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# **Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging Disaster Emergency Response Plan**

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## **2022**

**Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging  
Disaster/Emergency/Pandemic Influenza Response Plan**

## **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this plan is to describe the actions to Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging (Blue Rivers AAA) and its agents will take in the event of an emergency or disaster that occurs at or otherwise threatens the lives and safety of senior citizens within the eight county service area.

When a disaster occurs, local government must take immediate and effective actions to alleviate suffering and protect life and property. It is the responsibility of local government to develop capabilities that will provide for emergency operations during disasters. Local government is responsible for the development of an organization with a well-trained emergency staff and for providing relief and recovery assistance to the limits of their capability. (Nebraska State Emergency Operations Plan, 2014)

Blue Rivers AAA is an agency formed by officials of Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee, and Otoe Counties and the City of Falls City under the Interlocal Cooperation Act for the State of Nebraska. Blue Rivers AAA as designated by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for the administration of the area program plan in this planning and service area (PSA).

Therefore, it is the responsibility of Blue Rivers AAA to respond to designated or declared disasters. Blue Rivers AAA will cooperate with local emergency management officials to assure that persons age 60 and older receive the assistance they need. Furthermore, Blue Rivers will provide assistance as requested.

Disasters. Each Area Agency on Aging shall have on file a current plan for services to the elderly during disasters, including, but not limited to, tornado (high winds), chemical, nuclear, flood and blizzards. The plan will show the coordination with Civil Defense and Red Cross and its pyramid alert system, including notification of the Department's disaster coordinator. NAC 15 001.07J

### **Before a disaster occurs, Blue Rivers AAA will train by:**

1. Work with staff and providers to prepare for and reduce the severity of a disaster or emergency by doing the following:
2. Develop and maintain working relationships with area partners that could assist in the event of a disaster affecting regional kitchen(s);
3. Provide senior centers/meal sites/agency offices with first aid training, review and practice of local emergency drills and practices;
4. Provide for continuance of "business as usual" through protection of vital information and daily electronic data back-up, including client info and all agency fiscal data.
5. Develop and distribute a "chain of command" during an emergency:  
Executive Director will be primary communication contact for agency staff and local emergency personnel; in the event the ED is unable to provide that primary contact, the Fiscal Officer and the Home & Community Options Manager will collaborate to provide that contact.
6. Review and refine the disaster plan annually and after each emergency event as needed.
7. Reach out to local vendors, hospitals, schools to maintain an available supply chain

8. Provide staff with laptops, and remote access to desktops at Home Office to preserve the continuity of work.

## II. Preparation

Blue Rivers will encourage clients and participants of agency programs to be proactive and gather needed supplies in advance of emergency situations.

<b>*Sample Recommended Emergency Supplies Checklist Procurement Date (or replacement date)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Battery Powered Radio and Spare Batteries</li> <li>B. Flashlight and Spare Batteries</li> <li>C. Blankets</li> <li>D. Water</li> <li>E. High Energy Snack Foods and Shelf-stable Meals</li> <li>F. Adjustable Wrench for Turning off Gas or Water</li> <li>G. First Aid Kit</li> <li>H. List of Medications and other Medical supplies needed</li> </ul>

Executive Director and agency managers will be prepared to assist with the assessment of the scope of the disaster’s impact on people age 60 and older to include:

- An overview of the impact the disaster has had on Blue Rivers AAA, its service providers, service recipients, and if possible, other older individuals in the disaster area (e.g., are the individuals or facilities operational and or damaged, discontinued, closed, etc.)?
- An estimate of the amount of assistance that will be necessary to maintain older disaster victims over both the short and long term.
- Status of the programs (Are they operational, or have they been damaged, discontinued, closed, etc.)?
- Service gaps or critical issues that need to be addressed in order for service providers to resume operations. \*
- Impact on service recipients and number impacted (if known or best estimate).
- Disaster statistics, if available (number of injuries, deaths, number of shelters in operation, number of sites closed, etc.).
- Equipment or supply needs. \*
- Provide press releases as necessary with disaster relief information, contacts etc.
- Availability of Wi-Fi at all Agency facilities for staff to access.
- Proactive to contact family of clients that cannot be contacted.

