

THE ELIZABETH LOFTS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

BETTER TOGETHER

Tip 13: Financial Preparation for an Emergency

Check List

- Photocopy of driver's license, passport or other valid government ID for everyone.
- Marriage, birth and divorce certificates.
- Phone numbers for doctors, pharmacies and list of medications including dosage and last prescription number (to expedite re-order). Don't forget your pet's veterinarian.
- Insurance policy number and phone number for home, auto and medical including Medicare.
- Bank account, routing numbers, and phone numbers.
- Credit card and non-bank financial institution account numbers and phone numbers.
- Recent bank and credit card statements.
- If you have them for loved ones, durable power of attorney and/or trust documents.
- Your "Living Will" and, if you have them, for non-married couples and older loved ones, medical power of attorney. If you don't have a living will, make one now so your loved ones don't have to guess what you want for end-of-life care.

In an emergency, electricity and communications may be unavailable. This means electronic payments, ATMs, and mail may be unavailable. For a time, cash may be king. Businesses may require proof of identity. Insurance and medical services may require documentation as well. So, what do you need to prepare now to be ready to cope financially during an emergency?

Other Documents to Prepare

1. A written plan of how and where your family will meet up if separated.
2. Contact phone numbers for loved ones and out-of-state contact.

Cash Will Be King

1. Have enough cash for about a week.
2. Businesses may not be able to make change. Small bills are best.
3. Consider setting up email or text alerts for credit card transactions. A low ceiling is better, but getting a lot of notices can be annoying.

Store Documents Securely

1. Store these in a waterproof (ex: double baggie) container inside your go-bag (the bag of supplies when you have to leave your unit permanently).
2. Make an electronic copy into a flash drive and store it in your go bag.
3. Consider sharing these documents with a trusted out-of-state loved one.

Once a Disaster Hits

1. Contact out-of-state contacts. They may be able to help you contact insurance for claims and banks and credit cards to make payments.
2. If you cannot make payments, contact the business or creditor. They may be able to suspend payments for a time.
3. The Federal Emergency Management Agency can be contacted at 1-800-621-3362 or 7-1-1. Local assistance can be reached at 2-1-1, but may be overwhelmed depending on the extent of the emergency. The Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS. FEMA is online at [disasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disasterAssistance.gov). Local government is at 211.org.

More Advice on Financial Preparedness

The Oregonian has a recent article at

<https://www.oregonlive.com/business/2023/01/how-to-prepare-financially-for-an-emergency.html>

FEMA has a page including a video at

<https://www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness>