



Emergency Preparedness and First Aid

Assisted Living operators must ensure that staff trained in first aid and CPR are always available. They must also develop an emergency response plan, train their staff to be prepared for emergencies, and ensure that residents are ready for emergencies.



First Aid

What does the Assisted Living Regulation say about first aid?

Operators must have staff with valid first aid and CPR certificates available 24/7. Calling 911 is NOT appropriate access to first aid and CPR.

Because each assisted living residence is unique, each operator must look at their own residence and consider how to make sure that first aid and CPR are always readily available. For example, if the site is a campus of care, will a trained staff person in another building be quickly and easily able to help in an emergency? The operator may need to have several staff trained in first aid and CPR so that someone is always available.

If you need help determining what the best first aid and CPR options are for your residence, please contact the Assisted Living Registry at Hlth.assistedlivingregistry@gov.bc.ca. An investigator will contact you.

What level of CPR is required?

First aid providers in B.C. were consulted by the Assisted Living Registry. They recommended that Level 2 is the appropriate CPR skill requirement for assisted living residences.

The **Assisted Living Regulation** is always the best place to find the most up-to-date information about first aid requirements for your assisted living residences. See sections 25-28 and Schedule B.



Emergency Preparedness

What are an operator's responsibilities related to emergency preparedness?

An operator is responsible for:

- Creating an emergency response plan;
- Ensuring all employees are trained in how to carry out the plan, including how to use emergency equipment; and
- Ensuring emergency measures and equipment are in place and in working order.

What is required in an emergency response plan?

Each emergency response plan should include:

- Emergency procedures to be followed to mitigate, respond to and recover from a variety of types of emergencies;
- A clear chain of command that describes who will be the leader if an emergency happens;
- Emergency drills, including their frequency and the procedures to be followed;
- Evacuation planning and procedures, including when to evacuate and when to shelter in place;
- A description of evacuation routes and exits, with specific procedures for high-rise buildings;
- Procedures to follow to assist residents, visitors and employees to evacuate, including those who need extra support;
- A plan with the location for residents to go to if evacuated, e.g., an agreement with a neighbourhood location that it can be used as an evacuation site;

- A way of accounting for residents and employees after an evacuation;
- Procedures for taking direction from provincial emergency planning when a community emergency occurs, such as a forest fire or flood;
- A description of how residents will continue to receive adequate hospitality services and assisted living services during and following an emergency.
- **The plan needs to be reviewed and revised when there is a structural change to the residence; or if residents’ support requirements change significantly.**

What emergency measures and equipment need to be in place?

- Emergency exits and windows for people to use in an emergency;
- An emergency drill system appropriate to residents’ needs and capabilities;
- Posted diagrams of emergency exits throughout the building or floor;
- Evacuation procedures;
- Reliable communication equipment, e.g., a cell phone or a satellite phone in remote areas that is always accessible to employees;
- Fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers that are inspected, tested and maintained in keeping with the manufacturer’s guidelines; and
- Emergency drills.

Is there a standard emergency response plan available for operators?

No, there is no standard emergency preparedness package. Each residence is unique, and the plan must be specific to the residence, the resident population, the community and the assisted living services you provide.

Some resources to assist you in developing your emergency response plan include:

- [Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery BC](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery)
(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery>)
- WorkSafe BC resources on emergency planning, such as [Emergency Response Planning: 12 Tips for an Effective Emergency Response Plan | WorkSafeBC](#). Go to [WorkSafe BC](#) and search for “emergency” to find this and more resources.
(<https://worksafebc.com/>)

Is an opioid overdose response plan needed in the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities class?

The operator must assess whether they have any residents who are at risk of an opioid overdose. Two resources to help are included below:

- [Naloxone Risk Assessment Tool](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/overdose-awareness/naloxone_risk_assessment_-_non-governmental_sectors.pdf) (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/overdose-awareness/naloxone_risk_assessment_-_non-governmental_sectors.pdf)
- [Toward the Heart](https://towardtheheart.com), a harm reduction strategy of the BC Centre for Disease Control. (https://towardtheheart.com)