

SPRING 2026

Residential Facilities for Seniors or Persons with Disabilities

OPERATOR TOOLKIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background	1
Legal Requirements	2
Reporting During Declared Emergencies	3
Reporting Critical Issues Outside of Declared Emergencies	3
Additional Legal Considerations	4
Annual Application Process	5
Application Process Flow Chart	6
Applying for a License Using the One Stop App	7
Related Forms Explained	8
Annual Resident Census	8
Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs	9
Emergency Plan Survey Template	9
Emergency Plan Content Checklist	9
Emergency Preparedness Resources	10
How to Develop Your Organization’s Emergency Operations Plan	10
City-Assisted Evacuation	12
Voluntary or Limited Evacuation	13
Sheltering & Emergency Resource Centers	13
Communication Tools	14
Access and Functional Needs	14
CMIST Framework	15
Hazards	16
Local and National Emergency Preparedness Resources	18
Contact information for City of New Orleans Partners	18
Local Resources	18
State Resources	19
National and Online Resources	19
Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions	20
Appendix B: Glossary	21
Appendix C: Extreme Heat Guidance	22
Appendix D: Example of Completed Resident Census	23

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Background

The City of New Orleans' emergency preparedness ordinance for Residential Facilities Housing Seniors or Persons with Disabilities (from this point on, these properties will be referred to as either residential facilities or independent living facilities) was passed into law in October 2021 to protect the health and safety of residents at higher risk of poor health outcomes living independently in apartments in Orleans Parish.

Environmental conditions after Hurricane Ida (August 29, 2021) demonstrated the need for improved communication and coordination between the property owners and managers of these independent living facilities, facility residents, and the City of New Orleans during emergencies. The storm brought catastrophic power outages during the extreme heat of summer, threatening the health of residents throughout the city, in particular residents with mobility needs and chronic health conditions, who depend on electricity to utilize elevators in their apartments, keep medications refrigerated, or keep their units at a safe temperature. City of New Orleans responders conducted wellness checks at residential facilities and discovered many buildings with hazardous conditions that needed to be evacuated, and in a few cases, residents that had passed away behind locked doors. At some of the properties, city staff were unable to determine which units were vacant; how many residents remained on-site; what critical needs had to be urgently addressed; and no management was on premises or available.

These conditions made clear the importance of planning and preparation to ensure that this suffering and loss of life does not happen again, and these regulations represent a crucial step towards that goal. Ensuring the City of New Orleans has correct contact information for property management and real-time knowledge of both the conditions at facilities and the needs of residents, will help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the city's response.

However, planning for emergencies requires continuous effort, and there is more work to be done. As extreme weather influenced by climate change is forecasted to increase, our hope is that this ordinance helps bring together the City of New Orleans, facility operators, and residents themselves, to work together towards a safer and healthier future.



Residents are assisted in evacuation by NOHHS staff and volunteers during an emergency.



Legal Requirements

Section 30-1281 of the Code of the City of New Orleans defines a residential facility for seniors or persons with disabilities as a housing facility not licensed by the State of Louisiana and meeting one or more of the following conditions:

- Six or more rental units at the facility are specifically designated for persons aged 55 or older
- Six or more rental units at the facility are specifically designated for persons with disabilities (Note: Units are considered specifically designated for persons with disabilities if they are accessible for persons with mobility, hearing, or vision needs in accordance with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards or the American National Standards Institute, and if persons needing the features of that unit are given preference when applying)
- 50% or more of the units at the facility are permanent supportive housing

The legal requirements for these properties are outlined in two separate places: Chapter 30, Article XVII of the Code of the City of New Orleans, and regulations adopted by the New Orleans Department of Health and Human Services to accompany that section of the City Code. Copies of both documents are available on NOHHS's webpage for Residential Facilities Housing Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

The following is a list of the requirements for covered independent living facilities:

1. An emergency operations and evacuation plan must be submitted to the City by April 1st of each year. This all-hazards plan will describe the facility's planned response to events such as tropical weather, no-notice flooding, urban heat-related events, and prolonged power outages (longer than 48 hours).
 - A. The plan will include the name, title, email address, and mobile phone number for the point of contact at the property, as well as a backup point of contact if the primary point of contact is unavailable.
 - B. The plan must be shared with each resident when they move into the facility, and an updated copy must be provided to each resident prior to June 1 of every year. A copy of the plan must also be posted in a conspicuous location in the property.
2. A census of all residents must be submitted to the City by April 1st of each year, including all household members of each unit, with each resident's primary phone number, emergency contact name and number, and, for those residents who voluntarily report it, information on their communication needs, mobility needs, or electricity needs, such as use of durable medical equipment, oxygen, and assistive technology.
3. Information regarding generators on the property, including the type of fuel used, burn rate, fuel capacity, what areas or functions the generator will power in the event of a power outage, and information about emergency fuel contracts, service contracts, and annual certifications or inspections.
4. Facilities must comply with the **NFPA 101 Life Safety Code**, as determined by the New Orleans Fire Department. Contact the Fire Prevention Division for more information at (504) 658-4770.
5. During all declared emergencies:
 - A. Situational updates must be submitted to the City every 24 hours, unless otherwise specified by either the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness or the New Orleans Department of Health and Human Services. These updates will include a full census of all residents and staff on site, unless otherwise specified.

- B. A point of contact must remain on site and available to the City at all times, unless otherwise specified.
 - C. Immediate notification must be provided to the City if the facility evacuates, temporarily relocates, or temporarily ceases operation.
6. If a facility subject to these regulations experiences an acute incident, such as a loss of critical facility systems (for example: loss of power or water, or elevator outage) or structural damage (for example: a fire) the facility must notify the City and provide updates every 24 hours, even if this is not part of a declared emergency.
7. If a housing facility subject to these rules is a HUD Multifamily property, the facility owners must submit each year, as part of their annual license application, proof of the compliance with HUD Multifamily Emergency/Disaster Guidance put forth in Chapter 38 of the HUD Multifamily Asset Guidebook, including:
- A. Developing an emergency relocation plan to relocate residents prior to an impending storm.
 - B. Developing tracking mechanisms to contact residents and determine the intent to return to the unit.
 - C. Developing a pre-disaster checklist that is shared with tenants in the case of a disaster.
 - D. Maintaining an inventory of all residents, property, phone numbers, mailing addresses and emails.