**A. Blue Rivers AAA will make available to local responders information about**

1. Older adults and response to disasters
2. Possible services offered by Blue Rivers AAA when there is a disaster;
  - i. Outreach to home bound to insure their safety and determine their needs.
  - ii. Follow-up with persons to insure that questions have been answered and assistance provided.
  - iii. Names and contact information for persons receiving home delivered meals and/or congregate meals
3. Resources that could be offered in a disaster/emergency such as senior center building for daytime shelter or food preparation and Public Transportation Vehicles. Communicate disaster information to the State Unit on Aging and include submission of requests to provide disaster funding.
4. Ensure that contracts with senior centers include the requirement that they must have a disaster plan.

**B. Steps of the disaster plan**

1. Provide information and assistance to program participants and their caregivers to assist them in preparing for disasters.
2. Upon proper notification that a natural or man-made disaster has occurred in our service area, Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging will implement the following:
  - i. Blue Rivers AAA Executive Director or designated agency staff will make contact with emergency management officials (Appendix A) to determine the extent of damage that may have occurred that affects older adults and explore the possibility of entering the damaged area. If entry is not advised, then phone contact may be utilized to contact clients/participants.
  - ii. Complete the disaster preliminary review (Appendix B) to provide information needed to provide assistance and to make a first response report of a disaster situation.
  - iii. Contact local officials (emergency management, Red Cross, police, and sheriff) to determine if Blue Rivers AAA can be of assistance (re: transportation, use of senior centers, etc.). Advise them of Blue Rivers AAA capabilities and is prepared to cooperate and compliment rather than duplicate their efforts.
  - iv. Maintain inventories of available resources and contractual service providers.

- v. Provide available resources, with Governing Board approval, such as transportation, shelter facilities, cots and blankets, field kitchens, food service personnel, and emergency food supplies, expendable cleaning and personal hygiene supplies. When local plans provide for household animals shelters; cages, food, water, exercise areas, handlers if available, and security may also be provided.
- vi. Establish communications with appropriate personnel.
- vii. Keep a record of additional services provided and expenses incurred that are directly related to the disaster incident. Save copies of all receipts and track all disaster-related expenditures, including staff time beyond normal working hours. To recover disaster related expenses, documentation is critical. Reimbursement depends on complete, detailed, and accurate records, from the first hour forward.
- viii. Document the type and amount of services provided, such as the number of senior contacts, and any authorized contracted services. For documentation purposes, save copies of intake forms.

**C. Governing Board Approval**

- 1. Upon request from emergency management officials, the Executive Director will contact the Executive Committee of the Governing Board to request authority to release the resources necessary to assist emergency management with older adults in the disaster area. Authority will later follow in writing stating that the Executive Committee granted permission to the Executive Director to release resources.

**III. When Disaster Strikes**

When a disaster event occurs, remain calm. Do not call 911 for information. During a major event the 911 system may be overloaded with callers requesting information. Leave the 911 system open for callers with emergency assistance needs.

<b>Hazard Analysis</b>
1. Tornado
2. Hail
3. High Wind
4. Winter storm
5. High heat
6. Flooding
7. Fire
8. Nuclear power plant
9. Earthquake

## A. Responses

Depending on the type of disaster, staff will implement interventions and strategies to best meet the needs of the client/participant. Examples are as follows.

1. Heat Wave
  - i. Encourage persons to stay indoors and stay hydrated.
  - ii. Communicate guidelines: lightweight clothing, a/c, fans, and proper hydration.
  - iii. Monitor “at risk” clients/participants.
2. Snow Emergency
  - ii. Contact all staff through system.
  - ii. Keep fire exits and front entrance, emergency areas as free of snow as possible.
  - iii. Caution clients/participants about dangers of walking outdoors.
  - iv. Discourage unnecessary outdoor trips.
  - v. Inventory oxygen and prescriptions.
3. Bomb Threat
  - i. Call police, provide details: time of call, gender of speaker, approximate age, and accent.
  - ii. Recall language of threat as accurately and specifically as possible and relate to police.
  - iii. Initiate immediate search.
  - iv. Unknown packages, parcels etc. to be isolated for police. Do not touch!
  - v. Isolate any suspected bomb site areas.
  - vi. Staff to assist authorities with evacuation if requested to do so.
  - vii. Evacuate building under police/fire department orders and instructions.
  - viii. Provide staff traffic control at all exits and entrances.
4. When the disaster/emergency requires a response from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Blue Rivers AAA will coordinate and provide requested information.

