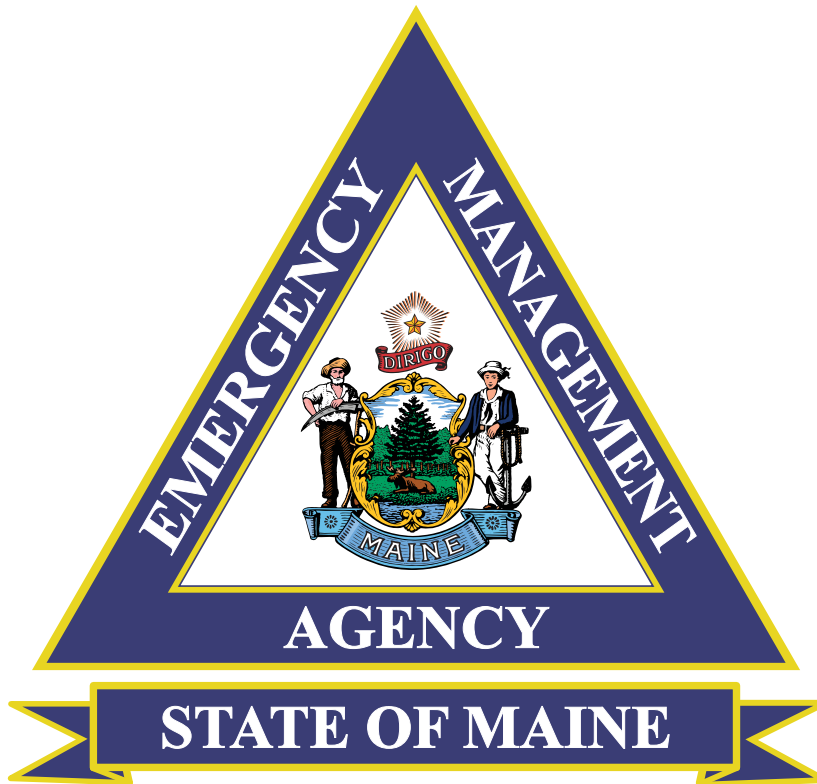


# Mass Care Considerations for Local, County, and Tribal Emergency Management Agencies



**Prepared By Bill Guindon**  
**State Mass Care Coordinator**  
**Maine Emergency Management Agency**  
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## **Introduction**

This Mass Care Considerations document has been prepared to serve as a tool for Local, County, and Tribal Emergency Managers to help in planning for Natural or Human-caused Disasters or Event requiring Mass Care assistance. The information has been provided to serve as a platform to share best practices which may help in situations requiring Mass Care assistance. Mass Care focuses on four primary areas:

### **Disaster/Emergency Sheltering**

### **Emergency Feeding**

### **Family Reunification**

### **Distribution of Emergency Supplies**

***As a supplement to this tool, the Maine Shelter Plan and information on Cooling and Warming Center Best Practices has been included in this document.***

### ***Mass Care Assistance***

The Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Mass Care Coordinator is available to provide coordination and technical assistance to communities, agencies, and organizations related to mass care needs. Resources available include technical assistance, training, and site visits. For assistance feel free to reach out to Bill Guindon, Mass Care Coordinator at [william.guindon@maine.gov](mailto:william.guindon@maine.gov) or 207-458-2867

## Definitions

### **Congregate Shelter**

A **Congregate Shelter** (aka Disaster shelter or Shelter) is a place for people to live temporarily when they cannot live in their current residence. The main difference between a warming center and emergency shelter is that an emergency shelter typically specializes in people fleeing a specific type of situation, such as natural or man-made disasters. Another difference from a warming center is that people staying in emergency shelters are provided places to sleep and/or eat for an extended period. If the shelter is run by the Red Cross facilities are ADA compliant and non-acute medical care and disaster mental health services may be available.

### **Non-Congregate Shelter**

A **Non-congregate Shelter** is the term used for emergency shelters that provide accommodation in a way that provides private space for guests. Non-congregate shelters are generally provided via Hotel/Motel rooms, College and University Dorms, and Camps.

### **Cooling Center**

A **Cooling Center** is a facility that has been opened for short term operations due to extreme heat conditions. They are typically operated at Town Halls, Libraries, Recreation Centers, and Churches during normal business hours.

### **Warming Center**

A **Warming Center** is a facility opened for short-term operations due to a specific emergency or event. Warming Centers are often open during regular business hours. They usually are opened when temperatures or a combination of precipitation, wind chill, wind, and temperatures have or may become dangerous. Their essential purpose is preventing death and injury related to exposure to the elements.