Reporting During Declared Emergencies

For the City of New Orleans to have accurate information about conditions at the facility, situational updates shall be submitted every 24 hours during a declared emergency (unless otherwise specified and communicated by NOHHS or NOHSEP). These reports may include information about the conditions at the property, the number of residents that have evacuated or are sheltering in place, and contact information for management. This section outlines the process for submitting the required reports.

When a state of emergency is declared by the Mayor, NOHHS will notify facility contacts of the declaration and provide instructions regarding situational updates. Initial notice and instructions will be provided via email. If a report is not received by the City, we will follow-up by phone, and will visit the property as needed, to make contact with property management.

NOHHS may request that situational updates be provided using a short digital survey, such as a Microsoft Forms survey. This will help provide an accurate record of submitted updates, and will help centralize the information submitted. If at any point you experience technical difficulties, reports can be submitted via email at pheeh@nola.gov, or via the emergency phone number provided by NOHHS if needed. It is always better to provide updates via email or phone, rather than not contact us at all.

Reporting Critical Issues Outside of Declared Emergencies

Building issues that pose a safety risk for residents can also occur when there is not a declared emergency. According to NOHHS regulations, all residential facilities covered by this ordinance must also notify the City of New Orleans and coordinate with the City if a critical issue occurs at a facility whether there is a declared emergency or not. Examples of critical issues include, but are not limited to, an extended loss of power, elevator outage, loss of heating or cooling, or fire.

Additional Legal Considerations

Some federal laws that establish requirements for housing for persons with disabilities deserve mention here. These include the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. This section is not meant to cover the entire contents of each bill, or to act as legal advice, but for your general awareness.

Fair Housing Act, as Amended

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination against people renting or buying a home, or seeking housing assistance, and prohibits discrimination when providing or maintaining housing services. The Fair Housing Act also requires owners of housing facilities to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities so they can fully utilize their units. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines reasonable accommodations as “changes, exceptions, or adjustments to a program, service, or procedure that allow a person with a disability to have equal enjoyment of the housing program.” Such reasonable accommodations are also required if there is a maintenance issue that affects the unit. In the event of an elevator outage, for example, reasonable accommodations might include helping a resident with mobility needs run errands or carry groceries up the stairs, or it might include moving that resident to a different unit until the elevator can be repaired.

The 1973 Rehabilitation Act

The 1973 Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities by the federal government, and in the operation of programs receiving federal assistance. Each federal agency has its own set of rules to prevent discrimination in the programs and services they provide. For example, HUD requires that some of the units at new or renovated multifamily properties be made accessible for people with disabilities, and that persons with disabilities be given preference if they apply for those units.

Americans with Disabilities Act, as Amended

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in many areas of public life, and in places open to the general public. The ADA specifically addresses discrimination in employment, public services, private services open to the public, and telecommunications. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not cover privately-owned housing, such as apartment units in privately-owned buildings, with the exception of parts of the building open to the public, such as the lobby or leasing office.



Scan QR code to access the complete Chapter 30, Article XVII - Residential Facilities for Seniors or Persons with Disabilities

Annual Application Process

Facilities subject to these regulations must obtain a Residential Housing Facility annual operating license each year. The purpose of this requirement is to provide a formal and transparent way for the City of New Orleans to verify what changes, if any, have been made to emergency plans, resident censuses, or facility points of contact, and to make sure we have up-to-date documents for each facility.

Applications must include the following information:

1. Emergency Operations Plan

The Emergency Operations Plan should include a complete all-hazards plan that describes the facility's planned response to tropical weather, no-notice flooding, urban heat-related events, prolonged power outages that are expected to last longer than 48 hours, and any other threat deemed required by a hazard vulnerability assessment.

2. Resident Census

The Resident Census should include the name of each resident, their unit number, their contact information, and their emergency contact information. It should also include information about medical needs, communication needs, or mobility needs that residents choose to share. Please complete the Census using the spreadsheet created by the NOHHS.

i A sample Resident Census is available in the appendix section of this toolkit.

