

**Cottonwood, Inc.
Policies and Procedures**

SECTION: Residential

POLICY NO: 30-003

SUBJECT: Severe Weather and Tornado Safety and Evacuation

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 1988

Policy:

It is the policy of Cottonwood, Inc. to provide a complete and comprehensive plan in case of emergency. This procedure will be followed in the event of a severe storm or tornado.

Procedures:

1. Shelter plans will be posted in a central location in each site leased or owned by Cottonwood, Inc.
2. When severe weather is threatening, the staff member responsible for that site will monitor weather conditions with a battery-operated radio.
3. When a severe weather watch or tornado watch is issued, the responsible staff person will monitor the safety of the consumers by asking them to stay in the immediate area.
4. When a tornado warning is issued for Lawrence or Douglas County the staff person monitoring the radio will announce that a tornado warning is in effect and instruct all to take cover in designated areas, as suggested by the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and outlined in the posted evacuation plans.
5. A head count will be taken to determine all consumers are present.
6. All houses will have a battery-operated radio to assist in monitoring weather conditions. No one should leave the designated areas until an "all clear" signal has been issued by the National Weather Service.
7. It is important to remain calm at all times. Consumer safety and the safety of staff is vitally important.
8. In the event the site is damaged to the extent that it is not habitable, emergency housing will be provided at other residential sites. No one will be allowed to enter a damaged owned or leased site until civil authorities have deemed it safe.
9. Tornado drills must be conducted monthly at each provider controlled site by a staff member. This person must complete an Emergency Drill form and route it to Coordinators and the Director with regular monthly paperwork. Problems encountered during drills and suggestions for addressing them will be documented on the Emergency Drill form.

10. Individuals receiving SIL services and/or living in privately owned/leased sites will review and/or practice safety procedures as required by individual need and environment.
11. In the event of an actual tornado, a phone tree will be implemented to attempt to contact all sites to assess damage and address any difficulties. ERT procedures will be followed.
12. If in a vehicle, seek cover in the nearest available shelter (churches, fire stations, group home, hospital, business, etc.) If you are in the path of an approaching tornado, exit the vehicle and seek shelter in a ditch. Note: Lawrence has no public shelters.
13. When in a business or other location follow the instructions of the responsible person in charge.