FIRES:

A. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:

- 1. The absolute **FIRST PRIORITY** in a fire emergency is to evacuate everyone in the home.
- 2. **TIME** is the most important factor in a fire. Any delay may increase the danger, and decrease people's chance to escape.
- 3. **CLOSING THE DOORS** on the way out will help contain smoke and fire spread giving more time for evacuation.
- 4. Smoke rises **KEEP LOW!** Smoke is the real killer in fires.
- 5. Once everyone is out do not re-enter the house!

B. FIRE EXTINGUISHMENT:

- 1. No attempt should be made to fight a fire except:
 - a. To create an escape route, if trapped, OR
 - b. Rescue someone who is trapped.

2. HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER:

- a. Hold the extinguisher firmly upright and pull the pin.
- b. Stand 6 to 8 feet from the fire no closer.
- c. Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire and squeeze the handles.
- d. Sweep slowly in a side to side motion and move forward as the flames subside.
- e. Fires can re-ignite! Get Out!!!

C. IF YOU ARE TRAPPED:

- 1. Close the room door and stuff bedding, clothes, etc. under the door.
- 2. Open a window for air. You may have to break it.
- 3. Stay close to the floor to avoid smoke.
- 4. Make noise or hang something out the window to let people know where you are.

It is important to know what to do in a fire emergency. Learning the correct action could save your life!

Most people die or are injured in a fire for the following reasons:

- > They do not get enough warning.
- > They do not evacuate immediately.
- Once they are out, they go back into the house for some reason.

FIRE PREVENTION IS KEY TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT!

SMOKE DETECTORS – Provide warning.

- ➤ Have enough working smoke detectors to provide warning. There should be a minimum of one on every level and outside sleeping areas.
- ➤ Make sure that they are properly placed. See manufacturer instructions.
- > Test the detectors monthly. Testing them on the first day of each month will help you remember.
- > Replace the batteries at least once a year. Do this on a birthday or a holiday so that you won't forget.
- Replace the entire detector every 5 years or as recommended in the manufacturer instructions.
- ➤ Don't take the battery out of a smoke detector! If you are having nuisance alarms, check to see if the detector is located too close to an area that would cause problems such as the kitchen or bathroom.



FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted so that the individuals who live in the home and DSP staff can practice how to respond in an actual fire or smoke emergency. All DSP staff that work in the home must participate in enough fire drills to be efficient and well practiced in using the home's evacuation plan. Every home with four or more individuals living there should conduct and document fire drills at least once during the daytime, evening, and sleeping hours during every three month period.

CONDITIONS:

- Fire drills should only be conducted with the normal number of staff on duty. Extra staff may be present to observe and record but may not participate in the drill.
- Surprise drills (no staff notice) should be conducted as frequently as possible.
- The people who live in the home are never alerted that there is going to be a drill.

Priority should be given to conducting drills during difficult conditions such as:

- * During periods of deepest sleep (1/2 to 3 hours after going to sleep).
- * During meal times, bathing, recreation times, etc.
- * During cold weather.

PROCEDURE:

- 1. The alarm or smoke detector should be activated through the entire drill. Start timing the drill as soon as the alarm starts.
- DSP staff should know and follow the evacuation plan. Give the instruction used in the plan to direct individuals to the designated meeting area. Never shout, call out, or say "FIRE".
- 3. Give prompts and assistance as needed. Do not wait for people to respond independently, even if they can.
- 4. Do a head count at the destination. Stop timing the drill as soon as the last person is out the door.
- 5. One staff should return to the house, shut off and reset the alarm. They should return to the destination and give the "all clear".

Fire Drills (Information and recommendations to staff)

- Fire drills are *required* in any licensed setting.
- Fire drills should be completed with the normal number of staff on duty.
 Extra staff can observe or sound the alarm but they should not help in the evacuation.
- The people living in the home should not be told in advance that there is going to be a drill.
- As often as possible drills should be a surprise to the staff on duty.
 Surprise drills help staff prepare for an actual fire emergency.
- Drills should occur under different times and conditions. Showers, meal times, sleeping hours.