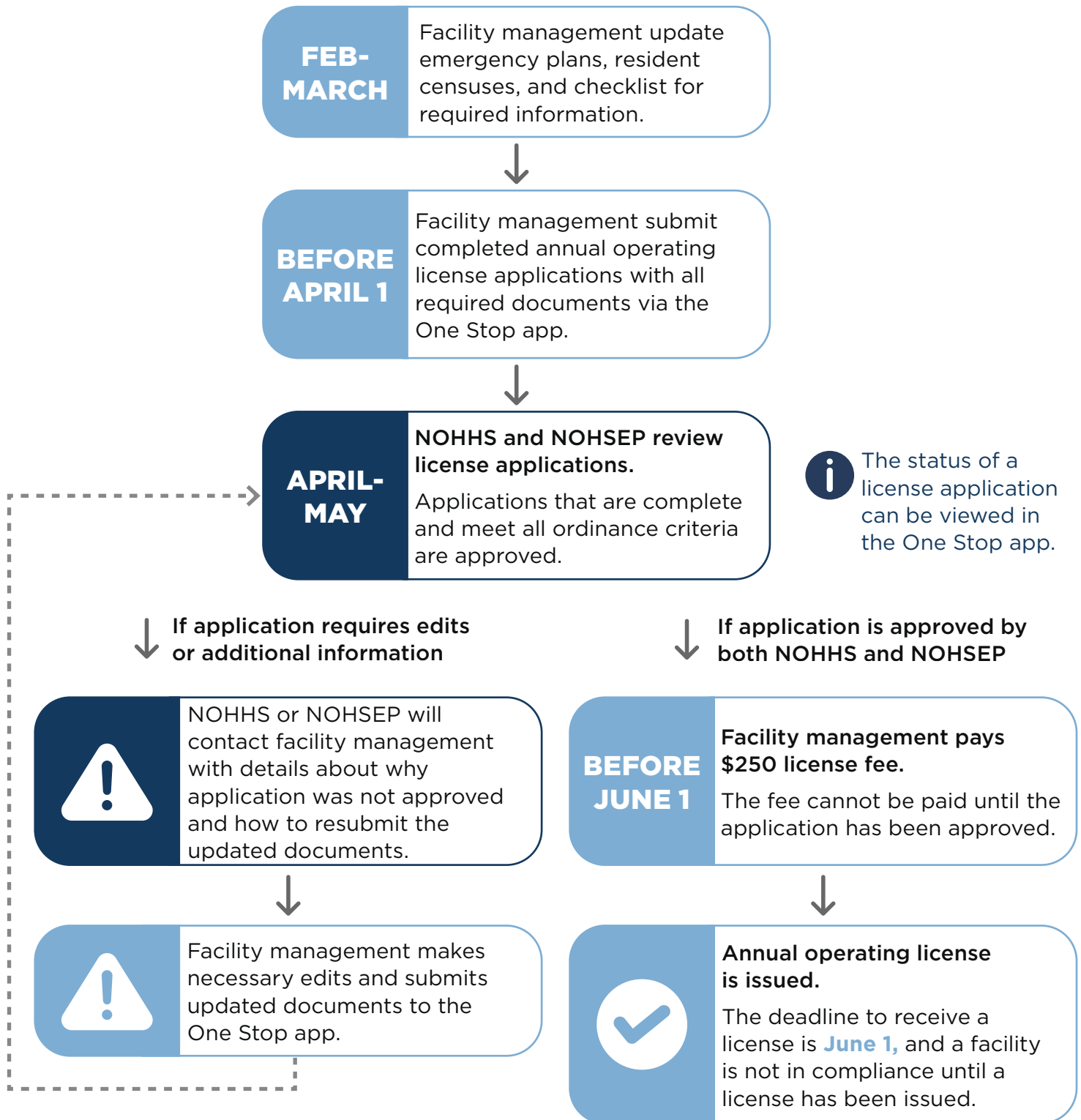
3. Details about the applicant, including contact information and mailing address
4. Contact Information and backup contact information for the Property Management, including names, cell phone numbers, and email addresses
5. (For HUD Multifamily properties only) HUD Multifamily properties must also include the following, which are required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): an Emergency Relocation Plan, Resident Tracking Mechanisms, and a Pre-Disaster Checklist.
 - A. An Emergency Relocation Plan should explain how the facility would be evacuated and where residents will go if an emergency displaces residences from the facility
 - B. Resident Tracking Mechanisms should explain how the facility plans to communicate with displaced residents in the event that residents evacuate, including sharing information about when it is safe to return to the property
 - C. A Pre-Disaster Checklist should include information shared with residents before an emergency, including steps residents are required to take before an event, as well as information about personal safety and general emergency preparedness that facility management shares with residents

Applications for annual operating licenses must be filed by April 1 of each year via the One Stop app, the City of New Orleans' platform for all licenses and permits. NOHHS and NOHSEP employees will review applications and respond by either approving the applications or reaching out with comments to request additional information that is needed. After both NOHHS and NOHSEP have approved an application, it will be possible to pay the \$250 fee and then a license will be issued. The deadline for each facility to receive an operating license is June 1, and a facility is not considered compliant until an operating license has been issued.

Each year the New Orleans Department of Health and Human Services will publish an Application Content Checklist on its website, which will list the specific information that should be included in each application. This is meant to make the application process more transparent and to ensure that all facilities are held to the same standard. Please review this checklist each year before submitting an application.

Application Process Flow Chart

Questions about application process and any documents should be sent to pheeh@nola.gov.



LEGEND

- NOHHS or NOHSEP are responsible for completing task.
- Facility management is responsible for completing task.

Applying for a License Using the One Stop App

To file an application for an annual operating license via the City of New Orleans One Stop app, the following steps should be taken.

1. Go online to **onestopapp.nola.gov**.
2. Log into your account. If you don't have an account, you will need to register by creating a new account. This account can be the same one used to file other permit and license applications and should be able to be accessed by other members of property management in case of a change in personnel.
3. Click on the icon labeled **Apply**, then locate the icon titled **Residential Housing Facility**. Click on the blue button labeled **Start**, to start a new application.

If your facility received a license the previous year, and you are logged into the same account that filed the application for that license, you can also renew your license from the previous year. Licenses that are able to be renewed can be located by clicking on the **Renew** tile on the One Stop app home page.

4. Once you start a new application you will be required to submit information about the applicant, the property, points of contact for management, and to upload copies of the emergency plan, resident census, and additional documents as needed. Once all the required information has been added, and documents have been uploaded, it will be possible to submit your application. It is also possible to save your application and return to complete it at a later time.

If you would like to locate an application that you have previously started, or to check on the status of an existing application, those can be located by going to the upper-right corner of the webpage, and clicking on the button with your username. From the drop-down menu that appears, select the option labeled **Your Items**.

5. After an application has been submitted, it will be reviewed by both NOHHS and NOHSEP. Those offices will either approve the application, or reach out to request clarifications, revisions, or additional information as needed.

If revisions or additional information are needed, new or updated documents can be added to the application using the One Stop app.

6. After the application has been approved by both NOHHS and NOHSEP, it will be possible to pay the \$250 fee required to receive the license. The fee can be paid online using a credit card, or in-person at the Department of Safety and Permits office, at 1340 Poydras St, 8th floor, using a check or money order.

7. After the fee is received, a copy of the license will become available in the One Stop App.

You can check the status of your application at any time by going to **onestopapp.nola.gov**, and typing either the property address or the reference code into the search bar at the top of the screen. A flowchart visualizing the annual operating license application process is also outlined on page 6.

Related Forms Explained

This section describes important forms and documents related to these rules and regulations. Copies of each of these documents are available on the New Orleans Department of Health and Human Services' webpage for Residential Facilities for Seniors or Persons with Disabilities.

Annual Resident Census

Residential facilities are required to maintain an updated Resident Census that includes all residents of the housing facility, including their name and phone number, and their emergency contact name and phone number, for each unit (the names of minors, or other persons living in the unit but not included on the lease, can be counted separately in the "Number of Individuals living in Unit" section of the Census). The Census should also include note of any residents and their household members who **choose to share information** about their medical, mobility, or communication needs. **Residents must be offered the ability to opt-in** to providing this health-related information in writing, but it is not required for them to share. The "Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs" form discussed in this section was created to give residents the opportunity to share this information. If a resident does not wish to share information about their medical, mobility, or communication needs with the City of New Orleans, those sections of the Census document for that resident should remain blank. A template for collecting this voluntary information from residents (Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs form, discussed in following section) is available on the Department of Health and Human Services' webpage.

