



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Social Services

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

MICHAEL A BECKETTS • Sr. Director for Policy and Planning

May 15, 2019

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**SUBJECT: Disaster Preparedness**

In the past three years, North Carolina has seen two major storms that have devastated our coastal areas and some inland counties. These storms have been stronger, longer lasting, and more damaging than most in the past. Forecasters are currently predicting a slightly less active storm season with a prediction of 14 named storms, of which 7 are forecast to become hurricanes. While we are not sure what the impact will be to our state and communities, being prepared is the best practice. The purpose of this letter is to remind agencies that hurricane season is approaching and that mitigating risks through proactive planning and preparation will ease the impact of responding to a disaster

First and foremost, please encourage your staff to be mindful of their own safety and prepare potential disasters. The North Carolina Department of Public Safety encourages us to prepare our families and homes for potential disasters and offers web-based tools to support disaster preparedness. The Ready NC website and instructions on how to access the mobile application can be reached by going to [www.ReadyNC.gov](http://www.ReadyNC.gov). As social services leaders, in addition to our personal readiness, we have additional duties to ensure preparedness for our agencies and to support the communities we serve through a disaster period.

As hurricane season approaches, please use this 'blue sky' time to review and refine your emergency preparedness plans including plans for operating shelters. If tropical storms or hurricanes threaten North Carolina, county social services departments, will work with the county emergency management leadership and the county manager's office to stage and support local shelter operations managed by either the American Red Cross or the county.

As you are also aware, there are disaster-related duties that extend beyond shelters in the areas of for child and adult protection and disaster food and nutrition services. Please take the time now to ensure your county is prepared for when the next emergency/disaster threatens. Attached to this letter is a list of items to rouse your thinking and planning about the continuity of DSS operations and how the county DSS will support your community while recovering from a disaster.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • BUSINESS OPERATIONS

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603

MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

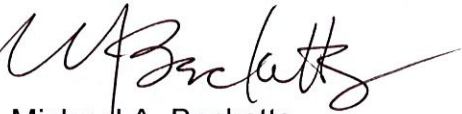
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov) • TEL: 919-527-6335 • FAX: 919-334-1018

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Shelter management and staffing is a local operation and to support the proper administration of shelter services, it is essential that your team members assigned to work in shelters are trained in shelter operations and management. Attached to this document is information provided by the American Red Cross that explains how to access web-based and instructor-led training. The Division of Social Services, along with North Carolina Emergency Management will keep you updated on relevant information related to disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

If you have additional questions, please contact Paris Penny by calling 919-527-7257 or by email at [Paris.Penny@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Paris.Penny@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Michael A. Becketts,  
Sr. Director for Policy and Planning

Attachments:            Disaster Preparedness Areas for Consideration  
                                 American Red Cross Shelter Training Information  
                                 American Red Cross Contact List

## *Disaster Preparedness Areas for Consideration*

### **A. General Preparedness:**

- Printed staff contact information
- Call tree structure and directions on how to use
- Alternate location(s) in the event current office is not accessible or remote work plans as appropriate
- Continuity of Operations Plan for all services and business operations

### **B. Aging and Adult Services**

- Plan to continue Adult Protective Services in the event that current building is not open for use
- Printed contact information for each adult with an open APS evaluation
- Printed information about each adult for whom guardianship is under the county DSS, (address, medical needs, medications, etc.)
- For each adult under the guardianship of DSS identify:
  - Safety Plan for the placement facility including evacuation plans
  - Information for placements on how to reach agency staff in the event of an emergency
- Plan to coordinate with the clerk of court on how to manage calendar during disaster and recovery period

### **C. Child Welfare**

- Plan to continue Child Protective Services in the event that current building is not open for use
- Printed contact information for each family with an open CPS case
- Printed contact information for each family with an open In-Home Services case
- Printed information about each child in foster care (foster home, treatment needs, medications, etc.)
- For each foster home with a child in placement:
  - The safety plan for the family including evacuation plans
  - Printed contact information for each foster family and other placement resources

- Information for foster parents with placements on how to reach agency staff in the event of an emergency

- Plan to coordinate court on how to manage calendar during disaster and recovery period

### **D. Food and Nutrition Services:**

- Location(s) for DSNAP
- Staffing Plan
- Line Control Tools and Line Management Plan
- Protection from rain and sun
- Comfort Items (water, snacks)
- Media and Social Media Plan
- Security plan

### **E. Shelters (In collaboration w/ county emergency management & county manager's office)**

- Accessible shelter locations
- Plan for feeding for at least the first 96 hours after shelter opening
- Shelter security plan
- Plan for shelter staffing with:
  - DSS Staff?
  - Other county departments?
  - American Red Cross?
- Plan for the medical and mental health needs for shelter operations?
  - Collaborate with mental health/LME-MCO?
  - Collaborate with public health?

### **F. Recovery Planning**

- Plan to support for shelter occupants to exit shelter after the disaster and to be a part of the Multi Agency Shelter Transition teams and community recovery efforts, including case management staff support from:
  - DSS Staff?
  - Other county departments?
  - Other organizations that provide case management services in the community?

