

Prepare

- Make a list of the AT that is critical to support your physical well-being and ability to communicate during an emergency.
- Contact Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program, Tools for Life/Pass It On Center (both at 404-894-0541 or 800-497-8665) to learn about obtaining previously owned equipment for free or low cost.
- You may choose to store backup equipment at another location.
- Teach others in your support network how to use AT and have instructions for use readily available.
- Keep charged batteries and backup batteries for critical AT. You may want to keep an extra cord for charging AT devices.
- Develop plans for someone to notify you of an emergency situation.
- Have a corded landline telephone that is NOT dependent on electricity to work. In some emergency situations, cell towers are down or overloaded, and a phone attached directly to a landline can be used in the event of a power outage.
- Plan for the evacuation of AT, if possible.
- Remember to take chargers and other AT components with you.
- Remember the importance of homeowner's, renter's, and flood insurance before the need arises. Since homeowner's insurance does not cover damage caused by ground water, flood insurance may be needed to replace AT damaged in a disaster. When determining the replacement value of your home or vehicle, be sure to factor in the cost of home and vehicle modifications.
- Plan for the possible need to evacuate your home and do an assessment of the AT you use.

Plan

- Do you need AT to alert you to a disaster at work and to the need to evacuate your building?
- Know the evacuation procedures at your workplace. How will a disaster impact your ability to leave the building safely?
- Is there an evacuation plan for employees who cannot use the stairs?
- Is there a designated place to wait for help? How will first responders be notified where you will be waiting?
- Is there a working AT device or system available to assist you to evacuate (flashing lights, vibrators, etc.)? If so, be aware of where it is located and determine if it is easily accessible. If not, request that the needed AT be purchased.
- Be responsible for your own safety.
- Develop your own evacuation and support system.
- Do not depend on just one person to assist you. Create a support network to ensure your assistance will be available.

Consider AT devices that are:

- Electricity dependent
- Used for transportation



Stay Informed

- ▶ Learn about the types of hazards that may impact your community. Check with your local Emergency Management Office (www.gema.ga.gov).
- ▶ Find out what emergency plans are in place in your community, workplace, service agencies, etc. Determine whether those plans have considered your functional needs.
- ▶ Contact your local fire department and/or utility company to let them know about your specific assistive technology/access needs.
- ▶ If you use a power wheelchair or scooter, if possible, use a manual wheelchair as backup. If you use a custom wheelchair that provides medical support, have information available with the chair for the first responders.
- ▶ **Develop a needs list** of AT devices you use every day – at home and at work – to support your physical well being and ability to communicate. Be sure to include AT needs related to: Communications, Mobility, Personal care, Meal time and Transfers

Emergency Preparedness Planning Resources

Websites & Publications

- ▶ Ready Georgia
www.ready.ga.gov
Georgia Emergency Management Agency
www.gema.ga.gov
 - ▶ The Georgia Advocacy Office
www.thegao.org
 - ▶ ADA Coordinators Office
www.ada.ga.gov
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- ▶ “Preparing for Disaster for People with Disabilities and Other Special Needs”
www.fema.gov/pdf/library/pfd_all.pdf
 - ▶ “Functional Needs of People with Disabilities: A Guide for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders”
www.nod.org/research_publications/emergency_preparedness_materials
 - ▶ Georgia’s Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities & Older Adults
<https://ada.ga.gov/publications-videos>



Emergency Preparedness Planning for Individuals Who Use Assistive Technology (AT)



Georgia Emergency Preparedness Coalition
for Individuals with Disabilities & Older Adults

Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.