The Census document asks the following questions about voluntary medical information. Along with each question included on the form is a description with more information:

Mobility Assistance

1. Does this individual use any form of durable medical equipment to support their daily independence or quality of life?

If the individual uses durable medical equipment such as a cane, rollator, or powerchair, please list the specific equipment used on the census form.

2. Are all individuals in this unit able to leave the building without caregiver support?

A "no" answer would indicate that, at least one person in the unit would need assistance from a caregiver in order to leave the building. Reasons for needing a caregiver might include cognitive impairment, or a resident needing support with activities of daily living such as maintaining hygiene, eating, or mobility.

3. Are all individuals in this unit able to leave the building without public safety support?

A "no" would indicate that, at least one person in the unit would need assistance from first responders, such as the New Orleans Fire Department or New Orleans Emergency Medical Services, in order to leave the building. Reasons for needing public safety support to leave the building might include the individual being bed bound.

Electricity Dependence

1. Does anyone in this unit depend on an elevator to leave the building?

Select yes if any individuals in this unit would no longer be able to leave the building by themselves if the elevator were out of order.

2. Does anyone in this unit have medical equipment or refrigerated medication requiring access to stable power?

Select yes if any individuals in this unit use refrigerated medication (for example: insulin) or medical equipment (for example: CPAP machine, nebulizer) that requires access to stable power.

3. Does anyone in this unit require oxygen?

Select yes if anyone in this unit uses supplemental oxygen.

Facility operators should keep a copy of this document at the property and update it regularly throughout the year. An accurate and up-to-date Resident Census will be crucial if the City of New Orleans is called upon to assist with evacuation or another critical issue that may affect the facility. An example of a completed Resident Census is available in Appendix D.

Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs

This is a voluntary form that residents can use to share medical, communication, or mobility needs to help the City of New Orleans prepare for and respond in the event of an emergency. The questions asked on this form correspond to the questions included in the Annual Resident Census, so that the answers on this survey form can be added directly to the Resident Census. The Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs form should be shared with residents upon signing of a lease, and should be available for them to update annually, but residents are not required to complete it. The form is available in Spanish and Vietnamese as well as English, along with a letter from NOHHS explaining the purpose of the survey form that can be shared with residents, that is also available in both Spanish and Vietnamese.

Emergency Plan Survey Template

This document provides a template for an emergency plan that facilities can use if they would like, or if they do not already have an emergency plan. This template was designed to include information about the property, communication methods, evacuation information, and community preparedness resources, among other information. Facilities are not required to use this template but must ensure that their plan includes all of the required information, such as property information and generator information. Facilities can also submit a copy of this template along with their existing emergency plan if they would like.

Emergency Plan Content Checklist

This document lists the information required in each emergency plan. This document is meant to make it easier for property management to prepare their applications by knowing what specific information NOHHS is asking to be included in the emergency plan application. Using a checklist also helps ensure that each application is being evaluated fairly. NOHHS will issue a new checklist each year, so that facilities can know which information is required, and whether the required information changes or not from year to year.

Emergency Preparedness Resources

How to Develop Your Organization's Emergency Operations Plan

An Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) should describe the roles and responsibilities of an organization and the actions they will take in an emergency situation. Having a written plan is important for protecting lives and property, by ensuring that staff and residents are prepared to respond.

To begin developing an emergency plan, organizations often look at three major categories:

1. Name the hazards that your organization could face

Hazards are events that are potentially harmful or dangerous, such as hurricanes or power outages, that can cause loss of life, injury, or other impacts (property damage, social or economic disruption, or environmental loss).

2. Look at actions to prevent or lessen the impact of hazards

3. Develop a list of resources needed

Resources can include staff, supplies, equipment, or external support needed to make an action happen.

When writing a plan, it is important to be specific about which persons or roles are responsible for carrying out which tasks. This helps create clear expectations for both management and residents about their respective roles. The plan should be specific enough that it describes specific roles and responsibilities and strategies, while also being flexible enough that it can be adapted to different emergency situations.

One option to consider is to create an additional section for the plan, called an annex, that provides guidance for specific situations or hazards. Annexes are added to an emergency plan to outline more detailed information or actions that may be important for some hazards or situations, but not for others. For example, an emergency plan might have an annex for building fires, or for hurricane evacuations.

As an example, please compare the following sample descriptions of how management might notify residents about a hurricane evacuation.

Sample 1: "Management will communicate all evacuation orders to residents when an evacuation is called."

Sample 2: "In the event of a hurricane evacuation, the property manager will send notices to all residents through the management's text message communication system, and by posting written notices on the bulletin board outside of the management office and on each resident's door. Management will also take additional steps to share this information to residents who have additional communication needs. For example, for residents who are blind or have low vision, the property manager will reach residents by either knocking on their doors to distribute messages verbally or calling them and their emergency contacts directly."

These notices will describe steps residents must take before leaving the property, will include contact information for management, and will inform residents needing evacuation assistance how to access transportation from the City of New Orleans or RTA. Residents may be responsible for emptying their refrigerators, unplugging appliances, and updating contact information with management before evacuating the property.

In the event of a mandatory evacuation, the property manager will confirm that all residents have evacuated the property by entering and inspecting each room. After they have done so they will lock down each building and inform the City of New Orleans that all residents have evacuated. No residents will be allowed to re-enter the property until it is safe to do so.

When it is safe to return to the building, management will send notice to residents through management's text message communication system and phone calls as needed.

Sample 2 states both which staff member is responsible for communication with residents, how they will contact and share information with residents, discusses resident responsibilities, and includes action items both before, during, and after the evacuation. The greater level of detail helps set clear expectations for both residents and staff.

Emergency operations plans can vary significantly based on the characteristics and needs of the organizations that they are created for. Here is a list of subjects that property management may want to consider including in their emergency operations plans:

Continuity of Operations

- How would property management's regular operations change if facility staff were not able to access the property, or if the property didn't have electricity? What essential functions might be affected?
- What steps can be taken to ensure that essential parts of property management's operations can continue, even following an emergency?

Property Information

- Does the plan include a map of the property or floor plan?
- Does the plan describe the type and location of mechanical equipment at the property (such as generators, boilers, or chillers), and important safety information regarding the operation of that equipment?
- Does the plan include descriptions of fire prevention systems and fire safety equipment at the property?

Site Security

- In the event of a mandatory evacuation, what are management's procedures for securing the property?
- What security features exist at the property, and how might they be affected by a power outage or other emergency?