### **Evacuation Center (TEP)**

**Evacuation Centers** or **Temporary Evacuation Centers** provide temporary shelter for people displaced from their homes following a disaster. The term Temporary Evacuation Point is often used to stage individuals out of harm's way until Shelters can be set-up. These facilities vary by location and by the extent of damage to the area. Evacuation Centers are not typically equipped for overnight Sheltering.

## **Warming Shelter**

A **Warming shelter** is a short-term emergency shelter that operates when temperatures or a combination of precipitation, wind chill, wind and temperature become dangerously inclement. It is a place where people can go to stay warm and dry when it is rainy or wet outside. Facilities provide sleeping accommodation and may provide additional resources for Homeless or unhoused individuals. Warming centers are like homeless shelters, except that they are only open when the weather is bad. Their main goal is to make sure that nobody is left out in the cold.

## **Homeless Shelter**

A **Homeless Shelter** is a facility that provides temporary housing and support services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. These shelters offer a safe and secure place to stay, often with basic amenities like beds, food, and hygiene facilities. Some shelters also provide additional services like job training, medical care, and case management to help residents transition to more stable housing.

## **Mass Care Disaster/Emergency Sheltering Considerations**

The location of and decision to open and operate a Disaster/Emergency Shelter is at the sole discretion of local EMA and Municipals Officials in collaboration and coordination with the County EMA.” The exception being that a Local or County EMA may plan with a government or non-government Agency or Organization regarding opening triggers and management.

Local Emergency Management Agencies are encouraged to identify and survey primary and secondary facilities for Disaster/Emergency Sheltering use. As part of the preparedness process the development of a Shelter Plan can become a helpful tool in the event there is a need for Sheltering due to a Disaster or Human-Caused Incident or event.

### **Facilities to consider for primary and secondary Disaster/Emergency Shelters:**

- Schools (Public and Private K-12, Colleges and Universities)
- Recreation Centers
- Community Rooms
- Libraries with Meeting Rooms
- Grange Halls
- Fraternal Halls
- YMCA's
- Municipal Buildings

### **Facility Considerations should include but not be limited to the following:**

- Safe Location and Accessibility to the Community including roads and transportation routes.
- Capacity for Anticipated Shelter Residents that would use facility in a Disaster or Incident.
- ADA compliance and Functional Needs Accessibility.
- Compatibility to allow normal operations and use during Sheltering Operations.
- Generator Power or ability to connect temporary power resources to electrical services during Sheltering Operations.
- Safety and Security
- Ability to support Pet Sheltering Needs
- Impact on Community Infrastructure and Recovery Needs
- Other uses of the facility that may be more beneficial during a Disaster or Event
- Ability to Separate Feeding and Dormitory Areas.
- Adequate Toilet and Bathing Facilities.
- Accessible Routes for Walking and Wheelchairs.
- Ability to Co-locate those with Disabilities with General Population
- Isolation Area for those with allergies or medical issues.

- Consideration for Nursing Mothers
- Childcare and Child friendly recreation area.
- Life Safety Equipment. (First Aid Kit, AED, Smoke and CO Detectors)

### **Capacity Considerations\***

- Capacity is determined by measuring area of staging or sleeping area of building only not entire building. (The dormitory or staging area capacity shall not exceed posted occupancy of room being for Center or Shelter use.)

### **Cooling and Warming Centers-**

- 20 Square Feet Per person of area where individuals will be staged.

### **Evacuation Center or Temporary Evacuation Point-**

- 20 Square Feet Per Person of area where individuals will be staged.

### **Disaster/Emergency Shelter-**

- 40 Square Feet Person of Dormitory area where individuals will sleep.
- 110 Square Feet Person of Dormitory area where individuals will sleep. (COVID-19 or Communicable Disease.)
- 100 Square Feet Person of Dormitory area where individuals will sleep. (Long-term Sheltering or Medical Needs)

### **Commonly Used Shelter Supplies**

- Cot or Sleeping Mats
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Tarps or Flooring Paper to Cover Floor where Cots are placed.
- Cones
- Trash Bags
- Blue Painters Tape
- Easel Pads, Markers, and Easel Stands for signage.
- Maine Shelter Handbook or FEMA Shelter Guide P-785
- Cleaning Supplies

### **Potential Partners to Staff Disaster/Emergency Shelters**

- Municipal Staff and Volunteers
- Civic or Fraternal Groups
- Private and Non-Profit Agencies and Organizations
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

- Civil Air Patrol Squadrons

## **Cooling and Warming Center Considerations**

Here are a few considerations for operating a Cooling or Warming Center:

- Identify facilities before the need arises.  
Commons sites include:
  - Municipal Offices
  - Senior Centers
  - Libraries
  - Community Centers
  - Fraternal Halls
- Monitor Weather Forecasts to determine Cooling or Warming Center Open hours. Cooling and Warming Centers may be opened during extreme heat, or cool periods will provide a source of relief to those unable to stay cool or warm.
- Make sure the space has good and reliable air conditioning and heating resources. The space should also be accessible to people with disabilities and people who use mobility devices.
- Some activities you can offer are coloring, crosswords, books, playing cards and movies. This can help create a feeling of trust and comfort and keep kids happy. If you plan to offer toys that can be shared, be sure to sanitize them before each use.
- Do not get discouraged if individuals do not attend Warming or Cooling Centers, particularly during short-term extreme cold weather. The critical thing to remember is that the longer the weather is extreme, the more likely community members will visit the site. Individuals in the community should know a facility is available rather than not having or knowing the location of a safe place of refuge if needed.
- Place signage in the Warming or Cooling Center that explains Behavior and Conduct rules and expectations.
- Remember that weather conditions may prevent community members from going to Warming Centers due to unsafe road conditions.
- Always have two staff or volunteers on site during Warming or Cooling Center during open hours.
- Choose a facility that has adequate ADA Accessible bathrooms.



- Make sure the facility is accessible by removing snow and ice from sidewalks and entrances during winter weather conditions.
- Ensure consideration is given to providing a safe space for families with small children and nursing mothers.
- Set up tables and chairs where Warming or Cooling Center guests can sit comfortably.
- Consider basic supplies to help meet guests' needs, such as access to face masks, hand sanitizer, drinking water, warm drinks like coffee or tea, pre-packaged snacks, and activities/entertainment.
- When possible, provide access to charging stations to community members visiting a Warming or Cooling Center to charge electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops. Access to charging stations will be beneficial during extended power outages.

### **Reporting the Opening of a Cooling and Warming Center or Disaster/Emergency Shelter**

“The decision to open and operate a Cooling and Warming Center or Disaster/Emergency Shelter is at the discretion of local EMA and Municipal Officials in collaboration coordination with the County EMA.” The exception being that a Local or County EMA may plan with a government or non-government Agency or Organization regarding opening triggers.

Please notify MEMA of any Cooling or Warming Center or Disaster/Emergency Shelter Openings through the following email:

The email notification address is [CenterShelter.OpenNotification@Maine.Gov](mailto:CenterShelter.OpenNotification@Maine.Gov)  
(Please provide the location, hours, point of contact, and facility-specific information.)

The email is automatically forwarded to the MEMA Duty Officer, I/A Officer, Mass Care Coordinator, MEMA PIO, and 211 Maine. Opening and closing of Centers and Shelters will be posted on the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Website platform by the Mass Care Coordinator or MEMA Public Information Officer when notified by the Local Municipal or County Emergency Management Agency of Center or Disaster/Emergency Shelter Opening.

#### **Important Note:**

During Extreme Weather situations MEMA will post Homeless and Wellness Shelter Openings when notified of such resource availability. Non-Weather or Disaster related Homeless and Wellness Shelter resources can be found by contacting 211Maine <https://211maine.org> or Call 211 or 1-866-811-569 or MaineHousing at: <https://www.mainehousing.org/> 207-626-4600.

## Mass Care Emergency Feeding Considerations

In the event of a natural or human-caused disaster or event, consideration should be given to ensure that basic needs such as food and water are met promptly. During a Disaster or Event, the routine supply chain may be interrupted. The longer the situation lasts, the greater the potential impact of community members on meeting basic needs such as food and water. As part of planning efforts for situations requiring emergency feeding, it is essential to consider the possibility that the first 24-72 hours may require resources to be made available at fixed or mobile sites. Here are a few tips to assist in your Emergency Feeding Planning efforts:

- Ensure the feeding requirements and plans are consistent with the community's demographic, cultural, dietary, and ethnic diversity.
- Emergency feeding planning efforts should include planning for providing food to those sheltering in place or utilizing non-congregate shelters.
- During emergency feeding planning for your community, consideration should include providing food and water to not only those directly affected by the situation but also responders and those supporting response and recovery efforts.
- Consider developing Memorandums of Understanding with ServSafe® certified food preparers such as Restaurants, Catering Companies, Grocery Store delis, Food Banks, Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, School Nutrition programs, and Bottled Water Vendors. \*During the first initial hours of a Disaster, Catering Companies, Restaurants, and delis may be able to safely donate food when power restoration efforts are delayed.
- Discourage using donated food, except for food prepared by ServSafe® certified food preparers.
- Arrange for individually packaged or boxed meals. Examples include packaged or boxed meals (sandwiches, fruit, chips) from a caterer, vendor, or restaurant that are delivered already sealed in containers and labeled with the contents.
- Do not conduct Emergency Feeding services in the Dormitory area during Shelter Operations.
- During Preparedness Efforts, community members are encouraged to remember to plan for food and water for their pets in a Natural or Human-caused disaster.
- Work with local health officials to address food safety concerns that may arise as part of your preparedness efforts and response operations.

