



Nutrition and Aging Resource Center

Emergency Preparedness for the Aging Services Network

Older Adults are disproportionately affected by disasters. Community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve older adults can play a role in improving this statistic. This document highlights steps and resources to enhance CBO emergency preparedness so that they will be better situated to assist their older adult clients.

Continuity of Operations

A CBO will only be able to assist older adults in emergency situations if it has an emergency plan in place. FEMA has some resources to consider:

- [Continuity Resource Toolkit](#)
- [Continuity Training Program](#)
- [Continuity Resources and Technical Assistance](#)

It is important to have a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in place and to review and update it from time to time. CBOs cannot wait until they're in the midst of an emergency to start developing a COOP.

Community Resilience

The extent of a community's ability to quickly respond to and recover from a disaster or emergency will profoundly affect its ability to save lives and minimize damage. A community's response can be better when its members partner together in planning for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

A CBO may want to create its own partner network. The [Capacity-Building Toolkit for including Aging & Disability Networks in Emergency Planning](#), developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response, and others, contains tips for developing partnerships.

Alternatively, a CBO may want to join an existing partner network. Below are some examples of networks with local chapters; click on the links for more information and to find the nearest chapter:

- [Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster](#)
- [Medical Reserve Corps](#)
- [Community Emergency Response Teams \(CERTs\)](#)

Client Preparedness

As events over the last several years have shown, disasters, whether man-made or natural, can happen anywhere. Older adults may have lived in a particular area for decades without experiencing an emergency and may fail to appreciate the risks they face. Older adults and their caregivers also need to understand that first responders may be delayed in reaching them and that they need to be prepared and adhere to local officials' warnings.

Here are resources that can assist CBOs in helping older adults and their loved ones prepare for emergencies:

- [Guide to Expanding Mitigation – Making the Connection to Older Adults](#) (FEMA & AARP)
- [Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans. Get Ready Now.](#) (FEMA)
- [Emergency Preparedness for Older Adults](#) (CDC)
- [Disaster Preparedness and Recovery for Older Adults](#) (NIA/NIH)
- [Emergency Preparedness Toolkit for People Living with Dementia](#) (NADRC)