



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

TO: DDS Regional Directors, STS Director, CCH Coordinators, and Private Providers

CC: Commissioner Jordan A. Scheff, Deputy Commissioner Peter Mason, Chief of Staff Kathryn Rock-Burns

FROM: Jackson Pierre-Louis, Division Director, Quality & Systems Improvement

DATE: Seasonal/Summer 2021

RE: Summer Hurricane Season

ADVISORY

Hurricane Season, which lasts from June through October, is upon us. Experts predict increased levels of hurricane activity. As we learned from the last hurricane season, **effective planning and preparedness on the parts of individuals, federal, state and local governments can save lives.** The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is working with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to promote awareness and preparedness to ensure that we are ready in the event that a hurricane hits the state of Connecticut.

Here's what we as individuals and providers can do to prepare for such an emergency event.

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"Hurricane WATCH" and "Hurricane WARNING"

- **WATCH:** Hurricane conditions are *possible* in the specified area of the WATCH, usually within 36 hours. When a hurricane watch is issued, people in affected areas should tune in to local radio or TV stations for up-to-date storm information.
- **WARNING:** Hurricane conditions are *expected* in the specified area of the WARNING, usually within 24 hours. When a hurricane warning is issued, be prepared to evacuate to your pre-determined relocation site or local shelter if public officials indicate to do so.

Review Emergency Supplies

- Ensure our homes have a three-to-seven-day supply of water, food, medication, etc. available.
 - Be sure to consider that after a hurricane passes, it may be difficult to get water and other supplies for several days.
 - Roads may be impassable because of storm debris.
 - Telephone lines, cell towers, and electrical power lines may be down.
- Make sure you have a working battery-operated radio and extra batteries.
- Make sure you have a working flashlight and extra batteries.
- Ensure you have adequate PPE supplies.
- If a generator is available:
 - make sure you know how to use it.
 - ensure it is in good working order.
 - know what devices the generator will operate.
 - make sure there is an adequate supply of fuel safely stored.

Review Evacuation Plans

FYI - *Three to four days in advance of a hurricane's projected landfall, DEMHS, in conjunction with DDS, may advise an evacuation of people with "special needs" from low lying areas that are subject to storm surge or flooding effects. These and other citizen advisories will be communicated via local radio or TV stations and public officials.*

- Review existing evacuation plans. Ensure relocation sites are not in low lying areas subject to storm surge or flooding effects. Given the anticipated track of the hurricane, some DDS Relocation Sites noted in the **DDS Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation** may not be available for use. You may be informed which DDS Relocation Sites are available for occupancy, and any other special instructions, via citizen advisories and/or through direct communication from DDS. Remember, monitor your local emergency radio and TV stations.
- Encourage all personnel to establish their own personal/family evacuation plans.
- In some communities, public officials may direct people to go to a specific shelter. This shelter will likely be a site other than the sites identified in your **DDS Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation**.
- Identify the items you will need to take with you should evacuation be necessary.
- Keep maps available to identify alternative travel routes in the event of road closures.

Staffing Considerations and Continuity of Service

- Providers:
 - Establish contingency plans for minimum safe staffing requirements in a home or at a shelter during a hurricane event. *
 - Advise staff that extended duty may be necessary under such emergency circumstances. *
 - Talk to staff about special personal considerations that would prevent or enable them to work during an emergency.
 - To promote continuity of services, consider accommodating family members and pets of staff during such an emergency, e.g. providing food, shelter, and/or transportation.

- Staff:
 - Talk to your employer or supervisor about special personal considerations that would prevent or enable you to work during an emergency.
 - Staff may need to accompany individuals to shelters and remain with them for an unspecified period of time. *

* Conn. Gen. Stat, Sections 17a-210, 17a-238, and 17a-227(b);
Regs. Conn. Agencies - DDS Sections 17a-227-1 et seq.

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This ADVISORY is intended to inform you regarding critical readiness activities you can engage in prior to, during, and in the aftermath of a hurricane. Major disruptions to services and supports we typically rely upon should be expected. Each person needs to be prepared to be as self-sufficient as possible. Hurricanes can be unpredictable, however planning and preparation can minimize the impact on all of us.

Additional emergency management resources are referenced on DDS website. DDS regional directors are listed. Also posted are the American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency web sites that provide valuable information and a web reference to the Connecticut General Statutes referred to in this Advisory.

Additional References:

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