FEMA has a helpful resource to assist in the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for Mass Care Services at the following:

[DvlpngMssCareAgrmntsGuide\\_20220727\\_508.pdf](#)

## **Meeting the Needs of the Entire Family**

Ensuring adequate nutrition for the entire family following a disaster is a critical part of the Mass Care mission. Families with young children are especially vulnerable given the specific needs and unique challenges associated with caring for infants and toddlers. This is particularly true when families are displaced from their homes and must seek shelter in a congregate setting. Emergency Managers are strongly encouraged to plan and provide resources for mothers who may require additional support to continue feeding their children as they would at home, whether through breast milk or infant formula. This can include establishing specific areas for breastfeeding and for bottle washing as addressed in the [Multi-Agency Shelter Plan Template](#).

## **Federal Support for Infant Formula and Breastfeeding Equipment in Shelters**

There are two potential methods to secure federal assistance for infant formula and breastfeeding equipment for use during mass care/sheltering operations during a federally declared disaster when Section 403 is authorized and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) resources are exceeded. One is through Direct Federal Assistance and the other is through reimbursement under Public Assistance.

One method available to SLTTs is to request reimbursement through FEMA Public Assistance after securing the resources through their own sources. These resources serve as an emergency protective measure, necessary to sustain and support human life. The Federal share is not less than 75 percent of the eligible costs for either method of assistance.

The other, Direct Federal Assistance is initiated by state, tribal or territorial (STT) government when a Resource Request Form is submitted to FEMA for the provision of a specified resource. FEMA then identifies the most appropriate source to meet the request and arranges for transportation and delivery of the resource to the identified location. This method would be appropriate when the STT lacks the capability to secure such resources, which serve as emergency protective measures to sustain and support human life.

## **Additional Resources for Families and Mass Care Providers: Source:**

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/infant-toddler-feeding-support-in-shelters/>

## **Mass Care Family Reunification Considerations**

The aftermath of a Natural or Human-caused disaster can plunge a community into chaos and confusion. In such a situation, planning for family reunification becomes not just important but crucial. While the focus of family reunification is often on locating children, it's important to remember that finding any individual in a disaster can be a daunting task. Those with limited access to routine communication devices or those displaced may find it particularly challenging for their family and friends to know if they're safe. This is why planning for Family Reunification must start before a disaster strikes. Here are a few tips to prepare for reuniting individuals and families:

- Encourage Individuals and Families to develop a reunification plan, which includes multiple gathering spots, communication preferences, and emergency contacts.
- Empower Community Members to actively participate in reunification planning by identifying a family or friend for an emergency contact outside the disaster impact area. This small step can make a big difference in ensuring the safety and well-being of your loved ones.
- Identify a family reunification site in your community, such as a Hotel/Motel Conference Center, Community Center, or Recreation Center. (Utilize School and Public Safety facilities as a last resort.)
- Coordinate with School Officials on Family Reunification plans. School departments and districts develop plans to reunify children with their families. These plans ensure that children are safely reunited with their parents or guardians after an emergency.
- Involve local Medical Facilities such as hospitals and long-term care facilities in family reunification planning. Families often go to medical facilities to seek out information about family members.
- Recognize the collective responsibility in disaster preparedness and recovery. As part of the planning effort, it's crucial to coordinate with Local, County, State, and Tribal Agencies on joint messaging processes regarding family reunification. This collaborative approach will ensure a more effective and efficient response in times of crisis.
- Remember, during a Mass Casualty or Fatality event, State and Federal Officials may, by statute or regulation, have primary responsibility for Family Reunification. Situations involving Criminal Activity, Air, Rail, or Bus Transportation related situations State or Federal Authorities may have oversight of Family Reunification activities. Identifying primary roles and responsibilities before a disaster or event occurs will help accelerate family reunification.
- Involve Behavioral Health Agencies and Organizations in planning for Family Reunification to communicate rules of engagement in the event assistance is needed and to prevent self-deployment.

## **Mass Care Considerations for Distribution of Emergency Supplies**

It is not uncommon for basic resources and supplies to be limited to survivors following a natural or human-caused disaster. A disaster or no-notice event may interrupt the supply chain and prevent access to essential food, water, and hygiene supplies. Following a Natural or Human-Caused Disaster, a Point of Distribution, a place to gather resources for survivors to meet basic needs, may need to be established.

The following are a few items to consider when planning to set up an Oasis, often called Points of Distribution (POD) in a community:

Encourage residents to plan for meeting basic needs in the event of a disaster for the first 72 hours to include food, water, securing important documents, and medicines.

