



Department of Health

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DAL: DACF 25-21
DNH 25-13

Subject: Emergency Preparedness Reminder

Dear Nursing Home and Adult Care Facility Administrators:

In disaster or emergency, a facility's ability to respond in a timely, organized, and effective manner can mean the difference between life and death for its staff and residents. Nursing home minimum disaster and emergency preparedness requirements are outlined in regulation at 10 NYCRR § 415.26(f), and adult care facility disaster and emergency planning requirements are in 18 NYCRR §§ 487.12 (adult homes) and 488.12 (enriched housing programs), and 10 NYCRR § 1001.14 (assisted living residences). In addition, the Department of Health ("Department") makes available setting-specific Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) templates as well as hardware and software for tracking of displaced individuals in the event of a facility evacuation.

CEMP Template

The CEMP template outlines the facility's management strategies in various types of events throughout all emergency phases from prevention to recovery. In addition to the Evacuation Templates for both settings available on the Health Commerce System (HCS) under Documents by Group->Long Term Care->Preparedness->Protocols, training to facilitate the completion of the CEMP is available on the [Learning Management System](#) through the course number OHEP-CEMPONLINE. The Department strongly encourages the facility administrator and emergency response coordinator(s), at minimum, take this course and update the facility's CEMP annually.

The New York State Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (eFINDS)

During an emergency where residents are displaced, use of a centralized tracking system is imperative. eFINDS is a statewide role-based emergency location tracking system accessible through the HCS and your facility's HCS coordinator must approve your access to the eFINDS application. Two eFINDS roles, occupied by two separate individuals for purposes of redundancy, are fundamental to its operation:

- The facility's designated eFINDS Data Reporter can register people, update tracking information, and upload eFINDS information to register evacuees.
- The facility's designated eFINDS Administrator can create an evacuation operation and temporary locations, order supplies, register and update tracking history, generate barcode assignments, and register people.

After you obtain eFINDS access appropriate to your role, please consider taking the eFINDS courses available on the [Learning Management System](#):

- OHEP-eFINDS-PSR, a practical skills self-paced review;

- OHEP-24-25-EFINDSTTT, a train-the-trainer live training which, when available and scheduled, can be taken in-person or online.

Each facility has a supply of eFINDS bracelets for residents that contain a barcode. When scanned, eFINDS bracelets are activated to allow for tracking the resident's temporary location through an application on the HCS. Information about eFINDS, including a demonstration, is available on the HCS.

Other Resources and Recommendations

Based on recent emergency events at long-term care facilities, the Department will be reviewing facilities' CEMP and eFINDS competencies through its quality assurance and surveillance processes. Please know that the Department's Office of Health Emergency Preparedness is engaged with long-term care trade associations on emergency preparedness activities. Therefore, your trade association may be an additional resource to ensure your facility is prepared for any type of emergency that threatens operations and/or health and safety.

In collaboration with the Quality Improvement Organization, the Department makes available a course on tabletop emergency preparedness exercises that provides best practices and ways to leverage these exercises as a valuable improvement tool. On the [Learning Management System](#), please find course number OALTC-534, an on-demand recorded training that provides best practices and suggestions for facilities as they navigate emergency preparedness.

Be advised that the Department strongly encourages facilities ensure their mutual aid agreements for location and transportation are maintained current at all times and are reflective of residents' current transportation assistance levels. Additionally, please be reminded that there are certain HCS roles that are regulatorily required, as outlined in DAL DACF 22-18/NH 22-03, including a 24/7 contact. Due to the nature of emergencies, the 24/7 contact should reflect a mobile phone number - not the facility's landline - to ensure the ability of the 24/7 contact to make and receive calls in emergencies and/or during times of suboptimal telephone and/or internet connectivity.

Questions

As it is our shared goal to protect facilities' staff and residents through any means necessary, please know the Department stands ready to provide guidance and support to develop CEMPs and obtain applicable training to support use of eFINDS equipment. If you have any questions about emergency preparedness, please outreach to the Department's Health Emergency Preparedness team at ohep@health.ny.gov. If you have any questions about the general content of this correspondence, please contact your program's regional office or centralized information mailbox, i.e., acinfo@health.ny.gov or nhinfo@health.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

Valerie A. Deetz, Deputy Director
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