

Step 1. Join

Commit to membership in the Red Cross Ready Rating™ Program.

This step indicates your commitment to increasing your business' or organization's level of emergency preparedness during the course of the calendar year. You will be working to make your business or organization more prepared and to enhance overall community preparedness. Required actions include:

- A. CEO or sponsoring executive reviews and agrees to all terms and conditions of the Ready Rating Membership Agreement.
- B. Ready Rating Coordinator is appointed by CEO/executive to serve as the primary point of contact for the Ready Rating program.
- C. Complete the online Ready Rating 123 Assessment.

Step 2. Assess

Conduct a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment.

This step involves gathering information about possible emergencies that could impact your business or organization and your facility's capabilities to respond to and recover from a disaster or other emergency. Analysis of hazard vulnerability includes:

2.1 Knowing your region and the types of disasters most likely to impact your business or organization.

What disasters and other emergencies should you plan for? Include natural, human-caused and public health disasters that can happen in your area and emergency situations that may occur unexpectedly within your facility.

- A. Obtain a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) from your local emergency management agency to learn about local hazards that contribute to disasters most common in your geographic region. Note: In some areas, this may be a component of your community's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). Hazards could include:
 - Wild fires
 - Severe weather
 - Hazardous material spills
 - Transportation accidents
 - Earthquakes
 - Hurricanes
 - Floods
 - Tornadoes

- Terrorism
- Power outages

Consider your facility's proximity to potential hazards when thinking about the likelihood of different disasters occurring, such as:

- Flood plains, seismic faults or dams
- Companies that produce, store, use or transport hazardous materials
- Nuclear power plants
- Major transportation routes and airports
- Proximity to other larger facilities
- Proximity to potential targets of terrorism

Find out about any emergencies that have occurred at your facility in the past and gather information about other potential hazards related to:

- Fire, explosions, hazardous material spills
- Safety system failure
- Telecommunications or computer system failures
- Power failure, including heating/cooling system malfunction
- Your facility's design or construction
- Human error

- B.** Consider using the [Red Cross Hazard Assessment Guide](#), or make your own chart, to guide the process. You may also contact your local emergency management agency to obtain a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) they have conducted recently. [APPENDIX 2.1.B.](#)
- C.** List any additional steps your business or organization may have taken to gain an understanding of internal and/or external threats and vulnerabilities.

2.2 Knowing your business or organization's current capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster.

- A.** Assess the physical capacity, supplies, equipment and human resources of your facility to resist damage during a disaster.

What types of emergencies could result from the design or construction of the facility? Does the facility enhance safety? Consider:

- Facility's physical construction and location
- Hazardous processes or byproducts
- Facilities for storing combustibles
- Layout of equipment
- Lighting
- Evacuation routes and exits
- Proximity of shelter areas

- Barrier issues such as locked gates, secured areas, multiple floors or building locations

Assess your human resources, or employee capacity, to prepare for and respond to a disaster. One of the most effective ways to assure your business' or organization's recovery from an emergency is to involve employees in preparing and planning for disasters and other hazards. When assessing your human resources, consider the following questions in terms of what you have in place already and what you need to do to help prepare your employees:

- Do you have enough employees trained in basic first aid and CPR/AED skills to handle emergencies in the workplace? Do employees know how to find those who are trained and willing to respond? You may choose to designate an employee who is trained in and willing to offer first aid and CPR/AED on every floor, or section of each floor, of your facility.
 - Are there regularly-scheduled presentations and training seminars to help employees learn and develop preparedness skills? Examples of emergency preparedness topic areas include:
 - Putting together emergency preparedness kits for use at home, at work and while in transit
 - Developing a family communication plan
 - Mapping out evacuation routes from various locations
 - Is emergency preparedness training part of every new hire's orientation?
 - Do employees take part in regularly-scheduled drills and exercises to practice evacuation and sheltering in place? It's important to include information about local evacuation routes and encourage employees to have alternate means and routes to get to and from work.
 - Is there a plan in place to communicate with employees during an emergency? It's important to get the message out using all available communication tools. Consider setting up a telephone call tree, a password-protected page on your business' or organization's Web site, e-mail alert, or call-in voice recording.
 - Do you have an out-of-area phone number designated where employees can leave an "I'm okay" message during a catastrophic disaster? Does your facility keep employee emergency contact information with other important documents in your emergency preparedness kit and at an off-site location?
 - Do employees have a family communication plan? Do they know about emergency procedures and disaster plans at their child's school? Having a family communication plan and knowing school plans will help employees make effective decisions about what to do and how to communicate during a disaster.
- B.** Speak with your insurance agent and learn what coverage is available and what precautions to take for disasters that may impact your business or organization.