- Non-perishable foods
- Bottled Water
- Insurance and Vital Records
- Prescriptions
- Mobility Devices
- Batteries for Electronic Devices

Establish Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with vendors or resources who may be able to support post disaster needs of survivors. (Example of Potential Vendors)

- Grocery Stores
- Delicatessens
- Food Banks and Food Pantries
- Private and Non-Profit Organizations
- Hardware Stores
- Distribution Warehousing Companies
- Trucking and Rental Equipment Companies
- Porta Potty Companies
- Generator and Equipment and Rental Vendors

Identify locations to set-up a Point of Distribution before the disaster occurs. Consider the following:

- Sites which are easily accessible to community transportation routes.
- Plan to needs of the population and community.
- Plan to have Plenty of room to permit traffic flow safely.

Identify potential needs of community members such as:

- Non-perishable Food
- Water
- Hygiene Supplies
- Blankets
- Baby Food and Diapers

- Pet Food
- Batteries
- Tarps
- Cleaning Supplies
- Clothing
- Cleaning Tools (Buckets, Shovels. And Gloves)
- Medical Equipment

Identify potential staffing resources to manage and support operations such as:

- Municipal Staff
- Volunteers
- Pallets
- Forklifts

FEMA offers a helpful resource for Points of Distribution Planning at the following: [fema distribution-management-plan-guide-2.0.pdf](#)

- Set up tables and chairs where Warming Center guests can sit comfortably.
- Consider basic supplies to help meet guests' needs, such as access to face masks, hand sanitizer, drinking water, warm drinks like coffee or tea, pre-packaged snacks, and activities/entertainment.
- When possible, provide access to charging stations to community members visiting a Warming Center to charge electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops. Access to charging stations will be beneficial during extended power outages.

## REFERENCES

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

<https://www.fema.gov/sitemap>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

[Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool \(RAPT\) | FEMA.gov](#)

Disability Rights Maine

<https://drme.org/>

Maine Office of Aging and Disability Services

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads>

Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

<https://www.maine.gov/mema/>

Maine Emergency Management Agency Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan  
Emergency Support Function #6 (ESF #6)

Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Mass Care Shelter Handbook

Request copy at [william.guindon@maine.gov](mailto:william.guindon@maine.gov)

MaineHousing

<https://www.mainehousing.org/>

American Red Cross of Northern New England Region

<https://www.redcross.org/local/me-nh-vt.html>

Maine Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MEVOAD)

<http://mevoad.org>

The Salvation Army of Northern New England Division

<https://easternusa.salvationarmy.org/northern-new-england/>

National Mass Care Strategy

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/nmcs-resource-center/nmcs-sheltering/>

211 Maine

<https://211maine.org>

Volunteer Maine

<https://volunteermaine.gov>

## **Resources**

### **Sheltering**

[https://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Shelter-Field-Guide-508\\_f3.pdf](https://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Shelter-Field-Guide-508_f3.pdf)

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/nmcs-resource-center/nmcs-household-pets-service-animals-and-assistance-animals/>

### **Emergency Feeding**

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/nmcs-resource-center/nmcs-feeding/>

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/infant-toddler-feeding-support-in-shelters/>

### **Family Reunification**

[https://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Multi-Agency Reunification Services Plan Template 508 final v1.pdf](https://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Multi-Agency_Reunification_Services_Plan_Template_508_final_v1.pdf)

### **Distribution of Emergency Supplies**

<https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/nmcs-resource-center/nmcs-distribution-of-emergency-supplies/>

### **Warming and Cooling Centers**

<https://www.maine.gov/mema/response-recovery/mass-care>



## Appendix A-Maine Sheltering Plan

### Executive Summary

This document has been created to provide an overview of Maine Emergency/Disaster Sheltering planning assumptions to house displaced residents in a Natural or Human Caused Disaster. The Sheltering plan is designed to provide planning assumptions and the framework for mobilizing, operations, management, and demobilizing of General Population Shelters.

### MAINE DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the US Census Bureau as of July 1, 2023, there were reported 1,395,722 residents in Maine which includes 23 % over the age of 65. (The population of 65 and over is expected to increase by 36 % by 2030 according to a report from the Office of State Economist, Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFC), “Maine Population Outlook 2030”.)

