



SURVIVING SEVERE WEATHER: A DIALOGUE

An opportunity to learn and share skills to stay safe in bad weather and disasters when you live outdoors

What will you do in a weather emergency?

WHAT IS THE SURVIVING SEVERE WEATHER DIALOGUE?

Not having a roof over your head can lead to injury and even death during bad weather and disasters if you don't know how to protect yourself. The Surviving Severe Weather Dialogue brings people together who are living on the streets to share and learn skills to survive bad weather and disasters. At the same time, we invite local emergency management and/or public health officials to ask questions and hear what people have to do to survive the streets. In most communities, these officials have never had the opportunity to hear what it's like to live on the streets in bad weather and disaster. For them, this is an eye-opening experience and can lead to increased efforts to assist people experiencing homelessness during emergencies.

WHAT ELSE CAN I EXPECT FROM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OR PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS?

Like you, the emergency management officials are there to share and learn. Just hearing what people are doing to survive the streets is a great way for them to think about ways to help people experiencing homelessness during bad weather and disasters. We ask them to start the conversation by talking about bad weather and disasters that are most likely to happen in your community. Officials will ask questions about how you protect yourself during bad weather and disasters, what kind of injuries can happen, and what to do if you're hurt. The group will respond to these questions and share stories and tips for staying safe based on what they've learned living outdoors. The official will be asked to listen for red flags (unsafe or risky safety tips) and offer some advice on the safest way to protect yourself. For example, some people might think a bridge is a safe place to hide during a tornado when in fact it can be quite dangerous.

HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN BE PART OF THIS DIALOGUE?

We recommend 15 people or less for each dialogue session. Having a small group gives people more time to share their stories and to ask questions of each other. If more people are interested in participating, we recommend that you plan more than one session.

Having a small group also allows you to arrange the chairs in a big circle or around a big table so that people can see each other while they are talking.

HOW LONG IS THE SESSION?

We recommend a one-hour session for the dialogue.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I WANT TO BRING THE SURVIVING SEVERE WEATHER DIALOGUE TO MY COMMUNITY?

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council will help you set up a session. We will help you find a location, someone to lead the discussion, and even invite the right people from your emergency management or public health agencies. We will also send flyers with tips on staying safe if you are outdoors in bad weather and in a disaster.

If you want to bring a session to your community, call the National Health Care for the Homeless Council at 615-226-2292 and ask for Sabrina Edgington. You can also send an email to sedgington@nhchc.org.

Please contact us at least two months before you want to have this event so that we have plenty of time to make all the necessary arrangements.



This initiative is made possible by grant number U30CS09746 from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care. Its contents do not necessarily represent the official views of HRSA.