

# Special Needs Shelter

Florida Department of Health  
Broward County

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# Special Needs Shelter (SpNS)

Shelters may be activated during an emergency event to provide mass care for people who cannot safely remain in their home. Special Needs Shelters are designed to meet the needs of persons who require assistance that exceed services provided at a general population shelter. Special Needs Shelters are intended to provide, to the extent possible under emergency conditions, an environment that can sustain an individual's level of health.

# SpNS

- Florida Statutes Chapter 381.0303
- Shared responsibility between local Emergency Management (EM), County Health Departments (CHDs) and Children's Medical Services (CMS)
- Part of CHD All Hazards Response Plan and County Comprehensive Emergency Management plan
- Function of ESF-8 Health and Medical at Emergency Operations Center during activation
- Ongoing planning, training and exercising

# SpNS Eligibility Criteria

- Has special medical needs
- Needs care that exceeds aid provided at general shelters
- Has impairments or disabilities that are medically stable
- Is dependent upon a health care professional to perform daily assessment and administer care
- Requires minimal assistance
- Depends on oxygen therapy
- Is medically dependent on uninterrupted electricity
- Is mentally or cognitive limitations requiring assistance and is accompanied with a full-time caregiver
- Requires fulltime care who is accompanied by an appropriate fulltime caregiver
- Is a hospice client if accompanied by caregiver or hospice nurse

# SpNS Registration

- Apply to local EM or CHD
- Application includes demographics information, transportation needs, medical information
- Triageed by Registered Nurses to SpNS, Red Cross General Shelter or higher level of care
- Encourage residents to make alternate arrangements
- Urge residents to pre-register

# How can we help our neighbors?

- Inform people who might be eligible about SpNS
- Assist in making alternative alternate arrangements i.e. generator, family out of the area
- Encourage pre-registration
- Provide transportation
- Act as a caregiver to a friend or family member at SpNS
- Serve as a caretaker for a pet while owner is sheltered
- Provide information after the storm about property damage, electricity