



Resources for NDIS
Emergency and Disaster
Management

Emergency & Disaster Management Planning with NDIS Participants

A Guide for NDIS Providers

Funded by the NDIS Quality and
Safeguards Commission grants program



NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission

Introduction


This guide has been developed to assist you – an NDIS Provider – to involve and collaborate with NDIS Participants in emergency and disaster planning, response, and recovery.

The R4NED resources and website have been developed as part of a co-design process with people with disability across Australia.

Practical suggestions are provided for how to have conversations with people about emergency and disaster management, and what to talk about.

There are also suggested actions you can take to involve people with disability in the various stages of emergency and disaster preparedness for individuals and organisation.

These are in bold gold text.

When you see this logo  it means there are resources on the R4NED website that will help you understand different aspects of emergency and disaster preparedness in an NDIS context and explain these to the NDIS Participants you support. It also flags where there are templates and checklists to help with the planning and preparation process.

A summary of all the resources available on the R4NED website is at the end of this guide. They are divided into Participant and Provider sections, but there are resources you will find useful in both sections.



Welcome to R4NED video

Before you start, watch this video for an overview of the resources available on the R4NED website, and to understand the structure of the website and its accessibility functions. It runs for 2.40 minutes.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Welcome to R4NED](#)

Watch it with captions in other languages on our [You Tube channel](#).

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Context

This guide is based on the principles of Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR). DIDRR recognises that people with disability are disproportionately affected by disasters and emergencies.

It is, therefore, important that our approach to emergency and disaster management is inclusive of people with disabilities.

This means ensuring that the needs and voices of people with disability and their supporters are included at all stages of emergency and disaster management. This includes prevention, planning and preparedness, response, and recovery.

Having a conversation about this may help some NDIS Participants and their supporters understand why emergency and disaster planning is important.



DIDRR and the NDIS Practice Standard fact sheet

This fact sheet will help you explain what DIDRR is, and the international and local frameworks about emergency and disaster management in Australia, and what this means for NDIS Participants and Providers.

Find it on the R4NED website here - [Understand the Standard](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)

NDIS Providers are responsible for ensuring the people with disability they support are fully included and meaningfully participate in all activities that impact them.

The NDIS Practice Standard for Emergency and Disaster Management provides a blueprint for how you should do this when preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.

While all registered NDIS Providers must comply with the NDIS Practice Standard, not all providers are expected to be involved in emergency and disaster planning to the same degree. This is the concept of “proportionate risk”.

Helping NDIS Participants understand what your responsibility is as an NDIS Provider may make the planning experience easier for everyone, and help individuals understand what actions they may have to take for themselves to plan and prepare for emergencies and disasters



The NDIS Practice Standard and my provider fact sheet

This fact sheet will help you explain to NDIS Participants what the NDIS Practice Standard for Emergency and Disaster Management is, and what they should expect from their providers.

Find it on the R4NED website here - [Get started](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)



Proportionate risk video

You may also want to watch this video together. It explains what proportionate risk means to NDIS Providers and Participants, and why it is important. It runs for 3.38 minutes.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [NDIS Participants](#)

Watch it with captions in other languages on our [You Tube channel](#).

Planning and preparing: how and what to talk about

It is natural that a conversation about emergencies and disasters might cause some initial anxiety for a person with disability.

It can be reassuring to remind the person that these conversations are about being aware and being prepared, which can help us to feel more in control of unexpected and difficult situations.

From an individual perspective, it may be useful to approach emergency planning like any other form of individual planning. That is, with respectful listening and a focus on what the person can do and contribute. Don't forget to involve the person's supporters if they want that to happen.

From an organisational perspective, NDIS Participants may feel empowered to know they are assisting their provider by contributing to emergency planning at this level.

You should explain these two different aspects of planning to the NDIS Participants you support so they can decide how they want to be involved.



Plan with your provider video

Watching this video together could be a good place to start to understand the ways NDIS Providers and Participants can work together to plan and prepare for emergencies and disasters. It runs for 3.20 minutes.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Plan and Prepare](#)

Watch it with captions in other languages on our [You Tube channel](#).

