

Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging Disaster Plan

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

The Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging (NENAAA) has a legislative mandate to advocate on behalf of older persons who reside within its 22-county service area. The Agency works in cooperation with federal, state, county, municipal, voluntary, and other non-profit programs to provide for the needs of older disaster victims.

II. Policies

A. NENAAA will provide a broad framework of cooperation in rendering assistance and services to older victims of emergencies/disasters.

B. The Older Americans Act may provide reimbursement to any state, upon application, for funds to be made available to Area Agencies on Aging for delivery of support services during a major disaster declared by the President. NENAAA, in the event of a disaster, will contact the State Unit on Aging to request needed funds.

III. Situations and Assumptions

A. Conditions

Given the variety of threats, NENAAA and service providers are dedicated to safeguarding people and property through emergency preparedness and a coordinated response to emergencies/disasters. The emergencies/disasters may include but not limited to flood, severe winter storm/blizzard, tornado (high winds), fire, failure of power, chemical, nuclear, terrorism, etc.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. NENAAA and service providers will work to prepare for and reduce the severity of a disaster/emergency. This is done through a variety of practices such as fire/storm drills, first aid training, emergency/disaster plans reviewed and updated, provision of meals, outreach, education, etc. The Agency will protect vital records and data through electronic back-up.
2. NENAAA will review the Disaster Plan as time allows and make any changes if needed as we learn from each disaster.

IV. Concept of Operations

A. General

When an emergency/disaster is reported, the response process that the Agency will follow is:

B. Organization

1. The Executive Director will take the lead in determining, managing, and coordinating emergency/disaster related activities. If the Director cannot be reached to respond to an emergency/disaster situation, the designee, Long Term Care Supervisor and/or Fiscal Officer, will ensure that a prompt response takes place.
2. The Director can be reached at the NENAAA office during normal working hours. If he/she is not in the office, the designee will be contacted. During non-working hours, the Director may be reached via cell phone.
3. In the event an emergency/disaster destroys NENAAA's office and/or its communication system, the Director can be reached via cell phone. Depending on the disaster situation, NENAAA may operate out of an alternative location and the location and telephone numbers will be provided to the public. The Director will work with all organizations and available resources to provide assistance to older individuals in need.
4. The Director may initiate each department's disaster and/or infectious disease pandemic plan.
5. NENAAA will call, text, e-mail or utilize virtual meetings for on-going communication to Agency staff.

NENAAA will call, e-mail, or utilize virtual meetings to contact providers/vendors, subrecipients/contractors including senior centers and emergency responders. Agency staff and service providers will telephone, e-mail or utilize virtual meetings for client contacts which may include responsible parties to address client needs, such as continuing services or developing alternative services, etc. The public may contact NENAAA regarding the wellbeing of older adults in the service area.

6. When a Presidential Declaration of a major disaster has been made, federal assistance may become available to support state operations. The Director will take action to mobilize services through the Agency to provide assistance to older persons. The Director will conduct the following activities:
 - a. Telephone calls will be made to the State Unit on Aging to assure appropriate assistance is being provided, sufficient resources are available and to respond to any problems/questions that may arise. The Director will ask NENAAA staff to keep records of services delivered and compile projections of funding that will be needed. In addition, staff will be asked by the Director to monitor the emergency/disaster situation and report on circumstances as they change. Depending on the magnitude of the emergency/disaster and the number of older people involved, contacts may be hourly, daily and/or weekly. Site visits to the emergency/disaster area will be made upon request and as needed to assess the emergency/disaster situation if allowed.

7. The Director will work with State Unit on Aging staff to complete an application for federal funds as soon as possible.
8. If a federally declared disaster is of catastrophic proportion, Agency staff and the Director will:
 - a. Resolve issues, access needed material/supplies and advocate for additional services and resources.
 - b. Participate in disaster recovery operations and collaborate with FEMA, state agencies and voluntary emergency/disaster relief organizations if allowed.
 - c. Keep the State Unit on Aging apprised about the emergency/disaster situation and NENAAA's activities in the delivery of services.
 - d. Provide assistance with issues that arise in the delivery of services to older disaster victims during and after the emergency/disaster.

Reviewed and Approved by
The Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging Governing Board
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Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging Infectious Disease Pandemic Plan

The Administration of Community Living requests that all States and Area Agencies on Aging include the infectious disease pandemic as part of their disaster plan.

Advanced planning, prevention, communication and coordinated partnerships through the aging network will be critical to ensure the safety and ongoing care of older persons, before, during and after the emergency events.

Mission

The mission of the infectious disease pandemic plan is to maximize the safety and well-being of our vulnerable elderly population, family caregivers and aging network service providers before, during and after a pandemic and to ensure the continuity of Older Americans Act programs and services of the Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging.