### Potential Hazards and Impacts in Maine

Domestic Terrorism	Structure Fires	Wildland Fire
Winter Storms	Hurricane/Tornado	Tropical Storm
Active Shooter Incident	Transportation Incident	Hazardous Materials Incident
Supply Chain Interruption	Extreme Heat	Extreme Cold
Earthquake	Flooding	Blight/Infestation
Building/Bridge Collapse	Civil Disorder	Dam Failure
Cyber Incident	Food/Water/Air/Soil Contamination	Epidemic/Disease
Drought	Utility Outage	Erosion/Landslide

### PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The historical experience of Maine residents in Emergency/Disaster Sheltering is limited to long-term power outages, multi-family fires, and extreme weather conditions. According to the US Census Bureau, between April 1, 2020, and July 1, 2022, an estimated 34,237 people have migrated to Maine — including 30,642 from other states and nearly 3,595 international migrants, according to the Census figures. It is estimated that 10.5 of overall new residents are international immigrants. The influx of new residents to Maine may result in a higher number of individuals seeking Emergency/Disaster Sheltering since many are without historical knowledge or experience in Maine weather conditions. Residents who experienced

the Ice Storm 1998 may be more resilient than many unfamiliar with Maine's turbulent weather conditions.

Based on historical data, the number of individuals who pursue Emergency/Disaster Shelters is estimated to be 1-3 % of residents displaced in an Emergency or Disaster Incident. (Nationally, the average ranges from 10-15 %.) Individuals and families identified as Pre-Disaster Homeless or Unhoused are projected to Shelter when such facilities are open to the general population.

Historically, the American Red Cross has been a significant Emergency/Disaster Shelter service provider in Maine. Due to a decreasing number of volunteers and a new regionalized response approach, Local, County, and State Emergency Management Agencies have found the need to bridge the gap in limited capacity for Sheltering resources. Planning assumptions now require the first 24-72 hours of Natural or Human-caused Disaster to be met with local resources.

## **SHELTERING OPTIONS**

### **Shelter In Place**

Sheltering in place should be the first option for those impacted by a Natural or Human-caused Disasters. Limited Sheltering Resources, Transportation, Staffing, and Weather Conditions may require Sheltering in Place.

**Shelter-in-place** is a method of protection often utilized when hazardous materials have been released into the atmosphere. It might also be used during dangerous storms like hurricanes, when it is safer for you to be home, than it is for you to travel to a shelter.

### **Non-Congregate Sheltering**

Non-Congregate sheltering is a viable option to house individuals displaced by a Natural or Human-caused Disaster. Hotels, Motels, Camps, Community, and University Campuses can be utilized for Non-Congregate Sheltering. Non-congregate sheltering resources are often limited during the Maine peak periods of Summer and Fall Tourist season.

Non-Congregate sheltering is a viable option when no Emergency/Disaster Shelter facilities are available in a community or where the number of displaced residents is low. The American Red Cross often uses Hotels/Motels to house individuals and families displaced by a fire or other event.

The decision to use Non-Congregate Sheltering is at the discretion of Local Emergency Agencies, who would be financially responsible for such measures. FEMA may approve Non-

Congregate Sheltering as a reimbursable expense as a Category B Emergency Protective Measure during a Presidentially Declared Disaster or Public Health Emergency.

### **Emergency/Disaster Shelters**

As of September 2023, 279 Emergency/Disaster Shelters were listed in Maine per the FEMA/American Red Cross-National Shelter Database. 38 of the 279 Emergency/Disaster Shelters reported to have documented as being surveyed.

MEMA has created and delivered Shelter Surveying training to Local, County, State, and Tribal officials on the requirements for identifying Emergency/Disaster Shelters in communities.

Training includes information on collaborative planning, capacity, resources, accessibility, and functional needs. Local and County Emergency Management Agencies are encouraged to develop Shelter plans specific to each community's needs and resources. Annual review of Shelter plans and at least one on-site reviews every five years is strongly encouraged.\

### **Evacuation Centers**

Evacuation Centers are set up to provide a temporary place of refuge, often less than 24 hours for those displaced due to a Disaster or Emergency. (Evacuation centers are often called Temporary Evacuation points.)

The capacity of the number of individuals residing in an Evacuation Center (20 Square Feet per Person.) is 100 % larger than an Emergency/Disaster Shelter (40 Square Feet Per Person.). Evacuation Centers usually do not have wrap-around services but may transition into an Emergency/Disaster Shelter if the situation requires such a need.

### **SHELTERING RESOURCES**

Several Sheltering resources and supplies are available in the State of Maine at fixed locations and trailers. Local, County, and State Emergency Management Agencies maintain inventories of Cots, Blankets, Animal Crates, and other emergency supplies. The American Red Cross of Northern New England maintain several Trailers throughout the state that are mission ready for deployment, some of which are co-located with local and county emergency management agencies.

In the event of a large-scale disaster additional sheltering resources including staffing may be available through our partner states of New Hampshire and Vermont once all local and state resources have been exhausted. As needed additional staffing and supplies may be requested from the American Red Cross Regional, Division, and National resources when available. FEMA has Sheltering resources available when a Presidential Emergency or Disaster has been

declared when all Maine resources have been exhausted which includes the American Red Cross networks.

