

# Special Needs Populations Annex Carbon County, Montana



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## **I. Introduction**

In the event of a disaster or emergency in Carbon County, regardless of the cause, there may be individuals with special needs that require assistance over and above that of the general population. These individuals have a variety of needs and are located both in communities and in rural areas across the entire county. The goal of this annex is to describe the most expeditious and safest process to ensure residents of Carbon County with special needs are assisted.

## **II. Purpose**

This annex provides for the effective identification of and emergency response to ensure the safety and care of individuals with special needs during a disaster or emergency.

## **III. Legal Authorities**

Special needs populations can be affected by natural or person-caused disasters and emergencies, but would not cause a disaster. Legal authority for managing a specific type of emergency that could affect special needs individuals would be found under the hazard-specific annex. Additional legal considerations include:

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Privacy Rule in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that health information not be used or shared without written permission or as allowed by law. There are provisions in the HIPAA for sharing health information when necessary and the federal government recognizes that being able to coordinate health information appropriately will help save lives.

In all circumstances, the Privacy Rule allows for information to be disclosed for treatment, payment and health care operations without an authorization from the individual. If the President declares an emergency or disaster and the Secretary of Health and Human Services declares a public health emergency, the Secretary may waive sanctions and penalties against a covered hospital that does not comply with certain provisions of the Privacy Rule. Waivers are limited and apply only for limited periods of time.

According to the Health and Human Services (HHS), "*Emergency preparedness and recovery planners may seek protected health information to ensure that in an emergency, individuals can receive the assistance or care they need. In addition, during a severe disaster, those involved in disaster relief efforts may seek protected health information to provide persons displaced and in need of*

*health care ready access to services, and the means of contracting family and caregivers.” (Source [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov))*

- Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Title 37 – Department of Health and Human Services
- Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD) #5 and #8, 2003
- Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Title 10, Chapter 3 – Disaster and Emergency Services
- Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Title 50 – Health and Safety
- Montana Executive Order #17-04, Office of the Governor, 2004
- Social Security Act of 1935, as amended

## **IV. Situation and Assumptions**

### **A. Situation**

Individuals with a variety of special needs reside in Carbon County. People who might need extra assistance during a disaster or emergency are widely-distributed across Carbon County. Some of these individuals live in one of the five incorporated communities while others are spread across rural areas of the county. For purposes of this plan, it is most important to understand approximately how many individuals could require assistance during a disaster or emergency, their general location, and what resources are available.

The National Response Framework has identified the following groups of individuals as those who may have additional needs before, during, or after an incident. These needs may be related to maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision, and medical care.

- Disabled
- Elderly
- Children
- Live in institutions
- From diverse cultures
- Limited English Proficiency
- Transportation disadvantaged

Carbon County was home to 1,532 persons over the age of five years with disabilities during the 2000 Census. This population was broken down as follows.

**Table 1. Disability of Civilian  
Noninstitutionalized Persons in Carbon Co. 2000**

Population 16-64 years	4,495
With a mobility limitation	50
With a self-care limitation	222
With a work disability—in labor force	209
With a work disability—prevented from working	236
Population 65 years and over	1,584
With a mobility limitation	305
With a self-care limitation	197

(Source: factfinder.census.gov)

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, individuals 65 and older made up an estimated 16.7 percent of the population in 2008. Based on a county population of 9,657 for 2008, there would be 1,613 individuals aged 65 and over in Carbon County. U.S. Health and Human Services estimates that approximately 40% of the population aged 65 and over have one or more disabilities. Not all elderly individuals would need extra assistance during an emergency. Some have their own transportation, no impairment, and many have friends and family who could assist them if needed.

All individuals in the county that receive home health care do so through Beartooth Hospital and Health Center. The number of patients receiving these services is shown in the table below.

Three services provide home oxygen delivery throughout the county. These services are all based in Billings; Billings Clinic Oxygen Services, Lincare, and Community Home Oxygen. Together, the three firms were serving 160 patients across the county as of February 2010. Under the Health Information Patient Protection Act (HIPAA) the companies are not allowed to disclose their patient lists. Lincare delivers to patients once a week, Community Home Oxygen delivers once every two weeks, and Billings Clinic Oxygen Services delivers once a month. Each of these companies has an emergency plan and but would know when a patient was last serviced and at what point during an emergency or disaster that they would need additional oxygen.

**Table 2. Locations of Special Needs Individuals**

Facility	Location	Apprx # of individuals	Concern(s)	Comments
Cedarwood Villa	1 South Oakes Red Lodge	36-76	Age Medical Condition Cognitive	Has 14-passenger van, agreement with BHC.
Tender Nest	215 N. Cooper Red Lodge	Up to 15	Age Medical	Have own capability to transport all or most of residents
Beartooth Industries	21 <sup>st</sup> and White N Cooper, Red Lodge	2 group homes @ 8 each, 10 living independently	Mental Emotional Mobility	B.I. has own care and evac plan including facilities in Laurel and Billings
Beartooth Hospital and Health Center	600 W. 21 <sup>st</sup> Red Lodge/ US Hwy 212 Red Lodge	10-25 in current facility 10 in new facility	Age Medical	Has 14-passenger van. Majority are ambulatory to some degree. Agreement for school buses.
BHC Home care and Hospice	Various	40-60	Age, Medical Psycho-social Mobility Bedridden	Patients are spread throughout the county
Beartooth Children's Center	114 N. Villard Red Lodge	35-48 (youngest are 2 yrs)	Youth	Have access to BHC's van if not in use.
Licensed Daycares	Various	Bridger 12 Joliet 6 Red Lodge 48 Roberts 12	Infants, Youth	Contact through Human Resources Development Council (HRDC)
Frontier Apts	S. Adams Red Lodge	20 (estimated)	Elderly, Mobility Without transportation	No shared transportation
Campbell Apts	4 <sup>th</sup> Street, Bridger	8-10 units	Elderly, Mobility Without transportation	No shared transportation
Pleasant View Apts	Hobbs St. Joliet	8 units	Elderly, Mobility Without transportation	No shared transportation
St. Johns Retirement Housing	Hwy 212 North of Red Lodge	Unknown	Elderly, Mobility, Without transp.	To be constructed Will likely have van

## B. Assumptions

1. Individuals who would need extra assistance during a disaster or emergency are located throughout the county.
2. The largest concentrations of individuals in the county that might need extra assistance during a disaster are located in Cedarwood Villa and the Beartooth Hospital and Health Center.
3. At any given time the number of mobility or self-care disabled in the county is approximately 15% of the population.
4. Some of the special needs individuals in the county that are not living in some type of care facility have family, friends, or neighbors that are aware of their situation and if unable to help them directly during an emergency, would notify authorities about the need for assistance.
5. It is highly unlikely, with the possible exception of a long-duration winter storm, that the entire county would be affected at one time by a disaster or emergency.

## V. Concept of Operations

Individuals with special needs could be affected by any of the natural or person-caused disasters--most likely in small numbers. Addressing their needs will be a support function under the NIMS organization established for the incident.

1. Facilities that house special needs' populations have their own emergency and evacuation plans. These are Beartooth Hospital and Health Center, Cedarwood Villa, Tender Nest, and Beartooth Industries.
2. The three home oxygen providers in the county have emergency plans and the means to identify and contact each of their patients.
3. Due to the Privacy Rule in HIPAA, communications with certain individuals will need to occur through appropriate health care channels.
4. Public notification in combination with friends, family, and neighbors would be used to get information to and check on elderly individuals that are living alone and may need assistance.
5. Evacuation and relocation of some individuals would require specialized facilities available only in either Stillwater or Yellowstone County.
6. The federal government prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

## VI. Responsibilities

There is no such thing as a "special needs disaster," therefore, responsibilities of the various functions would remain in tact as described under each of the hazard specific responses in the other annexes. In addition to those responsibilities, there would be other parties involved in assisting special needs individuals described below.