Note that some property insurance policies may exclude, or have high deductibles for, losses due to earthquake, flood, windstorm, hurricane or terrorism. Valuable property and equipment may need to be insured with special coverage endorsements or policies. Also, review your business interruption and extra expense insurance needs. You may want to discuss all of these issues with your agent and consider purchasing additional insurance to cover any currently uninsured loss exposures.

- C.** Identify and obtain agreements, as necessary, with external emergency response resources that will provide assistance during a disaster or other emergency.

It is recommended that you contact external organizations that may be able to help “just in time,” during or after a disaster. In some cases, formal agreements may be helpful to define the relationship and communication with these providers during an emergency. Consider:

- Local and state police and fire department, hospitals and emergency medical service organizations
- The mayor, community emergency management office or planning commission
- Local Red Cross Chapter
- National Weather Service
- Telephone, water, gas and electric companies
- Local businesses
- Insurance carriers

Step 3. Plan

Develop an emergency response plan.

An emergency response plan describes the steps your business or organization will take to protect your business or organization and employees before, during and after an emergency. Developing a plan includes the following steps:

3.1 Identify an emergency planning committee that is responsible for developing and implementing an emergency response plan.

- A. Establish an **emergency planning committee** of key stakeholders that is responsible for and empowered to develop and implement an emergency response plan. The size and make-up of the committee should reflect your business operations, requirements and resources. It’s helpful to involve workers from all levels and functional areas of the business or organization. **APPENDIX 3.1.A.**
- B. Senior management should review the work of the emergency planning committee, including the emergency response plan, updates to that plan and recommendations to better protect the business or organization and its employees. This review should be done annually, at a minimum. Once the final written plans are approved by senior management, necessary resources should be committed to ensure the plan is effectively implemented in all appropriate levels of the organization.

3.2 Develop a written plan describing how your business or organization will respond during a disaster or medical emergency.

The written emergency response plan should describe how your business or organization will respond during a disaster in terms of the leadership structure, systems and response procedures that will be established. Create a work schedule for developing the written plan. Consider asking a seasoned project manager to assess the work required and to create a realistic timeline. Whenever possible, write as a series of checklists. Be sure to include:

- A. A clearly designated leadership structure that details chain of command designations for emergency situations.
- B. A system for **warning and alerting employees and other stakeholders** (including customers, contractors, suppliers and vendors, as appropriate) about emergencies. **APPENDIX 3.2.B.**
- C. A system for storing employee emergency contact information and other important business files in both on- and off-site locations. Designate staff to maintain current emergency contact information for employees' families as well as employees' after-hours contact information.
- D. Procedures for communicating with employees and their families, clients, emergency response organizations, media representatives and other stakeholders prior to, during and after a disaster or medical emergency. These procedures should incorporate a means of reaching employees both at home and at work.
- E. Procedures for employees and all other individuals on the premises to follow for **evacuation**, including pre-designated gathering points. Develop a system to keep track of the location of employees during a disaster. **APPENDIX 3.2.E.**
- F. Procedures for individuals on the premises to follow for **sheltering in place** during external threats, including designated areas and supplies. **APPENDIX 3.2.F.**
- G. Procedures for individuals on the premises to follow for other area-specific hazards as identified in your Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA).
- H. Procedures for responding to internal medical emergencies. This could include how to alert persons that are on-premise and are trained in and willing to offer first aid and CPR/AED, the local emergency medical service, and others as deemed appropriate. Documentation and follow-up procedures should also be considered.
- I. A description and timeline for conducting regular drills, exercises and ongoing training. Build in the need for regularly-scheduled practice, ongoing training and communication to employees.
- J. An updated list of **employees with disabilities** and/or medical conditions who may require additional assistance and the help they will need during different types of emergencies. **APPENDIX 3.2.J.**
- K. A list of necessary safety equipment and emergency preparedness supplies (i.e., drinking water, food, first aid kits, flashlights, radio, batteries, etc.). Ensure ready access to **emergency equipment and supplies**. **APPENDIX 3.2.K.**
- L. Long-term steps your business or organization will take to mitigate and prevent disasters by reducing or eliminating the risks to life and property from a full range of hazards as identified in the HVA and emergency plan procedures.

- M. The emergency response plan should be reviewed and updated every year and as staff changes and/or the business or organization itself changes. Senior management should receive a report on any changes and enhancements to the plan, as well as any concerns about issues that still need additional work or resources. Management should review this report and, when appropriate, support efforts to address outstanding issues.

3.3. Create a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) can help businesses or organizations respond to and recover from disasters or other emergencies. To develop a COOP, your planning team will need to assess how your business or organization functions, both internally and externally, and determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business or organization operating.