What is an infectious disease pandemic?

An infectious disease pandemic is a respiratory virus that causes fever, cough, headache, runny nose, sore throat, muscle aches and extreme fatigue. This is different than the seasonal influenza. It is easily transmitted from person to person with the potential to be fatal.

Planning and prevention

The Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging (NENAAA) staff must practice and teach prevention. The following will be strongly encouraged:

- Cough etiquette
- Proper hand-washing technique
- Using alcohol-based hand gel
- Keeping hands away from eyes and mouth
- Using your own office equipment
- Staying within your work area
- Receiving an annual flu vaccine and infectious disease pandemic vaccine
- Wear face mask, face shield, eye protection, gloves as needed
- Stay home if you are sick, you may be asked to go home

Communication

The availability and dissemination of timely and appropriate information to staff, clients, and service providers will be one of the most important facets of the pandemic response.

NENAAA will partner with Nebraska Health and Human Services, local health departments, emergency management officials and professional organizations to ensure accurate information before, during and after the infectious disease pandemic emergency.

The Executive Director or designee will be the key communication contact. The Director or designee, Long Term Care Supervisor and/or Fiscal Officer, or their designees to assist to disseminate information to staff, clients and service providers.

Communication will be provided through e-mail and/or telephone. Staff working at alternate sites will maintain contact with their supervisor.

Coordinated services

NENAAA staff will work to continue the operation of home and community-based services as effectively as possible. Alternate operations will be issued from the direction of Nebraska Health and Human Services, local health departments, and/or emergency management officials. Procedures for services such as care management, level of care, Medicaid waiver, ombudsman, SHIP, senior centers, nutrition and fiscal have been developed.

Train and prepare staff

Training and exercises of the infectious disease pandemic plan is essential to demonstrate and improve the plan. All staff will receive a copy of the plan. Each department will test its plan to ensure workability and reliance.

Personnel Issues

Please refer to the Agency's Personnel Policy on issues such as attendance, sick leave, travel, etc.

Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging
Long Term Care Staff
(AD Waiver, SCO, CM, RD and ADRC)
Infectious Disease Pandemic and Disaster Plan

1. Communication Plan:

The Executive Director (ED), Long Term Care Supervisor (LTCS) or Appointed Designee (AD) will communicate to the staff the type of disaster and/or any necessary information or precautions that are appropriate. Staff will be contacted via telephone, text message or email as appropriate.

2. Service Plan:

Available Long Term Care Staff will work with any available agency personnel to cross train personnel to perform client telephone contacts, review the client needs and delegate any duties as deemed appropriate by the ED, LTCS and/or AD. The Agency personnel available with the required training and credentials will review all contact narratives, take appropriate action, note, and sign off on information and documentation as needed.

The ED, LTCS and/or AD will contact Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC), and the State Unit on Aging (SUA) for guidance and direction as needed. If unable to contact MLTC and SUA the Long-Term Care Staff, will, to the best of their abilities, follow the appropriate regulations per the State of Nebraska Provider and Sub-Award Agreements.

The ED, LTCS and /or AD will be responsible to decide if or when:

- A) Routine services will be put back in place.
- B) It is appropriate for the agency staff to perform agency duties from their own home.
- C) Personnel working from their homes will be required to contact the LTCS or AD.
- D) Resource Development will obtain pertinent current information for providers from the Public Health Department and HHS Central Office.
- E) Providers will be contacted and given information on an as needed basis, dependent on the type of disaster.

NENAAA Nutrition and Services Department Infectious Disease Pandemic /Disaster Plan

Pre-Disaster Preparation:

- Educate senior centers on pandemic/disasters
- Supply centers with information and brochures for their participants
- Assist with pandemic/disaster plan of action for centers as needed
- Annually check on center's preparedness
- Develop a list of centers/meal sites, contact person(s), and phone number(s)
- Consider the option of shelf-stable meals for senior center participants

Communication Plan:

As soon as Nutrition Department receives information from NENAAA Executive Director or designee of a pandemic/disaster:

- Nutrition Department will contact appropriate center managers/designated person to give accurate information about the pandemic/disaster and inform them to initiate their plan of action
- Department will keep in contact as needed with centers and give technical support and updates as much as possible via phone and e-mail.