Standard Fire drill procedures to observe

- If possible, always sound the alarm that would go off in the actual fire. Sound it throughout the entire evacuation!
- Start timing when the alarm sounds. Stop timing the minute the last person is out the door. A stop watch is recommended!
- Follow the evacuation procedure if it doesn't work, let someone know. Use
 the correct exits during evacuation. Always use primary exits, not alternate
 routes or rescue routes such as windows.

DSP staff should treat all fire drills as actual fire emergencies. Everyone in the home should evacuate during a drill!

What to do if an individual refuses to participate in a fire drill

- If a person refuses you must document your actions, including what you did to determine why the person would not evacuate and what type of verbal encouragement /prompting you used. Do Not Force the Individual To Evacuate! Remain in the home with the individual until everyone has completed the practice drill. An incident report should be completed and the home manager/supervisor should be contacted. The home manager/supervisor will contact the case manager on the next working day to schedule a meeting in the next 3-5 days to review and adjust the individual's plan of service. This is a problem solving meeting to identify reasons why the person may be refusing and to offer specific recommendations which staff will use to encourage participation.
 Home staff will then schedule another fire drill to "test" the new evacuation plan. If
 - Home staff will then schedule another fire drill to "test" the new evacuation plan. If the plan is not successful this process should be repeated until the individual successfully completes a fire drill.
- Practice evacuations may be used to assist with individuals experiencing
 difficulties participating in "fire drills". "Practice evacuations" may be announced and
 used to assist with the implementation of a positive behavior supports plan.
- In the event of a real fire the DSP will assist individuals to evacuate and may
 use physical intervention techniques, blanket drag, clothing drag, two-person
 seat carry, or other technique that will move the individual safely out of the
 home and away from danger. The DSP will have to decide quickly in the event
 of a real fire emergency, and must do what ever is necessary to ensure
 successful evacuation of all persons in the home.
- At the destination complete a head count and determine if it is necessary to go to the place of safety.
- One staff returns to the house to shut off and reset the alarm (if it is still sounding), they check to make sure the house is safe, and then they give the "all clear" for everyone to return.
- Complete the fire drill log!

It is a good idea to schedule required drills at the beginning of each month. If a drill cannot be completed due to problems with a person in the home such as health concerns, or other issues which may interfere with successful participation. It can still be completed before the end of the month. Fire drills should be scheduled to avoid poor weather conditions. (Drills can be delayed or rescheduled if the DSP staff determine there may be a problem or the drill may cause problems).

Recommended evacuation time in a drill is 3 minutes or less. If evacuation is taking longer than this, the evacuation procedure should be reviewed for possible modification. Staff may need additional training; bedroom changes may be required, etc.

Strategies for Improving Evacuation Times

Timin	Timing Issues		
	Is everyone timing the drills correctly? The timing starts when the alarm is sounded, and stops when the last person steps out of the door.		
	Is a stopwatch being used? Guessing at times is often inaccurate. Watches can be hard to read, especially at night.		
Desti	nation/Meeting Place Issues		
	Is the destination appropriate for the people in the home? It should not be further than three to five feet from the door. (The destination is where you complete your head count – you need to know if anyone is unaccounted for before you move away from the structure). If there are people who are slow moving or need full assistance, it is better to assemble everyone just outside the door first, and then take the time needed to get people to the place of safety. (Remember timing stops when the last person is out of the door.)		
Resid	Resident Evacuation Procedure Issues		
	Is there a carefully planned procedure for the most efficient evacuation of all occupants? It should take into account assistance needs of the people who live there (are there current e-scores?), and organize staff movements to provide assistance in the most logical sequence.		
	If possible and safe, can the people who need the most assistance sleep in bedrooms closest to an exit door?		
	Is the procedure reviewed often enough to be sure that there is not a better procedure available? This is especially important if new people have moved in, or if assistance needs have changed in the existing residents.		
Staff	Training/Competence Issues		
	Are all staff trained in the evacuation procedure including actual practice in a fire drill?		
	Are all drills evaluated and reviewed with staff, so that changes can be made if someone has found a better procedure?		
	Is staff participation in drills monitored so that everyone has had recent practice at implementing the fire evacuation plan?		