- A. Identify a COOP Coordinator and/or committee that is responsible for and empowered to develop a COOP. Senior management should provide the COOP Coordinator and/or committee with the resources and authority to work with the different internal and external entities involved to develop your business' or organization's COOP. This plan will help keep your business or organization operating as it responds to and recovers from the effects of a disaster or emergency situation.
- B. Establish procedures to **activate the COOP**. **APPENDIX 3.3.B.**
- C. Identify **essential functions** of the business or organization and designate staff to carry out these functions. **APPENDIX 3.3.C.**
- D. Establish **procedures with suppliers, vendors and other businesses or organizations that are critical** to daily operations. Information on these procedures, and how to contact the necessary individuals to implement them, should be secure and backed up (both on and off site) so as to be available at the facility and when access to the facility is not feasible. **APPENDIX 3.3.D.**
- E. Establish procedures to ensure the financial and administrative processes that enable identified critical business functions can be performed.
- F. Plan how to conduct business if the **facility is not accessible**. Optional worksites, work from home, or other options to continue the delivery of critical business functions should be established. **APPENDIX 3.3.F.1.**

Create secure **back-up systems** for vital business records and identify records and documents for performing essential business functions. Ensure they are available to those who have already been identified to carry out essential business functions. **APPENDIX 3.3.F.2.**

- G. Ensure **records and documents** for performing essential business functions are stored in a safe place, perhaps off site, where they can be retrieved quickly. **APPENDIX 3.3.G.**

- H. The COOP should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis as staff changes, new suppliers and vendors are integrated into operations, and as other changes to the business or organization occur that would affect the COOP. Senior management should receive regular reports regarding changes and enhancements to the COOP, as well as notification of concerns regarding outstanding issues or needed resources. Management should review this report and, when appropriate, support efforts to address outstanding issues.

Step 4. Implement

Implement your emergency response plan.

This step involves continuing to work with the planning committee to implement the emergency response plan with employees. The key to implementing the plan is to make preparedness a part of the corporate culture. To ensure preparedness is integrated into your business or organization, do the following:

4.1 Train employees on a regular basis about what to do during a disaster or emergency.

Consider partnering with community organizations to help create comprehensive preparedness training. At a minimum, all employees should know:

- A. Warning systems and communication procedures.
- B. Their role during a disaster and the roles and responsibilities of key personnel at your facility.
- C. Evacuation procedures and shelter-in-place procedures, location and use of common emergency equipment and emergency shutdown procedures.

4.2 Acquire and maintain needed safety equipment and emergency preparedness supplies.

When employees need to seek temporary shelter in your facility during emergencies, think about how you can provide the basics of survival: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth.

Encourage employees to purchase or assemble emergency preparedness kits for use at work, at home and in their vehicles. Employees can learn more about assembling emergency preparedness kits for the workplace and for commuting by visiting the Be Red Cross Ready Web site at [RedCross.org/beredcrossready](https://www.RedCross.org/beredcrossready).

While most sheltering in place situations last only a few hours, try to have three days worth of supplies on hand whenever feasible for other types of sheltering situations that may occur at your business or organization.

- A. Designate employees who know how and where to access safety equipment and emergency preparedness supplies.

- B.** Your Hazard Vulnerability Assessment should help inform the kinds of safety equipment needed to respond to specific emergencies. This should be listed clearly in your written emergency response plan. Much of the safety equipment needed may be standard and required to operate your business or organization. Maintaining and keeping it in working order is just as important as having it on hand. The following list of recommended safety equipment and emergency preparedness supplies should be checked and maintained at least once a year, if not more often:
- First aid kits - Replenish supplies regularly
 - Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) - Check regularly and replace batteries as needed
 - Fire extinguishers - Check pressure gauge
 - Bloodborne pathogens kits - Replenish supplies regularly
 - Carbon monoxide alarms - Test once a month to ensure they are working properly and replace batteries as needed or at least once a year
 - Smoke alarms - Test once a month to ensure they are working properly and replace batteries as needed or at least once a year

Additional emergency preparedness supplies and equipment to consider having on hand for shelter-in-place emergencies are:

- One gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation, if possible
- Non-perishable foods that do not require cooking or refrigeration
- Battery-powered commercial radios and extra batteries. If possible, include a NOAA Weather Radio with a tone-alert feature that automatically alerts you when a watch or warning is issued in the area
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Whistles to signal for help
- Dust or filter masks, which are readily available in hardware stores. They are rated based on how small a particle they filter
- **First aid kits** for each member of the first aid team placed in common areas according to OSHA requirements **APPENDIX 4.2.B.1.**
- **Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)** **APPENDIX 4.2.B.2.**
- Moist towelettes for sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can openers for food (if supplies include canned food)
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape for "sealing the room" to shelter-in-place
- Garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation

4.3 Show employees how to be prepared at work and at home so they are better equipped to help the business or organization respond to and recover from an emergency.