5. The local chapter of the American Red Cross and local city/county/regional emergency response coordinators establish shelters and assistance centers where mobile elderly and disabled persons come to seek temporary shelter and assistance. Aging and disability service providers offer case management to help meet needs beyond emergency sheltering.
6. If there is an announcement of an active chemical incident, Blue Rivers staff will then contact the clients in the affected area. They will also contact local Emergency Management Services and the local Public Health Agency to inform them if any of the clients that are in immediate need of assistance and to offer transit services. The staff will also contact administrative staff to keep them informed and to receive further instructions.

## **B. Post Disaster Recovery**

Additional services may be necessary to help older disaster victims until they have recovered or no longer need assistance.

1. Blue Rivers AAA will
  - i. Identify services that are needed.
  - ii. Submit requests for funds from local and state resources.
  - iii. Assist older victims as resources allow.
  - iv. Advocate for disaster service continuity.
2. In some cases, Blue Rivers AAA may need to expand existing contracts to meet disaster needs (e.g. nutrition, transportation, case management, etc.). If Blue Rivers AAA does not have adequate resources to meet additional needs, it will communicate with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to determine if funds are available before committing resources.

## **C. Post Disaster Evaluation**

Blue Rivers AAA will carefully review and evaluate the response to a disaster event and adjust the Agency Disaster Plan to implement lessons learned. This evaluation will improve preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in future disaster situations and help reduce agency risk.

## **D. Disaster Grants**

The Administration on Community Living has in the past utilized a pool of discretionary grant funds to allocate resources for disaster assistance to States and Area Agencies on Aging. Funding is available for disasters upon request by the AAA and State Units on Aging Office from the Regional Office. These funds do not require local or state match, and a verbal commitment can be obtained in an emergency situation.

### **1. General Rule**

Expenditures are allowable for the following:

- i. Programs and services above normal, where the increase is directly related to the disaster. Ex. Overtime pay, special equipment, travel expense.
- ii. For special services directly related to disaster response.

### **2. Fiscal Procedures**

- i. The funds utilized must be billed and budgeted separately at the Area Agency level. Blue Rivers AAA would prefer that local contractors do the same.
- ii. Documentation of expenditures will be evidence of disaster need as above and beyond normal operations. A separate file on expenditures will be maintained.

### **3. Disaster Management Development Procedures**

- i. Alphabetize individual interview forms.
- ii. Record individual interview information on daily priority disaster assistance form.
- iii. Check client lists against the FEMA list of people age 60 and older signed up for assistance.
- iv. Record telephone assistance requests using individual interview forms.
- v. List daily assistance and update requests for assistance (completed, date, arranged for, ongoing, comments, etc.).
- vi. Prioritize needs and requests for assistance.

### **4. Classify and file individual interview forms into the two following categories; General (assistance not needed or request for assistance met) or Permanent (ongoing assistance needed, request for assistance not met to date). Requirements After Project Completion**

Disaster assistance funding may be available for up to one year. Even in a major disaster, it is unlikely that the need would continue for more than six months. AOA requires a six month and year end report. (Note: Fiscal year for disasters is based on date of grant.)



This report will be prepared by the parties involved in the Disaster response, including Blue Rivers AAA Executive Director, staff, and local program and project managers. The following is a report outline:

- i. Narrative: The who, what, and when – includes data on who was affected, how many elders were affected, total scope of disaster, and what kind of damage was incurred. The narrative should generally cover the response by the AAA and local agencies describing actions taken and an evaluation of the experience.
- ii. Service Response: A semi-detailed description and what services were used or developed for disaster response. Detail on each service and statistics on service should include service units, clients, gender, age, income, etc. This is standard information that should be available.
- iii. Budget Narrative: At the development of the project budget, exacting detail is not available. It is important to detail expenditures at the close out of the project. The Budget narrative will be written to outline the budget by categories, with details for each line item under each category. This process will show why each cost item was necessary.
  - a. Since this report is at close out, the procedure will be to also define the variance from the approved budget that is actual expenditures – vs- budget, during writing of the budget narrative.
- iv. Revenues: There may be donations by the general public or victims after assistance. Do not budget unless these donations are positively committed in advance, do report income as in any Blue Rivers AAA budget.

# Pandemic Influenza Plan

## I. PURPOSE:

Planning, prevention, communications, and coordinated partnerships will be important to ensure safety and ongoing care/services to older adults. The purpose of this plan is to maximize the safety and well-being of our frail adult population, family caregivers, and service providers before, during, and after a pandemic and to continue to provide Older Americans Act programs and services of the Blue Rivers AAA.

