

Wherever you are in the world and whenever you need our help, information and support is available to you, your family, and significant others.



Federal Disaster Response Worker Resources

Federal Occupational Health Employee Assistance Program for Federal and Federalized Employees

(800) 222-0364
(888) 262-7848 (TTY)
<http://www.foh4you.com>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

(800) 273-TALK (8255)
(800) 799-4889 (TDD)

CDC Emergency Preparedness Resources

www.bt.cdc.gov/mentalhealth

SAMHSA Disaster Readiness and Response

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/disasterrelief/>

Important Contact Information

Buddy: _____

Team Leader: _____

My Supervisor: _____

Local Police: _____

Home Contact: _____

Additional Information

Medical Conditions: _____

My Regular Prescriptions: _____

Allergies: _____

Notes: _____

(Record and keep with you)

Attention Federal Disaster Responders!

You're taking care of others...



Health, Safety,
and Resilience for
Disaster Responders



Produced by the Office of Health and Safety, with the support of CDC's Resilience and Mental Health Team

It Can Happen to You

You will likely encounter hazardous and emotionally gripping conditions. Accidents, illnesses, or exposures can occur. Risks for gastrointestinal illness, dehydration, overexertion, and illness spread by skin and wound infections will likely increase.

Your personal health and safety is our #1 goal; make it yours as well.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

- **Look** for potential hazards and changing conditions. Warn others as needed.
- **Avoid** contaminated water, snakes, stray or wild animals, carcasses, unstable structures, debris piles, poorly ventilated areas near generator (a carbon monoxide poisoning risk).
- **Report** immediately any incident or unusual occurrence, or any exposure, fever, rash, significant wound, unusual symptom.
- **Stay connected** to people around you; use the “buddy” system.
- **Don’t perform** beyond your ability to do so safely. Lift heavy objects with a buddy.
- **Rest and relax** when you can without feeling guilty. You’ll need to recharge to go on.

Food and Water Safety

- Wash hands with soap and safe water before drinking or eating.
- Use bottled water or sealed drinks only.
- Follow any EPA, state, or local water authority’s boil water advisories.
- Don’t eat food that may have contacted floodwaters or other contaminated water.

Heat and Sun Safety

- Use SPF > 15 sunscreen.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting long pants and long sleeve shirts (breathable or wicking fabrics).
- Drink 8 oz. of water for each 15 min. of activity.
- Take breaks in a shaded area or cool room.

Prevent Disease and Injury

- Wash hands with soap and safe water often and always after using restrooms.
- Wear steel-toed, steel-bottomed shoes.
- Change socks often; bring extras!
- Check with team leader for duty-specific personal protective equipment (PPE). Avoid flooded areas without appropriate PPE.
- Use mosquito repellent with > 30% DEET.
- Flush a wound well with safe running water and a soapy, 10-minute scrub. Get prompt medical help if a wound is swelling, warm or hot to touch, or tender.

Resilience

Helping out during an emergency can be emotionally taxing. You’ll likely experience mental and emotional stress, and increased physical stress, during deployment and afterward. You’ll need to be resilient to such stresses.

Resilience is the...

- Ability to recover from or rapidly adjust to misfortune or change.
- Ability to “bounce back” from difficult experiences in a healthy manner.

Increase Your Resilience to Stress

There’s **no shame** in experiencing stress or taking positive action to manage it!

Some helpful hints:

Communicate

- Connect to those around you, colleagues, and loved ones at home.
- Share with family/significant others that you’re safe and that you’re eating and sleeping well.
- Apprise family/significant others of the length of your deployment, especially as it changes.

Create a Routine

- Create at least one routine activity, such as calling home during a certain part of the day.
- Schedule in that rest and relaxation time.
- Eat well, as regularly as you can and exercise!

Symptoms of Stress

- Heart palpitations, dizziness, numbness or tingling, gastrointestinal upset.
- Grief, guilt, insomnia, self-doubt, hypervigilance.
- Difficulty calculating, concentrating, or making decisions; reduced attention span.
- Uncomfortable, persistent anxiety or panic attack.
- Depression signs (crying, sadness, hopelessness).
- Excessive fear for safety that impedes your work.
- Being psychologically unable to complete tasks.
- Frequent, uncontrollable outbursts of anger.
- Having continual thoughts and fears that you know are not based in reality.

The Danger Signs

- Burnout
- Over-identification with victims
- Becoming an adrenaline “junkie”

If you experience any of the above symptoms or danger signs, consider sharing them with a travel partner or supervisor. You may need to get professional help. And it’s freely available to you.