

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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July 5, 2022

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Emergency Planning and Preparedness Reminders

Emergency planning and preparedness continues to evolve and has changed significantly just in the last five years. Each year we are reminded that the term “unprecedented” has been used year after year as California’s emergencies have worsened and the reality of the changing climate continues. Wildfire season now is part of California’s landscape and for the last five years has started earlier and has lasted longer each year.

This year there is a combination of extreme drought increasing the potential for wildfires, high winds prompting Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) as a fire mitigation measure, and danger of continued extreme heat into the coming months. Therefore, this letter is the first annual reminder of the importance of ensuring that we all remain in a state of readiness and identify how we work together to increase the awareness and preparedness of individuals and families we serve across the State to mitigate the risks of negative impacts to life and wellbeing.

Preparedness Reminders

Be familiar with the basics of emergency response:

- How will your consumers be contacted to share local emergency alerts, locations of shelters / cooling centers / and electricity charging stations?
- Do your case management systems have current, up-to-date emergency [contact information](#) for consumers served?
- Have you informed consumers on the importance of not blocking important messages sent from Everbridge?
 - Here are some of the phone numbers and email addresses from which Everbridge notifications will be sent:
 - Short Message Service, also referred to as text message or SMS messages, are sent from number 88911
 - Emails are sent from noreply@everbridge.com
 - Phone calls are sent from (your specific RC general phone number)
- Are power-dependent consumers reminded to have batteries charged and ready when wind, PSPS, and fire activity can cut power unexpectedly?

“Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices”

- Consider holding training events for consumers living in high fire threat areas.
- Continue to test your satellite phone regularly for familiarity and function. DDS schedules quarterly test dates, which should be considered a minimum frequency.
- Stay informed. Sign up for the California Department of Social Services' Provider Information Notices (PINs) at [CCLD Subscriptions \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Programs/OPPS/Information/ProviderInformationNotices/Pages/ProviderInformationNotices.aspx) and the California Department of Public Health's All Facility Letters (AFLs) by emailing LNCPolicy@cdph.ca.gov.

Emergency Coordinators

Please continue to support the work of the emergency coordinators. Upon approval of the 2022 state budget, allocations effective July 1, 2022 will be increased for their salaries and benefits. Many of these emergency coordinators may be new to regional centers, new to emergency operations, and/or new to other employees within the regional center whose assistance is essential to their success. Attached is a statewide list of the emergency coordinators, including contact information. We recommend that you print a hard copy to keep with your satellite phone as well to support cross-regional center collaboration.

As mentioned in our last update, implementation of the 2021-22 funding and resources for emergency preparedness and planning is well underway, thanks to coordination and collaboration with the regional center emergency coordinators statewide and other stakeholders. We are excited to share that those consumers living independently and/or with limited supports who are dependent on life-sustaining equipment and who are living within high fire threat areas will begin receiving portable backup battery power to enhance their individual preparedness. The Department has partnered with the California Foundation of Independent Living Centers' Disability Disaster Access & Resources (<https://disabilitydisasteraccess.org/>) program to provide these batteries. Your emergency coordinators can share more about how the program will work and help to assure identified consumers have access to this resource.

Additionally, consumers living independently or with limited supports in identified areas with high risk of fires are being invited to attend a training session on emergency preparedness and the importance of having an emergency go-kit. The flyer for the initial training opportunities is included with this memo as Enclosure A. The flyer includes live hyperlinks to the registration pages for these initial training dates. Initial and then monthly training via Zoom will be available, eventually transitioning to availability on-demand once a recorded session is available. In-person training could be arranged as well upon regional center request. Following completion of this training session, consumers will receive emergency go-kits with items specific to those living in identified high fire threat areas. The training will provide an overview of specific items and the importance of keeping them updated and personalized to meet consumer specific needs. The go-kits will be assembled and distributed to regional centers through our partnership with SupplyBank.org. Your emergency coordinators have been working on the process and details of this go-kit initiative if you have questions.

DDS' Feeling Safe, Being Safe emergency preparedness materials have been translated into five additional languages (Spanish, simplified and traditional Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese) and can be found here: [Emergency Preparedness – Feeling Safe, Being Safe](#). Also, we are partnering with the American Red Cross to develop video training opportunities for residents of congregate living facilities, which will be available on demand once finalized. More specifics about this initiative will be shared in the future.

We are pleased to share that the state budget beginning July 1, 2022 includes ongoing funding for these initiatives. Their success, and improvement, is dependent upon our ongoing collaboration.

Preparedness Resources for Excessive Heat, PSPS Events, and Wildfire Emergencies

- Heat Preparedness – high temperatures, posing a substantial risk to at risk populations that include children, the elderly, and those with disabilities or chronic diseases. General extreme heat guidance is available here: [Climate Change and Extreme Heat: What You Can Do to Prepare \(cdc.gov\)](#).
- In anticipation of Public Safety Power Shutoff events, please work with your service system to become familiar with these PSPS events, and to encourage individuals and families to sign up with their respective utility company to be notified timely:
 - [Prepare for Power Down](#)
 - [Cooling Centers \(ca.gov\)](#)
- Wildfires Emergencies – Fire season is starting earlier and ending later each year. Being prepared for wildfire emergencies remains a priority. Please visit and share this site, [Wildfire Action Plan](#), which provides a simple guide for what a personal action plan should include.

Other Information

The Department's website hosts varied resources on numerous topics for multiple audiences. For general wellness topics such as emergency preparedness, heat, and dehydration, please visit [Wellness Toolkit - CA Department of Developmental Services](#).

COVID-19 variants continue to circulate. Almost 200 Californians continue to die each day. Testing, vaccination, and public health guidance continue to evolve. The most recent information always can be found on www.covid19.ca.gov. Guidance for the public, employers, special populations and specific industry sectors can be found at the California Department of Public Health's guidance page:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx>. Vaccinations,

including transportation assistance and in-home options, can be scheduled via www.myturn.ca.gov.

For personal protective equipment (PPE) needs, such as masks, gloves, gowns, and sanitizer, please continue to follow the current [process](#) for requesting needed items.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment with emergency preparedness planning efforts to improve the lives of people we serve and support.

If you have questions about this informational bulletin, please contact Tamara Rodriguez at 916-718-1942 or by email at Tamara.Rodriguez@dds.ca.gov.

Stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Pete Cervinka
Chief, Data Analytics and Strategy

cc: Regional Center Community Services Directors
Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Emergency Coordinators
Amy Westling, Association of Regional Center Agencies
Tamara Rodriguez, Officer, Emergency Preparedness & Response, DDS