Some NDIS Participants may prefer to plan and prepare for emergencies and disasters with someone other than their NDIS Provider or by themselves. There are resources available to assist them do this here - [R4NED NDIS Participants](#).

Planning and preparing: actions to take

Supporting NDIS Participants to engage with their own individual emergency planning has many benefits. It is not only about empowering the person to be informed and prepared for potential situations but also, about increasing self-confidence and resilience.

To ensure the safety of participants, NDIS Providers should do these three things:

1. Understand that individuals have unique needs, abilities and ways of communicating, and their emergency plans should reflect that.
2. Train support workers in emergency procedures and practice evacuation drills with NDIS Participants.
3. Have clear ways to communicate with each other, especially when an emergency situation is happening. NDIS Participants might need help to understand what's going on, and a reminder to use their individual emergency management plan.

Start your planning and preparation for emergencies and disasters by working through each of the sections below with individual participants, or with two or more participants who are living together.

If you are planning with participants who live together or live with other people (e.g. family members or a partner or housemate), encourage them to all use the same templates for their plans. This can make it easier for support people – such as Emergency Services personnel or people working at Recovery Centres – to know where to find critical information quickly.

Make an individual Emergency Management Plan

There are a number of things to think about before you dive into filling out a template, such as what information you will need to complete a plan, what process to follow, and which template to use.

To make the planning process smoother, work out what you need before you start.



Pre-planning guide for NDIS Participants

This guide will step you and the NDIS Participants you support through what you need to think about before you start planning.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Get Started](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)

Other things to think about

There are also links and information on the R4NED website Get Started page that explain the Australian Warning System. It is particularly important for NDIS Participants living independently in the community to understand and be familiar with the warning system, so they know when to take action in an emergency or disaster.

There are also tools to help you work out whether NDIS Participants live in high-risk areas. This can help them decide the type of plan they might need, and what to include in it.

Now it is time to start writing the Emergency Management Plan. Remember that the template or process used is not as important as making sure the NDIS Participants you support have a plan in place.

Emergency Management Plan templates

There is an R4NED Emergency Management Plan template, as well as links to other templates that are suitable for NDIS Participants to use.

Find them on the R4NED website here: [Make a plan](#)

Find the R4NED Emergency Management Plan template in other languages here – [Resources](#)

Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP)

P-CEP is a comprehensive resource package for people with disability to prepare for emergencies and disasters. It includes a practical conversation guide and planning tool.

Check out the P-CEP resources at the [Collaborating 4 Inclusion website](#).

Identify a support network

It is important to support NDIS Participants to identify their support network, including family, friends, neighbours, and support workers.

You can help by working out what each supporter will do in case of an emergency, including how they will communicate and stay connected with the NDIS Participant.

You should also decide together who needs a copy of the plan and in what format (e.g. digital, hard copy, translated), and make sure they receive a copy.

Prepare a ‘Go Bag’

Having an emergency kit – which is sometimes called a “Go Bag” – ready to go if you need to leave in a hurry is an important way you can prepare for an emergency of disaster.

A Go Bag should include essential items like medication, medical records, important documents, and personal care items.

The contents might differ for each individual. Be sure to consider peoples’ individual needs when preparing a kit, and to keep it updated every 6 or 12 months or as needs or details change.

And make sure everyone involved knows where the kit or Go Bag is located.

Making a Go Bag is easy and a great way to involve NDIS Participants in emergency planning.

Go Bag checklists

The Red Cross and Ember checklists will help you work out what to put in your Go Bag.

Find links to them on the R4NED website here: [Make a plan](#)

Other things to think about

Emergency management planning must be tailored to individuals.

Each NDIS Participant will have different information they might want to include in their plans. For example:

- specific support needs when evacuating a building
- what to do with their pets
- how to prepare for, and manage, communication outages

- how to connect with their neighbours and grow their support network.

Take a look around the [Make a plan](#) page on the R4NED website with the NDIS Participants you support and talk about what they need to include in their individual Emergency Management Plan.

