

Best Practices

Disaster Preparedness

RFP, Training, Identification of At Risk Seniors, and Contingency Planning (2007)

PSA 2:

The AAA Request for Proposal Language for contracted providers to have emergency operations plans and the AAA's work with providers to develop lists of at risk seniors that may require special attention during emergencies is a best practice. The City of Yreka's Senior Program contingencies for maintaining Title C-1 and C-2 Nutrition programs and senior transportation services is well thought-out.

Special Needs Awareness Program (SNAP) (2006) PSA 3

Area 3 Agency on Aging, in concert with Butte County Elder Services, distributes a Special Needs Awareness Program (SNAP) packet to seniors designed to assist seniors with disaster preparedness. The packet contains the following:

- Information on how to Shelter In Place for 72 Hours;
- Emergency Preparedness Checklist;
- Information on how to prepare a Family Disaster Supply Kit;
- A form for the senior to complete that includes name, address, telephone number, medical history, medications, Advanced Directives, Doctor's name and telephone number, whom to notify in case of an emergency, and other emergency information and instructions;
- A card that can be placed in the senior's window during a disaster to notify emergency responders that assistance is needed;
- A postcard seniors can send to notify local emergency officials of changes in address, telephone number, etc.; and
- A laminated card with local agency names, telephone numbers, and a description of services provided.

Written Emergency Plans for Service Providers (2006) PSA 4

The Area 4 Agency on Aging requires its service providers and/or parent agencies to have a written emergency plan which includes coordination with their local emergency response system. The providers must identify disaster coordinators and their alternates and provide contact information to the AAA. They also have a good system for maintaining and periodically verifying the service provider contact information.

Disaster Preparedness: Coordination, Service Provider Training, Working with the Local Office of Emergency Services, and Volunteer Registry: (2007) PSA 5

The AAA has several notable practices in the area of disaster preparedness. One staff member represents the Department as a special needs advocate for disaster preparedness with the local office of emergency services. In this role, they work on coordinating first responders, transportation, and shelter resources. Coordination has occurred with the Red Cross and training was provided to service providers on how to develop their own preparedness plans. The Marguerita C. Johnson Senior Center is piloting a volunteer registry that prioritizes the needs of frail and vulnerable people for use in the event of a disaster.

Emergency Operations Plan (2006) PSA 6:

The AAA's Emergency Operations Plan is an excellent example for other AAAs. The AAA continues to refine its plan and will be working on developing a recognized form of identification for its home delivered meal drivers. Some components of their plan are as follows:

- Defined Roles and Responsibilities;
- Procedures to ensure uninterrupted services (especially nutrition) in the event of an emergency;
- Site Disaster Assessment Forms;
- Identifying an alternative site to conduct work in the event the main office is not accessible;
- A session on Disaster Preparedness conducted at a Senior Survival School, and
- An Emergency Plan Template for contractors.

Disaster Registry for Vulnerable and At-Risk Clients (2006) PSA 8

The agency maintains and updates a client disaster emergency contact list. In the event of a disaster or severe weather conditions, staff will identify and contact clients who are considered vulnerable and at-risk in order to assess their need for assistance. The following three categories of Disaster Preparedness Codes are used:

- **Degree of Contact Need** (Critical-Lives Alone, Critical-Lives with Others, Moderate, and Contact by Emergency Staff Not Needed)
- **Predominate Special Impairment** (Hearing, Visual, Confined to Bed, Wheelchair User, Mental Disability, or No Special Impairment)
- **Predominant Life Support Supply Need** (Respirator, Oxygen, Insulin, Life Support, Dialysis, Bowel and Bladder, Nasal/Gastrointestinal Tubes, Suctioning, Other Medical Device/Equipment, or No Life Support Supply Required)

Emergency Information - Vial of Life (2007) PSA 17

The Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens, in partnership with first responders in the San Luis Obispo service area, developed a "Vial of Life" medical information depository case for magnetic attachment to the refrigerator in a senior's home. The case contains vital data a response team needs to handle emergency situations in the home, and is updatable.

Disaster Response - "Disaster Wheels" (2008) PSA 23

The County of San Diego Aging and Independent Services created and distributed "Disaster Wheels," throughout their PSA. The Disaster Wheel can be rotated to different scenarios to suggest preparations or how to respond to an emergency or disaster. This is an innovative and effective way of informing seniors on how to prepare for, and respond during, a disaster.

Evacuation Checklist Magnet (2008) PSA 23

The County of San Diego Aging and Independent Services distributes an Evacuation Checklist Magnet that identifies items seniors should take during an evacuation i.e., documents (Social Security Card, medical records, insurance information, etc.), clothing (a change for each family member), hygiene items (toothbrush, shampoo, tissues, etc.), baby items (diapers, formula, food, etc.), special needs (wheelchair, medication, canes, etc.), and pet care items (immunizations, carrier, leash, etc.). The magnet also lists the San Diego Office of Emergency Services website and suggests residents be prepared

by having an Emergency Supply Kit to take along with the identified items. This is a simple, quick, and easily accessible evacuation checklist.

Emergency-Disaster Separate Remote Facilities for Continuity of Operations (2008) PSA 23

The County of San Diego Aging and Independent Services maintains a separate facility in the South County area to ensure continuity of operations in the event of an emergency or disaster that leaves the main office inoperable. This will help assure that services will continue in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Emergency-Disaster Continuity-of-Operations Plan Brochure (2008) PSA 23

The County of San Diego Aging and Independent Services staff receives Continuity of Operations instructions in a small brochure format, to assist them when they are away from the main facilities. The brochure details essential functions staffs are required to perform by statute, executive order, or county policy. It also explains the roles and responsibilities of staff in the event of an emergency or disaster. A relocation plan and confidentiality requirements are also outlined in the brochure. AIS' Continuity of Operations Plan provides the framework to ensure that AIS' essential functions continue during and after a broad spectrum of emergencies.

Routing of Calls after an Emergency (2008) PSA 23

The AAA has designed a call center with the capability of routing calls to a different location in the event of a disaster or the main call center becomes inaccessible.

Building Effective and Comprehensive Community Systems of Service (2006) PSA 25

The DOA has successfully developed programs with its partners in the area of disaster preparedness. This partnership includes city and county fire and law enforcement agencies, Secure Horizons, the Department of Mental Health, and Los Angeles County. One collaborative effort has developed, distributed, and provided education pertaining to a "File of Life." This file is distributed to seniors and contains documents to record medication information, medical problems, and emergency contact information. The DOA has also worked with the mayor's office, local emergency officials, and first responders to develop a disaster plan with defined roles and responsibilities.

Emergency Action Plan (2006) PSA 28

The agency has developed a plan to assist the elderly, handicapped, and their caregivers in the event of an emergency or disaster. The plan includes the following components:

- Coordination with the local Offices of Emergency Services;
- How the two I&A programs will provide assistance;
- AAA Administrative Office is designated as the Disaster Control Center for the purpose of coordinating with State and federal authorities as well as local providers;
- On-site emergency supplies;
- Maintaining service continuity;
- Roles and Responsibilities for staff ;
- Disaster Impact Assessment within 24 hours of a disaster to collect information on they type, scope, and location of needed assistance. A major focus is to determine the extent of the impact of the disaster upon elderly, handicapped, caregivers, those in congregate housing, nursing homes, residential facilities,

mobile home parks, senior housing, independent living centers, and other locations where seniors maybe living;

- Contact checklists;
- Developing and distributing status reports;
- Ensuring service providers have emergency plans;
- Recovery services that will advocate for clients and help them with applications for assistance, and
- Tracking disaster assistance services available and sharing them with staff and the public.