



Planning assumption: Your rescue is your own first responder for the first 72 hours of a disaster. Foster homes are satellite shelters. Outside help may be delayed. Every plan must focus on animal accountability, communication, and self-sufficiency.

1

RESCUE PROFILE

- ☐ Rescue name and legal organization name documented
- ☐ Service area documented — list all parishes and counties serve
- ☐ Average daily animal census identified
- ☐ Number of active foster homes documented
- ☐ Number of active volunteers documented
- ☐ Number and capacity of available transport vehicles documented
- ☐ Primary hazards for your area identified — *hurricane, flood, tornado, wildfire, extreme heat, ice storm, etc.*
- ☐ Rescue type documented — *foster-based, facility-based, or hybrid*
- ☐ Tax status and legal registration documented — *needed for grants and reimbursement*

2

RESCUE COORDINATION TEAM

- ☐ Primary coordinator identified — name, cell, backup number
- ☐ Backup coordinator identified — knows full plan, has full access
- ☐ Second backup coordinator identified — three deep is the goal
- ☐ Foster coordinator identified
- ☐ Transport coordinator identified
- ☐ Communications and social media coordinator identified
- ☐ Veterinary liaison identified
- ☐ Volunteer coordinator identified
- ☐ Supply and logistics coordinator identified
- ☐ Primary and backup contact methods documented for every role
- ☐ Phone tree documented — who calls whom, in what order
- ☐ All coordinators have copies of this plan

3

COMMUNICATION PLAN

- ☐ Foster group messaging platform established and tested — *e.g. GroupMe, WhatsApp, Signal*
- ☐ Phone tree documented — written, not just remembered
- ☐ Printed contact list created and updated at least quarterly
- ☐ Backup communication method identified for areas with poor cell service
- ☐ 24-hour foster check-in protocol established and communicated
- ☐ Process for tracking and following up on non-responsive fosters documented
- ☐ Social media login shared with backup admin
- ☐ Out-of-area contact identified for relaying messages if local systems fail
- ☐ Check-in message template written and saved — *“All safe, animals OK, staying put” is enough*

4

ANIMAL CENSUS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ☐ Current animal census maintained and updated weekly
- ☐ Census includes: animal name, species, breed, color, microchip number
- ☐ Census includes: current foster location and foster contact info
- ☐ Census includes: medical conditions and daily medications
- ☐ Census includes: brachycephalic, senior, and medically fragile animals flagged — *these animals need extra heat and transport planning*
- ☐ Census includes: evacuation priority level — *Priority 1 = medical/meds, Priority 2 = young/fragile, Priority 3 = healthy adults*
- ☐ Current photo available for every animal — stored on phone and printed backup
- ☐ Census stored digitally with backup access and in printed form
- ☐ Backup person has access to census records at all times
- ☐ Weekly update reminder set — *e.g. every Sunday*

5

FOSTER NETWORK PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Every foster home has a written disaster plan on file
- ☐ Every foster has a 72-hour supply kit for their foster animals
- ☐ Every foster has a confirmed evacuation destination
- ☐ Every foster has transportation or an identified backup driver
- ☐ Foster Home Profile Sheet completed for every household
- ☐ High-risk foster locations identified — *flood zones, fire zones, mobile homes, areas with poor roads*
- ☐ Foster homes without reliable transportation flagged and backup arranged
- ☐ Foster homes with special needs animals identified and given priority support
- ☐ Five-Question Readiness Check completed with every active foster annually
- ☐ Foster Disaster Guide distributed to every current foster
- ☐ New fosters receive disaster orientation at placement
- ☐ Fosters briefed before every hurricane season — *May/June annually*

6

TRANSPORTATION AND EVACUATION

- ☐ Evacuation triggers defined in writing — *no guessing required*
- ☐ Primary evacuation destination confirmed — *contact name, address, capacity*
- ☐ Backup evacuation destination confirmed
- ☐ Driver roster established — *minimum three drivers*
- ☐ Vehicle and transport capacity documented — *number of crates per vehicle*
- ☐ Dog crates inventoried — *count, sizes, condition*
- ☐ Cat crates and carriers inventoried separately
- ☐ Load order plan established — *medical and fragile animals load first*
- ☐ Estimated total time to evacuate all animals calculated
- ☐ Mutual aid agreements (MOUs) signed with at least two partner rescues
- ☐ MOU identifies partner rescue by name, contact, and specific role
- ☐ Transport partner registered and contact confirmed before disaster season
- ☐ Fuel plan established — *fill vehicles when Watch is issued, not after*



7

SHELTER-IN-PLACE PLANNING

- ☐ Safest area of facility identified — *interior room, lowest flood risk*
- ☐ Seven-day supply of food available per animal
- ☐ Seven-day supply of medications available
- ☐ Water storage plan established — *1 gallon per animal per day, minimum 3 days stored*
- ☐ Generator available, fueled, and tested
- ☐ Generator operator identified and trained
- ☐ Backup power options identified if no generator available
- ☐ Extreme heat contingency documented — *fans, ice packs, wet towels, cooled room access*
- ☐ Freezing cold contingency documented — *portable heaters, extra blankets, heated room plan*
- ☐ Brachycephalic, senior, and medical animals have a specific temperature plan — *these animals cannot tolerate 85°F+ even briefly*
- ☐ Critical supplies stored in accessible, labeled locations
- ☐ Supply cache reviewed and restocked every three months

