



# SAFEGUARD CRITICAL DOCUMENTS AND VALUABLES



FEMA

When disaster strikes, your immediate concern will be your safety and the safety of those you care about. Once the immediate danger passes, however, having your financial and medical records and important contact information will be crucial to help you start the recovery process quickly. Taking time now to safeguard these critical documents will give you peace of mind, ensure you have access to essential medical and prescription information, and help you avoid additional stress during the difficult days following a disaster.

In addition, take the time now to think about the priceless personal items you would want to protect from damage or take with you if you had to suddenly evacuate your home.

The first step is to take an inventory of your household documents, contacts, and valuables. The checklist below will get you started. Then download the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) at [www.ready.gov/financialpreparedness](http://www.ready.gov/financialpreparedness) for more complete checklists and guidance on collecting and safeguarding this important information.

Put a checkmark next to any item that you may need to collect and safeguard. Be sure to include emergency contact phone numbers or other contact information with your documentation for questions that may arise following a disaster.

## HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFICATION

**Think about the documents you would need to identify yourself and your household members, including children and pets, your relationships, or status. These may include:**

- Vital records (birth, marriage, divorce certificate, adoption, child custody papers)
- Passport, driver's license, Social Security card, green card, military service identification, other
- Pet ownership papers, identification tags

## FINANCIAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENTATION

**If your home or income is impacted by a disaster, you will need documentation to request assistance from insurance providers and from government disaster assistance programs.**

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- Housing: lease or rental agreement, mortgage, home equity line of credit, deed
  - Vehicle: loan documents, VIN, registration, title
  - Other Financial Obligations: utility bills, credit cards, student loans, alimony, child support, elder care, automatic payments such as gym memberships
  - Financial Accounts: checking, savings, debit cards, retirement, investment
  - Insurance Policies: homeowners, renters, auto, life, flood, appraisals, photos, and lists of valuable items
  - Sources of Income: pay stubs, government benefits, alimony, child support
  - Tax Statements: Federal/state income tax returns, property tax, vehicle tax
  - Estate Planning: will, trust, power of attorney
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## MEDICAL INFORMATION

- Health/dental insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, VA health benefits
  - List of medications, immunizations, allergies, prescriptions, medical equipment and devices, pharmacy information
  - Living will, medical power of attorney
  - Caregiver agency contract or service agreement
  - Disabilities documentation
  - Contact information for doctors/specialists, dentists, pediatricians, veterinarians
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## EMERGENCY OR HOTLINE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR HOUSEHOLD

- Employers/supervisors
  - Schools
  - Houses of worship
  - Social service providers
  - Homeowners Associations
  - Home Repair Services: utilities, plumber, roofer, carpenter, electrician
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## VALUABLES AND PRICELESS PERSONAL ITEMS

- Priceless personal mementos, family photos, and keepsakes
- Possessions with monetary value, including jewelry, art, and collectibles

