



Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First 72 On You – Family Preparedness

Week 2 of awareness campaign focuses on preparing families for disasters

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 10, 2018) – The Department for Public Health (DPH), within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), has launched ***First 72 On You*** information campaign during the month of September – National Preparedness Month (NPM), to increase emergency preparedness efforts for Kentuckians and their families. This week’s spotlight is on preparing families for disasters and emergencies.

“Some disasters come with warning and others with little or no warning,” said Dr. Jeffrey Howard, DPH commissioner. “In the aftermath, communities are left without safety, security, food and shelter. We are urging everyone to plan for being self sufficient for at least 72 hours because this is the timeframe after a disaster that is critical to surviving through a serious crisis. Families need to take action and prepare today – know your hazards, assemble supplies and practice what to do in case a disaster strikes.”

Preparing for emergencies and disasters can start with four important steps:

1. **Be ready with an emergency supply kit** – Build an emergency supply kit that contains essential items to keep you and your family self-reliant for at least 72 hours without utilities, electricity and water or without access to a supermarket or local services. The kit should contain essential items for families to include non-perishable food, water (one gallon per person per day), first aid kit, radio, flashlight, can opener, baby needs, cell phone charger and extra batteries, duct tape, matches, emergency contacts and important papers, personal hygiene

items, complete change of clothes, disposable plates, cups and utensils, medicine, extra cash, blankets and pet/service animal supplies. A detailed list of items to be included in the kit can be found at <https://www.ready.gov/kit>. Be sure to rotate supplies so they do not exceed their expiration dates.

2. **Develop a family emergency plan** - Families may not be together when an emergency happens so the plan will allow families to develop a meeting place, establish an out-of-town contact and gather essential information that would help them to stay connected in the event of an emergency. Practice your plan with regular drills and know your local evacuation routes. If a family member has a disability, contact your local fire department and/or police station now to inform them so that this information could be kept by these agencies in case of an emergency or disaster. For those that may be blind or visually impaired, predesignate someone to assist in case of emergency and have a plan in place if evacuation becomes necessary because public transportation may not be available during an emergency. For information on writing a plan visit <https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>.
3. **Be informed** - Learn about emergencies that could happen in your area and identify sources of information in your community that will be helpful before, during and after an emergency.
4. **Get involved** - Preparedness is a shared responsibility and it takes a whole community to prepare and respond to emergencies. Donate time to a local Medical Reserve Corps unit to contribute skills and expertise throughout the year as well as during times of community need.

Throughout NPM, DPH will spotlight preparedness measures for families, seniors and pets on a weekly basis. Additional information about the campaign will be posted on the CHFS Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/kychfs> where Kentuckians are encouraged to like and share posts among their networks of friends.

DPH will be spotlighting the remaining preparedness topics weekly during NPM to include:

Sept. 17-21 – Preparedness for older adults
Sept. 24-28 – Pet preparedness

The nationwide effort of NPM is organized each year by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to encourage citizens to prepare and plan for emergencies in their homes, business and schools. This yearly observance was founded after 9/11 to increase preparedness awareness in the U.S., a fitting time to join the effort to help communities prepare for emergencies, such as natural disasters and potential terrorist threats, and to encourage individuals to take action.

For more information about preparing for and responding to emergencies visit <http://ready.gov>.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.