Hidden disability and other considerations

It can be difficult to provide personal information to other people when you are in a stressful situation, such as an emergency or disaster.

Having an easy way to do that may be useful for some NDIS Participants – for example, if they have a hidden disability or identify in a particular way.

Some people may find it helpful to make a card that can be shown to people assisting them – such as Emergency Services personnel or people staffing Evacuation and Recovery Centres – that has a simple description of their disability or how they want to be addressed (e.g. pronouns such as “he”, “she” or “they”).

The card can be kept in people’s Go Bags..

Talk this over with NDIS Participants you think might be interested in doing this and help them make a card to include in their Go Bag if they wish to.

Evacuation drills and reviews

Practicing what is in people’s plans is a critical activity you should do with the NDIS Participants you support, as well as with the other disability support workers involved in their lives.

Evacuation drills are a mandatory requirement for NDIS Providers in particular settings, such as Specialist Disability Accommodation. Regardless of where support is being provided, support workers should be aware of evacuation procedures, and ensure NDIS Participants know what to do if they need to leave their home suddenly.

There are a number of ways to involve NDIS Participants in evacuation drills.

Allocating roles to willing individuals is one strategy for providing meaningful opportunities for NDIS Participants to contribute, prepare and be empowered. For example, it could be one person’s job to collect the house pet. Using structured game play to prepare for evacuations is another great way to involve individuals.

Your organisation may have structured ways to do this, or you may need to come up with ideas together with the NDIS Participants you support.



Practising your Emergency Management Plan

This tips and activities sheet will help you practise with NDIS Participants living independently in the community.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Practise and Review](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)



Practising Emergency Management Plans in Specialist Supported Accommodation

This tips and activities sheet will help you practise with NDIS Participants living in group accommodation settings.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Plan and prepare together](#)

Individual plan reviews

Making sure plans have current information in them is also really important.

Scheduling regular reviews and plan updates alongside other planning – such as updating individual support plans or NDIS reviews – could be a convenient way to do this.

Plans should also be updated when details change, such as where a person lives, their contact details, or critical health and support information.

Encourage the NDIS Participants you support to make a note in their diary or put a reminder in their phone for an annual review.

Organisational plan reviews

The NDIS Practice Standard for Emergency and Disaster Management expects that Providers include NDIS Participants in organisational planning, as well as individual planning.

This means providing ways for people with disability to contribute to your organisation's risk management, emergency and disaster management, and business continuity planning.

Participants should be encouraged to provide feedback on policies and plans, as well as on your organisation's emergency responses. This can be helpful for learning and improving practice – so that everyone can work better together the next time there is an emergency or disaster.

 **Organisational planning templates checklist**

One way to do this is to work through this checklist with the NDIS Participant you support or with a group of interested people.

Encourage them to ask questions about what is in the plan, check that you have the right information, and give their ideas for how it could be improved.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Manage your paperwork](#)

Assisting in home or work safety checks

Just as NDIS Participants may already be included in auditing processes within your organisation, there are opportunities for people with disability to be involved in home and work safety checks.

Allocating individual roles and responsibilities, such as checking fire safety equipment expiry dates and checking smoke alarms, is a great way to involve individuals in emergency preparation, while increasing awareness and self confidence in individuals.

Even if an individual can partially participate in a role, with the assistance from a support worker, this is still a valued contribution.

Remember, practical checks like ensuring smoke alarms are working need to occur regularly.

Educating and mentoring other NDIS participants

Not all NDIS Participants will be enthusiastic about emergency and disaster planning. In fact, you may find that many individuals are anxious or concerned when emergencies and disasters are mentioned.

However, some people may feel they can support others, perhaps because they have been through emergencies or disasters before.

Consider facilitating conversations between NDIS Participants about their experiences to raise awareness and encourage involvement. The tone of these conversations should be one of resilience. Be aware that talking about previous experiences can trigger a trauma response in individuals, in which case mental health support should be sought.

Connecting with local emergency services

Did you know that many local emergency services can assist you with advice on being prepared for an emergency?

