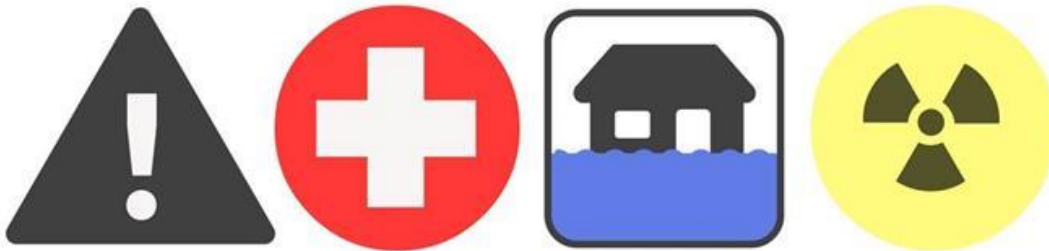




# NORC Notes

*A monthly reminder of available resources and tips for using them.*

July 2, 2018



## ARE YOU PREPARED?

### Emergency Preparedness

While the summer brings warmer weather, vacations, and opportunities for relaxation it also brings an increase of hurricanes, tropical storms, and other severe weather and natural disasters. This issue of *NORC Notes* highlights opportunities for Ombudsman program advocacy, emergency preparedness tips, and resources.

### The Role of the Ombudsman Program



Ombudsman programs play a vital role in emergency planning and response. Ombudsman programs can resolve complaints, protect rights, and promote access to services for residents before, during, and after emergencies and disasters. There are a variety of ways in which Ombudsman programs can contribute to ensuring that long-term care facilities are ready for natural

#### Examples of Ombudsman program activities and advocacy regarding emergency preparedness:

- Creating and implementing emergency preparedness plans regarding the continuity of Ombudsman program operations.
- Coordinating with local first responders and the State Department of Public Health.
- Provide input regarding the potential impact on residents while minimizing disruption to public health officials, first responders, and facility management and staff.

- Communicating and coordinating with residents, staff, and residents' families before during and after the disaster.
- Advocating for consumers to receive services, transfers, medical, or personal care.
- Thinking systematically about how to address resident's complaints. If one resident has a complaint, many others may also be experiencing the same thing.

## Tips for Emergency Preparedness



- Make sure your office has documented a formal emergency preparedness plan and has emergency preparedness kits ready.
- Know the plan but take time to question the plan. If it seems that something has not been properly accounted for, or that an aspect is missing from the emergency plan speak up.
- Allow first responders to respond to the crisis first. Wait until local authorities give permission for others to be on scene before resuming Ombudsman duties.
- Know your local EMA Plan and Safe Shelter Locations. Keep paper copies of contact information for facilities, caregivers, and staff as well as consumers' names, address, phone numbers, care facilities, day centers, and providers.

## Emergency Preparedness Resources



### **Being Prepared! Things Ombudsmen Should Do Before, During and After an Emergency**

This [guide](#) breaks down steps that Ombudsmen can take before, during, and after emergencies. It also provides personal safety and work safety guidelines.

### **Smartphone Apps for Ombudsmen**

This resource is a list of suggested [weather and emergency related applications for Ombudsmen](#) to download to their iPhone or Android devices.

### **Emergency Preparedness: Questions Consumers Should Ask**

This [fact sheet](#) from Consumer Voice provides a list of questions consumers should ask regarding the facility's emergency preparedness and evacuation plans.

### **Emergency Preparedness Kit**

The [Emergency Preparedness Kit](#) is available in Consumer Voice's online store for \$14. Each kit includes a drawstring bag; a flashlight; the NORC Tip Sheet for Ombudsman - Being Prepared! Things Ombudsmen Should Do Before, During and After an Emergency; Smart Phone Apps; and Emergency Management Dictionary and Translations; and CMS Emergency Preparedness Checklist for People Living in Long-Term Care Facilities, their Families, and

Ombudsman programs. Discounts are available for bulk orders (20 or more).  
Email [ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org) for more information.

***For more information on Emergency Preparedness visit the NORC [website](#).***

*Read archived issues of NORC Notes [here](#). If you have a question, are not able to find a resource, or want to share training materials or program practices, please email [ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org).*

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