8

FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Emergency fund established — *minimum \$300 cash accessible*
- ☐ Emergency credit or debit card identified and accessible to coordinator
- ☐ Cash on hand for disasters — *ATMs may be offline for days*
- ☐ Donation platform tested — *process a \$1 test donation annually*
- ☐ Expense tracking process established — *receipts kept from day one*
- ☐ Grant and reimbursement documentation process established
- ☐ Financial backup contact identified if primary coordinator is unavailable

9

EXTERNAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

- ☐ Local emergency management contact identified — *name and direct number*
- ☐ Primary veterinary partner identified — *disaster arrangement pre-confirmed*
- ☐ Emergency/after-hours vet identified
- ☐ State Animal Response Team contact identified
- ☐ AIM / BISSELL Pet Foundation contact saved — info@bissellpetfoundation.org
- ☐ Animal transport partner identified and pre-registered
- ☐ At least two neighboring rescue partners identified for mutual aid
- ☐ Regional humane society contact confirmed
- ☐ Donation and supply partners identified — *food banks, Tractor Supply, PetSmart, etc.*
- ☐ Overflow volunteer organization identified — *for spontaneous volunteers who arrive unannounced*

10

SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS & DONATED SUPPLIES

- ☐ Volunteer orientation script written — *15-minute briefing ready to use*
- ☐ Volunteer intake log prepared — *clipboard ready at your entrance*
- ☐ Volunteer tiers defined — *known volunteers, vetted walk-ins, unvetted public*
- ☐ Rule established: no unannounced volunteer has direct animal contact without orientation
- ☐ Public needs post template written and ready to update every 24-48 hours
- ☐ Supplies manager role identified — *one person controls all incoming donations*
- ☐ Storage capacity limit set — *know when to redirect overflow to a partner org*
- ☐ Overflow partner identified to receive donated supplies you cannot use
- ☐ Donation intake log prepared

11

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

- ☐ Social media administrator assigned — *has login access*
- ☐ Backup social media admin identified
- ☐ Pre-scripted disaster messages prepared for each phase — *Watch, active event, recovery*
- ☐ Donation request templates created for five scenarios
- ☐ Volunteer request templates created
- ☐ Public update schedule established — *at minimum every 24 hours during active events*
- ☐ What NOT to post guidelines documented — *no animal photos without coordinator approval*

12

RECOVERY AND CONTINUITY

- ☐ Criteria for resuming normal intake defined — *supplies restocked, all animals accounted for, fosters stable*
- ☐ Disaster expense tracking process established from day one
- ☐ Damage assessment process documented — *photo documentation protocol*
- ☐ Lost animal and reunification procedures established
- ☐ Supply restocking plan identified — *vendors, quantities, timeline*
- ☐ Grant and reimbursement documentation process established
- ☐ Foster relief plan established — *process for replacing exhausted or displaced fosters*
- ☐ Mental health resources identified for staff and volunteers after a disaster
- ☐ After-action review scheduled within 30 days of every disaster event
- ☐ Plan updated after every review — *dated and version-controlled*

13

ANNUAL PREPAREDNESS CALENDAR

Complete these tasks on schedule — do not wait for a disaster to find the gaps.

- ☐ **JANUARY** — Review and re-sign annual foster agreements. Update insurance.
- ☐ **FEBRUARY** — Audit animal census. Update all contact lists.
- ☐ **MARCH** — Drive evacuation routes. Inspect crates and carriers. Test generator.
- ☐ **APRIL** — Call all mutual aid partners. Confirm agreements are still active.
- ☐ **MAY** — Full hurricane preparedness review. Restock supply cache. Brief all fosters.
- ☐ **JUNE** — Full census update. Test group messaging system. Review activation checklist.
- ☐ **JULY** — Mid-season supply check. Review heat protocol.
- ☐ **AUGUST** — Peak season check. Confirm backup coordinator availability.
- ☐ **SEPTEMBER** — Test communication system. Test donation platform.
- ☐ **OCTOBER** — Begin winter prep. Close out any disaster expense records.
- ☐ **NOVEMBER** — Swap summer supplies for winter. Review cold protocols.
- ☐ **DECEMBER** — Full plan review. Renew mutual aid agreements. Retake self-assessment.

RESCUE RESILIENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Answer honestly. Every NO is a planning task. Score: 10-12 YES = strong. 7-9 YES = developing. 6 or fewer YES = act now.

☐ YES	☐ NO	Can we account for every animal within two hours?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Can we contact every foster home within one hour?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Can we operate independently for 72 hours without outside help?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Can we evacuate all animals within six hours?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Do we have at least two trained backup coordinators?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Does every foster home have a written disaster plan?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Do we have signed mutual aid agreements with at least two partners?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Do we have transportation and enough crates for every animal?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Do we have a phone tree documented in writing?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Do we have emergency funds or a credit card accessible?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Has our supply cache been checked in the last three months?
☐ YES	☐ NO	Have all fosters been briefed this calendar year?

ACTION PLAN

List the specific steps needed to complete your emergency plan.

#	ACTION NEEDED	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Rescue Name: _____ Date Completed: _____ Version: _____ Reviewed By: _____