## II. ABOUT PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

Influenza is a respiratory virus that causes fever, cough, headache, runny nose, muscle aches, sore throat, and extreme fatigue. It is transmitted person-to-person, and can occur seasonally. When strains of an Influenza virus emerge which are able to infect people easily and spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way, nation-wide or world-wide, it is labeled a Pandemic by a governing authority. This means that the particular strain of virus is new or mutated enough that normal immunity has not been established, nor is there a vaccine developed to increase immunity. It has the potential to be deadly when frail individuals, many who have underlying conditions that put them more at risk, are exposed.

### A. Prevention / Safety:

Blue Rivers AAA staff must practice prevention. The following is a list that can assist with safety:

- Proper hand washing technique
- Using masks, hand sanitizers, and disinfectant wipes
- Cough etiquette
- Staying in your own work area
- Get an annual flu vaccine
- Avoid others if you are ill
- Work from home

### B. Communications:

Blue Rivers AAA will coordinate with Local Health Departments, District Health Departments, Emergency Management Officials, Red Cross, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska National Guard and other organizations to disseminate timely and accurate information before, during, and after a pandemic influenza emergency to staff, clients, and service providers.

Blue Rivers AAA Executive Director or designee will be the key communications contact. Agency Managers will also assist with the dissemination of this information.

Communications will be provided through telephone, fax, and e-mail. If staff are working at alternate locations, such as their homes, or another Agency facility, they will maintain contact with their supervisor. Press releases will be utilized via media.

Senior Center Participant contact lists are maintained by the Site Managers. If client cannot be contacted by telephone, a personal visit, if feasible, may be required from Blue Rivers AAA staff or Emergency Management staff or volunteers.

### **C. Community Services:**

Blue Rivers AAA will provide for the continuum of community-based services as feasible. If alternative directions are provided by Emergency Management, Red Cross, Local / District Health Departments, or the Nebraska Health and Human Services, Blue Rivers AAA will make every effort to comply with their requests.

Blue Rivers AAA's first priority is our current clients.

Our goal would be to provide for the delivery of priority services to the frail, older adult population. The following would be examples of these services:

- Home Delivered Meals
- Medicaid Waiver Clients Care Plan of Services
- Care Management Clients Care Plan of Services
- Essential Transportation and Essential In-Home Services

### **D. Blue Rivers AAA Community Resources:**

Blue Rivers AAA will work to provide the following:

1. Information and Education:
  - Distribution of fact sheets, general safety information, supply lists, emergency contact information.
2. Senior Centers:
  - Provide information to clients.
  - Provide home delivered meals to current eligible clients and provide daily check of status (as feasible).
  - May be able to continue to serve congregate meals to current eligible clients (unless location is closed to prevent the spread of infection). Congregate clients will have the opportunity to receive home delivered meals or take n go meals.
  - Maintain calling list of clients so telephone calls can be made to check on their status.
  - May be able to assist in the recruitment of volunteers that may be needed to deliver essential supplies to homebound clients (food, medicine, etc.).

3. Transportation:
  - If transit vehicles are allowed to operate, may be able to provide essential trips to medical facilities or resource centers (dialysis, cancer therapy, etc.).
  - Provide pickup and delivery of essentials (i.e. groceries, medications, etc. as feasible).
  - Provide transportation for emergency personnel and volunteers (as feasible).
4. Training for Staff and Preparation:
  - All Staff will receive a copy of the Pandemic Influenza Plan. Training will be conducted to inform Agency Staff about the Blue Rivers AAA Pandemic Influenza plan. Exercises will be conducted to demonstrate and improve the planning tool. Changes to the plan will be made accordingly, per directives of state officials and health department officials.

#### **E. Personnel Issues:**

1. Employee Sick Leave: All employees will follow policies on sick leave as outlined in the Blue Rivers AAA personnel policy or as directed by Executive Director. If the Federal Government has outlined procedures/policies to deal with Pandemic illness/exposure of staff, such as EPSLA during the 2020 Pandemic, the Agency will follow these guidelines. Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging has adopted a Self-Assessment Questionnaire and a COVID-19 Return to Work policy, that all staff are to utilize.
2. Cross Training: Provide the opportunity for staff to cross train on job duties of essential positions.
3. Absenteeism: Plan for staff absenteeism and establish methods to address this issue. Explore the feasibility of staff working from their home.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Blue Rivers AAA has the ability to respond to disasters based upon the very fact that it is structured to provide services necessary to support persons in a disaster (i.e. meals, transportation, in-home services, outreach).

