

# Community Planning for Evacuation and Sheltering during COVID-19

## Community Planning Considerations

- Hotels/schools (locations that can hold fewer than 50 residents or separate residents from other groups in some manner) should be prioritized over larger shelters. Large congregate shelters should be a last resort.
- Shelter managers should maintain contact with state and local public health agencies and emergency management for updates on local COVID-19 information.
- Shelter health staff should monitor residents daily for symptoms of COVID-19 and other illness, including mental health concerns, and provide a daily status update to the local health department and other relevant agencies. View resources on daily life and coping.
- Body temperature monitoring should be conducted on everyone entering the shelter and food distribution areas.
- Shelters should provide separate areas, including restrooms, to isolate residents with COVID-19 symptoms

## ***Family Preparation for Potential Evacuation in time of COVID***

*An essential aspect of planning for a community is ensuring that families are prepared as well.* Families should prepare a “go kit” with [personal items](#) you cannot do without during an emergency. Each family member should have their own bag filled with their essential items. Include items that can help protect you and others from COVID-19, such as hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, and two cloth face coverings for each person. Face covers should not be used by children under the age of 2. They also should not be used by people having trouble breathing, or unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Follow guidance from local public health or emergency management officials on when and where to shelter.

## ***While Sheltering in a Community Shelter:***

- [Practice social distancing](#). Stay at least 6 feet from other people outside of your household. Considerations for social distancing include:
  - Wearing a mask
  - Evacuees meet at a designated location, those who arrive in vehicles, stay in their vehicle if possible
  - Utilizing multiple shelter locations to create smaller crowds
  - Having one shelter designated for those who are high risk
- Follow [CDC COVID-19 preventive actions](#)—wash your hands often, cover coughs and sneezes, and follow shelter policies for wearing [cloth face coverings](#). Avoid sharing food and drink.
- Follow disaster shelter policies and procedures designed to protect everyone in the shelter, especially those who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Avoid touching high-touch surfaces, such as handrails, as much as possible. [Wash hands](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol immediately afterwards
- Keep your living area in the shelter [clean and disinfect](#) frequently-touched items
- [If you feel sick](#) when you arrive at the shelter or start to feel sick while sheltering, tell shelter staff immediately.

# Resources for Emergency Preparedness Planning

## Community Planning

Alaska is unique in its emergency preparedness planning for communities. As such, we require resources that are separate from the rest of the world. One of the best resources that any Alaskan community can utilize is the **Small Community Emergency Response Plan** through the State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Over 70 Alaskan communities have taken advantage of this resource. Ask your local council or mayor's office if your community has one of these. If you do not, request that they reach out to DHSEM. You can find great information on how to begin your planning and see an example of what your finished product will be here: <https://ready.alaska.gov/Plans/SCERP>

While this resource states "hurricanes" as its main example, in Alaska you can easily substitute winter storm, earthquake, tsunami, etc.... Community sheltering during COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/public-disaster-shelter-during-covid.html>

Make sure to consider resilience and coping resources for anyone responding to the event and those within your community. In Alaska, we need to consider traditional methods such as opportunities for storytelling.

Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/index.asp>

## Family Planning

Shelter-in-Place Kit Guide:

<https://www.muni.org/departments/oem/prepared/documents/dhsem-7-day-survival-kit.pdf>

Ready.gov is an excellent resource that covers many different scenarios for families.

Go Bag Guide: <https://www.ready.gov/kit>

Disaster Preparedness for Families with Special Health Care Needs:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/wcfh/Documents/disability/CYSHCNBookletWebAccessible.pdf>

## Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Emergency Management

ANTHC is here for our Alaska Native communities. If you are looking for guidance on emergency preparedness for communities, businesses, families, etc please reach out. If we are unable to provide the help you need we will direct you to resources that can better help you achieve your goals.

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