

Reunification Planning: Supplemental Checklist

This supplemental checklist, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [Post-Disaster Reunification of Children: A Nationwide Approach](#), contains planning considerations to guide the integration of reunification of children separated from their parents or legal guardians following a disaster into existent emergency operations plans. This checklist is meant to be used concurrently with the planning process defined in [Comprehensive Preparedness Guidance 101 Version 2.0](#) to determine which components may be lacking in a jurisdiction's current planning efforts and those that are already included in their plan or supporting procedures (standard operating procedures or standard operating guidelines).

Preparedness

- Have you included in the planning group individuals and stakeholders with expertise in pediatric and disabilities issues, as well as relevant community leaders, service providers, and other subject matter experts?
- Have you provided demographic data and information on the number of children and where they tend to be during normal business hours or the school day (e.g., educational, childcare, medical, juvenile justice, recreational, and other facilities)?
- Have you identified the agency with the lead role for coordinating evacuation and reunification planning efforts and ensuring children with and without disabilities and other access and functional needs are incorporated into all emergency preparedness plans?
- Have you identified support agencies to assist the lead agency in coordinating evacuation and reunification planning efforts and ensuring that children are incorporated into all emergency preparedness plans?
- If feasible, have you identified a Child Coordinator (e.g., State Emergency Medical Services for Children Coordinator) to provide expertise for the emergency planning process and to support the Incident Commander, the Planning Section, and/or the Operations Section during an emergency?
- Have you included mechanisms or processes to effectively identify children and families who will need additional assistance with specific mobility, access and functional, communications, or health-related needs in advance of, during, and following an emergency?
- Have you addressed procedures to secure medical records to enable children with disabilities and/or other special health care needs to receive health care and sustained



rehabilitation in advance of, during, and following an emergency, or to assist with reunification efforts?

- Have you outlined roles and responsibilities for supporting children with and without disabilities and other access and functional needs, and children with special health care needs?
- Have you identified governmental and nongovernmental resources to meet critical needs such as reunification, accessible sheltering, housing, educational and childcare needs, rental assistance, and emergency repairs for families of children with special health care needs?
- Have you identified training and exercise opportunities for first responders, emergency managers, and pediatric stakeholders to learn how to fully incorporate children and children with disabilities and other special health care needs into emergency preparedness plans and operations?
- Have you defined procedures for the training and use of spontaneous volunteers with background checks and fingerprints who may offer their services to families with children and children requiring additional support?

Evacuation Support

- Have you ensured that children with and without disabilities and other access and functional needs are incorporated into all evacuation considerations and planning?
- Have you included affirmative recognition of the need to keep children with disabilities and their caregivers, mobility devices, other durable medical equipment, and/or service animals together during mass evacuations?
- Have you outlined procedures to provide the availability of sufficient and timely accessible transportation to evacuate children with disabilities and other access and functional needs whose families do not have their own transportation resources?
- Have you collaborated with educational, childcare, medical and juvenile justice facilities, and others responsible for the temporary care of children, specifically those with disabilities and other access and functional needs, to ensure that their emergency preparedness plans address reunification of children with their parents or legal guardians?
- Have you identified the means by which incoming transportation requests will be tracked, recorded, and monitored as they are fulfilled?
- Have you identified a process for tracking a child's location should they become separated from parents or legal guardians during a public mass evacuation (e.g., Radio-frequency identification, otherwise known as RFID system, identification bracelet or badge, bar-coded system) until reunification occurs?

Shelter Operations

- Have you outlined procedures for ensuring there will be adequate and accessible shelters capable of sheltering unaccompanied minors in the event of a large-scale event occurring during normal business hours and resulting in mass quantities of children separated from their parents or legal guardians?
- Have you confirmed that adequate shelter space allocation is provided for children with disabilities and other access and functional needs who may need additional space for assistive devices (e.g., wheelchairs and walkers) and/or other life sustaining equipment such as oxygen?
- Have you addressed necessary developmentally appropriate supplies (e.g., diapers, formula, baby food, age-appropriate items), staff, medicines, durable medical equipment, and supplies that would be needed during an emergency for children with disabilities and other special health care needs?
- Have you identified personnel who can provide assistance to unaccompanied minors at shelters, to include personal care providers and security personnel?

Reunification Mechanisms

- Have you identified a communication mechanism or pre-designated a primary point of contact to coordinate with shelters, Family Assistance Centers, hospitals, childcare and educational facilities, and coroner/medical examiner's offices in the immediate area to begin searches for unidentified minors and their families?
- Have you coordinated with child welfare agencies, health departments, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC), and law enforcement to request assistance with reunification efforts?
- Have you established communications or pre-designated a primary point of contact to coordinate with state and national agencies and organizations and/or Reunification Strike Teams to enlist their assistance with reunification efforts?
- Have you explored state and national reunification systems such as the NECLC's Unaccompanied Minors Registry (UMR) or American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site to determine whether they can assist with your reunification efforts?
- Have you established a process for verifying the identity of located parents or legal guardians before unaccompanied minors will be released to them?
- Have you identified accessible and credentialed transportation resources (including Paratransit service vehicles, school buses, municipal surface transit vehicles, drivers, and/or trained attendants) that can provide needed services during physical reunification?

Public Information and Outreach

- Have you identified ways to promote personal preparedness among children, their families, and temporary caregivers (including educational, childcare, medical, juvenile justice and recreational personnel)?
- Have you identified mechanisms for disseminating timely and accessible emergency public information using multiple methods (e.g., television, radio, Internet, sirens) to reach families of children with sensory and cognitive disabilities, as well as families with limited English proficiency?
- Have you engaged Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social media, and other members of the whole community, who play an increasingly critical role in messaging and reunification during disasters?