

Paperwork: How to Prepare Your Important Paper, Electronic Records

Important [paperwork](#) includes any document that you might need in and after an emergency. Don't wait until you get an evacuation order to gather insurance cards, identification documents, and emergency action plans. Get your paperwork squared away now:

- Copies of insurance cards and medical records, such as:
 - Health insurance card
 - Immunization and vaccination records
- Vital records (e.g., birth certificates) and identification documents, including:
 - Passport
 - Driver's license
 - Social Security card
- Current versions of emergency action plans, including:
 - Advance directives (e.g., living wills and power of attorney forms)
 - Asthma action plans
 - Food allergies action plans
 - Emergency care plans for children with special healthcare needs.

QUICK TIPS

- Keep an up-to-date list of all prescription medications, dosages, medical supply needs, and known allergies.
- Pet owners: Make copies of [important veterinary records](#) such as a [rabies](#) certificate, vaccinations, prescriptions, and a recent photograph of or selfie with your pet(s).
- Download and/or bookmark online versions of user manuals for your home use medical devices, such as blood glucose meters and insulin pumps.

These days, much of our important "paperwork" isn't on paper. Important documents can exist in digital form on our smart phones, flash drives and cloud-based servers. Digital documents are convenient, but with convenience, comes risk. It's imperative that we secure our digital files with passwords and/or two-factor authentication. Here are some digital-document best practices:

- Scan and save electronic copies of important papers in a password-protected format to a flash or external hard drive or a secure cloud-based service.
- Store flash drives and hardcopies of important papers in a fireproof and waterproof container or safe, with a trusted friend or relative, or in a safety deposit box at a bank.
- Use the [Blue Button](#) (if available) to securely view, print, and download personal health data to a personal computer, external hard drive, or safe place in case of an emergency.

For more Prepare Your Health information, tips, and checklists, visit cdc.gov/prepyourhealth.