- A.** Part of your emergency response plan is to ensure you have a team of employees who are trained annually and prepared with knowledge and skills necessary to provide basic first aid care for injuries and sudden illness as well as to respond to life threatening emergencies until advanced medical personnel arrive and take over. Train and maintain a first aid team. There may be situations when professional responders can not reach your facility as soon as you would like.

- B.** Members of the team should be trained annually and willing to administer basic first aid and CPR and use an AED appropriately. The size of the team will depend on the number and location of employees and the layout of your facility. It is recommended that 10 percent of the workforce, in any specific work area and point in time during the work day, be trained annually to respond to emergencies. Since employees may change jobs, work shifts and locations, you will need to evaluate the team regularly to ensure you have enough trained personnel at any given time.

Help employees and their households prepare. Your employees will be better able to help your business or organization respond and recover from an emergency if they know how to prepare their homes and families. You can help your employees become better prepared by:

- C.** Offering first aid training to employees annually.
- D.** Offering CPR/AED training to employees annually.
- E.** Offering bloodborne pathogens training to employees annually.
- F.** Offering preparedness training to employees annually. This can include reminding employees and their families to: “Get a Kit, Make a Plan. Be Informed.” Go to [RedCross.org/beredcrossready](https://www.redcross.org/beredcrossready) for more information on how everyone can Be Red Cross Ready. Include emergency preparedness information in newsletters, on the business’ or organization’s intranet, periodic employee e-mails and other internal communications tools.
- G.** Encouraging employees to identify alternative routes for going to and from your facility.
- H.** Reminding employees to always keep their emergency contact information current.
- I.** Encouraging employees to create a Family Communication Plan, including an out-of-area contact designated where they can leave an “I’m okay” message during a disaster or an emergency situation. Remind employees to have a family communications plan that includes meeting places both at home and outside their neighborhood, and current emergency contact information for all family members. Visit the Make a Plan section of the Be Red Cross Ready online program at [RedCross.org/beredcrossready](https://www.redcross.org/beredcrossready) for communications plan templates and emergency contact cards.
- J.** Providing emergency preparedness training to each new person you hire.
- K.** Making sure your list of employees with first aid and CPR/AED training is kept up-to-date as employees come and go.
- L.** Encouraging employees to have emergency preparedness kits on hand at work, at home and in their vehicles.
- M.** Encouraging employees to learn about the emergency procedures and disaster plans that are in place at their children’s schools, child and senior care facilities and other places where their family members stay

when not with them. Include information in the Family Communication Plan about these locations, and an alternate meeting place in case it is unsafe to return home.

- N. Include information about other activities, communications or services you have offered to promote employee personal preparedness in both the workplace and at home.

4.4 Conduct and assess regular drills and exercises to determine the readiness of your employees and facility.

Create a team of skilled personnel responsible for developing, conducting and evaluating practice drills and tabletop exercises. Use the drills to assess the readiness of your employees and your facility. Involve both personnel and community responders in after-action debriefings and the evaluation process. Use lessons learned to update emergency response plans, improve procedures and increase training as needed.

At a minimum, conduct the following drills and exercises once a year. These should also include drills that test specific functions, such as alert systems and communications equipment.

- A. Tabletop exercises to assess your emergency preparedness.
- B. Building evacuation drill. In these exercises, employees walk the evacuation routes to a pre-designated gathering area where assigned personnel take role and account for all evacuees.
- C. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) activation drill. These drills should demonstrate how the chain of command, management succession and back up of critical business functions will occur during a disaster.
- D. Shelter-in-place drill. Employees are asked to proceed to pre-designated shelter areas and follow the facility's Shelter-in-place procedures.
- E. Conduct other drills to practice procedures specific to disasters in your area at least once a year.
- F. Medical emergency response exercise.
- G. After each exercise, review these questions during an after-action debriefing meeting:
 - Did employees know where they were supposed to go? Did they follow procedures?
 - Did designated personnel know how to use emergency equipment?
 - Did emergency systems and equipment function properly?
 - Were access routes, exits and stairways easy to find and clear of debris?
 - Were all employees accounted for?
 - Were other elements of your emergency response plan, including COOP, implemented?
- H. Record the points discussed during the after-action debriefing meeting. Include any recommendations or concerns that were identified and provide them in an after-action report to the appropriate coordinators or

committees and senior leadership for follow-up and possible changes to the emergency response or COOP plans.

Step 5. Help Others

Help your community get prepared.

Now that your business or organization and employees are prepared, make at least one additional commitment to ensure that the overall community is prepared for a disaster or other emergency.