Service Plan:

During the pandemic/disaster:

- Nutrition Department staff will report to office if possible (may need to alternate days in office for minimal exposure)
- Work in our office space only, using our phone and computer (no sharing of equipment)
- All business done by phone and or e-mail
- Assist other departments as needed
- If office is closed or staff is unable to come to work, work from home

As soon as NENAAA receives accurate information the pandemic/disaster has been lifted:

- Nutrition Department staff or designated person(s) will contact appropriate center managers/designated person with accurate updates
- Nutrition Department staff will keep in contact as needed with centers and give technical support in reopening for services

NENAAA Ombudsman Program/SHIP/Nebraska SMP Infectious Disease Pandemic and Disaster Plan

Communication Plan:

The Ombudsman and SHIP/SMP Coordinators or designees will communicate to program volunteers the plan of action for services during the time of a pandemic or disaster. This information will be disseminated via e-mail to the volunteers and as needed telephone calling to Ombudsman, SHIP/SMP volunteers.

Service Plan:

The Executive Director or designee will contact the Department of Insurance and or Long-Term Care State Ombudsman as needed. Services for the Ombudsman/SHIP/SMP programs will continue via e-mail, mail, telephone, webinar or virtual meeting. All volunteers will be advised to continue services from their homes or work place and will have available pertinent information such as phone numbers, e-mail addresses and mailing addresses of fellow program volunteers, program coordinator (or designee) and state program coordinator in order to better serve clients.

Fiscal Department
Disaster / Infectious Disease Pandemic Plan

The Fiscal Department's responsibilities are very cyclical, requiring tasks be completed according to a defined timetable. Adherence to this timetable is essential to the on-going operations of the Agency, its sub-recipients, and contractors, all of whom are dependent upon a consistent and reliable flow of funding.

That said, and acknowledging possible staffing and workplace limitations that may be presented at the time of any disaster and/or pandemic situation, the Fiscal Department will attempt to continue operations as effectively as possible, following the guidelines and/or instructions of the appropriate federal, state, and/or local disaster management authorities. All necessary consideration will be given to the wellness and safety needs of fiscal staff.

Assistance from other agency department staff member may be sought to help with Fiscal functions such as data entry, vendor check processing, and tasks wherein a specific knowledge of accounting is not necessary.

During any disaster, pandemic, and/or emergency, work plans and communications for the department will be the responsibility of the Fiscal Officer or designee. Where and when staff is available, priority will be given to the department's critical functions, and every effort will be made to avoid jeopardizing the Agency's financial stability.

Infectious Disease Pandemic /Disaster Plan of Action for Senior Centers

I. Pre-Disaster Preparation:

- 1) Identify person or persons to take the lead at the center and to receive information from NENAAA and the local Health Department to inform senior citizens and volunteers with accurate information.
- 2) Identify personnel/volunteers to cook meals, deliver meals, do phone calling to senior citizens, answer phone calls, etc
 - a) Have backups for every task
- 3) Develop a list of all meal participants, their phone numbers and a family member name and number.
 - a) Have a priority list of most frail and or those who will need a home delivered meal during a pandemic
 - b) Keep lists current and easily accessible
- 4) Begin to purchase/set aside a 6-8-week supply of the following items:
 - a) Food items -shelf stable, such as canned meats, fruits, etc, in case of power outages
 - b) Disposable masks and gloves for all staff and volunteers
 - c) Disposable meal containers
 - d) Hand sanitizer and disinfectants
- 5) Educate participants and staff on, but not limited to:
 - a) Pandemic flu
 - b) Center's plan of action during a pandemic
 - c) Importance of sanitation before, during, and after a pandemic
 - d) Supplies needed at home
 - e) Having meal supplements on hand, such as Carnation Instant Breakfast
 - f) Having access to their medications
 - g) Importance of a family/friend support system during a pandemic
 - h) Importance of emergency phone numbers (ambulance, family contact, police etc.) that are easily accessible
 - i) Individual plan of action if meal provider cannot supply meals
- 6) Annually review center's plan of action

II. Plan of Action When Pandemic/Disaster Occurs:

- 1) After receiving information from the Northeast Area Agency on Aging about the pandemic, inform participants
- 2) Call or e-mail key personnel/volunteers to initiate the center's plan of action
- 3) Designated person(s) contact participants stating pandemic plan of action is in place and instructions regarding the delivery of meals
- 4) Provide services as needed which may be limited to non-congregate services
- 5) Supply all staff and volunteers with masks and gloves to be worn at center and during delivery of meals.
- 6) Prepare meals to the best of your ability
- 7) Meal delivery persons will follow instructions of center. Recommend no personal contact if at all possible.
- 8) Designated person(s) phone participants as needed to check up on them and keep them informed on any new and accurate information.
- 9) If center is unable to prepare meals and or all center volunteers/staff are ill, follow the center's emergency meal plan of action if possible.

III. Plan of Action When Pandemic/Disaster Has Lifted:

- 1) After receiving accurate information that the crisis is over, evaluate the situation of the center.
- 2) Call all participants and inform them of accurate information
- 3) Clean and sanitize center and reopen as soon as possible for services.

