



NATIONAL
HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL

EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

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CONFERENCE

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HOW DO WE DEFINE HOMELESS?

- Sheltered (emergency shelters, transitional housing)
- Unsheltered (streets, camps, cars, abandoned buildings)
- Doubled up (temporarily living with family and friends)*

*HUD does not yet include people who are doubled up in their definition of homeless

May 2010, Nashville, TN
Photo by: Jude Ferrera



STATE STATISTICS

| | Idaho | U.S. |
|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Total homeless (PIT)* | 2199 | 649,917 |
| Sheltered (PIT)* | 1585 (72%) | 62% |
| Unsheltered (PIT)* | 614 (28%) | 38% |
| Youth (annual) | 4342 | - |
| Veterans | 15% | 11% |

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*. Available online at <http://www.hudhre.info/documents/2010HomelessAssessmentReport.pdf>
 - City/County level data: <http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewHomelessRpts>
 - School count: www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/sy09-10part1/id.pdf
- * *Indicates that count does not include people who are doubled up*

STATE STATISTICS

| PIT self-reported characteristics (disability related) | Idaho |
|--|------------|
| Substance use | 24% |
| Serious Mental Illness | 17% |
| Serious Physical illness | 12% |
| Developmental disability | 4% |
| Other disability (undisclosed) | 6% |
| Chronically homeless | 14% |

Source: State of Idaho January 2011 Point-in-Time Count Report,

HIGH DISASTER RISK

HAZARD X VULNERABILITY = DISASTER RISK



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VULNERABILITIES CONTRIBUTING TO DISASTER RISK

- Limited access to media outlets to receive emergency communication
- Limited resources to take risk deduction measures
- Laws that criminalize homelessness push people out of public areas making them harder to reach
- Most shelters are closed during the day
- Lack of transportation for evacuation
- Poor social support networks
- High prevalence of mental illness, trauma, disability

INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY PLANNING

- Include homeless service organizations and people experiencing homelessness in emergency planning meetings, exercises, and events
- **Work with homeless service organizations to tailor emergency messages and instructions**
- Ensure that homeless service representatives are included in communication blasts
- **Assist homeless service providers in developing an interagency emergency plan.**
- Promote CERT trainings for homeless outreach teams
- **Assist homeless service organizations in developing peer-led trainings to prepare people who are experiencing homelessness for emergencies**

EMERGENCY MESSAGING

MOST EMERGENCY MESSAGING IS TAILORED TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE RESOURCES TO TAKE RISK REDUCTION MEASURES:

Before a storm, have a 3- to 5-day supply of nonperishable food and clean drinking water.

“Be prepared! Pack your emergency supply kit with essential first aid items such as bandages, antibiotic ointment, scissors, etc.”

“To help maintain your body temperature in cold weather, drink warm, sweet beverages and broth, and eat a well-balanced diet.”

inform local authorities about any special needs before a hurricane strikes.

“Make plans in advance to secure your home. Protect your windows by installing storm shutters or board up windows with plywood.”

HELPFUL EMERGENCY MESSAGING

Tips:

- Include actions to take, not just actions to avoid
- Use simple messages
- Be as specific as possible
- Use language representative of the community
- Use trauma informed communication

Basic information for emergency preparedness flyers:

- If using flyers, use large font and include a couple of graphics
- List shelters that will be open during emergencies
- Accommodations for pets
- Pick up points for evacuation or to a shelter
- How to access information about the emergency
- Services available at the shelter
- Basic safety tips

HELPFUL EMERGENCY MESSAGING

LOGISTICS

“During severe weather, go to Union Shelter located at 555 Union Street.”

During emergencies, accessible buses will be available at Site A and Site B to take people to Union shelter or to assist in evacuation if needed.

“Union shelter will have designated areas and food for pets.”

“Medical teams will be available at Union shelter to replace any lost medications or to look at any injuries.”

SAFETY TIPS

Avoid food that’s been contaminated by flood water. Food and clean water will be available at Union shelter.

“If caught in a tornado, seek shelter in a sturdy building or lie flat in a ditch to avoid flying debris. DO NOT get under a bridge or overpass.”

Stay away from damaged buildings to avoid injury.

INTERAGENCY EMERGENCY PLANNING

- Identify communication chain: VAL/PIO → lead HSO(s) → all HSOs → people experiencing homelessness
- Designate homeless service organizations (HSOs) to various geographical areas to communicate emergencies and assist in evacuation (using trained outreach teams)
- Identify emergency shelters that will open its doors during emergencies (make sure people know about this)
- Mutual aid agreements with homeless providers (health care for the homeless clinicians, PATH workers, and case managers) to be stationed at Red Cross shelters
- Mutual aid agreements with motels and other residential facilities that can accommodate people who are displaced from camps and who have no where to go when the Red Cross shelter closes.

QUICK WAY TO ORGANIZE HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDERS

Contact your local Continuum of Care lead:

www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewCocContacts

Continuum of Care: "The Continuum of Care is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness."

PREPAREDNESS TRAININGS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- Local hazards/ high risk areas where people without housing reside
- Which shelters will open its doors during the day
- Evacuation pick up points
- What to do if stranded
- Pet Care
- What to expect from first responders
- How to complete a health information card
- Safety tips

Peer to peer training curriculum coming out end of the year



SOME RESPONSE RESOURCES

Homeless Outreach Teams

- Trained in engagement strategies
- Skilled in trauma informed communication
- Knows the homeless community
- Trusted by the homeless community
- Culturally competent



SOME RESPONSE RESOURCES

Health Centers/Mobile Medical Teams

- Federally Qualified Health Centers (Health Care for the Homeless projects) receive federal funding to provide primary care and other services
- Some are equipped with mobile medical vans
- Federal liability coverage to provide care at emergency service sites if its in their service area
- May be a source for outreach workers and case managers

Contact your local FQHC:
findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov



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RECOVERY RESOURCES

■ Housing

- People living in camps may be eligible for rental assistance and compensation for personal belongings (FEMA - non-traditional living quarters)
- HUD allows people affected by disasters to be moved to the top of waiting lists; also allows resources to be shifted from one program to another.

■ Case Management

- After the President declares a disaster, the state can request disaster case management.

Try to coordinate housing and case management assistance!

RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

- Mental Health
- Identification Replacement
- Prescription Assistance
- Disability services (including addiction/recovery services)
- Local funds from foundations and corporations for individual assistance
- Transportation assistance (free Metro bus passes)
- Community voice mail



RECOVERY RESOURCES

Additional resources for veterans:

- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Veteran Affairs Medical Center



PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

- One stop resource fair for people experiencing homelessness
- Great place to provide preparedness material/ recruit people for trainings/give away emergency kits
- Can be coordinated after a disaster to provide access to information and services
- Can be a way to help people connect with friends and support
- Volunteer opportunity



QUESTIONS?

MORE INFORMATION

National Health Care for the Homeless Council
Emergency Preparedness Resources
<http://www.nhchc.org/disasterplanning.html>

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