Equipment and Records

- In the event that the property is evacuated, what steps will management take to preserve important equipment, records, or other documents that may become lost or damaged?

Trainings and Preparedness Resources

- What trainings on emergency preparedness are provided to staff?
- What trainings or exercises (for example: fire drills) on emergency preparedness are conducted by management? How often are they held?
- What resources or tools are available for property management or residents to use during an emergency?

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- Does the plan include specific roles as part of the facility's emergency response?
- Does the plan include the specific duties required by role, including which roles or persons are responsible for decision-making at the property?

Communication Procedures

- Does the plan address procedures for management communicating with residents before, during, and after emergencies?
- Does the plan address procedures for management communicating with one another before, during, and after emergencies?

No-Notice Hazards

- While some hazards such as hurricanes come with advance warning, other hazards, such as fires, floods, or infrastructure failures, can happen with little or no notice. Does the plan include procedures for responding to no-notice emergencies?

Contact Information

- Does the plan contain contact information for facility staff, public safety agencies, local government emergency management, vendors or contractors, local utility companies, or other relevant contact information?

Accessibility

- Does the plan address the needs of residents with disabilities and other access and functional needs?
- Are there procedures in place so that messages that must go out quickly in an emergency are accessible for residents with disabilities?

These suggestions are not meant to cover every subject that property management may need to consider, but are meant to show that emergency plans can help both property managers and residents prepare for and respond to emergencies. By providing valuable guidance and instruction in uncertain situations, and including information that property managers and residents need to know, emergency plans can help save lives and property.

Additional resources on how to design emergency operations plans are included in the section titled “Local and National Preparedness Resources.” Also, if you have questions about any of the above subjects, or would like assistance or feedback regarding your facility’s plan, please reach out to us at pheeh@nola.gov.

City-Assisted Evacuation

For residents that are unable to evacuate on their own during a mandatory evacuation, the City of New Orleans can help. City-assisted evacuation provides free transportation out of the local area in the event that the Mayor declares a mandatory evacuation.

How It Works

The Smoothie King Center will be the hub (Parish Pick-Up Point) for evacuation for residents who cannot leave on their own. During a mandatory evacuation, evacuees should come to the Smoothie King Center (1501 Dave Dixon Dr.), where they will be registered for evacuation. From there, evacuees will board a bus, train, or airplane to a state or federal shelter. There are three options to get to the Smoothie King Center:

- RTA Bus Routes: RTA will run buses along their normal routes, and all bus routes ending at Duncan Plaza will make a final stop at the Smoothie King Center. Residents can catch a ride at any RTA bus stop, and do not need to travel to an Evacuspote statue to be picked up
- Drop Offs and Walk Ups: Evacuees can be dropped off or walk up to the Smoothie King Center
- Residents who require assistance because of medical and/or mobility needs can call 3-1-1 to request paratransit pickup. Registration with RTA is waived for City-assisted evacuations.

What to Bring

- Each person can bring one carry-on sized bag with supplies for a go bag. Medical devices, diaper bags, and other necessary personal items will not be counted in the one-bag rule.
- Pets should have an ID collar, leash, medications, and a carrier. Pets will be taken to an animal shelter near where the locations evacuees are sheltered.
- Weapons and illegal substances are not allowed in the evacuation process.

Voluntary or Limited Evacuation

In the event of a voluntary evacuation, the City of New Orleans encourages residents who are able to evacuate on their own to do so, but transportation assistance out of Orleans Parish will be limited, if available at all. Residents are encouraged to evacuate if able but should be prepared to shelter in-place if necessary.

In order for a mandatory evacuation to be implemented, the City needs enough time before a storm makes landfall to mobilize employees and buses to get every resident that needs transportation out of the local area. This means a mandatory evacuation is unlikely to be called less than 72 hours before a storm is expected to make landfall on the coast. If conditions do not allow for a mandatory evacuation, the City may attempt to set up a Refuge of Last Resort in Orleans Parish to provide vulnerable residents with shelter before a storm, and to provide limited transportation assistance to that shelter. It may also be necessary for the City to provide evacuation assistance after a storm has passed, if it appears likely that critical utilities will be compromised and it will be unsafe for residents to stay in New Orleans. In these events, the City will communicate information regarding evacuation resources to property managers and residents.

Sheltering & Emergency Resource Centers

In events that do prompt evacuation orders, the City of New Orleans may open local shelters or emergency resource centers. A shelter is a multi-day location that has consistent staffing and resources for individuals who have been displaced from an event. This can involve local, state, or non-governmental partners (for example, American Red Cross) to support survivors from an event. An Emergency Resource Center (ERC) is a location that is activated to support distribution of commodities or to provide access to a temperature-controlled environment with power. ERCs usually have less requirements to enter (open to the public), but are typically restricted to certain hours of operations during an event and do not provide overnight sleeping accommodations.

How It Works

In most scenarios, an event will take place and local officials will determine if there is a need for an ERC or shelter to open based on the facilities or areas impacted by an event. This set-up usually takes 12-24 hours post-event, but will depend on the size and severity of the incident. Most local shelters and ERCs take place at the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission's recreation centers and are staffed by local responders.

What to Bring

- Each person can bring one carry-on sized bag with supplies for a go bag. Medical devices, diaper bags, and other necessary personal items will not be counted in the one-bag rule, so encourage individuals to bring those, too.
- Pets should have an ID collar, leash, medications, and a carrier.
- Weapons and illegal substances are not allowed in the sheltering or resource center environment.

Communication Tools

NOLA Ready Text Alerts

The City of New Orleans sends emergency alerts to residents with information about hazards and resources available to residents. To sign up for NOLA Ready text alerts in English, text **NOLAREADY** to **77295**. To sign up for NOLA Ready text alerts in Spanish, text **ESP** to **77295**.

Smart911

Smart911 is an app that the City of New Orleans uses to communicate with residents during emergencies and to support first responders. Smart911 allows residents to create a safety profile, which can include information about members of their household, pets, emergency contact information, and medical or communication needs that residents would like to share (such as medical conditions, allergies, use of medications or mobility devices). The information in each profile will be visible to 9-1-1 operators, when that user calls 9-1-1, to help support first responders. Smart911 also allows the City of New Orleans to message residents directly based on needs included in their safety profile.

