

# Community Care Home Bulletin

July 2024

## Emergency Preparedness

### Purpose

As a Licensee it is your responsibility to ensure the health, safety and dignity of persons in your care. An emergency plan that has considered all potential events and associated risks will help guide you during emergency situations and support the well-being of persons in care.

Residential Care Regulation section 51 - Emergency Preparations outlines a Licensees legislative requirement for emergency planning:

### Legislative Requirements

51 (1) A licensee must have:

- (a) an emergency plan that sets out procedures to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from any emergency, including procedures for the evacuation of persons in care, and
  - (b) a plan that sets out how persons in care will continue to be cared for in the event of an emergency.
- (2) A licensee must ensure that the plans described in subsection (1) are updated if there is any change in the facility.
- (3) A licensee must ensure that each employee is trained in the implementation of the plans described in subsection (1) including in the use of any equipment noted in the plan.
- (4) A licensee must display a copy of the emergency plan in a prominent place in the community care facility.
- (5) A licensee must ensure that all employees have access, in an emergency, to reliable communications equipment.

### Considerations for Pre-Emergency Planning

Each facility is unique, it's important to explore all possible emergency situations to identify and anticipate any potential risks affecting the health and safety of the persons in care. Ensure your facility policies and procedures continue to be relevant:

- Identify specific roles and duties within the emergency plan; for example, those involved in the drafting, implementation, practicing and monitoring of the emergency plan.
- Seek out opportunities for consultation with community or provincial experts in the field of emergency planning. i.e. [Health Emergency Management BC \(phsa.ca\)](https://phsa.ca) (public), [Health Emergency Management BC Emergency Response & Planning \[IH\] - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com) (Health Authority employee access only), Interior Health extraNet SharePoint for Long Term Care and Hospice.
- If using templates ensure they cover all the needs of your facility and its operations.
- Have a 24-hour to 72-hour emergency kit and first aid supplies. Ensure all expiry dates are checked.
  - [Basic Emergency Kit \(getprepared.qc.ca\)](https://getprepared.qc.ca)
  - [Build an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://gov.bc.ca)



- Have up-to-date contact information for all person in care representatives, emergency contacts and staff contacts with cellular, landlines and email.
- Have a plan for communication – How will you communicate with person in care representatives and family and provide notification of any applicable relocation(s) and care updates.
- When considering evacuation and relocation, have a plan A-B-C, as recent emergency events have seen persons in care move within community, out of community, out of region and out of province for an extended period time.
- Ensure the emergency plan has a thorough relocation transportation plan and ensure it has up-to-date contacts, modes of transportation, and needs of persons in care i.e., support staffing if required, in the event of a community emergency, there will be extreme demands and competition for transport resources, especially for stretcher and wheelchair resources. Acknowledge that your facility staff will most likely have personal investments and family at risk.
- Review the emergency plan regularly and ensure its continued effectiveness and adherence to legislative requirements.
- Retain all documentation of staff emergency plan orientation, and training for review.

### Considerations for Emergency Event Evacuation/Relocation

Evacuation and relocation can be stressful for the licensee, persons in care, and their family and representatives. Emergency events need to be continually monitored to ensure the ongoing health and safety of persons in care. Ensure your facility policies and procedures continue to be relevant.

- Include a communication plan for receiving up-to-date emergency information.
  - [Home - EmergencyInfoBC \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery) or follow [@EmergencyInfoBC](https://twitter.com/EmergencyInfoBC)
  - Register for Municipal or Regional District Alerts
  - [Interior Health Media Centre & Alerts](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/interior_health_media_centre/alerts)
  - [Alertable - Emergency Alerts](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/alertable)
  - [EmergencyMapBC \(arcgis.com\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-map)
  - [Wildfire Service - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/wildfire-service)
  - [DriveBC](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/drivebc)
- You will need to know if your facility is on alert or needing immediate evacuation.
- Consider the care needs of the persons in care, time for evacuation, availability of transportation and any information provided by your municipal or provincial government, regional health authority and applicable funding body.
- Ensure you have a plan to obtain, transfer and track personal care information - including immediate medications and person in care locations. An evacuation plan should include 72-96 hours worth of medications and other essential supplies for example, tube feed, ostomy, diabetes care etc..
- Follow your emergency plan for evacuation and consider staffing needs for and during the relocation, and individual care needs at the new location.
- When you encounter a reportable incident for a relocated facility, ensure it's submitted to Licensing Direct via the evacuated licensee.



## Considerations for Repatriation

Repatriation planning is imperative in supporting a return to a safe and healthy environment for person in care. Ensure your facility policies and procedures continue to be relevant.

- Repatriation may occur in an area that is on alert. Ensure you follow direction from the applicable Emergency Operations Commander.
- Ensure you have a plan to reach out to all the applicable authorities/regulators prior to repatriation, i.e., inspection of the food premise (Environmental Health Officer), operation of the HVAC, Environmental Services, etc.
- Make time for after event debriefing. Consider seeking mental and emotional support for all involved.
- Review the emergency plan and applicable policies and procedures and celebrated the successes and seek opportunities for change or improvement.

## Additional Resources

- [Public emergency preparation and recovery - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Get Prepared: Government of Canada](#)
- [Natural Disasters & Emergencies | Interior Health](#)
- [Support services during an emergency - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Disaster Recovery Guide \(gov.bc.ca\) \(For Local Authority and First Nations\)](#)
- [Disaster recovery resources - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [BC-Guidance-for-Property-Impacted-by-Wildfire\\_2023\\_11\\_08 \(csrd.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Caring for seniors in long-term care in an emergency - HealthLinkBC File #103c - Printer-friendly version](#)
- [Disasters and Public Health Threats | HealthLink BC](#)
- [CivicInfo BC | Directories](#) – Directory of Municipalities, Regional Districts, First Nations, etc.

If you have further questions, please contact Licensing Direct at 1-877-980-5118 or [LicensingDirect@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:LicensingDirect@interiorhealth.ca).