

# Post Disaster Self Assessment Form for Early Childhood Programs

## Children Need a Safe Place to Go

When child care programs close the community suffers. We appreciate efforts to quickly reopen child care programs. This gives children a safe place to go, allows them to return to a normal routine and lets families focus on rebuilding and recovering. While there is often great pressure to reopen childcare, we must take steps to ensure our programs are safe before reopening.

## Disasters Create New Hazards

The environment can change drastically after a disaster, sometimes causing direct and indirect releases of hazardous (dangerous) materials into the environment that can make places that were at one time safe for children, no longer safe. This document was developed to help identify issues that you should consider after a disaster. The information contained within this document provides suggestions on how to protect children from harmful environmental and chemical exposures during disaster recovery.

Ultimately, your local child care licensing rules and regulations, in conjunction with other authorities, such as the health department or fire marshal, will dictate whether you are allowed to reopen or not. This document is not a replacement for existing laws and regulations. It is a guidance tool to help you identify any safety hazards that should be addressed.

## Who can use this form?

Child care providers, owners, and operators can use this document after a disaster as a starting point to help identify potential public and environmental health risks and issues.

Local authorities, such as the health department, fire marshal and child care licensing, should feel free to modify this form in order to meet local regulations and provide guidance as to whether a child care facility in your jurisdiction may reopen or not.

## How do you use this form? INSTRUCTIONS:

**STEP 1:** Review pages 1 and 2 of this document. Page 1 describes the purpose of this document. Page 2 provides examples of the optimal operating environment for child care programs. We recognize that after a disaster, things are usually not optimal. This information is provided as an example of what to strive for, but it is recognized that it is unlikely that child care programs will be able to meet all of these criteria immediately following a disaster.

**STEP 2:** Complete the self-assessment on pages 3 and 4 following the instructions for each question. This will help you identify potential hazards at your child care program.

**STEP 3:** As recovery from disasters can take a while, we recommend that you repeat this assessment frequently - especially as conditions change.

**STEP 4:** Share the results of your assessment with your local authorities. This can assist governmental organizations in understanding the types of issues that you need additional assistance with and / or which issues still require attention.

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## Outdoors

- The building should be in compliance with fire codes, building codes, and zoning.
- An environmental assessment should include: previous use of the building and/or nearby sites (which includes proximity to any nearby sites that can lead to exposure of environmental or chemical hazards), testing of air, soil, and water, and assessment of potential hazardous building materials
- The playground and playground equipment should be structurally sound, as well as the fences and any surrounding outdoor areas that children can access.
- Walking surfaces should be clear, be a non-slip surface, and should not have any holes or irregularities in the surface

## Indoors

- If a new childcare facility is opening or a facility is moving to a different location, that site should be inspected by the appropriate agency within your community to make sure that the building does not have environmental, chemical, or other health hazards that can lead to exposure to children or staff (lead, mold, asbestos, etc).
- The facility should have proper ventilation, heat, and cooling that is maintained.
- Windows, if used for ventilation, should have screens to prevent mosquitoes and other insects from entering.
- Walls, windows, doors, roofs, and ceilings should be structurally sound, water-tight, and weather-tight
- There should not be any open holes in the building structure, including leaks in the roof.

## Food Safety

- Food preparation area should be separate from all other areas by a physical barrier and children should not have access to that area.
- Food storage and food handling areas must be clean and monitored closely.
- Refrigerator works at optimal temperatures (at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit for fridge, at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit for freezer) and there is no lapse in refrigeration.
- Food preparation surfaces are clean and free of bacteria, mold, fungus, etc.
- Utensils, cups, plates, and other materials used during food preparation should be able to be washed and properly sanitized with hot water and bleach and water dip or in a sanitizing dishwasher and has been tested and determined safe to use post disaster.
- Properly store any hazards, pesticides and sanitizing chemicals away from children and food preparation areas.

## Water

- There must be access to safe drinking water that has been tested post disaster.
- There must be access to hot water that has been tested and determined safe to use for washing food preparation materials (kitchen ware, etc) and washing hands.