If you know of an NDIS Participant who has specific support needs that might make evacuation challenging, it can be a good idea to assist them to connect with a local emergency service to discuss.

They may also be able to talk with you both about local evacuation centres and facilities, and what happens if you have to go to one of these places.

Remember, this is something you need to do before an emergency or disaster has occurred.



Find out more about connecting with emergency services here:

[Emergency services](#)

Connect with community

Some local communities have initiatives and resources about planning and preparing for emergencies and disasters, particularly in areas that are at high risk of this happening.

For example, some local councils run Disability-Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP). These are local community-led conversations about disability inclusive emergency planning.

Support the NDIS Participants you support to prepare for emergencies and disasters by connecting them with community initiatives and resources relevant to their individual culture or background.



Find out more about what might be happening in local councils and communities at these two links:

[Local council](#) - and - [Community partners](#)

Responding: how and what to talk about

Most importantly during an emergency, NDIS Participants need to be kept safe and to know they are safe.

People also need to know that their core supports will continue during an emergency or disaster (known as continuity of support), as far as is possible.

Providing words and actions of reassurance and confidence are what people need to hear when emergencies occur.

If someone you support becomes panicked or stressed, support them to slow down and to take some deep breaths together.

Part of being ready to respond to an emergency or disaster is being confident that you know what your plan is, that you understand what might happen, and you have practised what you have to do.

Reinforce the steps you have planned together for what you will do if something happens.



Prepare and practise video

Watch this video to remind yourselves about the things you should do before an emergency or disaster happens. It runs for 4.21 minutes.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Respond](#)

Watch it with captions in other languages on our [You Tube channel](#).

Responding: actions to take

Having NDIS Participants prepared and practised with individual roles and responsibilities can mean a genuine contribution and welcome distraction during a stressful emergency event or evacuation.

Something as simple as locating a Go Bag can be a useful action.

Preparing for what happens if people have to evacuate from their home is also a useful thing to do.

Talk to the NDIS Participants you support about what to expect and how they can prepare.



Evacuations: What to expect before, during and after fact sheet

Read this fact sheet together to learn about what might happen in an evacuation centre. Take a look at the Easy Read communication Board while you're there.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Steps to take](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)

If the person you're supporting has a plan, make sure they know where it is kept.

If the person you're supporting does not have a plan, encourage them to at least know where to get reliable information about any emergencies and disasters happening in their area.

Encourage the NDIS Participants you support to keep information handy about how to stay informed during an emergency or disaster, and what they can do to let people know they are safe.



Find information about the ABC Emergency website and other important information to assist you with this here:

[ABC emergency website](#)

Recovering: how and what to talk about

Disasters and emergencies can be unsettling and scary, especially for people with disability. Recovering from a disaster or emergency can sometimes be as challenging as getting through the event itself.

After experiencing an event like a bushfire, flood or the Covid-19 pandemic, it is natural for people to feel like they have less control in their lives than usual.

It's important to keep positive and to remind the NDIS participants you support that they can cope, and that they will be okay.

NDIS Providers play an important part in people's lives. Remind the participants you support that you are there for them, and together there are many things you can do to make recovery go as well as possible.



What happens after an emergency video

Watch this video together to learn about some of the important things you and NDIS Participants can do to recover from an emergency or disaster. It runs for 3.29 minutes.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Recover](#)

Watch it with captions in other languages on our [You Tube channel](#).

Recovering: actions to take

The first thing to do when recovering from an emergency is to get your thinking right, and to support the NDIS Participants you support to do the same.

This means reminding individuals that they are okay, and to 'go with the flow', whilst modelling this in your own behaviour. When unexpected things happen, both you and the NDIS Participants you support will be better able to keep calm and take action.

There are lots of things you can do to support people to do this. For example:

- Taking four slow, deep breaths is a good starting point for clearer thinking.
- Support people to write a list of actions – a "To Do list" - is a great thing you can do to support individuals to do to feel more in control of a stressful and unpredictable event.
- Remind and support participants to stay connected with their support people, whether that's family, friends, neighbours or their NDIS Provider.