**Table 3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Agency/Org.	Primary Roles and Responsibilities
American Red Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in feeding and sheltering as necessary</li> <li>• Provide status information to Incident Command</li> </ul>
Beartooth Children’s Center and daycares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelter in place or oversee evacuation of children</li> <li>• Notify parents of status</li> <li>• Discharge children to parents</li> </ul>
Beartooth Hospital and Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelter in place or oversee evacuation of individuals from hospital (and nursing home as appropriate)</li> <li>• Contact and support home health patients’ needs</li> <li>• Contact and inform patients’ families</li> <li>• Assist Cedarwood Villa with patient care and/or transportation as per MOU</li> <li>• Request assistance from Incident Command as needed</li> </ul>
Beartooth Humane Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in care and sheltering of service animals and individuals’ pets</li> </ul>
Beartooth Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support clientele during incident including shelter in place and/or evacuation to other facilities</li> <li>• Inform families and Incident Command of status</li> </ul>
EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in transportation of individuals with medical needs</li> <li>• Provide medical services at staging, sheltering locations</li> </ul>
Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help select staging and sheltering locations if evacuation is necessary</li> <li>• Notify state DES of situation</li> <li>• Coordinate state or military resource requests</li> </ul>
Fire Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform rescue and life safety operations</li> <li>• Assist in delivery of oxygen or medicines as requested</li> </ul>
Law Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct welfare checks as requested</li> <li>• Provide coroner services as needed</li> </ul>
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide resources to address emotional needs of affected individuals related to stress from the incident and/or evacuation</li> </ul>
Nursing home(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelter in place or guide evacuation of own facilities as needed</li> <li>• Request assistance of Incident Command as needed</li> <li>• Coordinate medical needs with hospital</li> <li>• Notify Incident Command of evacuation status</li> <li>• Notify Incident Command of resource availability (buses, kitchens, etc.)</li> </ul>
Private Oxygen Providers (Billings Clinic, Community Home Oxygen, Lincare)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement emergency plans</li> <li>• Contact patients</li> <li>• Make deliveries or request assistance to make deliveries of oxygen</li> </ul>
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify needs, locate and help obtain supplies such as durable medical equipment (walkers, wheelchairs, etc.)</li> </ul>

## VII. Execution

### A. Initiation

This annex will be implemented as a supplement to other hazard-specific annexes whenever there is a disaster or emergency that could affect special needs individuals. This is likely to include any disaster or emergency that is not strictly limited in duration, location, and scope.

### B. Notification

Contacts with potentially affected special needs individuals will be made as follows:

**Table 4. Notification of Special Needs Individuals**

Population	Who will notify
Beartooth Industries clients	Beartooth Industries staff/446-1722
Cedarwood Villa	Cedarwood Villa staff/446-2525
Children in daycare	Beartooth Children's Center/446-1919, Human Resources Development Council/247-4720
Home health and hospice patients	Beartooth Hospital and Health Care/446-0050
Home oxygen patients	Private providers—Billings Clinic/238-2500, Community Home Oxygen/245-9792, Lincare/248-1390
Hospital patients	BHHC 446-2345
Elderly living independently	Public notification Friends and family
Tender Nest residents	Tender Nest staff/446-2777

### C. Transportation

Cedarwood Villa, Beartooth Hospital and Health Center, and Beartooth Industries all have multiple-passenger vans for transporting their respective patients and clients. Evacuation of any one facility, for example if a gas leak forced evacuation of the hospital, could most likely be accomplished with these facilities' existing transportation resources in addition to ambulances for those with acute medical needs. Ambulances from the other two districts in the county, Joliet and the Clark's Fork services, could be called if additional transportation was needed for hospital patients or bedridden individuals. Evacuation of the community of Red Lodge would probably require additional transportation resources—available and under agreement with the hospital in the form of school buses.

Tender Nest residents would be transported by staff on duty. For children in daycare, parents would be contacted to pick up their children. As a back-up, school buses could also be used for this population if necessary.

#### D. Sheltering

Beartooth Industries has facilities in Billings that could house clients from Red Lodge during an emergency. Cedarwood Villa has facilities in Columbus and Billings that could take Red Lodge residents. Beartooth Hospital patients and nursing home residents that could not be discharged could be accommodated at either Billings Clinic or St. Vincent's Healthcare in Billings. Tender Nest residents could be transported to facilities in Laurel and Billings. Mental health services may be needed for some of these individuals at the receiving location due to the stresses of evacuation if that became necessary.

If shelters were established for any reason, they would need to be accessible and have accessible toilet and bathing facilities.

### **VIII. Annex Maintenance**

Maintenance of this annex is the responsibility of Carbon County Disaster and Emergency Services. The annex will be reviewed annually, preferably with the Local Emergency Planning Committee, at the same time as the basic plan and other annexes. Changes to this annex will be documented in the Record of Changes found at the beginning of the plan.



Beartooth Children's Center, Red Lodge

## References

### HIPAA Decision Tool

During a disaster situation, responders should use the Decision Tool: HIPAA Privacy Rule and Disclosures for Public Health. The tool, found at the end of this annex can also be accessed online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/special/emergency/emergencyprepdisclosure.pdf>.

### Interim Emergency Management Planning Guide for Special Needs Populations, CPG 301, FEMA, 2008

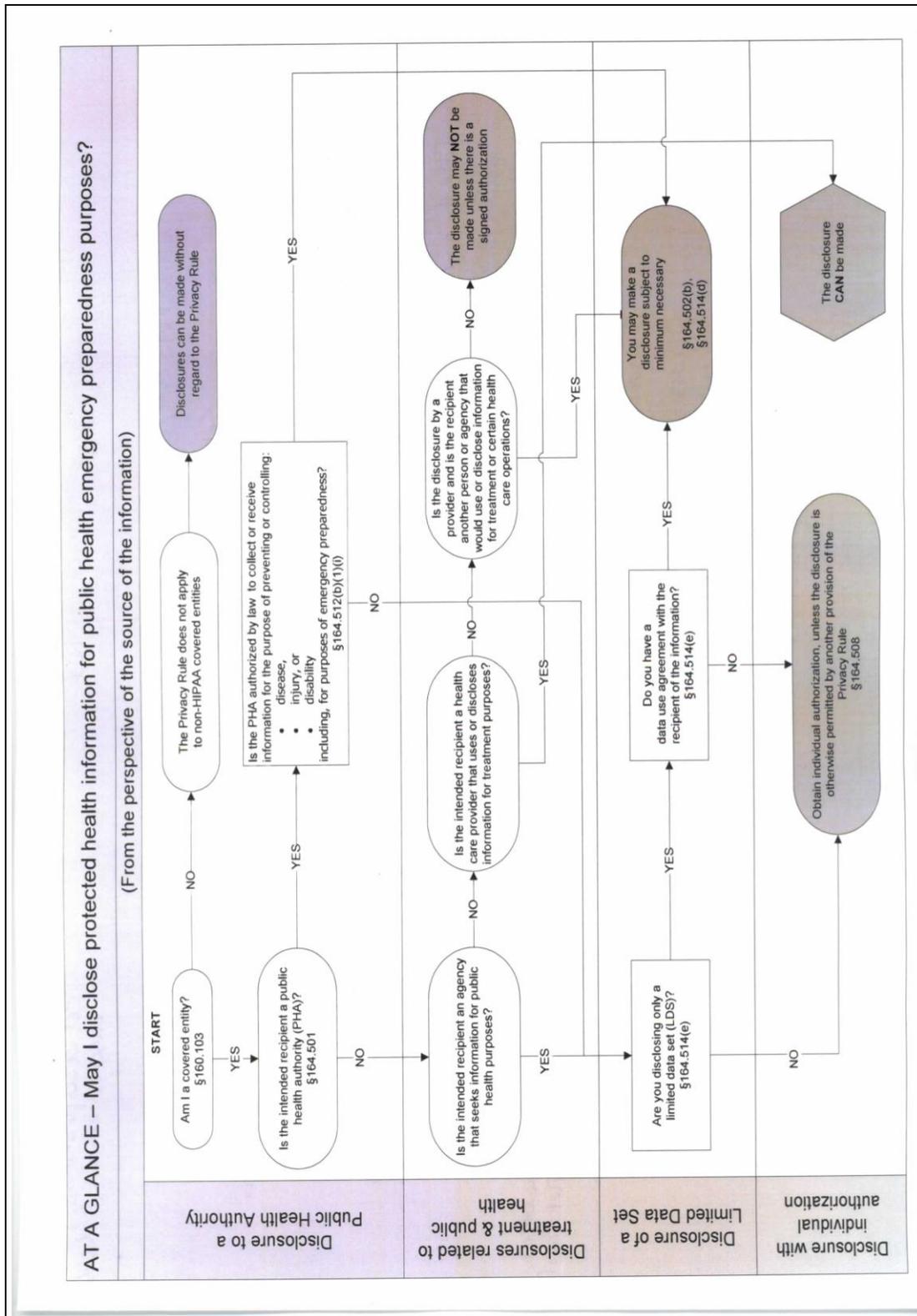


Figure 1: HIPAA Privacy Rule Decision Tool