## How to Access American Red Cross Training

The American Red Cross (ARC) provides web-based and instructor led shelter training. First time users will need to register using the following link: [http://bit.ly/ext\\_register](http://bit.ly/ext_register). Per the American Red Cross there are two courses that staff that support shelter operations must take. **To schedule instructor led courses, please use the attached County ARC Contact Directory.**

1. Shelter Fundamentals is a basic level course that introduces the guidelines and procedures for setting up, running and closing a shelter during a disaster. The web-based course takes about 2 hours and 20 minutes to complete.
2. Shelter Management is a basic level course that introduces the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of the shelter manager. The course content is based on the American Red Cross sheltering guidance, which is documented primarily in the Sheltering Standards and Procedures, Operating a Shelter Job Tool, Shelter Staffing Job Tool, and Shelter Supply Template Job Tool. The web-based course takes 2 hours and 30 minutes to complete.

Realize Your Potential: E x

https://arc.csod.com/selfreg/register.aspx?c=edge%326e4

**American Red Cross** | EDGE

PLEASE READ: Only use this registration page if you do not have other means of access to the EDGE Learning Management System. If you are an employee or volunteer DO NOT register using this page. Extended Enterprise users (e.g.: Red Cross community partners, military spouses, contractors) should register here.

\* Required Field

\* First Name:

\* Last Name:

\* Email Address:

\* Username:

\* Phone:

\* Address Line 1:

Address Line 2:

\* City:

State:

\* Zip:

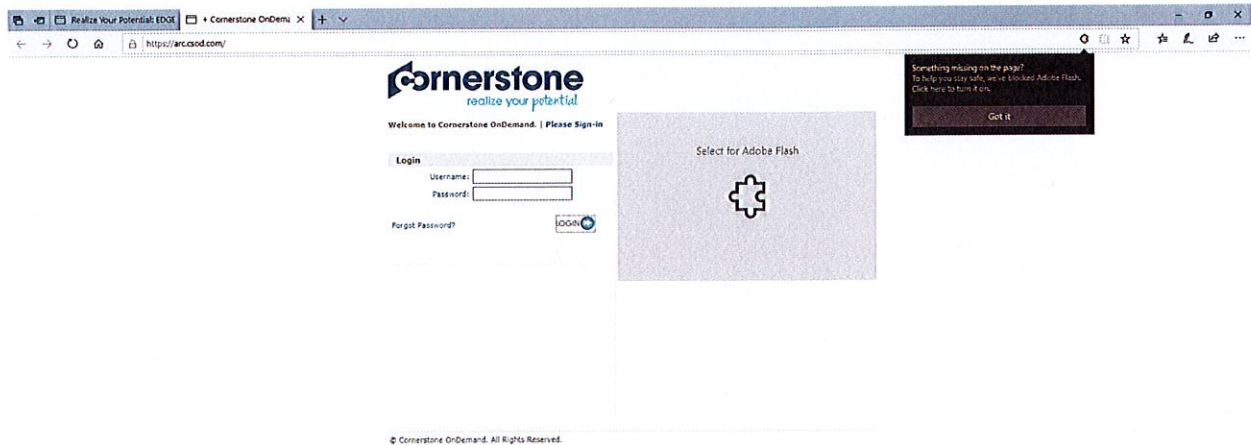
\* County/Parish (if you do not reside in a US state, please enter N/A):

Country:

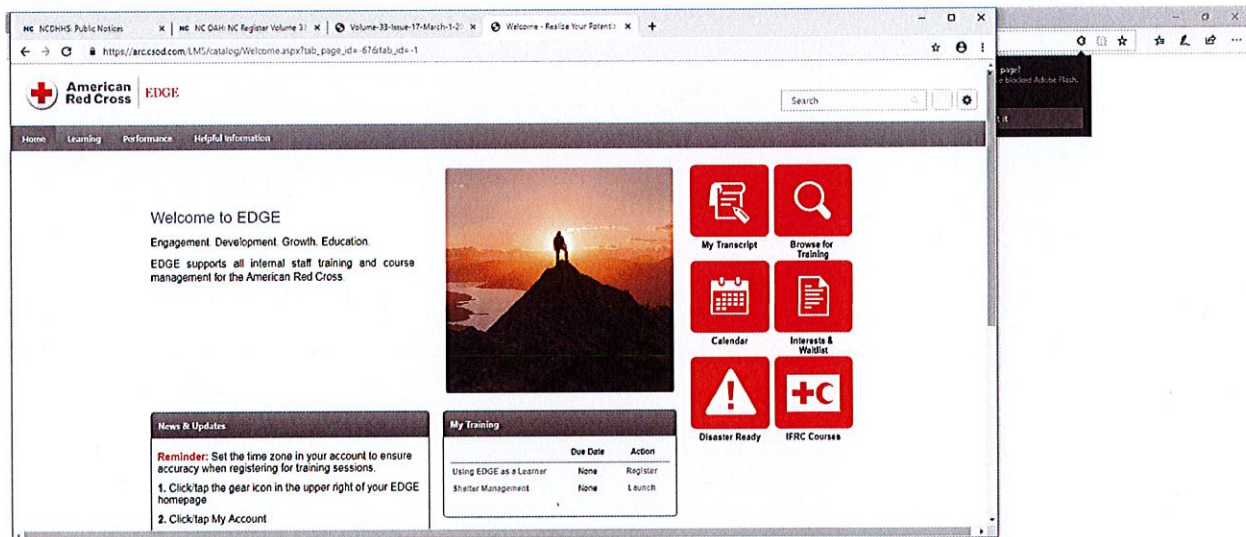
\* Division:

\* Organization Type:

Once registered, use Chrome search engine to access the training site, using the following link: <https://arc.csod.com>.



Once signed in, click on the red box with magnifying glass (browse for training) to search for the web-based courses.



ARC recommends employees assigned to support shelter operations take **Shelter Fundamentals** and **Shelter Management**. Both courses are offered web-based and instructor led.