Smart911 replaced the former Special Needs Registry in 2022. Residents can sign up for Smart911 by calling 3-1-1, same as for the Special Needs Registry, or by downloading the Smart911 app, or by going to **nola.gov/Smart911**. Residents should make sure to log in to their profiles and update their information each year before hurricane season, so that their information is current. This is also important as Smart911 will stop sending messages to profiles that have not been accessed in more than a year.

When an individual provides information about their household, family members, pets, and medical information, 9-1-1 operators and first responders will be better able to assist them in the event of an emergency. To protect one's privacy, information is only available to 9-1-1 and first responders when a registered individual, or someone connected to their profile, dials 9-1-1. The information is available for only 45 minutes from the time of the 9-1-1 call.

Access and Functional Needs

The Access and Functional Needs Framework suggests that there are resources everyone needs during emergencies, regardless of who we are. This language helps focus attention on what assistance or resources a person might need in an emergency, and away from a specific diagnosis or label. The term also recognizes that a person's needs can be temporary and change over time. Examples of persons with access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to:

- Persons with disabilities
- Persons who are unboxed
- Persons with limited English proficiency
- Clients of the criminal legal system
- Persons who are pregnant
- Persons under the age of eighteen
- Persons without access to private transportation
- Single parents
- Persons who are injured or recovering from surgery
- Immigrants or refugee

CMIST Framework

Planning for the entire community during emergencies requires considering the diverse needs of individuals in the community. The CMIST Framework is one tool that can help identify the specific support and resources that a person might need, in order to help plan for and respond in the event of an emergency. CMIST is an acronym that stands for Communication; Maintaining Health; Independence; Support and Safety; and Transportation. This framework recognizes that each person needs to be able to communicate; maintain their health and independence; remain safe and supported; and transport themselves in order to function, even if we each require different resources to make those things possible. Here are some examples of the types of assistance and resource solutions that might fall into each category:

Communication

- Language Interpreters or translated notices may help support individuals who speak sign language or who have limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Audio and visual warning systems may help individuals who are hard of hearing or have limited vision receive emergency warnings

Maintaining Health

- Access to backup power may be important for people who use medical equipment that requires electricity, such as CPAP machines, oxygen concentrators, or home dialysis equipment.
- Breastmilk or formula may be important for providing infants with proper nutrition.

Independence

- Assistive technology (such as glasses and eating aids), mobility devices, communication aids, or service animals, may help persons function more effectively on their own.

Support and Safety

- Behavioral healthcare services might be helpful for a person experiencing stress or trauma during an emergency.
- Caregiver support might be helpful for persons who are experiencing memory loss or who need assistance with daily tasks.

Transportation

- Access to transportation such as a bus or train might be necessary for a household without a vehicle to evacuate the city.
- A van with a wheelchair lift might be helpful in transporting a person who uses a powerchair.

As these examples show, using the CMIST framework can help both persons with functional needs and emergency managers plan for emergencies, by making it easier to identify the specific actions and resources people need to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Hazards

The following are brief descriptions of some of the more common hazards that New Orleans may experience, and some of the risks they may pose to New Orleans residents. As the risk of extreme weather continues to increase due to climate change, the following hazards may become more frequent or more impactful, and other hazards may become more common. More information about hazards that New Orleans may face is available at [ready.nola.gov/plan](https://www.ready.nola.gov/plan).

Flooding

Flooding can occur as a result of heavy rain, storm surge, or when rivers overflow (also called riverine flooding).

While the regional flood protection system helps reduce the risk from storm surge and riverine flooding, New Orleans is a city with high average rainfall and low elevation, meaning it is especially prone to flooding from heavy rain. Rain must either be absorbed into the ground or, after entering catch basins, must be pumped outside of the levees.

Flooding can cause streets to become impassable, and may cause stormwater to enter homes or businesses that are not elevated. This can damage vehicles and property, and may block transportation routes for buses and first responders.

What management can do to prepare: Use flood risk information to understand a property's flood risk; consider elevating utility equipment or using stormwater management strategies like permeable pavement to reduce flood risk.

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat makes it harder for the human body to cool itself and maintain a stable temperature, and can lead to serious injury and death.

Various factors affect our vulnerability to extreme heat. These include environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity, and the amount of nearby concrete, asphalt, and buildings, which absorb and retain heat. Personal factors, like age, chronic health conditions (such as heart disease, or respiratory conditions like asthma or COPD), and both over the counter and prescription medications can also affect our risk to extreme heat.

One tool to measure extreme heat is the heat index (also called the "feels like" temperature), which measures how the body feels when humidity is combined with air temperature. The heat index helps to better measure heat risk than temperature alone, because higher levels of humidity make it harder for the human body to keep itself cool.

What management can do to prepare: Inspecting chillers and other air conditioning equipment each spring, so there is time to fix possible issues before summer heat arrives.

Power Outage

Power outages pose a hazard because of how much the whole community relies on electricity. Extended power outages can mean a loss of air-conditioning, heating, appliances, and elevators in buildings; closure of businesses like grocery stores, pharmacies, and other services; and difficulty for residents who rely on electricity to power medical devices or refrigerate medication. Power outages can also make it more difficult to access digital records, and to communicate using tools such as email or telephones, without a backup source of power.

Extended power outages, especially if they occur during times of extreme heat or extreme cold, also affect resident's ability to safely use their apartments, and therefore may require evacuation.

What management can do to prepare: Develop and practice an evacuation plan for the property in the event of an emergency; install a generator at the property, if one is not already present; and make sure that generators are properly maintained and fueled.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air that extend up from a thunderstorm down to the ground. Tornadoes can appear with little notice or warning, and can destroy buildings and property and lift debris into the air.

While tornadoes have historically been less common in New Orleans, tornadoes have hit the New Orleans area in 2017, and twice in 2022. If a tornado warning is issued (meaning there is a tornado in the area), residents should seek shelter in a small, windowless room, on the lowest level of a sturdy building.

What management can do to prepare: Ensure that interior spaces within your building are identified for staff and residents who work in higher levels of a building/near windows to move to in the event of a tornado warning.

Fires

Fires pose a serious risk to multifamily buildings and their residents, and in particular to older adults or residents with mobility needs. Fires can happen anytime and with little notice, and residents with mobility needs may have difficulty getting to safety without assistance.