### **Types of Emergency/Disaster Shelters in Maine\***

- **Locally Managed and supported-** Local EMA's provide management, staffing, and supplies in collaboration with municipal officials and community volunteers.
- **American Red Cross Managed and Locally Supported-** The American Red Cross Northern New England Region provides management, staffing, and supplies in collaboration with municipal officials and community volunteers.
- **Federally Managed with Local and State Support-** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides shelter management, staffing, and supplies in collaboration with municipal officials and volunteers organizations which may include Maine VOAD, American Red Cross, or The Salvation Army.

**\*Note: for the purposes of this plan Cooling and Warming Centers are not considered as Emergency/Disaster Shelters.**

### **SHELTER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

Due to Maine's demographics Local and County Emergency Management Agencies are encouraged to plan utilizing local resources for the first 24-72 hours of a Disaster to manage and support Sheltering needs. Sheltering management and operations should include Basic Sheltering, Pet Sheltering, and Emergency Feeding. As the Disaster or Emergency escalates, additional resources outside of a jurisdiction may be available to support shelter needs. The following Individuals, Agencies and Organizations may be available to assist in the set-up, operations, and management of an Emergency/Disaster Shelter:

Local Civic and Fraternal Organizations	Communities of Faith	Boy Scouts
Girl Scouts	Civil Air Patrol	American Red Cross
The Salvation Army	Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)	Maine VOAD
Maine CDC PHEP	Maine Medical Reserve Corps	Municipal Staff
Amateur Radio League	Boarding Kennels	Local Volunteers
County Animal Rescue Teams	Humane Society	United Way

Active and Retired Medical Providers	Veterinarians	Maine Responds
Meals on Wheels	Senior Centers	Access and Functional Needs Specialists
Volunteer Maine	Local and Regional Food Banks	Disaster Behavioral Health (ME DHHS)
School Department/District Nutrition Services	Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens	

## **SHELTER SUPPLIES**

There are several sheltering supplies available through a variety of sources which include Local, County, and State Emergency Management Agencies, the American Red Cross, and the Maine CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness, a Division of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

As of July 2024, a census of the Shelter Supply Inventory of all Maine Counties, MEMA, and the American Red Cross in Maine indicated that the following were available:

Cots: 4035	Bariatric Cots: 97	Medical Cots: 58
Pillows: 487	Blankets: 4,674	Comfort Kits: 803

Recommended Shelter Resources include:

Blue Painters Tape	Paper and Cloth Towels	Trash Bags
Traffic Cones	Ink Pens	Trash Cans
Easel Pads/Stands for Signage (directions to restrooms, shelter rules, shelter meetings)	Plastic Tarps or Flooring Paper	Hygiene Supplies (Toothpaste, Soap, Wipes)

## **EMERGENCY FEEDING IN A SHELTER**

Pre-planning efforts for Emergency Feeding in a Shelter should include identifying resources that can provide at least two, preferably three meals a day for those housed in Emergency/Disaster Shelters.

Potential resources for Emergency Feeding may include but are not limited to Servsafe® certified local vendors, food banks and soup kitchens, school nutrition services, and non-profit organizations. The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Operation BBQ, LDS

Charities, and the Southern Baptist Disaster Services may be a resource for Emergency Feeding. Shelter Plans are suggested to include planning for Emergency Feeding from local resources for the first 24-72 of a Natural or Human-caused Disaster.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Local and County Emergency Management Agencies are encouraged to identify Emergency/Disaster Shelter sites on or near public transportation routes whenever possible. In communities with limited public transportation, local school departments, school districts, and community action programs may be able to assist in transporting residents to Emergency/Disaster Shelters. Preparedness messaging encourages individuals to take pre-disaster planning measures for transportation needs, particularly those in ill health, elderly, mobility issues, and accessibility challenges.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Access to Emergency/Disaster Shelters is an essential consideration in Shelter Surveying and Planning. Preferred Emergency/Disaster Shelters are facilities which meet or exceed the ADA accessibility of all residents of a community. Surveying of Shelter facilities incorporates best practices to ensure accessibility. Local and County Emergency Managers are encouraged to identify vulnerable population specific to their own community requiring accessibility assistance. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool can be used to acquire community specific demographics. [Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool \(RAPT\) | FEMA.gov](#)

## **ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS IN SHELTERING**

Functional Needs Support Services (FNSS) are defined as services that enable individuals to maintain their independence in a general population shelter. FNSS includes:

- Reasonable modification to policies, practices, and procedures
- Durable medical equipment (DME)
- Consumable medical supplies (CMS)
- Personal assistance services (PAS)
- Other goods and services as needed as Children and Adults requiring FNSS may have physical, sensory, mental health, and cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities affecting their

ability to function independently without assistance. Others that may benefit from FNSS include women in late stages of pregnancy, elders, and people needing bariatric equipment.

