

Planning and Preparing for Hurricane Season



CHILD CARE

State Capacity Building Center

What Are Hurricanes?

Hurricanes are severe tropical storms with high winds and heavy rain. Hurricanes are categorized based on a sustained wind speed rating, known as the [Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale](#), from categories 1 to 5. All five categories can produce damage, but categories 3 through 5 are considered major hurricanes and can cause extensive or catastrophic damage. Hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30, but hurricanes can occur before and after this time frame. To learn more about hurricanes, [visit the Ready.gov 2024 web page on hurricanes](#).

CCDF Lead Agency

To prepare for hurricane season, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies should consider reviewing their communication protocols, including contact information on file for providers, families, and Lead Agency staff. Lead Agencies may also evaluate their child care disaster plan policies to ensure partner entities such as child care resource and referral agencies are prepared. Severe hurricane damage can generate a greater need for child care and support among parents and families. Ensuring staff and partnering agencies receive training on how to carry out core functions of CCDF and the child care disaster plan can ease burdens and stress during hurricane recovery.

Lead Agencies may find the following resources on leveraging voluntary organizations active in disaster (VOAD) and developing a communication plan helpful:

- [Did You Know about VOAD?](#) (2021), Child Care State Capacity Building Center
- [How States and Territories Can Plan for Recovery](#) (2023), Child Care State Capacity Building Center

Child Care Providers

CCDF Lead Agencies should consider sending seasonal reminders about hurricane season preparedness to providers. Ready.gov publishes a [yearly preparedness calendar](#) to promote preparedness throughout the year. Reminders may include information about checking or stocking emergency supplies, reviewing families' contact information, and signing up for weather alerts. During this time, child care providers should ensure all staff receive training and are ready to support children during hurricane season. Providers should also consider

HURRICANE DISASTER SUPPLIES

The following supplies can help you prepare for hurricanes:

- Enough food and water to last 3 days
- Full gas tank
- Cash
- Medicine and prescriptions
- Radio, batteries, and phone charger

Additional supplies for providers include the following:

- Records (i.e., business and family information)
- Medication for children in care
- Baby formula and diapers

Child Care Aware of America's [Emergency Supply Kit for Child Care Providers](#) offers a full list of emergency supplies.



checking in with families before forecasted severe storms or hurricanes to discuss communication and reunification plans. In addition, providers may want to review their business continuity plans and insurance in case their program site sustains damage during the hurricane. The following resources support preparedness:

Hurricane Resources

- [A Hurricane Comes to Sesame Street](#) (n.d.), Sesame Workshop
- [Emergency Preparedness Hurricane Resources](#) (n.d.), Child Care Aware of America
- [Preparing for a Hurricane or Other Tropical Storm](#) (2022), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Resources to Help Children in the Aftermath of a Hurricane](#) (2017), Child Trends

Financial and Business Resources

- [Business Continuity](#) (n.d.), Child Care Aware of America
- [How Insurance Protects You in an Emergency: A Resource for Family Child Care Providers](#) (n.d.), Child Care Aware of America
- [Ready Business](#) (2024), Ready.gov

COMMUNICATION

Before a hurricane, you should establish alternative methods of communication. Cellular networks and landlines may be out of service.

- Lead Agencies can use text messaging, social media, the Lead Agency website, or a provider portal to send important communications such as hurricane watch alerts.
- Providers can use text or social media to contact parents and families and establish an out-of-state contact for themselves and families.

Dangers After a Hurricane

After a hurricane, several dangers could be present in the area or community, including flood water, downed powerlines, and structural damage to homes and businesses. Be sure to follow guidance from officials, such as returning to a home or business only if cleared by officials (especially if you evacuated) and heeding water boil advisories. The following resources support health and safety after a hurricane:

- [After a Hurricane](#) (n.d.), National Weather Service
- [Stay Safe After a Hurricane or Other Tropical Storm](#) (2023), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Tips for Returning Home Safely After a Disaster](#) (2021), Federal Emergency Management Agency

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