- A.** Host blood drives. [APPENDIX 5.A.](#)
- B.** Promote personal and family preparedness in your workplace and community through educational communications and training programs that include the message “Get a Kit. Make a Plan. Be Informed.” Lead an educational campaign that encourages others to Be Red Cross Ready. Consider opening any trainings or presentations to your employee’s families and other groups in your community. [APPENDIX 5.B.](#)
- C.** Appoint employees to be trained as Preparedness Education leaders who represent the business or organization and Red Cross when conducting preparedness presentations in your business or organization and community. [APPENDIX 5.C.](#)
- D.** Appoint employees to be trained as Red Cross national disaster volunteers and give work time to serve on disaster assignment(s). [APPENDIX 5.D.](#)
- E.** Sign a facility agreement with your local Red Cross Chapter to allow your facility to be used as a Red Cross shelter location, as needed, in the event of an emergency. [APPENDIX 5.E.](#)
- F.** Contribute supplies and/or services to emergency response efforts. [APPENDIX 5.F.](#)
- G.** Invest in Red Cross services and programs. [APPENDIX 5.G.](#)
- H.** Provide scholarships for Red Cross health and safety training courses and products. [APPENDIX 5.H.](#)
- I.** Adopt a local school or school district and support their disaster and emergency preparedness programs. [APPENDIX 5.I.](#)
- J.** Re-direct pre-paid advertising space for Red Cross messaging during a disaster. [APPENDIX 5.J.](#)
- K.** Include information about other activities your business or organization completed to help your community prepare.

APPENDIX

2.1.B. (Appendix) - Red Cross Hazard Assessment Guide

This exercise can help you record information about your facility's capacities and vulnerability to a variety of emergencies and hazards.

1. Make a list

Identify all possible emergencies that may impact your business or organization. To make sure your list is comprehensive, meet with government agencies, community organizations and utility companies. These groups can help identify potential emergencies and hazards.

2. Estimate probability

Rate the likelihood of each emergency's occurrence. Use a 1 to 5 scale with 1 as the lowest probability and 5 as the highest. This is a subjective consideration, but it is useful for prioritizing and planning.

3. Assess the human impact

Analyze the potential human impact of each emergency on your list—the possibility of death or injury. Use a 1 to 5 scale with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest.

4. Assess the impact on your facility's property

Using the same 1 to 5 scale, evaluate the potential impact on your facility's property for each emergency on your list. Consider:

- Cost and time needed to replace
- Cost and time needed to set up temporary replacement
- Cost and time needed to repair

5. Assess the impact on your business operations

Using the same 1 to 5 scale, evaluate the potential impact of each emergency on your day-to-day business operations. Some scenarios to consider:

- Employees are unable to report to work
- Customers are unable to reach facility
- Critical supplies cannot be delivered
- Product distribution is interrupted

6. Assess internal and external resources

Using the same 1 to 5 scale, evaluate the potential impact of each emergency on your internal and external resources. Ask yourself:

- Do we have the needed resources, equipment and capabilities to respond?
- Will external resources be able to respond to us for this emergency as quickly as we may need them, or will they have other priority areas to serve?

Your score

Total the scores for each emergency; the lower the score the better. While this is a subjective rating, the comparisons will be useful for assigning, prioritizing and allocating resources during the emergency planning phase.

3.1.A. (Appendix) – Emergency Planning Committee

Who should be on the emergency planning committee?

You will need a person or small group to lead the process. External resources for consultation are valuable as well. The team should include workers from all levels of the business or organization as well as those who represent essential business functions.

- Consider a broad cross section of people from your organization, but focus on those with expertise vital to daily business functions. These will likely include people with technical skills as well as managers and executives.
- Make sure your committee includes workers with known disabilities or others who may need extra assistance during an emergency (such as people with chronic or temporary medical conditions who may not consider themselves as having a disability).
- Consider partnering with outside organizations to develop the plan. Local emergency management, public health and government agencies as well as business preparedness groups are useful resources when writing your plan. Emergency response personnel and the Red Cross can provide assistance during an emergency and can describe the resources they have available in those situations.

3.2.B. (Appendix) - Warning and Alerting Employees and Other Stakeholders about Emergencies

To be effective, a warning and alerting system should:

- Be audible or within view by all people in the facility, including people with disabilities. For instance, a flashing strobe light may be part of a warning system to ensure people with hearing impairments will be alerted to an emergency situation.
- Have an auxiliary or back-up power supply.
- Have distinct and recognizable signals. Familiarize personnel with procedures for responding when the warning system is activated. Establish procedures that can help guide visitors who may not be familiar with the facility's warning system.
- Be tested regularly. Preparedness experts suggest facilities test their warning systems monthly.

