

# Important Documents You Will Need

Use this checklist to create an Important Documents folder or 3-ring-binder with the information you will need to recover from a worst-case scenario. Keep the folder/binder in your Go Bag.

## Emergency Contacts/Numbers

- Family & Friends addresses and phone numbers (in your smartphone?)
- Phone contact trees printout – if you have a contact tree for schools, church, friends, and family, etc.
- Doctors, Dentists, and local hospitals/clinics
- Utilities – even if you have left home, you need a list of utilities in case you need to contact them for safe return dates, to report a problem or to inquire about your particular location during an emergency. This would include whoever runs your water, electricity, gas, and propane.
- Local non-emergency numbers for police, fire, ambulance, and city.

## Financial Information

- Credit card numbers and phone numbers (plus websites and passwords)
- Bank Cards, accounts and phone numbers (plus websites and passwords)
- Insurance card numbers and phone numbers
- Last two statements from all of your financial accounts – checking, savings, 401K, investments.
- Safety deposit box keys

## Copies of Vital Documents

- Driver's licenses or State-issued ID Cards
- Birth Certificates
- Social security cards
- Credit cards (front and back)
- Military Records
- Naturalization/Immigration documents

## Medical Information

- Advanced Care Directives
- Medical Power of Attorney
- Immunization Records
- Medical history if you have serious illnesses/diseases
- Current Prescription lists
- Medical Insurance information – copies of your cards (front and back)

## Legal Documents

- Passports
- Power of Attorney for you
- Power of Attorney for others – if you are the POA for someone else, it is vital to have it with you. While in most cases a copy isn't a legally binding document, you

may get some leeway in an emergency. Consider keeping the original in a safe deposit box.

- ❑ Deed and titles to your home and cars; lease or rental agreements
- ❑ Birth certificates – you can order duplicates from state agencies
- ❑ Marriages licenses
- ❑ Wills – again, original documents are the only ones that are legally binding. Have a copy and consider keeping the original with your attorney or in a safe deposit box.
- ❑ Death Certificates – it may be important to keep a death certificate from a recently deceased family member – this is a judgment call for you.

## Insurance

- ❑ Insurance Policy with local agent information; Insurance wallet cards.
- ❑ Home inventory – Keep copies of your home inventory in case you lose your home and need to go to your insurance company's field office. While you should always have a copy of your inventory (including video/photos) that stays with your local insurance agent, keeping your own copy to provide during an emergency might get you on your way to recovery money faster.

## Other

- ❑ List of vital websites and passwords – This can be kept on an encrypted/protected Excel spreadsheet and stored on a thumb/flash drive.
- ❑ Your Emergency Plan – once you have defined your emergency plan, share it with your trusted allies. The plan should include who to call, options of where to meet, etc. Remember, when you are in a crisis, it's hard to keep everything straight.
- ❑ Keys to your vehicles, house and storage spaces, plus keys to locations you go to in an evacuation (such as a friend's or parent's house to ride out the storm.)
- ❑ Evacuation Checklist – your plan for sudden evacuations. Don't leave trying to remember what to take. In moments of panic, we tend to lose our focus. Having a checklist will allow you to work with purpose and expediency.
- ❑ Photos – the ideal way to save your digital photos is to put them on a thumb drive or two to keep in your Go Bag, and/or upload them to Dropbox or other cloud service. If you don't have a scanner to digitize the photos stored in shoe boxes or family albums, there are photo services (such as Costco Photo online) you can ship your pictures to and they will scan them for you.
- ❑ Cash – Each family member's Go Bag should have their personal items and some cash. Because lives are uprooted during localized emergencies, have a pencil case or zip lock bag full of some coins (for laundromats, vending machines, etc.) and small bills (for purchasing food and gas on the go). If you don't keep a credit or debit card in your wallet, you should keep one in your Go bag (or a supply of large bills) in case you need to pay for emergency lodging.