

# Guidance – Pre-Planning Efforts Surrounding Nursing Home Residents and Flood Activities

Many nursing facilities are currently working to prepare and plan for potential floods this spring. The Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH) and Human Services (DHS) want to provide you some guidance in working with other facilities both within Minnesota as well as facilities across the borders (North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin).

First and foremost the health, safety and welfare of residents should always be a priority, especially during emergencies.

A facility operating in Minnesota may:

- receive requests for information regarding the availability of beds within their facility, and
- receive advance notice of the potential need (“pre-planning”) for sheltering of residents from other facilities (including out-of-state facilities) in their facility.

As you receive or make such requests, please keep in mind the following:

- facilities should be discussing in advance what options for relocating residents may be available including space and staffing, in an actual emergency, evacuations from other states should be managed through the appropriate State Incident Command Structure for that state,
- facilities may be asked to temporarily shelter residents by providing short-term beds beyond their normal licensed bed capacity. In a rapidly moving event, such as a flood, ensuring that residents get to a facility that can provide adequate shelter and appropriate care for the short-term, is critical; and
- in emergency situations, short-term relocation of residents to another facility is not considered a “new admissions.” If your facility provides shelter to residents beyond your licensed bed capacity, contact the MDH Health Regulation Division at (651) 201-3567 or (651) 201-4101 and we will work with you on any state or federal compliance issues.

In addition, please note that emergency “pre-planning” does **not** obligate a facility to hold a bed in order to provide temporary shelter to any resident.

Facilities should not “hold” beds open and as a result, deny temporary shelter or formal admission to other individuals who have an immediate need for temporary shelter or admission. Denying admission to an individual based on a “bed hold” for another individual that has not been formally admitted to the facility, may violate Medicaid and/or Medicare regulations and the rights of the individual seeking formal admission to the facility.

Providing temporary shelter, as well as the formal admission of residents, should be made on a first-come, first-served basis and with consideration for the ability of the facility to provide an appropriate bed and care for that individual.

For questions regarding payment of costs related to emergency sheltering, please contact the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Long-Term Care Policy Center at (651) 431-2282.

For questions related to federal and state licensing requirements, please contact the Minnesota Department of Health at (651) 201-4101.



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