

Financial Preparedness

Are you ready?

Preparing yourself for a disaster can pay dividends for your future. By gathering and safe-keeping your financial records and other important documents, you will be better equipped to quickly access information. This advance preparation can help provide a safety net for you and your family.

What financial documentation should I gather?

- **INSURANCE POLICIES** Homeowners, renters, flood, earthquake, auto, life, health, disability, and long-term care insurance.
- **ACCOUNT INFORMATION AND PHONE NUMBERS** List all account numbers and contact information for all of your financial institutions and credit card companies.
- **FEDERAL AND STATE TAX RETURNS** The first two pages of your previous year's tax returns.
- **PROPERTY RECORDS** Real estate deeds of trust, mortgage documents, and registration/title for all vehicles and boats.
- **ESTATE PLANNING DOCUMENTS** Wills, trust documents, and power of attorney.
- **CASH OR TRAVELER'S CHEQUES** Enough for several days of living expenses; small denominations are preferable.
- **OTHER IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS** Driver's license, birth certificate, adoption papers, social security card, passports, marriage license, divorce decrees, child custody papers, current military ID, and/or military discharge orders.

Where is the best place to store this information?

- **OFF-SITE AT A SECURE LOCATION** Store original documents and electronic backup files in an off-site safe deposit box or at another secure location away from your home.
- **OUT-OF-STATE** Send a copy of your important documents to an attorney, a trusted relative, or friend in another state.
- **EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE** Store your important digital files on a hard drive or periodically back up files to a CD. Files may include electronic scans or statements of your financial records, insurance policies, and home inventory photos.
- **FIREPROOF, WATERPROOF LOCK BOX** Keep a second copy of your important documents in a fireproof, waterproof lock box to grab in the event of emergency. Make sure the lock box is stored in a location that is secure and is not susceptible to theft, such as an immobile or secure safe.
- **ONLINE AT YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION** Most financial institutions offer online access to your statements and other account information.

What else can I do to be financially prepared?

- **REVIEW YOUR COVERAGE** Make sure you have the right insurance coverage for you, your family, your home, and all your assets.
- **SET UP AN EMERGENCY FUND** Building your own financial safety net can come in handy in the event of any unplanned situation.
- **EDUCATE YOURSELF** For more information, visit www.alaskausa.org and click on the link to "Home & Family Finance."

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