

**Disaster Resources**  
**Los Angeles County and U.S**

**Los Angeles County**  
**Department of Mental Health**

ACCESS Center  
Available 24/7 including holidays  
1(800) 854-7771

**Other Resources**

**The American Red Cross**  
Redcross.org

**CERT-Los Angeles Emergency Survival Program**  
<http://www.cert-la.com/esp.htm>

**Los Angeles County Department of Public Health**  
[lapublichealth.org](http://lapublichealth.org)

**Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness**  
(323) 478-8000

**Department on Disability**  
[disability.lacity.org](http://disability.lacity.org)

**Los Angeles County Information Line**  
Dial 211

**County of Los Angeles**  
**Board of Supervisors**



**Hilda L. Solis**  
First District

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**

Second District

**Sheila Kuehl**

Third District

**Janice Hahn**

Fourth District

**Kathryn Barger**

Fifth District

**Sachi A. Hamai**

CEO

**Los Angeles County**  
**Department of Mental Health**  
**Community and Government Relations Division**  
**Public Information Officer**  
550 South Vermont Avenue, 6th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
213-738-3700  
[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)



**Coping with a Disaster**



*Nurturing Hope, Promoting Wellness  
and Supporting Recovery*

**Emergency Outreach Bureau**  
**Disaster Services Unit**

550 South Vermont Avenue, 10th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
213-738-4919  
[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)

**Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.**  
**Director**



## County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health

### Mission Statement

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

### General Information

Disasters may strike at any time and may leave people feeling frightened, upset and powerless.

Firestorms, earthquakes, flood or man-made disasters are drastic and intense experiences that can cause major interruptions in the natural flow of life.

The emotional and physical impact can be overwhelming, causing reactions that may otherwise not exist. Reactions to these events may show up immediately or they may appear weeks, even months later.

### The Role of Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

The department of Mental Health will respond to the psychological needs of survivors and their families, first responders and their families, the community at large and maintain continuity of care in its clinics.

### How can we prepare for a disaster now?

- Have a family plan.
- Identify a meeting location for the whole family to meet.
- Know what your place of employment will do in the event of a disaster.
- Familiarize yourself with your children's school emergency plans.

- If you have a family member or a friend with a disability and/or access and functional needs, prepare in advance to meet those needs.
- Prepare an emergency kit to include two weeks of food, water, prescription medication and other over-the-counter medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen for fever or pain.
- The kit should also include: list of medications and dosages, list of important phone numbers, cell phone chargers, flash lights, battery operated radios, batteries, and other items that are important for your basic survival needs.
- Familiarize yourself with your local cities/counties' emergency plans and protocols.

### What Should I do During and After a Disaster?

In the event of and following a disaster, maintain as many familiar routines as possible. People derive a sense of security from established patterns. Provide reassurance to your loved ones (children especially require physical contact, comfort and affection). An emotionally supportive environment can minimize the negative effects of disturbing events. If you have a family member or friend with a disability and/or access and functional needs, have a plan in place that accommodates those needs. Keep yourself updated with the event as it unfolds.

### Immediate Reactions

- Fear and anxiety about the safety and well-being of loved ones, friends and co-workers.
- Trauma reactions such as fearfulness, numbness, jumpiness, sleep and concentration problems, and replaying images and sounds.

### Immediate Needs

- Physical need for warmth, safety, rest, fluids and food.
- Need for connection with loved ones and support system.

## Coping with the Event

- Talk opening about feelings of fear, anxiety & irritability
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Engage in physical activity
- Make time for relaxation— encourage contact with friends and rehearse safety measures.

### Long-term Impact

The emotional stress may go beyond the immediate impact of the initial destruction. Disasters affect individuals emotionally, may change relationships, disrupt work, and cause financial worries. Additional stressors include increased irritability, a feeling of exhaustion, illness, emotional problems and often, survivor's guilt. If these reactions continue, seek professional help.

### ACCESS CENTER HOTLINE

1-800 854-7771

### Accessing Special Services

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may call the following number for information and referral to appropriate mental health services.

**562-651-2549 TDD/TTY**