STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
Residential Care Services • P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

August 4, 2026

HCLA: ALF #2026-031
HCLA: AFH #2026-030
HCLA: ESF #2026-022
HCLA: CCRSS #2026-015
HCLA: NH #2026-029
HCLA: ICF/IID #2026-009
Emergency Evacuation Reporting

Dear Provider/Administrator:

Residential Care Services (RCS) reminded providers in Dear Provider Letter 016-008 about their responsibility to be prepared for emergencies that may require evacuation of staff, residents, and clients. RCS asked them to report to the department immediately when they were evacuating their facility/home to reduce the number of agencies contacting them. This letter is an additional reminder.

Fire season is well underway. Washington is experiencing dry weather, active large wildfires, and heavy smoke. This season is outpacing the past with thousands of acres burnt, structures destroyed and lives displaced. Our highest priority in the event of a major emergency is the health and safety of you, your staff, and the long-term care residents you serve. Make sure you take the necessary precautions to be safe.

In the event of an emergency, the County Sheriff or other authority for your area assigns an evacuation level and determines when:

Level 1: READY - Current & projected threats from approaching fire(s) are severe.

Level 2: SET – Significant risk exists. You should either voluntarily relocate to a shelter or go with family/friends outside the area or be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

Level 3: GO! – Imminent danger exists and threatens your life and safety. You should leave immediately.

Reminder
Be aware they may direct you to evacuate immediately in an emergency. We know that during an evacuation, you and your staff are busy responding to multiple agencies including emergency response authorities for your area. To reduce the number of agencies contacting you, we ask you to inform the department immediately when you are evacuating your facility. Report online using Residential Care Services Online Reporting Portal or call **1-800-562-6078**. Include this information in your report:

- Date/time of evacuation (When?)
- Method of evacuation (Who? How? What?)
- Number of residents(s) (Who?)
- Residence physical address (Where?)
- Physical address of location to which residents were evacuated (Where? If a licensed facility/home, provide name and address)
- Date/time of estimated return to primary residence (When?)
- Plan to ensure the continuity of care (How?)
- Any special needs, e.g., ventilators? (Describe)
- Any injuries, casualties? Property damage? Other pertinent information? (Describe)

The above information can be found on Home and Community Living Administration Emergency Evacuations Reporting website. Link: Emergency Evacuations Reporting | DSHS. Please take time to educate your staff about this reporting requirement. If we do not hear from you when your area authorities issue an evacuation notice, we will contact you for a report and evacuation information. If you recently evacuated and did not report, please make a report.

Local public safety officials, County Sheriff or emergency management authorities will let you know when it is safe to return. They check that active fires, hot spots, or immediate dangers are fully put out and down power lines and trees, burning gas lines, and blocked roads are cleared and safe. Do not return to your homes and facilities until you receive their official safe return notice.

If your facility/home needs assistance in locating alternate placements for evacuated residents, please contact your local Home and Community Living Administration (HCLA) office. Contacts by county are available online at HCLA Resources. Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) contacts are available online at DDA Resources. For active fires in our state, please read your local, county, and state emergency management online websites for their resources, information, and emergency direction Review RCS Dear Provider Letters about emergency preparedness:

026-024 (nursing home)

026-024 (assisted living program)

026-021 (adult family home)

026-018 (enhanced service facility)

026-011 (Certified Community Residential Services and Supports)

026-006 (Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Developmental Disability)

If you have questions about this letter, please contact your local Field Manager for assistance. Links: Region 1 Offices, Region 2 Offices, and Region 3 Offices. Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication knowing how hard it is to respond to these devastating fires.

Sincerely,

Miriam Mina, Interim Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: “Partnering with People”