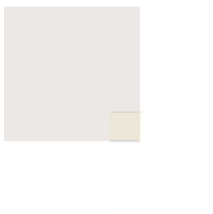


Public Health Workbook

to Define, Locate, and Reach
Special, Vulnerable, and At-Risk
Populations in an Emergency



STEPS AT-A-GLANCE

SECTION 1 – DEFINING SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND THE AGENCIES THAT SERVE THEM

RESEARCH AND FACT FINDING

Step 1 – Collect population information and data using Census and other national data as well as data developed specifically for your community (studies conducted by area agencies or quasi-governmental organizations, such as a metropolitan planning organization [MPO]).

Step 2 – Establish baseline criteria to define special populations in your community.

Step 3 – Estimate the number of people in special population groups who live in your community (or jurisdiction, or whatever area you are addressing).

Setting special population descriptors or definitions is a crucial step best accomplished by consulting with some of your community partners to benefit health, emergency, safety, and other people responsible for managing widespread emergencies.

Step 4 – Select up to five broad categories of population descriptors that will provide access to the most numbers of people. As time and resources permit, this list can be expanded, but selecting five will let you begin your planning with a manageable body of information.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Step 5 – Identify key contacts at overarching organizations and government agencies and collect phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and postal addresses.

Step 6 – Facilitate discussions with key contacts. Topics can include:

- The issue and process of defining special populations
- Long-term goals and objectives
- Other people who should be part of the discussion and their contact information
- Information about the populations under discussion

Step 7 – Survey representatives of overarching organizations and government agencies to learn:

- Their interaction (or lack of) with special populations in your community
- Names and contact information for direct service providers and advocacy organizations that work with special populations
- Barriers to special populations receiving routine health or emergency information

Step 8 – Commit to regular contact with members of your community network and build in opportunities for them to give you feedback about their involvement.

HOW TO USE THE INFORMATION

Step 9 – Develop a database that includes:

- Broad categories of three to five special populations
- Contact information on key representatives or trusted sources from overarching groups and government agencies

Step 10 – Expand your database to include:

- New special population demographics and characteristics gathered from research
- Contact information for organizations and agencies that provide services, such as human service government agencies, tribal, CBOs, FBOs, businesses, and others who work with special populations
- Updated information on contacts and populations

SECTION 2 – LOCATING SPECIAL POPULATIONS

RESEARCH AND FACT FINDING

Step 1 – Assess existing processes within your department or agency for locating special populations.

Step 2 – Choose GIS mapping or alternate methods to locate special populations.

- If departmental resources are not available for GIS mapping programs, consider working with a partner organization, such as a local MPO, department of transportation, fire departments, or election offices, many of which have access to such resources.
- If electronic mapping is not available, consider using colored pins or dots placed on a map of your community to indicate the size and locations of defined special population groups.
- Using Census and other data previously collected in the defining stage, locate on a map the neighborhoods or communities where members of special populations live in significant numbers.

STEPS AT-A-GLANCE

Step 3 – Locate and map gathering places for the broad categories of special populations (e.g., community centers, missions, churches or grocery stores).

Step 4 – Identify and map trusted information sources representing the special population groups.

- Collect names, telephone numbers, e-mail, and mail addresses.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Step 5 – Facilitate discussions with leaders of community organizations with which special populations have existing networks and ties.

- Arrange roundtable meetings or conference calls.
- Discuss goals, objectives, roles, and common issues surrounding the challenges in accurately locating special populations.

Step 6 – Establish a community network of overarching organizations, service providers, businesses, and others who work with special populations.

- Members of this network are your community collaborators and program partners.
- Maintain regular contact with the community network through a newsletter, conference calls, or meetings.

Step 7 – Develop an agreement stating the terms of the collaboration. Choose between a formal agreement and an informal agreement.

HOW TO USE THE INFORMATION

Step 8 – Expand your existing computer database by storing additional names and contact information for community collaborators and program partners. Also include special population gathering places in the database.

Step 9 – Update database of all the community organizations that you've worked with to locate special populations because it will be important for reaching special populations.

SECTION 3 – REACHING SPECIAL POPULATIONS

RESEARCH AND FACT FINDING

Step 1 – Survey people from agencies and organizations outside your department to learn their successes and failures in reaching special populations.

Step 2 – Conduct focus groups or community roundtables with members of different special population groups to identify their needs and barriers to communication.

Step 3 – Analyze data gathered from the surveys, focus groups, and your previous research efforts in defining and locating special populations. Look for common themes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Step 4 – Collaborate with community organizations to develop messages and materials to reach special populations.

Step 5 – Develop and test messages for cultural and linguistic competence with members of the targeted populations.

Step 6 – Identify appropriate, trusted messengers to deliver the messages and appropriate channels of delivery.

Step 7 – Maintain ongoing relationships and partnerships with community organizations, government agencies, first responders, and other service providers.

HOW TO USE THE INFORMATION

Step 8 – In your existing database, enter information from your research on communication barriers for special populations and preferred channels of communication. This database will become your special population community network.

Step 9 – Create a plan to reach special populations using a variety of methods, messages, and messengers. This plan will supplement your organization's existing crisis communication plan.

Step 10 – Test your community network. Look for gaps in message delivery.

Step 11 – Revise your special population outreach plans according to the outcomes of your test. Schedule tests at least annually.

Step 12 – Once you have successfully defined, located, and reached members of your initial special population groups, you can expand your initiative to include more groups.

This document is a brief overview of information that can be found in the *Public Health Workbook to Define, Locate, and Reach, Special, Vulnerable, and At-Risk Populations in an Emergency*. The Workbook provides a detailed description of a process that can support state, local, and tribal planners as they advance in their efforts to reach all populations – and specifically, special populations – in times of crisis and noncrisis. The Workbook provides information and resources to help implement the steps shown in this overview.



The Workbook Page
www.bt.cdc.gov/workbook

Web Resource for:

- The Workbook (125 pages)
- This Steps at-a-Glance 4-page summary
- FEEDBACK (online form) for The Workbook