

Policy Title: Emergency Event Policy

Effective Date: November 20, 2024

Purpose: To establish clear procedures for caregivers to follow in the event of an emergency, including fire, natural disasters, or other unforeseen incidents, while ensuring the safety and well-being of the service recipient.

Policy:

Affordable Assists Private Care is committed to ensuring that caregivers respond effectively to, report, and review all emergencies to safeguard clients' health and safety. This policy aims to promote the continuity of services during emergencies and ensure that all emergencies are managed appropriately until they are resolved.

An "emergency" is defined as any event that disrupts the usual operation of services and threatens the immediate health or safety of clients. This includes, but is not limited to, events such as fires, severe weather, natural disasters, power failures, or any situation that requires calling 911, emergency evacuation, or moving to an emergency shelter for more than 24 hours.

Caregivers are expected to be familiar with the emergency preparedness plan, which is located within each client's care plan. The caregiver must remain calm during an emergency and ensure clear communication, keeping everyone informed as the situation evolves.

Procedure:

1. Initial Preparedness:

- Caregivers must familiarize themselves with the emergency plan for each client's home during the initial visit.
- Caregivers should identify emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and safe areas in case of natural disasters.

2. General Emergency Protocol:

- Follow this chain of command for reporting and guidance:
 - a. Administrator (Primary Contact)**
 - b. Supervisor (Secondary Contact)**
 - c. Family Emergency Contact (if required)**
- Notify the client's family or emergency contact immediately.
- Document the incident and submit a written report to the agency within 24 hours.

Fires

In the event of a fire emergency, caregivers should take the following actions:

- Suppress the fire using fire extinguishers, if it is safe to do so.
- Call 911, providing relevant information such as the location of the fire and the number of people involved.
- Evacuate all individuals in the immediate area to a safe location. Close doors to prevent smoke and heat from spreading. Test a closed door before opening by feeling near the top; if the door is hot, use an alternative exit.
- Stay low in smoke-filled rooms to breathe more easily.
- Keep everyone together and avoid reentering the building until emergency personnel confirm it is safe.
- Provide emergency first aid as needed until emergency responders arrive.
- For more information on fire safety, visit: [Ready.gov - Home Fires](https://www.ready.gov/home-fires)

Severe Weather and Natural Disasters

In the event of a severe weather or natural disaster emergency, caregivers should take the following actions:

- Stay informed about weather conditions by tuning into local TV, radio, or weather radio broadcasts for updates on warnings and watches.
- Ensure the client is aware of the situation and any potential risks.
- Follow the recommendations provided by emergency authorities and assist the client in preparing for inclement weather. This may include altering plans, staying indoors, or seeking shelter.
- For additional information on severe weather and natural disaster safety, visit: [Ready.gov - Severe Weather](https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather)

Power Failures

In the event of a power failure emergency, caregivers should take the following actions:

- Report the power failure to the client's utility company immediately.
- Use emergency supplies such as flashlights and a battery-operated radio to maintain safety and communication.
- Adapt plans and activities to ensure the client's safety during the outage, especially if the power failure impacts medical equipment or lighting.
- For more information on power failure safety, visit: [Ready.gov - Power Outages](https://www.ready.gov/power-outages)

Emergency Shelter and Evacuation Guidelines

Emergency shelters may be required in situations such as severe weather, natural disasters, power outages, or other events that pose an immediate risk to the health and safety of clients.

Steps to take:

1. Follow Local Emergency Directions:

- Listen to local emergency personnel for instructions on the nearest available emergency shelter.
- 2. Prepare Before Moving to a Shelter:
 - If time permits, bring essential items such as:
 - A 24-hour supply of medications and medical supplies.
 - Medical records or information.
 - Emergency contact details.
- 3. Communicate Special Needs:
 - Upon arrival, inform shelter personnel of any special needs or accommodation required for the client.

Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of caregivers to respond promptly and appropriately to emergencies, ensuring that client safety and service continuity are maintained. This policy outlines key actions caregivers must take during common emergencies, including fires, severe weather, natural disasters, and power failures. Regular training and adherence to these protocols are essential in ensuring the safety and well-being of all clients.

Review and Updates:

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in regulations. Updates will be communicated to all team members, and new hires will be trained on the revised policy.