3.2.E. (Appendix) - Evacuation Planning

During some emergencies, it may be necessary to evacuate your facility. To develop an evacuation plan, consider the following:

- Determine the conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary.
- Establish a clear chain of command. Identify personnel with the authority to order an evacuation. Designate “evacuation wardens” to assist others in an evacuation and account for all personnel. Create training programs for wardens and other personnel involved in evacuation procedures.
- Establish procedures for assisting persons with disabilities or medical conditions. For example, a blind employee may need a partner in case an evacuation is necessary.
- Post evacuation procedures and make sure exits and evacuation routes are clearly marked.
- Designate personnel who will shut down critical operations while an evacuation is under way. These employees must receive training to recognize when to abandon the operation and evacuate themselves.
- Coordinate plans with local emergency management authorities and external resources, such as police and fire departments.
- Include plans for assisting guests, clients, customers and other visitors to the facility during an evacuation.

3.2.F. (Appendix) - Shelter-in-Place Procedures

Shelter-in-place procedures

In some emergencies, it may be safer to have employees stay in your facility (i.e., when a tornado warning has been issued or a toxin has been released into the environment). Your plan should designate a small, interior room(s) with no or few windows where employees and others in your facility can take temporary refuge.

How to shelter in place:

- Provide for the safety of customers, clients or visitors in the building by offering to let them stay—not leave.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as non-perishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor with the fewest windows or vents that will still provide an adequate air supply for the maximum number of people that will occupy the room. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to sit. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes that may not be able to be sealed from the outdoors. Consult with a safety professional for advice on the unique characteristics and needs pertaining to your building for disaster-related situations.
- Have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room in the event of a chemical or radiation emergency.
- Bring everyone into the room(s). Close the doors, windows and other exterior openings securely.

- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call your business' or organization's designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you, and their affiliation with your business or organization (employee, visitor, client or customer.)
- Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told it is safe to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

3.2.J. (Appendix) - Employees with Disabilities

Keep in mind that people requiring additional assistance during an emergency may not be apparent. An employee may have a condition that makes it difficult to walk down stairs. Identify as many of these needs as possible and how they will be addressed ahead of time. For more information about disaster preparedness for people with disabilities, go to the Red Cross Web site at RedCross.org.

3.2.K. (Appendix) – Safety Equipment and Emergency Preparedness Supplies

- Install emergency lights that turn on when the power goes out. They are inexpensive and widely available at building supply retailers.
- Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio with a tone-alert feature. Keep it on and when the signal sounds, listen for information about severe weather and protective actions to take.
- Stock a minimum supply of the goods, materials and equipment you would need to keep the business or organization operating during an emergency.
- Keep emergency supplies handy, including:
 - One gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation, if feasible
 - Non-perishable foods that do not require cooking or refrigeration
 - Battery-powered commercial radios and extra batteries. If possible, include a NOAA Weather Radio with a tone-alert feature that automatically alerts you when a watch or warning is issued in the area
 - Flashlights and extra batteries
 - Whistles to signal for help
 - Dust or filter masks, which are readily available in hardware stores. They are rated based on how small a particle they filter
 - First aid kits for each member of the first aid team placed in common areas according to OSHA requirements
 - Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)
 - Moist towelettes for sanitation
 - Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
 - Can openers for food (if supplies include canned food)
 - Plastic sheeting and duct tape for "sealing the room" to shelter-in-place
 - Garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation

3.3.B. (Appendix) - Activate the COOP

- Establish procedures for management succession. Ensure at least one member of the management team is located off site.
- Define crisis management procedures and individual responsibilities in advance. Make sure those involved know what they are supposed to do.
- Train additional people in case back-up help is needed.

3.3.C. (Appendix) - Essential Functions of the Business or Organization and Staff

- Review your business process flow chart if one exists.
- Identify operations critical to survival and recovery.
- Include emergency payroll procedures.
- Create procedures that allow for expedited financial decision-making.
- Establish the accounting systems needed to track and document costs in the event of a disaster.

3.3.D. (Appendix) -Suppliers, Vendors and Other Businesses or Organizations

- Meet with suppliers, vendors and business partners to discuss how pick-up, delivery and distribution services can continue if your business or organization suffers an interruption.
- Share your plans and encourage other businesses or organizations to implement their own continuity planning.
- Review contracts for any obligations your facility may have during business interruptions.

3.3.F.1. (Appendix) - Facility is Not Accessible

- Determine alternative locations from where your business or organization could operate.
- Develop relationships with other companies to use their facilities in case a disaster makes your location inaccessible.
- Store back-up data at an off-site facility not likely to be damaged by an event affecting your facility.
- Arrange for evacuation of critical documents, like payroll, that may still be stored at your facility.

3.3.F.2. (Appendix) - Back-Up Systems

Preserving vital business records is essential to the quick restoration of operations. Analyzing vital records involves:

- Gathering documents that will be needed to respond to an emergency.

- Identifying the minimum information that must be readily accessible to perform essential business functions (i.e., maintaining customer collections may require access to account statements).
- Deciding where essential documents can be stored safely, perhaps off site, where they can be retrieved quickly.
- Identifying the equipment and materials needed to access and use the data.

