Community Preparedness

A practical checklist for neighborhoods, community groups and local associations. Start small, include everyone, and coordinate with local officials.

01 Organize your community

- ☐ Define the area or group covered by the plan. Invite residents, renters, local businesses and community organizations to participate.
- ☐ Choose a coordinator and backup. Assign volunteers to communication, neighbor check-ins and resource coordination.
- ☐ Ask local emergency management which hazards, alerts, evacuation routes and official shelters apply to your area.
- ☐ Invite people to identify support needs voluntarily. Include accessible communication, language, transportation and service-animal needs.

02 Stay connected

- ☐ Create an opt-in contact list and phone tree. Get permission before sharing contact information; limit access to designated coordinators.
- ☐ Choose a primary communication channel and a backup for outages. Keep printed contact instructions in a secure location.
- ☐ Agree on a check-in schedule and a safe meeting point with an alternate location. Confirm accessibility and property-owner permission.
- ☐ Relay verified official updates, including their source and time. Assign someone to correct outdated information.

Start here: Invite a few neighbors to a short planning meeting. Agree on one communication method and one next action.

Practice. Support. Improve.

03 Prepare to help safely

- ☐ Inventory resources volunteers are willing to share, such as charging equipment, tools, translation skills and transportation. Confirm availability and safe use.
- ☐ Encourage each household to maintain its own emergency supplies. Identify resource gaps without assuming donated supplies will be available.
- ☐ Set up voluntary buddy check-ins. Decide how to report a missed check-in without putting volunteers at risk.
- ☐ Identify first-aid, CPR and community emergency response training opportunities. Volunteers should work within their training.
- ☐ Follow official evacuation instructions. Do not enter damaged buildings, floodwater or hazardous areas to conduct check-ins; call 911 for immediate danger.
- ☐ Practice the communication plan and a simple outage scenario. Review after exercises, real events and changes in membership.

04 Your community action sheet

Community / area covered

_____

Coordinator and backup / contact method

_____

Primary channel / outage backup

_____

Meeting point / alternate

_____

Next action / owner / due date

_____

Keep personal contact lists separate from publicly distributed copies of this checklist. This plan supports local emergency response; it does not replace official instructions.

Planning references: Ready.gov: Resolve to Be Ready; City of Austin: Neighborhood Preparedness Guide; CDC: Community Preparedness. Independent resource from New Earth Corps, LLC.