

SHELTER INFORMATION

What Is A Shelter?

Public Shelters are provided for the public to use in the event an evacuation becomes necessary

and you have no other safe place to go. Buildings used for public shelters are normally public schools that are staffed by school personnel and Red Cross volunteers. Marion County officials strongly urge that a Public Shelter be used **ONLY AS A LAST RESORT**. It is recommended that other arrangements be made with a friend or relative that lives in a well constructed home, one that could withstand high winds. You will be more comfortable sheltering with friends/family or in commercial lodging.

Also, many churches will provide shelter for members either through the "host home" sheltering concept, where members who need to evacuate are paired up with families who do not need to evacuate or by opening the church itself as a shelter depending on its location and construction.

What Is It Like In A Shelter?

Shelters are always crowded, usually uncomfortable when the power goes off because there is no ventilation, long lines to use the restrooms and to get food, and very noisy making it difficult to rest or sleep. You may have to stay there for several days.

Shelter Facts

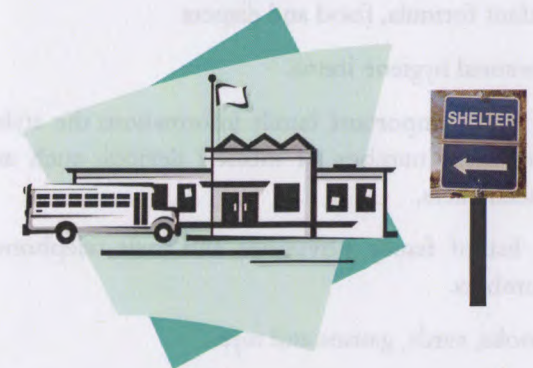
- Bedding is not provided in public shelters.
- Shelters are not hotel/motels and they will not be able to provide you with conveniences or luxuries. Bring your disaster supply kit with you to ensure proper provisions.
- Shelters have a community environment which consists of a large number of people. It is important to be considerate and cooperative and follow the instructions of the shelter management staff.
- During your shelter stay, you may experience a shortage or rationing of food, especially for the first hours. This is only a temporary condition until supplies are delivered.
- Volunteer your services whenever possible.
- Rumors can become widespread during your shelter stay. Listen only to **official information**, and refuse to pass on other speculations.
- Be patient and cheerful about the situation and your attitude will help the morale of the entire group.
- When you arrive in the shelter give your name and address to the shelter manager so that you can be located, if necessary. If you leave, tell the shelter manager where you are going. You will not be permitted to check in and out of a shelter as if it were a hotel.
- **Alcoholic beverages and weapons are not permitted in the shelter.**

- **Pets are not allowed in public shelters.** The only exceptions are service animals for those who are disabled. You need to make prior arrangements to ensure your pets safety and care. Check with your veterinarian about pet sheltering. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND.** If it is not safe for you, then it is not safe for your pets.

What Shelter Will Be Open?

You must listen to the media for a list of shelters that are open. **DO NOT** go to a shelter until we announce through the media that the shelter is open. The Division of Emergency Management will advise over the television, radio and NOAA Weather Radio which shelters are open. Shelter Route Signs have been posted to assist you in locating the shelter.

**DO NOT call 9-1-1 for shelter information.
Use 9-1-1 for true emergencies only.**



What To Take To The Shelter

Prepare a Disaster Supply Kit with supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container, such as duffel bags, backpacks or covered trash containers. Keep important family documents in a waterproof container.

- Non-perishable packaged or canned food.
- Manual can opener, eating utensils, paper plates, cups, napkins/paper towels.
- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person, per day) and other beverages. Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- Sleeping bags, blankets, pillows and folding chairs.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries.
- A change of clothing and sturdy shoes for each person. Include warm clothing and rain gear.
- An extra pair of glasses.
- An extra set of car keys.
- Credit cards, cash or travelers checks.
- Infant formula, food and diapers.
- Personal hygiene items.
- A list of important family information; the style and serial number of medical devices, such as pacemakers.
- A list of family physicians and their telephone numbers.
- Books, cards, games and toys.



What If You Need Assistance?

Any person who has a medical or physical condition that requires special care, assistance with daily living, or is without transportation, can register with the Special Needs Assistance Program. The Marion County Emergency Management Office keeps a record of those individuals who would need assistance during an evacuation. This is a voluntary registry designed to provide evacuation assistance for individuals with no other alternative.



In order to register for the Special Needs Assistance Program, you must fill out a form and return it to our office. To obtain this form and/or more information, please contact:

Marion County Emergency Management
P.O. Box 1987
Ocala, FL 34478-1987
Phone: 352-369-8100
Fax: 352-369-8101

Prepared by
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