3.3.G. (Appendix) - Records and Documents

Essential documents should be easily accessible and stored in a water-proof, fire-proof container. Copies of the documents should also be stored in an off-site location where they can be retrieved quickly. Essential documents include:

- Emergency call lists and contact and identification information (wallet size, if possible) - lists should include all persons on and off site who would be involved in responding to an emergency, their responsibilities and their 24-hour telephone numbers.
- Building plans and site maps - should show utility shutoffs, floor plans, fire extinguishers, exits, stairways, designated escape routes and hazardous materials.
- Insurance policies
- Employee bank account records
- Supplier and shipping contact lists
- Computer back ups
- Emergency or law enforcement contact information
- Resource lists - should include a list of major resources (equipment, supplies and services) that could be needed in an emergency; and mutual aid agreements with other companies, organizations, including the Red Cross, and government agencies

4.2.B.1. (Appendix) - First Aid Kits

For emergency situations, a first aid kit and breathing barriers should be available to employees who are part of the first aid or emergency response team. Kits should be strategically located throughout the facility and should be for emergency use only. Kits should include barriers for breathing emergencies. When determining exact locations, numbers and type of first aid kits to have accessible in your facility, review OSHA standards for your industry and follow those guidelines according to your needs.

4.2.B.2. (Appendix) - Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

When sudden cardiac arrest occurs, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) should be readily available to use. Several factors should be considered when securing and making AEDs available at your workplace. Each minute defibrillation is delayed reduces the victim's chance of survival by about 10 percent. That's why it is important to conduct a site analysis of your business or organization and facility when determining where to place AEDs and how many to have. The site analysis includes:

- Profiling known risks within the organization such as the age and health status of employees as well as the physical environment for high-voltage equipment, high heat and other factors that may increase the likelihood of cardiac arrest.
- Evaluating the environment through a survey of the layout and estimated emergency response times for internal first aid teams and external emergency responders.
- Considering barrier issues such as locked gates, secured areas, multiple floors or building locations.
- Determining the most logical access for AED placement. For example, the break room is accessible to both sides of the building for quick access to the AED.

An AED response plan needs to be developed to ensure successful implementation of your AED program. This includes:

- Identifying state or local requirements for an AED program in your area, such as the training required for certification, industry standards and OSHA standards.
- Determining your response-time goal. Ideally, pads should be applied to the victim within three to four minutes of identifying the emergency.
- Evaluating equipment needs and response consistency when determining the number of AEDs to have on hand and where to place them.
- Selecting and training the first aid team. Consider the number of trained personnel and their willingness to respond, the location of first aid team members and their access to AED equipment.
- Streamlining internal and external communication to identify and respond to emergencies quickly.

5.A. (Appendix) - Host Blood Drives

Hosting a blood drive is a simple and powerful way to help your community prepare for disasters. The American Red Cross works closely with businesses and organizations, community groups, religious congregations and schools to organize blood drives at places most convenient for donors—the places where they live, work, worship and play. In fact, 80 percent of blood donations made through the Red Cross are made at blood drives rather than fixed donor centers.

As the host, your organization provides an appropriate physical space and a coordinator to recruit donors, schedule appointments and coordinate with the local Red Cross. The Red Cross does the rest. Visit [GiveLife2.org/sponsor/](https://www.givelife2.org/sponsor/) for more information about how you can host a blood drive at your place of business. If you or your organization is interested in sponsoring a blood drive, please call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543).

5.B. (Appendix) - Promote Personal and Family Preparedness

Offer presentations and training programs that include the message of “Get a Kit, Make a Plan. Be Informed.” Ways to promote this include newsletters, e-mail blasts, your Web site and/or using the [Be Red Cross Ready](#) online education program offered by the American Red Cross.

Give employees information stressing the need to have a family communications plan that includes finding out about the emergency procedures and disaster plans at their children's school/day care and arranging a meeting place in case it is unsafe to return home.

5.C. (Appendix) - Lead an Educational Campaign

September is National Preparedness Month. Work with your local chapter to support their campaign by hosting a community event or volunteering for outreach activities using Be Red Cross Ready materials.

- Link to the Be Red Cross Ready Web site from your corporate site to help others learn about preparedness and basic lifesaving information and training at [RedCross.org/beredcrossready](https://www.RedCross.org/beredcrossready).
- Include an article or series of articles on preparedness in your business' or organization's newsletter about the three simple steps to Be Red Cross Ready.
- Offer a Be Red Cross Ready community presentation to employees and their family members or even people in the neighborhood where your business or organization is located.
- Insert a Be Red Cross Ready checklist in employee paycheck envelopes.

Examples of safety information to send home to employees includes how to make a family communication plan, the essential supplies in an emergency preparedness kit, the disasters common to your area, and the importance of learning the emergency procedures at work, day care centers and children's schools. The Red Cross [Masters of Disaster®](#) program offers take-home activities linked to disaster-specific curricula that children can do with their families.

The knowledge and skills your employees have gained during your participation in the Ready Rating program can help others learn to prepare for and respond to emergencies. The Red Cross can train appointed members of your team to teach others how to prepare for emergencies; training is free. For information about how to appoint and train Preparedness Education Leaders, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

5.D. (Appendix) - Appoint Employees to be Trained as National Disaster Volunteers

By supporting volunteer training, you not only increase preparedness at your facility, you contribute to your community's volunteer resources.

The Red Cross trains thousands of people with all kinds of different backgrounds, talents and skill levels to respond to emergencies every day. No special skills are required. Click here for a [Volunteer Opportunities Checklist](#).

Your local Red Cross Chapter can provide a training program that fits the interests, skills and scheduling needs of your employees. Click here to learn more about [volunteer opportunities for your employees](#) or check with your local chapter.

5.E. (Appendix) - Sign a Facility Agreement with Your Local Red Cross Chapter

Every Red Cross Chapter works continuously to coordinate and collaborate with its disaster partners. Chapters identify places to set up shelters and service centers, make arrangements with vendors for needed supplies and work with local merchants. To find out how you can commit your facility as a Red Cross shelter location and get training for your workforce to manage the facility, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

5.F. (Appendix) - Contribute Supplies and/or Services to Emergency Efforts

Emergency Supplies

By donating supplies and/or services to emergency response efforts, your business or organization can help play a crucial role in helping entire communities recover. Water, food, cleaning supplies, medical supplies, even vehicles for transporting supplies and people to affected communities may be needed. The most important step when donating materials is to contact an established, professional relief organization before you collect anything. Your local Red Cross Chapter can provide information about local groups who may be accepting donations and items that are needed. To donate supplies and/or services to the Red Cross, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

[Donating Goods](#) -

<http://www.redcross.org/portal/site/en/menuitem.d229a5f06620c6052b1ecbf43181aa0/?vgnextoid=07001b655eb3b110VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD&cpsextcurrchannel=1>

[How to help](http://www.interaction.org/how-help) - <http://www.interaction.org/how-help>

[Guidelines for Effective Private Sector International Disaster Assistance](http://www.cidi.org/guidelines) - <http://www.cidi.org/guidelines>

Emergency Services

Consider making it possible for your employees, especially those trained in emergency preparedness, to volunteer in times of community need. Think about your facility's areas of expertise as well. Many businesses and organizations have been able to aid recovery efforts by providing logistics, telecommunications and computer support. For more information on how you can help, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

5.G. (Appendix) - Invest in Red Cross Services and Programs

By supporting the American Red Cross through a financial contribution, you're helping us provide relief to disaster victims and help prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Your gift not only touches individuals and families right here in our community, but people across the country and around the world.

Consider donating to the Red Cross and help us continue to provide the programs and services that aid our neighbors in their time of greatest need. To learn more about how you can support Red Cross services and

programs, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

5.H. (Appendix) - Provide Scholarships for Red Cross Health and Safety Training and Products

Sometimes community members are required to get health and safety training certification to be eligible for employment, but they may not have the funds to pay for it. Children from families with low incomes may not be able to participate in aquatics courses, so they risk being unsafe in and around water. Red Cross Chapters may be able to reduce the cost of a training course or provide scholarships. Your business or organization can work with your local Red Cross Chapter to provide scholarships based on the needs of people in your community.

5.I. (Appendix) - Adopt a Local School or School District

Many schools are feeling the effects of budget cuts and decreased funding for extracurricular programs. Businesses and organizations have a role to play in supporting programs and encouraging employees to find ways to volunteer at local schools.

Your business or organization can support the mission of the Red Cross and local schools by providing:

- Volunteers to lead sessions for students using the *Masters of Disaster*® curriculum or donating curriculum sets for teachers.
- Session leaders and/or student materials for other youth-focused programs such as Scrubby Bear, First Aid for Children Today, Basic Aid Training or Babysitter's Training.
- Items needed for school emergency preparedness kits in classrooms.
- Emergency equipment and supplies, such as first aid kits, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), training manuals and other items needed for first aid training.

5.J. (Appendix) - Re-Direct Pre-Paid Advertising Space for Red Cross Messaging During a Disaster

Become a partner in educating the public by re-directing some of your business' or organization's pre-paid advertising space or purchasing ad space outright for Red Cross messaging during a disaster. By agreeing upfront to donate ad space to the Red Cross, you will be helping to communicate about emergency preparedness and how to get or receive help immediately following a disaster. Contact your local Red Cross Chapter for more information.