- Support individuals to do a self-check-in.

Use our step-by-step guide to learn more about how to do these things and how to support NDIS Participants to do them too. You can also use the guide before an emergency or disaster happens, to support NDIS Participants mentally prepare and build resilience.



Resilience and NDIS Participants: a guide

This guide will help you support NDIS Participants mentally recover from disasters and emergencies.

Find it on the R4NED website here: [Steps to take](#)

Find it in Easy Read and other languages here – [Resources](#)

There is also a self-guided online module with this content. Find the link here: [Steps to take](#)
There may be practical considerations people need to make after an emergency or disaster, especially if they live independently in the community.

Support people to make an action plan of what they need to do to get their lives back on track once the emergency or disaster has passed.



Find links to checklists and resources to assist you to do this here:

[What to do after a disaster](#)

Other useful actions are to encourage and support NDIS Participants to engage with local community recovery services and resources.

These may be run through Local Council, local community organisations or dedicated Recovery Centres.

There are resources available to assist people immediately after - and in some cases in the weeks and months after – a disaster. This may be disaster recovery payments, food and clothing, and/or emotional support.

Support people to get the assistance they need.



Find links to useful websites for assistance with recovery here:

[Get assistance](#)

Conclusion

Involving and collaborating with the NDIS Participants in emergency management preparedness for themselves and for your organisation is not only important for supporting and upholding people's human rights. It will also help your organisation to meet the NDIS Practice Standard for Emergency and Disaster management.

Make sure you document the conversations you have with the NDIS Participants you support, as well as the actions you both take as a result. This will form part of your evidence that you are meeting the practice standard.

Find a summary of all the R4NED resources available below. Some of these resources are mentioned in this guide; others will help your organisation get ready to meet the NDIS Practice Standard and – most importantly – to respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.

R4NED resource summary

Videos	Website Link
Welcome to R4NED	R4NED Home page
Proportionate risk	NDIS Participants NDIS Providers
Plan with your provider	Plan and prepare
Prepare and practise	Respond
What happens after an emergency	Recover
The NDIS Practice Standard	Meet the Standard
What we want you to know	Work with your NDIS Participants Work with your Community

Resources for NDIS Participants	Easy Read	Other languages	Website Link
The NDIS Practice Standard and my provider fact sheet	YES	YES	Get started
Pre-planning guide for NDIS Participants	NO	YES	Get started
Emergency planning with NDIS Providers: a guide for Participants	NO	YES	Make a plan
Emergency Management Plan template for NDIS Participants	NO	YES	Make a plan
Practising your Emergency Management Plan tips and activities	YES	YES	Practise and review
Evacuations: what to expect before, during, and after guide	YES	YES	Steps to take
Resources for NDIS Providers	Easy Read	Other languages	Website Link
DIDRR and the NDIS Practice Standard fact sheet	YES	YES	Understand the Standard
Proportionate risk fact sheet and case studies	NO	YES	Understand the Standard
NDIS Practice Standard evidence checklist	NO	NO	Understand the Standard
Board and leadership team responsibilities	NO	NO	Understand the Standard
Resilience & NDIS Staff guide	NO	NO	Prepare your organisation

Resources for NDIS Providers	Easy Read	Other languages	Website Link
Workplace planning for emergencies and disasters guide	NO	NO	Prepare your organisation
Staff responsibilities presentation	NO	NO	Prepare your organisation
Organisational planning templates checklist	NO	NO	Manage your paperwork
NDIS Participant information checklist	NO	NO	Manage your paperwork
Organisational recovery guide for NDIS Providers	NO	NO	Manage your paperwork
Emergency planning with NDIS Participants: a guide for Providers	NO	YES	Plan and prepare together
Practising Emergency Management Plans in SDA tips and activities	NO	NO	Plan and prepare together
Evacuations: what to expect before, during, and after guide	YES	YES	Plan and prepare together
Resilience & NDIS Participants guide	NO	NO	Recover together