



## Best Practice Model

### Emergency Preparedness Training

Emergency preparedness and response training for LTCO may be incorporated into (a) new worker training, (b) once yearly training via webinar, web module, and in-person meeting, and (c) dissemination of written EP information during weather related awareness months.

Joint trainings may be coordinated between: (a) LTCO and Emergency Management Agency (EMA), (b) LTCO, EMA, and LTC provider associations, or (c) LTCO, State Unit on Aging (SUA), Area Agency on Aging (AAA), and LTC networks. North Carolina's strategy is joint training between LTCO, EMA, and LTC providers. Oklahoma LTCO program's strategy includes the use of a trademarked training program for LTC facilities, made available for LTCO and AAA.

#### State Examples

##### North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Divisions of Health Services Regulation, Health Services, and Emergency Management are all partners in the development of emergency preparedness and disaster training. The State LTCO receives emergency management training and serves in the Emergency Operations Center during emergencies. Annually, county emergency management (EM) staff and LTCO help to organize regional and local trainings for LTCO, LTCFs, family care homes, adult care homes, and mental health facilities. Volunteer First Responders and LTCO are invited to attend the trainings. LTCFs bring their emergency preparedness (EP) plans and work to improve them during the training. County EM staff schedule dates with facilities to go on-site and "walk through" the EP plans.

##### Resources:

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (formerly known as The North Carolina Department of Crime and Public Safety) <https://www.nccrimecontrol.org/>. The North Carolina Disaster Plan Template CD for Nursing Homes, Assisted Living, and Mental Health Facilities, version 1.02, October, 2010. Compact Discs are available through the NC Department of Public Safety Division of Emergency Management.

##### Oklahoma

Oklahoma LTCO are required to take the Mather LifeWays PREPARE training. According to the Mather LifeWays website, "PREPARE is a disaster preparedness webinar series, workshop, and toolkit that teaches senior living community staff to manage natural disasters and other public health emergencies, and trains participants as PREPARE Specialists capable of teaching the

information to others.” While the PREPARE training is oriented toward LTCF staff it has become an invaluable training tool for Area Agency on Aging (AAA) staff and LTCO. The State LTCOP office provides the PREPARE training to newly hired LTCO and AAA staff at no cost to the employers. When students go through the training they in-turn agree to train others on at least five of the seven PREPARE modules. Additionally, training is provided to LTCFs by the OK Department of Health and the regional/local emergency management agencies.

Resources:

Mather LifeWays, <http://www.matherlifewaysinstituteonaging.com/senior-living-providers/prepare/>

Training curriculum pricing is available on their website.

### Ombudsmen: What would you do?

**Q.** Statewide approach to local EP training sounds great. How do I get our local and state agencies to do something like NC’s training?

**A.** The need for EP training became a reality for the state of NC after Hurricane Katrina. Often you can get people motivated to make positive changes after they receive a significant wake-up call! However don’t wait for a specific disaster to happen in your region or state. It is significant enough to remind people with data, pictures, and video of the horrendous loss of life and property after recent weather related events in the U.S.

**Q.** How do we go about getting LTCFs to share their EP plan with us?

**A.** NC LTCO are familiar with the EP template and become knowledgeable about the LTCFs plans during the training event. This is an ideal way to learn of their EP plans. However if this is not the case in your state, it will be important to ask each administrator/manager to make an appointment with you to review their EP plan.

**Q.** I don’t think that our EM staff even knows about the LTCOP. How can we educate the EMAs about the LTCOPs?

**A.** Your first step would be to make an appointment to introduce yourself to the emergency staff in your county and region. Since many rural counties have volunteer EM staff you may have to arrange to meet them in the evening or over the weekend. You may get lucky and in addition recruit new volunteer Ombudsmen.

**Q.** We have so many LTCO volunteers. How can we involve them in EP planning and response?

**A.** NC volunteer LTCO have been taught to do “in-reach” with residents during routine visits. In-reach involves talking with residents about their awareness of the facility’s emergency plans and giving them gentle reminders of EP plans during certain related weather seasons such as hurricane, tornado, etc.

**Q.** How should we develop a training curriculum for emergency preparedness?

**A.** Adopt a training curriculum from a reputable organization or develop one in conjunction with your state's emergency management agency. Add a component that explains the advocacy role of LTCO in assisting residents after an emergency.

**Q.** We train the LTCO on EP but their employers do not understand the LTCO's unique role of advocacy for residents.

**A.** Make the LTCO EP training available to the LTCO's employer. Meet with employers and give examples of an LTCO's work in advocating for residents and how they can effectively assist residents after an emergency.

**Q.** Without a full-time trainer how will we keep up the demand for EP trainings?

**A.** Consider the "train the trainer" method that expands the number of teachers. Seek training curricula such as Mathers LifeWays' PREPARE (available through the internet for on-line sessions). Partner with other state agencies that are providing EP training and ask permission for LTCO to attend their trainings.