The best ways to reduce fire risk are to take steps to prepare and mitigate fires before they occur. This includes installing and maintaining fire prevention systems, such as sprinklers; conducting fire drills; and making sure that residents know what to do and how to exit the building in an emergency.

What management can do to prepare: Inspect and maintain fire prevention systems, and keep important fire safety information where it is accessible for first responders. This information might include things like the location of the building's fire alarm panel, floor plans for the property, and which rooms have residents with mobility needs.

Hurricanes

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th each year. Hurricanes are also most common from the middle of August through early October, which tends to be the hottest time of the year. Hurricanes vary in strength, but even smaller storms can cause damage in a number of different ways. These include strong winds that can damage buildings and infrastructure, flooding from heavy rain or storm surge, and the potential for extended power outages.

In the event of hurricanes, residents and management should be prepared to both shelter-in-place for multiple days, and to evacuate either before or after a storm.

What management can do to prepare: Develop and practice an evacuation plan for the property in the event of an emergency, including communication procedures for alerting residents and ensuring each unit has been evacuated before the building is secured.

Local and National Emergency Preparedness Resources

Contact information for City of New Orleans Partners

New Orleans Department of Health and Human Services - Public Health Emergencies and Environmental Health Division

- **pheeh@nola.gov** - This is the shared email address for the PHEEH team at NOHHS. This is the best email to use for written communication during emergencies because it will be visible to all team members
- **504-475-4850** - This is the emergency number for the PHEEH team. This number is not in active use outside of emergency situations, but may be activated to ensure that members of the PHEEH team can be contacted outside of the office or normal business hours

New Orleans Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness

- **ready@nola.gov** - This is the shared email address for the Public Engagement team at the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

Local Resources

NOLA Ready

- **ready.nola.gov** or dial **311** in Orleans Parish
- Sign up for emergency alerts from NOLA Ready by texting **NOLAREADY** to **77295** or sign up online at **ready.nola.gov/alerts**.
- Follow **@nolaready** on all forms of social media for emergency updates

New Orleans Council on Aging

- **nocoa.org** - **504-821-4121**
- The New Orleans Council on Aging (NOCOA) exists to protect the rights, promote the well-being, and enhance the self-esteem of New Orleans elderly by generating opportunities for self-reliance and independence.
- The New Orleans Council on Aging is a private, non-profit corporation which serves as the Area Agency on Aging for Orleans Parish. The agency is responsible for ensuring that a comprehensive and coordinated assortment of social, recreational, educational, and nutritional services are provided to persons aged 60 and over in the City of New Orleans.

Statewide Resources

United Way 211

- **211.org** - dial **211** in the state of Louisiana
- Our Louisiana 211 Statewide Network is composed of eight dedicated non-profit organizations with a more than 560 years of collective service to communities in Louisiana. Together, our network works around the clock to provide accurate information and referrals to meet the needs of 211 help seekers. All services are free and confidential to Louisianans.

American Red Cross of Louisiana

- **redcross.org/local/louisiana.html** or **1-800-229-8191** (toll free)
- The Louisiana Region of the Red Cross serves the 4.65 million residents in the 64-parish state, while supporting others across the country and around the world. Volunteers share their expertise on disaster relief operations out of state, and donors provide relief where it's needed most.
- Its members offer aid and resources to others to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies through immediate assistance, education, outreach and training.

National and Online Resources

Red Cross Ready Rating

- **readyrating.org**
- Ready Rating is a program that helps businesses, schools and organizations become prepared for disasters and other emergencies. All in one place, Ready Rating includes a questionnaire and template to help organizations develop an emergency plan, and a resource center with checklists, videos, and other resources to support organizational preparedness.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's mission is to help people before, during, and after disasters. In addition to supporting local and state governments, FEMA
- FEMA's Emergency Management Institute Independent Study Program - **training.fema.gov/ndemu/schools/emergency-management-institute/**
FEMA's Independent Study Program includes self-paced, online training courses available to the public free of charge

Enterprise Community Partners

- **enterprisecommunity.org**
- Enterprise Community Partners is a national nonprofit dedicated to increasing housing supply, advancing racial equity, and supporting community resilience and upward mobility.

APPENDIX A

Frequently Asked Questions

The apartment I manage is independent living. We don't provide medical care or assistance with daily living, and the residents know this and choose to live independently. Why do we have to follow these requirements?

These requirements were implemented to protect health and safety during emergencies for residents that may need extra assistance to stay safe. In an emergency, the networks and resources that people rely on to live independently are often interrupted. Residents may not be able to use utilities like electricity, running water, and cellphone service; services like public transportation; or local businesses like grocery stores and pharmacies that may be closed. As properties where residents live independently, the City of New Orleans needs to be prepared to provide assistance that is not provided by property management. These requirements help ensure the City of New Orleans has real-time information about both the conditions at properties and resident's urgent needs in order to respond effectively.

A representative from the facility owner or operator is required to stay at the property (unless otherwise specified by NOHHS or NOHSEP) for the duration of the emergency to assist and communicate with first responders and residents. Having a representative from the facility owner or operator can help first responders get access to the property; communicate changes or issues with the building to the City; and help disseminate information to residents, all of which can be critical in emergencies.

I have submitted an application for a Residential Housing Facility license, but I can't figure out how to pay the fee and receive the license.

It is not possible to pay for a license in the One Stop app until the application has been approved by both NOHHS and the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. If you have questions about the status of your application, please reach out to us at pheeh@nola.gov.

I'm having difficulty with the One Stop App. Where can I get help?

There is a guide with Frequently Asked Questions available at nola.gov/permits, and additional assistance can be accessed by emailing onestopapp@nola.gov. If you are having difficulty with One Stop, please also reach out to us at pheeh@nola.gov to let us know.

I recently submitted an application for a Healthy Homes Certificate of Compliance. Is this the same program?

This is a different requirement than Healthy Homes. The Healthy Homes Program was started to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by ensuring people who live in Orleans Parish have safe and habitable rental housing, and covers all rental properties in New Orleans. It is managed by the Department of Safety and Permits and the Department of Code Enforcement. The Residential Facilities Housing Seniors or Persons with Disabilities Ordinance was passed to ensure multifamily properties housing vulnerable populations were planning for and coordinating with the City of New Orleans during emergencies.

More information on the Healthy Homes program is available at nola.gov/HealthyHomes.

The staff at a covered facility changed, and I need to change the contact information on my license. How can I do this?

