

Evacuation Centers

What Is an Evacuation Center?

An evacuation center is designated by Sarasota County Government, and operated in partnership between the County and the Sarasota County School District. A hurricane evacuation center is a facility that provides protection from high winds and storm surge.

Evacuation centers open for the single purpose of protecting life. They do not provide the comfort of your home, and should be considered as a last resort. They do not have generators and, in the event of power loss, will lose air conditioning. They do offer basic food and water needs.

Where Do I Find Current Information?

For current evacuation information, tune to your local television and radio stations, including Access Sarasota (TV), operated by Sarasota County Government as channel 19 on Comcast and channel 32 on Frontier cable systems. Additionally, call the Sarasota County Contact Center at 941-861-5000 and visit the County website at scgov.net.

Do I Need to Go?

You may be able to shelter-in-place if you meet certain criteria, such as:

- Your home is located outside of a flood zone
- Your home was built under the 2002 Building Code or built after 2002
- You do not live in a mobile home or recreational vehicle (RV), regardless of location

What Do I Need to Take?

Take your disaster supply kit plus the following:

- Sleeping bag, pillow, blanket, air mattress, cot
- Towel, wash cloth, toilet paper, personal hygiene items
- Extra clothing, shoes, hearing aides
- Extra batteries and eyeglasses
- Medications (and know their expiration dates)
- Folding chair or lawn chair
- Snacks; special dietary foods
- Quiet games, books, puzzles, etc.
- Important documents, such as driver's license, medical information, deeds, insurance policies, passports, property inventories, etc.

If evacuating with children, remember to take the following:

- Baby food, cereal and formula
- Healthy snacks, juice boxes
- Baby bottles and baby spoons
- Toddler potty seat
- Diapers, diaper wipes and pull-ups, changing pads, and rash ointment
- Infant bathing basin
- Lightweight blankets
- Portable crib
- Small toys and quiet games, books, puzzles and extra batteries

Do not use your pet as an excuse to **NOT** evacuate. Sarasota County allows dogs and cats at all evacuation centers.

If evacuating with pets, remember to take the following:

- Proof of current vaccination records
- Current rabies tag/license
- Appropriate-size pet crate
- Leash, collar or harness
- Food for at least 2 weeks, treats, medications, ample water supply
- Pee pads and/or cat litter with scoop, and plastic trash bags for waste
- Non-electric can opener for food
- Toys
- Photo of you with your pet

You are responsible for your pet while in the shelter. Consider microchipping your pet.

What Should I Expect with COVID-19 Guidelines?

- Health screening before entering
- 40 square feet of space per person
- 60 square feet is available for one medically dependent person (MDP) plus caregiver and necessary items
- Prior registration required for MDP
- No more than 10 people per classroom
- Enhanced, frequent surface cleanings
- Smaller groups and social distance space in food lines

Bring your own face coverings and hand sanitizer.

What Is a Medically Dependent Evacuation Center?

Medically dependent shelters are for Sarasota County residents with qualifying medical needs, such as medical equipment requiring electricity. The shelter will accommodate the medically dependent person, one caregiver and all necessary items.

You will need to register in advance for this program for inclusion on the county's registry for transportation and sheltering. To apply and to learn more about this program, visit scgov.net and search for "medical needs" or call 941-861-5000.

Prepare Now

Remember, preparation is key to survival. Take the time to gather all your supplies and documents, create your plan and take care of all the necessary preparations. If needed, register early for a medically dependent shelter. And remember: evacuation centers should be your last resort.

Now is the time to prepare to stay safe.

RESOURCES

- Prepare a storm kit: blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/tag/storm-season-2020/
- Storm, shelter information: scgov.net/government/departments/emergency-services