Resident Skills and Motivation Issues Have all the individuals been taught to be as independent as they are physically able to be in evacuating? (If not a good destination training program is available). If the problem is that the person could evacuate if they wanted, but they usually don't want to go, there are programs to increase cooperation. Home staff should discuss this with the case manager/supports coordinator and it should be included in the individual's plan of service. Are drills being held too often, creating resistance in otherwise cooperative people? Minimum frequency is one per shift, per quarter; more frequent drills may generate resistance. Miscellaneous Issues Are there physical plant barriers to efficient evacuation that can be fixed? Some suggestions may be: Changing doors or handles that do not open easily or rearranging furniture to create smooth exit paths. Eliminating doorsills, ramping steps, adding handrails, or improving lighting, may be helpful. These suggestions can make evacuation easier and safer. Are you listening to others? Staff who are experiencing problems with the evacuation procedure are often the best people to ask when looking for solutions to improve evacuation time or procedure. Monitoring provides opportunity for preventative measures! Are staff trained in alarm/sprinkler system? Is a smoking policy available and in effect? Are safety ashtrays used? Is there documentation of battery operated smoke detector checks? Is there documentation of yearly battery changes in detectors? Is there a posted diagram of primary and alternate routes? Fire extinguishers – minimum of one per floor and basement? Is the extinguisher a 5 lb. ABC? (A 10 lb. Is Recommended). Is the extinguisher Inspected and labeled monthly by staff? Are hallways, stairways, egress routes clear of obstacles & storage? Do all exit doors open easily? Are all exit doors non-locking to egress? Is the exterior lighting operational? Are exit pads even with grade at exit doors? Is the destination or head count area close to exit (3-5 feet)? Is there a trailing mechanism for people who are blind? Is there a special alarm for people who are deaf?

Are stairway handrails secure, steps in good condition?
 Does the main floor have two separate means of egress?
Does the basement (if licensed for use) have 2 means of egress?
Do you understand that no portable heaters are allowed – for any reason?
If wheelchairs are used is there a ramp at both exits?
 Is the mechanical room free of stored items?
Is the furnace filter clean?
 Are there heat or smoke detectors in heat producing rooms?
Are flammable or combustible items properly stored?
 Is emergency lighting available?
 Is the dryer vent solid or flexible metal?
 Is the dryer filter cleaned after use?
Is the stove vent screen clean?
 Does the oven door shut tightly?
 Are electrical outlets overloaded?
Are there any frayed, hanging or exposed electrical cords?
Are there any problems with the dishwasher or other appliances?

After reading the Safety & Fire Prevention Unit, please review the following handouts:

- Poison Prevention
- Frost bite and Hypothermia
- ❖ Hyperthermia and Heat Related Illness
- How to Complete E-Scores

Click on the link below to take the test for the Safety and Fire Prevention Unit:

Safety and Fire Test

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Some content in this section has been adapted from the following resources:

"Providing Residential Services in Community Settings: A Training Guide" Michigan Department of Human Services www.michigan.gov/afchfa

Licensing Rules for Adult Foster Care family Homes
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/BCAL-PUB-0332_281384_7.pdf
Licensing Rules for Adult foster Care large Group Homes (13-20)
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-BCAL-PUB-334_276575_7.pdf
Licensing Rules for Adult Foster Care Group Homes (12 or Less)
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/BCAL-PUB-0333_241598_7.pdf
Certification of Specialized Programs Offered In Adult Foster Care Home To Clients With Mental Illness or Developmental Disability
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/BCAL-PUB-0336_214333_7.pdf

Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) http://www.michigan.gov/mdch

Department of Labor and Economic Growth http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_42271---,00.html

Federal Emergency Management Agency P.O. Box 10055 Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055

Consumer Product Safety Commission http://www.cpsc.gov/

Department of Health and Human Services http://www.dhhs.gov/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/

Red Cross http://www.redcross.org/

National Fire Protection Association http://www.nfpa.org/index.asp?cookie%5Ftest=1

National Safety Council

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia 761563837/National Safety Council.html