

Documents You'll Need After a Disaster

*Having the right documents prepared
before a disaster will make all the difference
to your recovery afterward*

Why You Need to Gather Documents Before a Disaster

Many people do not think about gathering their important documents as part of preparing for a disaster. But if you need to seek emergency medical services, refill prescriptions from an unfamiliar provider, or file for disaster assistance, you will need verifying documents that will be hard to access in the days after a disaster.

This guide will walk you through commonly requested documents, how to store them, and where you can locate copies.

How To Use This Guide

Many of these documents are already on hand, it's just a matter of identifying which documents apply to your household, gathering what you have, locating what you still need, and storing them in the same, secure, and easy-to-access place.

1. Review List of Important Documents

Determine which documents will help your household recover from a disaster or apply for assistance

2. Gather

Begin with the documents you have on hand, and then locate copies of documents you still need

3. Store

Make sure all documents are securely stored and protected from possible water, fire, or other danger

 Documents:

Government Issued ID Card(s)
or Driver's License(s)

Where to Locate a Copy:

Your Local Department of Public
Safety

Passport(s)
Social Security Card(s), Green Card(s),
Military ID Card(s)

Your Local Passport Agency, U.S.
Department of State

Birth Certificate(s)

The Vital Records Department in the
State or County of the Birth

Pet Ownership Paper(s) or
Identification Tag(s)

Your Veterinarian

Recommended Storage:

Physical Copies

Notes:

 Documents:

List of Medical Condition(s)
Including Children & Pets

Where to Locate a Copy:

Your Physician(s), Pediatrician,
Veterinarian

List of All Prescription(s)
Including Children & Pets

Your Physician(s), Pharmacist,
Pediatrician, Veterinarian

List of All Allergies
Including Children & Pets

Your Physician(s), Pediatrician,
Veterinarian

Recommended Storage:

Electronic Copies

Notes:



Documents:

General:

Proof of Address

Personal Property Inventory

Home/Rental Insurance Policy

Owner:

Deed for Your Home

Mortgage

Including lender contact information and the homeowner's name and pre-disaster address

Renter:

Rental Lease

Including landlord contact information

Where to Locate a Copy:

Copies of Recent Utility Bills

Electric, water, gas, cable/satellite, phone bill

Other official documents like mail from a child's school, or vehicle insurance cards

Create List of Your Personal Property

Include details and pictures of home appliances, furniture, valuables, etc

Your Insurance Agent or Insurance Company

The County Records Department Where Your Property is Located

Your Mortgage Lender

Your Landlord

Recommended Storage:

Electronic Copies

Notes:



Documents:

Financial Documents

Checking/Saving Accounts, Retirement Accounts, Investment Accounts, Pension, Trust Documents, etc

Marriage Certificate

Records from the County where you married

Living Will or Power of Attorney

Estate Planning Documents

Will, Transfer on Death Deeds, Insurance Policies

Tax & Proof of Income

Tax returns, pay stubs, government benefits, alimony, child support

Loan Documents

Mortgage, Home Equity Line of Credit, Deed

Military Service Records

Discharge Papers (DD-214), Dependent ID card(s), Veterans Health ID Card(s)

Where to Locate a Copy:

Financial Institutions Where You Have Accounts

The County Clerk Office

Your Records or Personal Lawyer

Prepare Prior to a Disaster Event Create with the help of a lawyer OR file a Transfer on Death Deed

Your Employer or Tax Preparer/ Accountant

Your Loan Provider

Veterans Affairs or Dept. of Defense

Recommended Storage:

Electronic Copies

Notes:



Document Checklist

Gather What You Need

Applies To My Household

Located Stored Where

- Identification Card or Driver's License
- Passport(s)
- Birth Certificate(s)
- List of Medical Condition(s)
- List of all Prescriptions
- Deed for Your Home
- Rental Lease
- Home/Rental Insurance Policy
- Proof of Address
- Personal Property Inventory
- Military Records

Applies To My Household

Located Stored Where

- Living Will or Medical Power of Attorney
- Will or other Estate Planning Documents
- Marriage Certificate
- Tax & Income Information
- Loan Documents
- Financial Documents
 - Checking/Saving Accounts
 - Retirement Accounts
 - Investment Accounts
 - Pension
 - Trust Documents

Notes:

Storing Your Documents

Physical Copies



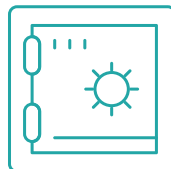
Keep your physical documents in a water-proof (zip lock bag) or fire-proof container. Make sure your documents are secure and easy to take with you.

Electronic Copies



Store electronic copies of your documents in a place that can be accessed from anywhere. This could be cloud storage, your email, USB drive, etc.

Safe Deposit Box



Keep important documents secure in a safe deposit box. You can rent a box from your local bank.

Storage Notes:

Recommendations for Securing Your Documents

- When you receive new/renewed policy or account documents, add them to your stored documents. Review and update documents once or twice a year
- Store all your important documents together in a secure location
 - Store your water and fire proof container on the highest floor in your home (avoid storing in a basement or garage)
 - Consider keeping a set of paper copies of your important documents with a trusted friend or relative
- If using a safe deposit box, confirm with your bank who has access if the owner cannot access it themselves. Designate who should have access, and share with them the name and location your bank, along with the box number, and contents of your safe deposit box
- Keep all electronic documents in the same location (email, cloud storage, external hard drive)
- Store documents in a password-protected format on a removable flash or external hard drive in your fireproof and waterproof box or safe. Consider using a secure offsite storage service
 - Visit www.us-cert.gov/ncas/tips/st04-019 to learn how to use electronic encryption to protect sensitive information
- If you choose a cloud storage system select a secure password that is memorable but not personal public information, like a birth date, phone number, or nickname

I've Gathered My Documents, Now What?

Well Done! Taking the initial step is the hardest part.

All you need to do now is keep your documents::

- Secure
 - Store your documents so they are safe from fire and water
- Up-to-Date
 - When you receive new/renewed policy or account documents, add them to your stored documents.
 - Make sure you have access to your most recent pay stubs
- Accessible
 - Store your important documents in a single location, both paper and electronic copies (i.e. email, cloud storage, external hard drive)
 - Take your documents with you if you need to evacuate or leave your home due to a disaster!

About This Project:

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buildingcommunityWORKSHOP Disaster Recovery Guides

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