Several Local, County, and State Emergency Management Agencies in Maine and the American Red Cross Northern New England Region have a supply of Bariatric and Medical Cots for Sheltering purposes. The Maine CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Division has a cache of durable medical equipment which may be accessed for Sheltering purposes.

### **MEDICAL SHELTERING**

As part of the planning process, consideration is given to Sheltering individuals who require specialized resources due to medical ailments or conditions. For Emergency/Disaster Sheltering, Alternative Medical Sites are not applicable. Situations may occur in some communities requiring Medical Cots and Equipment such as Oxygen, Bariatric and Medical Cots, Walkers, Wheelchairs, Shower Chairs, Elevated Toilet Seats, and Canes for General population shelters. A local medical provider or the Maine CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Divisions may be a source of equipment.

### **PET SHELTERING**

According to a study by pawlicy.com, 63.5 % of Maine residents have at least one pet. Pets are an important portion of a family unit. Shelter Planning should include consideration for housing domestic pets, service animals, and small farm animals. The facility ownership and management should be consulted to determine if Pet Sheltering is permitted in the Sheltering. In situations where Pet Sheltering is not feasible, the local Humane Society, Boarding Kennels, and Veterinarians may be a source of assistance. There are over 150 Animal Crates reported to be staged at Local, County, and State Emergency Management Agencies for sheltering purposes. Pet Sheltering resources may also include County and State Animal Rescue Teams, Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF), and Humane Society. On large scale Disasters national based Animal Rescue Teams may be available through the National Voluntary Organizations in Disasters (NVOAD).

### **EVACUATION PLANNING**

Local and County Emergency Management Agencies and the American Red Cross have identified Regional Shelters in the state to support evacuation sheltering needs. Most, if not all, facilities designated as Regional Shelters are large in capacity.

Local and County Emergency Management Agencies are encouraged to identify potential Evacuation Shelters in and outside their jurisdiction.

Pre-evacuation planning efforts should include the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that displaced residents may be received at a neighboring jurisdiction's Emergency/Disaster Shelter.

While the American Red Cross may manage and support Emergency/Disaster Shelters, the decision to open the facility is at the discretion of the Local Emergency Management Agency in collaboration and coordination with the County Emergency Management Agency. The decision to open an Emergency/Disaster Shelter and the capacity to receive residents from neighboring jurisdictions is at the discretion of local emergency management officials.

## **SHELTER TRAINING**

The Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Mass Care Coordinator offers no-cost training through in-person or virtual platforms to support and build Sheltering local capacity which includes topics such as Shelter Planning, Operations, Management, and Surveying. A Maine Shelter Handbook has been distributed to Local and County Emergency Management Agencies which includes the FEMA/American Red Cross Shelter Handbook and documentation to transition to an American Red Cross managed Shelter if needed.

## **PUBLIC MESSAGING**

The Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) utilizes an Email notification system to report the opening of Cooling and Warming Centers, and Emergency/Disaster Shelters. The decision to open and operate a Cooling and Warming Center or Emergency/Disaster Shelter is at the discretion of local EMA and Municipals Officials in collaboration coordination with the County EMA. The email notification address is [CenterShelter.OpenNotification@Maine.Gov](mailto:CenterShelter.OpenNotification@Maine.Gov). The email is automatically forwarded to the MEMA Duty Officer, I/A Officer, Mass Care Coordinator, MEMA PIO, and 211 Maine.

Opening and closing of Centers and Shelters will be posted on the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) MEMA Website and WebEOC platforms by the Mass Care Coordinator, Individual Assistance Officer or MEMA Public Information Officer when notified by the Local Municipal or County Emergency Management Agency of a Center or Emergency/Disaster Shelter Opening

Important Note: During Extreme Weather situations MEMA will post Homeless and Wellness Shelter Openings when notified of such resource availability. Non-Weather or Disaster related Homeless and Wellness Shelter resources can be found by contacting 211Maine <https://211maine.org> or Call 211 or 1-866-811-5695 or MaineHousing at: <https://www.mainehousing.org/> 207-626-4600



## **Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF 6)**

The Maine Emergency Management Agency has adopted the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. For the purposes of Sheltering the Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF) will be used to provide parameters and framework for sheltering response to natural and human-caused disasters. The ESF 6 document provides the foundation for response to situations requiring Sheltering, Emergency Feeding, Distribution of Emergency Supplies, and Family Reunification.