Through coordination with agencies such as FEMA, Emergency Management, Red Cross, Salvation Army, and other local disaster coordinating agencies, Blue Rivers AAA should be prepared to provide assistance, principally to the elderly but to other disaster victims as well. One important fact to remember is that AAA programs should be designed to complement, not duplicate efforts of other disaster relief agencies.

## **Public Information Resources**

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.com](http://www.cdc.com)

### **Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth>

## **Public Health Departments**

### **Public Health Solutions District Health Department**

Kim Showalter, Health Director

995 East Highway 33

Suite 1

Crete, NE 68333

Phone: (402) 826-3880; Toll Free: (844) 830-0813; Cell: (402) 730-4829

Fax: (402) 826-4101

Email: [kshowalter@phsneb.org](mailto:kshowalter@phsneb.org)

Web site: [www.phsneb.org](http://www.phsneb.org)

(Fillmore County/ Geneva, Gage County/ Beatrice, Jefferson County/ Fairbury, Saline County/ Wilber, Thayer County, Hebron)

### **Southeast District Health Department**

Grant Brueggemann,

Director 2511

Schneider Avenue

Auburn, NE 68305

Phone: (402) 274-3993; Toll Free: (877) 777-0424; Cell: (402) 274-8158

Fax: (402) 274-3967

Email: [grant@sedhd.org](mailto:grant@sedhd.org)

Web site: [www.sedhd.org](http://www.sedhd.org)

(Johnson County/ Tecumseh, Nemaha County/ Auburn, Otoe County/ Nebraska City, Pawnee County/ Pawnee City, Richardson County/ Falls City)

Appendix B

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging  
Disaster Preliminary Review

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Disaster \_\_\_\_\_

Describe Area Affected

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of Town/County?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the estimated number of older adults directly affected? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the number evacuated or homeless?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact information of Agency/Organization involved in finding temporary housing

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe situation

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

How many Senior Centers/Offices/Vehicles have been damaged or destroyed? List and describe.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the status of services to homebound clients?

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Home Delivered Meals

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In-Home Services

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Medicaid Waiver Clients

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Transportation

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If services are disrupted, when will services be restored?

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Are requests for disaster declaration likely to be submitted by local officials?

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Describe any special circumstances that should be noted and monitored.

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Other Comments:

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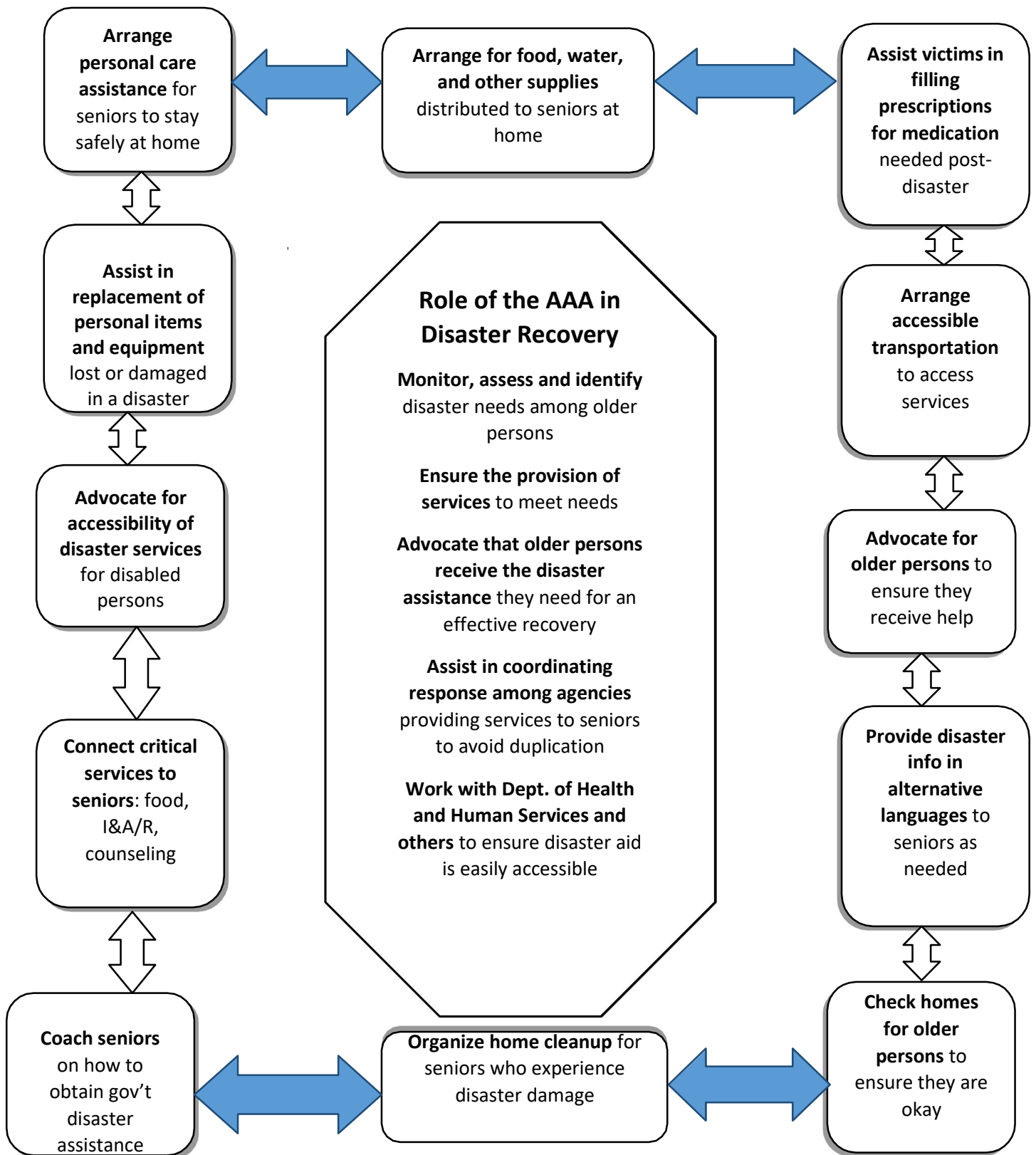
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County	Name	Phone	Location
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	Sheriff Millard 'Gus' Gustafson	(402) 223-1382 Fax: (402) 223-5223 <a href="mailto:mwg903@gcsone.us">mwg903@gcsone.us</a>	612 Lincoln St - County Jail Beatrice, NE 68310
	Red Cross	402-223-4211	City Auditorium 205 N 4th Street Beatrice, NE 68310
	Salvation Army	402-223-3341	624 Market Street Beatrice, NE 68310
Jefferson	John McKee	(402) 729-3602 If no answer call 402-729-3355 <a href="mailto:em@jeffcnebraska.us">em@jeffcnebraska.us</a>	313 South K Street Fairbury, NE 68352
	Interim Sheriff Nicolas Georgi	(402)729-2284 FAX: (402)729-2904 <a href="mailto:jcso@diodecom.net">jcso@diodecom.net</a>	606 3rd Street Fairbury, NE 68352
	Red Cross	402-729-2323	411 4th Street Fairbury, NE 68352
Johnson	Amanda Burki	402-921-0013 office phone 402-335-3411 <a href="mailto:johnsonpawneecountyema@gmail.com">johnsonpawneecountyema@gmail.com</a>	PO Box 687 110 Buffalo Drive Tecumseh, NE 68450
	Sheriff Scott Walton	(402) 335-3307 FAX: (402)335-2737 <a href="mailto:jcsodispatch@johnsoncountysone.gov">jcsodispatch@johnsoncountysone.gov</a>	Box 335 Tecumseh, NE 68450
	Red Cross	402-335-3307	222 South 4th, Tecumseh
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	Sheriff Braden Lang	(402) 852-2969 Fax: (402) 852-2726 <a href="mailto:Braden.lang@pawneecountyne.gov">Braden.lang@pawneecountyne.gov</a>	PO Box 267 Pawnee City, NE 68420
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Thayer	Colt Farringer	Home: (402) 356-2094 Cell: (402) 879-5553 Fax: (402) 768-2129	225 N 4th St, Room 303 Hebron, NE 68370
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Above are examples of services that may be provided for clients/participants of Blue Rivers AAA programs depending on the direction of the local first responders and the level of resources.