There is not currently a way to change the information on a license once it has been issued. This is to prevent licenses from being improperly modified. For the same reason, it is not possible to edit or add information to a license application after it has been approved. However, please reach out to us at pheeh@nola.gov to inform us of any staffing changes at your properties, so that we can keep our internal records updated.

We shared the Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs form with our residents, but some of them didn't return it. Does that form need to be completed by each resident?

The form does not need to be completed by each resident, but each household needs to be offered the chance to share information. If residents choose not to return the Resident Survey of Special Medical Needs form, then the sections of the Census form listing voluntary medical information can be left blank. The name, contact information, and emergency contact information for residents should still be included on the Census form.



Scan this QR code to access One Stop app.

APPENDIX B

Glossary

Access and Functional Needs

Access and Functional Needs are a broad set of needs that may affect a person's ability to access services or function independently during an emergency. This phrase helps to focus on the assistance that a person needs, not on whether they have a particular diagnosis.

Accessible Unit

An accessible unit is a housing unit that is built to be accessible to persons with mobility needs, persons with sensory needs, or persons with both. Standards for accessibility are outlined in documents such as the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and the American National Standards Institute.

Advisory

An advisory is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrological event is occurring, imminent or likely. An advisory means weather conditions pose a threat to life or property. Advisories are for less serious conditions than warnings.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology refers to items, equipment, or systems that enhance learning, working, and daily living for persons with disabilities.

Declared Emergency

A declared emergency is a formal announcement by a government (usually a Mayor, Governor, or President) that grants the government additional powers to respond to an extraordinary situation that affects the public's safety or well-being. The Mayor of New Orleans is granted the authority to declare an emergency by state law, including the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act. Declaring a state of emergency can allow the Mayor of New Orleans to suspend certain regulations, authorize additional spending, or request additional resources from the State of Louisiana or the Federal Government.

Durable Medical Equipment

Durable medical equipment includes medical equipment that is able to be used regularly and repeatedly, often in a person's home. Wheelchairs, canes, crutches, CPAP machines, blood sugar monitors, and nebulizers are all examples of durable medical equipment.

Emergency Plan Annex

An annex is an additional section added to an emergency plan that outlines the response to a specific hazard, or specific operational functions. Annexes help the emergency plan to include more detailed information specific to certain situations.

Hazard

A hazard is something that is potentially dangerous or harmful that threatens lives and property. Hazards can be natural, such as hurricanes or tornadoes, and they can be caused by humans, such as cybersecurity attacks or infrastructure failures.

Hazard Vulnerability Assessment

A hazard vulnerability assessment is a systematic way of understanding the impacts that different hazards might have on your community. A hazard vulnerability assessment can help identify both the direct and indirect impacts that a hazard might have.

HUD Multifamily Property

HUD Multifamily properties are multifamily rental properties subsidized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These subsidies include mortgage insurance and rental assistance. The three largest assistance programs for HUD multifamily housing are Section 8 Project Based Assistance; Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly; and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities.

Ordinance

A law or order enacted by a local government.

Warning

A warning is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrological event is occurring, imminent or likely. A warning means weather conditions pose a threat to life or property. People in the path of the storm need to take protective action.

Watch

A watch means that hazardous weather is possible, but whether it will happen, and its location or timing, is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to set their plans in motion can do so. Watches, advisories, and warnings may be issued for a variety of different types of hazardous weather, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, or winter weather.

APPENDIX C

Extreme Heat Guidance

Helpful tips for staying cool during hot weather

Health of Residents and Staff

Extreme heat can affect anyone, but some people are at higher risk for heat-related illness. Watch out for signs of heat stress in:

- People over the age of 65
- People managing chronic conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, respiratory diseases, poor blood circulation, diabetes, kidney disease, and mental health conditions
- People who take medicine regularly
- People without reliable air conditioning
- People who are socially isolated, or don't have others checking in on them
- People who are active in the heat (like carrying groceries, climbing stairs, or walking outside)

Make Design Choices That Keep Your Building Cooler

Hot weather can damage buildings over time. These design ideas can help your facility handle the heat better:

- Add attic or upstairs fans to push hot air outside
- Insulate walls and roofs to keep cool air in
- Use weather stripping on doors and windows to stop hot air from getting in
- Use blackout curtains or heat-reflective window film on sunny windows
- Plant trees to add shade and cool the area naturally
- Build shade structures over walkways and windows that get a lot of sun
- Replace worn-out pavement or dark surfaces with “cool pavements” or “cool paints” that reflect heat instead of absorbing it

Yearly Actions to Get Ready for Hot Weather

These actions can help your facility be more prepared for extreme heat:

- Check chillers and air conditioning systems in the spring to fix problems before summer
- Inspect backup generators in the spring to make sure they work
- Clean or change air filters every month so the AC doesn't have to work too hard
- Keep windows closed during the day when the AC is on
- Close curtains on windows that get strong sun in the morning or afternoon
- Make sure ceiling fans spin counterclockwise to push cool air down
- Turn off lights and equipment that give off heat when not needed

APPENDIX D

Example of Completed Resident Census

Communication Needs			Emergency Contact Information			Number of Individuals Living in Unit (Not including tenants listed)		
Preferred Language of Communication	If other, please write description here.	Does this individual identify as blind, low vision, deaf or hard of hearing?	Name	Relationship	Phone Number	0-5 years old	5-17 years old	18 years old or older
English			Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
English			Contact Name	Friend	504-123-4567			
English		Hard of Hearing	Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
English			Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
	French		Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
English			Contact Name	Friend	504-123-4567			
Spanish		Blind	Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
English			Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			
American Sign Language		Deaf	Contact Name	Friend	504-123-4567			
English			Contact Name	Family Member	504-123-4567			

Number of Animals Living in Unit			Voluntary Medical Information					
			Mobility Assistance			Electricity Dependence		
Dog	Cats	Other	Does this individual use any form of durable medical equipment to support their independence?	Are all individuals in this unit able to leave the building without caregiver support?	Are all individuals in this unit able to leave the building without public safety support?	Does anyone in this unit depend on an elevator to leave the building?	Does anyone in this unit have medical equipment or refrigerated medication requiring access to?	Does anyone in this unit require oxygen?
			Yes, Powerchair	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
1			No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
			No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
			Yes, Walker	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
	1		No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
			No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No



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