



# Disaster Event Checklist:

## Evacuation and Transportation for People Experiencing Homelessness

When disasters occur, and evacuation orders take effect homeless and other vulnerable people may not be able to access transportation if they are not properly notified and if the planned transportation is not accessible. Ideally, you have prepared for an evacuation that includes all people in your community, even the most difficult to reach (See [Preparedness Checklist](#)). If you have not, you will need to immediately contact your CoC to engage their expertise in planning comprehensive evacuations.<sup>1</sup> The checklist below offers a number of actions to enhance your evacuation plan by increasing accessibility for everyone in the community, including the most vulnerable and hard to reach.

### Pre-disaster

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Some disasters, such as hurricanes and floods, may allow for a few days warning. In those cases, take full advantage of these days to activate your evacuation teams and locate people experiencing homelessness to ensure they know about the evacuation. Use the systems you have established.

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- Reach out to the designated Communications lead to confirm that outreach teams are connecting with homeless and other vulnerable people to provide evacuation information (See the [Warnings and Notifications Checklist](#)).
- Contact emergency shelters to confirm that they are ready to implement their evacuation plans.
- Contact the person(s) designated to send text messages and distribute materials with evacuation details to confirm that they are doing this.
- Contact disaster shelters to confirm that they are prepared to receive homeless and other vulnerable people, they have enough copies of the one-page handouts you provided, and they are training volunteers. Provide a short training to volunteers if needed.
- In accordance with the plan you established and communicated, provide cash or vouchers to eligible households with cars so they can buy gas to evacuate. Provide directions to recommended locations for evacuation and information about how to return to the area after the disaster.
- Contact animal rescue groups to assist with evacuation of those with pets.
- Implement temporary storage solutions so that people don't lose belongings critical to their daily life, such as sleeping bags and legal documents.

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<sup>1</sup> This checklist supports Emergency Service Function (ESF) #1 (Transportation).



## During the Evacuation

Make sure all the elements of your evacuation plan are implemented. Stay apprised of developments so that you can address any problems as they arise.

- Stay in contact with outreach and evacuation teams to check on how the evacuation is going – if any unforeseen circumstances have arisen, contact the appropriate partners and address the needs.
- Call service providers to ensure staff have deployed as planned – e.g., case managers are deployed at pick up points and on transport to ensure that homeless and other vulnerable people can access the transportation. You may need a representative to go to these locations to ensure that things are happening as planned.
- Contact – or better yet, go onsite to – disaster shelters to confirm that people are arriving at and being accepted into shelters. Deploy additional resources if necessary (See [Shelter and Services Checklist](#)).
- Continue to provide funds for fuel to those who have cars but lack the resources to evacuate, in accordance with the plan.

## Post Evacuation

After the evacuation, help people get back home. People without access to transportation before the disaster will not have it after. You may need to investigate if arrangements are being made to help people return to the community and find decent and safe housing.

- Provide transportation back to the community for those who left the area and need help to get back.
  - This could mean providing rides through buses, vans, taxis, and ride share service as well as funds or vouchers for public transportation.
  - Remember that transportation back must be sufficient to transport people, pets, and belongings.
- Conduct active outreach to known evacuation locations to ensure that all residents – renters, homeowners, homeless, and facility based households – are informed of transportation options to come home.
- Implement measures to ensure that returnees have safe shelter to move into. It may take some time to find housing in the home community – in fact, in areas with a great deal of damage to the housing stock, it can be quite difficult. Work with FEMA, HUD, and other federal partners to help identify housing options – both short-term and long-term for people affected by the disaster (See the [Shelter and Services Checklist](#)).