## Waste

- Waste is properly managed and disposed of routinely. No open garbage or debris that can attract pests or be accessible to children.
- Hazardous materials are stored and disposed of properly according to recommendations, guidelines, or laws.
- The sewage/septic system needs to be fully functional and sized appropriately for the number of occupants in the facility.

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For Early Childhood Program



Facility Name		Date of Assessment		Time (am/pm)	
Address		City		Zip Code	
Faculty Contact Person		Owner Contact			
Phone #		E-Mail		Current Enrollment	
Hours of Operation		Disaster Type (Hurricane, Flood, Tornado, etc.)		Number of Staff	

\*Contact information will vary between jurisdictions and will need to be filled in by the document provider.

## Sources:

1. American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2019). CFOC Standards Online Database. Aurora, CO; National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. Retrieved July 3, 2019 from <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/4.8.0.1>.
2. American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2019). CFOC Standards Online Database. Aurora, CO; National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. Retrieved July 3, 2019 from <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/5>.
3. American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2019). CFOC Standards Online Database. Aurora, CO; National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. Retrieved July 3, 2019 from <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/6>.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD). (2019, May 21). Controlling Mosquitoes at Home. Retrieved July 19, 2019, from <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/controlling-mosquitoes-at-home.html>
5. Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force - Indoor Environmental Pollutants Work Group. (2015, June). "Homeowner's and Renter's Guide to Mold Cleanup After Disasters | Mold | CDC." Retrieved July 15, 2019 from [www.cdc.gov/mold/cleanup-guide.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mold/cleanup-guide.html)
6. National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC). (2019, February 5). Clean Up Safely After a Disaster [Fact sheet]. Retrieved July 3, 2019, from <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/facts.html>
7. U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's Food Cosmetic Information Center. (2017, November). Food and Water Safety During Power Outages and Floods. [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved July 2019, from <https://www.fda.gov/media.72124/download>
8. United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Flooding. (2019, April 11). Retrieved July, 2019, from <https://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/flooding>

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## Outdoors: Section A

A1. The building is accessible (no damage to building structure or excess debris).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
There is no visible damage to the exterior of the building. Proceed to A2.	Take pictures/videos and document all structural damage if it is safe to walk on grounds. If it is not safe to walk on grounds, do not proceed until the proper authorities have deemed it safe to walk on grounds. Proceed to A2

A2. The outside play area is fenced and in a safe condition.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
There is no damage to the fence around the play area and there is no debris. Proceed to A3.	Remove any debris & repair any damage to the fence and/or play area. Proceed to A3.

A3. All potential physical hazards are eliminated & out of children's reach.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Potential physical hazards are not present in the area where children occupy. Proceed to A4.	Contain garbage/debris/any hazards in area not accessible by children. Proceed to A4.

A4. There is standing water.		
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>
Electrical lines are touching the water.		There is no standing water observed. Proceed to A5.
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Note where the standing water is.	Empty the water out of any containers to prevent insects from laying eggs in them.	
Immediately shut off electrical power to the facility and do not make contact with the water. Call authorities to have electrical lines properly removed. Proceed to A5.	If standing water is preventing access to the facility, wait until the waters have receded and local authorities have deemed it safe. Proceed to A5.	

A5. There is exposure to contaminated soil, water, dust, pests or air (exhaust, chemicals).	
<b>Yes (ie: unusual odor present, pests visible, potential for chemical contamination present)</b>	<b>No</b>
Contact a certified local authority to perform an inspection/assessment of soil, water, air quality, and/or pest control. Proceed to A6.	Consider getting an assessment to ensure there are no contaminants present. Some chemicals may not be visible. Proceed to A6.

A6. There is a generator safely in use.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
The generator is located outside of the facility at least 75 feet away from windows and doors, and is inaccessible to children. Proceed to B1.	There is no generator or the generator must be relocated to at least 75 feet away from windows and doors and is not accessible by children. Proceed to B1.

## Indoors: Section B

B1. There are functioning carbon monoxide (CO) detectors.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
The carbon monoxide detector has been tested and is operating properly. Proceed to B2.	Test your carbon monoxide detectors and use a battery-operated or battery backup CO detector to ensure no CO is present. If there is no CO detector present, then install one. Proceed to B2.

