

How to Help Others with Emergency Preparedness

This guide is for anyone helping others with emergency preparedness – whether as a family member or professionally. Simple preparations make it easier to provide help and security to those most vulnerable during crises.



This guide is part of DSB's information material on emergency preparedness. You can find more good advice at dsb.no/egenberedskap.



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The safety that matters most

Norwegian authorities recommend that everyone who can should prepare to be self-sufficient for one week. In a crisis, municipalities and emergency services must focus their limited resources on those who cannot survive without assistance, but during large-scale emergencies, help may not reach everyone straight away.

Family, friends, and neighbours are often the first to respond in emergencies. That is why it is essential for everyone capable of doing so to make basic preparations – not just for themselves, but for the vulnerable people in their lives.

By helping those closest to us, we strengthen the resilience of our entire community.

We all have a role in Norway's emergency preparedness.



About this guide

This guide is intended for anyone who is a family member of – or works closely with – people who cannot care for themselves during a crisis. This may include people with physical or cognitive challenges, those not well integrated into Norwegian society, or others who may be particularly vulnerable during emergencies.

A major crisis can place a double burden on family members: you must help yourself and the person who depends on you. Joint practical preparations can make the situation more manageable.

The guide is divided into three steps. Include the person you care for when going through this guide.



1 Assess needs



2 Identify resources



3 Take action

However, you should be careful not to create anxiety. As someone close to them, you understand how to best approach these conversations without causing undue concern.

Remember that you and the person you care for likely already have many emergency preparations. By talking openly, making clear arrangements, and taking some practical steps together, you will both feel more confident if a crisis occurs.



Assess needs

Begin by assessing the needs of the person you care for – ideally together.

As their carer, you know this person well. You understand what works in their daily routine, what challenges they face, and what support they require. You are familiar with their wider support network. Much of this assessment has therefore already begun.

General and individual needs

DSB recommends that everyone prepare to be self-sufficient for one week, even when water supplies fail and electricity is cut off.

However, it is often unrealistic to expect someone who relies on care to manage completely independently for a whole week. Think about how long this person could realistically manage alone, and plan your preparations accordingly.

The following pages contain a checklist of items authorities recommend keeping at home. This is followed by a section where you can write down the specific needs of the person you care for.

Work through these lists together: What do you already have, and what is missing? What particular needs does this person have if the electricity fails, water gets contaminated, or the telephone stops working?

Checklist

Check
--- Personal notes



Water

- 20 litres of water per person



Heat

- Warm clothing
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Firewood (if you have a wood stove)
- Alternative accommodation arrangements



Food

- Food that does not require cooking, such as crispbread, nuts, and preserves



Light

- Candles
- Torch or headlamp with batteries
- Lighter or matches



Information

- Battery-powered DAB radio
- Radio batteries
- Charged power bank
- List of important phone numbers and other vital information



Medicine

- One week's supply of medicines



Hygiene

- Hand sanitiser
- Wet wipes
- Extra toilet paper
- Bags
- Sanitary pads/tampons



First aid

- Basic first aid supplies for minor injuries



If the person has children living at home:

Extra

- Baby food
- Diapers



If the person has service animals or pets:

- Pet food
- Water

Individual needs

Check

--- Personal notes

This section helps you assess together what the person you care for can manage independently during a crisis, and where help is needed. This provides a good foundation for planning your support.

	Can manage independently	Can manage partially	Needs help
Moving around the home:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using toilet (including emergency toilet):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking from water containers:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and eat meals:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand what is happening:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact someone when required – including when phones do not work:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take the correct medicines and use medical aids:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining personal hygiene:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow simple instructions:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manage stressful situations:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2

Identify resources

In step two, you identify which resources the person you care for can access.

- ① Which institutions, organisations, and individuals can help the person you care for before, during, and after a crisis, and what can they assist with?
- ② Which people in the support network can help during a crisis? What can they assist with?

Finding relevant government, private, and voluntary organisations can feel overwhelming. But remember that you already know a lot. Consider which organisations and services the person you care for already contacts and uses – these may also be able to help during a crisis.

Remember not to take on all care responsibilities yourself – especially during a crisis. When several people help, responsibilities can be shared according to each person's abilities and capacity. This benefits both you and the person you care for.

Who can help you during a crisis?

Your local council – municipality

If the person you care for receives public health services at home, they should also get help during a crisis. Contact the municipality in advance to learn about procedures and preparedness arrangements.

Voluntary organisations or advocacy groups

Is the person you support a member of an organisation – perhaps a user group or advocacy organisation? These often have comprehensive knowledge of available support before, during, and after crises, and may have their own response plans.

Family members and neighbours

Some people needing care live in supported housing with others in similar situations. If other families are in the same situation, it may be wise to discuss arrangements in advance and agree to help each other during a crisis.

List the names and contact details for relevant resources, and what they can help with. Some may be able to help now, while others can be contacted during a crisis.

Name	Can help with
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

3

Take action

In the third step, you use information from steps one and two to create emergency supplies, make relevant arrangements, and prepare a simple information sheet.

- Make sure you have emergency supplies. Obtain missing items from the checklist, tailored to the needs of the person you care for.
- Inform relevant resources about the needs of the person you care for.
- Arrange who in the support network can help before, during, and after a crisis.

Information sheet

It is wise to create a simple, personalised information sheet that the person you care for can use during a crisis. Write down important information on a sheet and keep it somewhere easily accessible in their home. Tell the person you care for and their network where it is kept. We have created a template on the following page that can be cut out and used.

The information sheet should include:

- List of names and phone numbers of closest family members/carers
- Phone numbers of the most critical resources that can help during a crisis
- Information about medicines and where they are stored
- Instructions for any medical equipment
- Emergency service phone numbers
- Other important information about the person you care for



Cut here

My name

Important information

My medicines and medical aids

Where my medicines are kept

Where my medical aids are kept

My most important carers

Name

Telephone

Where I can get help with my needs

Resources

Needs

Telephone

My notes

**Do you need
help quickly?**



Fire: 110

Police: 112

Ambulance: 113