B2. Mold is visible or has an odor of wet/damp materials.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Throw out any damp or wet materials that can't dry quickly (ex: mattress, stuffed animals, some baby toys, etc). Clean mold with 1 cup of bleach and 1 gallon of water. Wear goggles, gloves and an approved N-95 mask for nose/mouth. Have proper air circulation (fan/windows). Proceed to B3.	No mold is detected. Proceed to B3.

B3. There is ventilation to maintain comfortable temperature (air condition/heating system or screened windows).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Ventilation system is maintained and working properly: all windows and doors have screens, HVAC system is working properly. Filters are clean. Proceed to B4.	Make sure all windows and doors are properly screened. A certified professional should verify if the ventilation system is working at optimal temperatures and filters are clean. Proceed to B4.

B4. Assessment was done for hazardous materials (lead, asbestos) in the building.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Assessment was done in the initial inspection of the building OR was done post disaster. Proceed to B5.	A certified entity must do an assessment for hazardous materials such as lead and asbestos (buildings built or renovated between 1930-1950 in PR and USVI and 1989 in the USA are prone to having asbestos). Proceed to B5.

B5. All chemicals and hazardous materials are out of child's reach and used properly when needed (cleaning and pest products).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Chemicals and hazardous materials are kept in a place inaccessible to children and are handled properly when in use. Proceed to C1 on page 4.	Store all hazardous materials, chemicals and cleaning supplies in a place that is inaccessible for unauthorized personnel including children. Proceed to C1 on page 4.

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## Water: Section C

C1. Public water source post disaster and is safe for drinking.		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
There was a public notice sent out that the public water sources are safe to use. Proceed to C2.	Use bottled water until public water source is deemed safe. Proceed to C2.	Do not use a public water source. Proceed to C2.

C2. Reliable, safe drinking water from private source (well, cistern) is available (water has been tested and approved post disaster).		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
The drinking water from the private source was tested and approved post disaster. Proceed to C3.	Prior to use have water source tested by an approved agency or organization. Proceed to C3.	Do not use a private water source. Proceed to C3.

C3. There is a method for washing hands with safe water and soap is available (don't have to use hand sanitizer).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Safe water and soap are available to use for washing hands. Proceed to D1.	*Local jurisdiction should include language about the ability to operate without a safe method of washing hands. Proceed to D1.

## Food: Section D

D1. Able to safely keep perishable food at proper cooling and warming temperatures.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Refrigerator and heating equipment are working properly to keep food at correct temperatures (freezer at or below 0 degrees, refrigerator at or below 40 degrees, and above 140 degrees Fahrenheit for hot foods). Proceed to D2.	Dispose of all refrigerated food if the refrigerator's continuous functioning is compromised (by loss of electricity, broken, etc). Dispose of any perishable foods (including meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) in your refrigerator when the power has been off for 4 hours or more. Dispose of foods that show any signs of thawing. Proceed to D2.

D2. Able to safely wash plates, utensils, cups, bottles, etc. Must have access to hot water that is safe post disaster.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
There is hot water available to use for cleaning materials used in food preparation or presentation. Proceed to E1.	Use throw-away items (disposable cups, plates, silverware) until proper dishwashing can resume. Proceed to E1.

## Waste: Section E

E1. There is a reliable waste water system (public sewer or private septic system fully functional).	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Sewage is not backing up, septic tank is not over capacity, able to flush toilets and sinks can drain fully. Proceed to E2.	If sewage system is not fully functional, do not use until the issue is addressed by a certified entity. Proceed to E2.

E2. Garbage is kept contained and routinely removed to reduce chance of pests.	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Garbage is disposed of properly, in a timely fashion, and out of reach of children. Proceed to fill out the final summary.	Contain garbage in an area not accessible to children and remove routinely and legally according to local regulations to reduce pests. Proceed to fill out the final summary.

### Final Summary:

Identify issues that need to be addressed in Outdoors:

Identify issues that need to be addressed in Indoors:

Identify issues that need to be addressed in Food:

Identify issues that need to be addressed in Water:

Identify issues that need to be addressed in Waste: