



SHELTERING

City of Phoenix
Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

SHELTER

Sheltering is appropriate when conditions require that you seek protection in your home, where you work or other location when other emergencies arise. The length of time you are required to take shelter may be short, such as during a severe thunderstorm warning, or during a pandemic. In all cases, it is important that you stay informed and follow the instructions of local authorities.

During extended periods of sheltering you will need to manage water and food supplies to make sure you and your family have what you need to get by. Read more about [managing water](#) and [managing food](#).

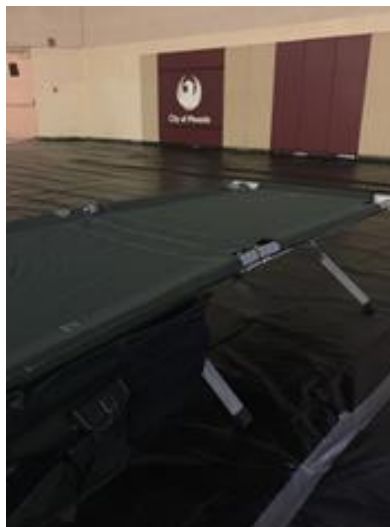
Finding shelter is critical in times of disaster. Shelter outside of the hazard area could include staying with family or friends, seeking a hotel room, or staying in a mass shelter. Choosing to take shelter is necessary in many emergencies. This can mean: Stay-At-Home, going to a Mass Care Shelter, or Sheltering in Place. Here's the distinction:

STAY-AT-HOME

- Remain indoors as much as possible and try to only leave your home when necessary. You can still use outdoor spaces such as patios, porches and yards.
- Outdoor activities such as walking, jogging and exercise are fine if you practice social distancing (maintaining six feet away from the next person).
- Essential services such as grocery shopping, the gas station, pharmacies and going to the Post Office are still fine to do.
- Limit visitors if possible.

MASS CARE SHELTER

Mass care shelters provide life sustaining services to disaster survivors. Even though mass care shelters often provide water, food, medicine and basic sanitary facilities, you should plan to take your [emergency supply kit](#) with you so you will have the supplies you need. Mass care sheltering can involve living with many people in a confined space, which can be difficult and unpleasant.



- Check with local officials about what shelter spaces are available. Coronavirus may have altered your community's plans.
- Be prepared to take cleaning items with you like cloth masks (for anyone ages 2 and above), soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes or general household cleaning supplies to disinfect surfaces.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of space between you and people who aren't in your immediate family.

Search for open shelters by texting **SHELTER** and a **ZIP code** to **43362**.

Example: Shelter 01234 (standard rates apply).

Learn more by visiting: <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/>.

SHELTERING IN PLACE

Whether you are at home, work or anywhere else you frequent regularly, there may be situations when it's best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside.

Here are some indicators and steps to take if the situation arises:

- Use common sense and available information to assess the situation and determine if there is immediate danger.
- If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated you may want to take this kind of action.

Here are some tips for sheltering in place:

- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do.
- Watch TV and listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.
- Bring your family and pets inside.
- Lock doors, close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems.
- Take your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- Go into an interior room with few windows if possible.
- Seal all windows, doors and air vents with thick plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance to save time.
- Cut the plastic sheeting several inches wider than the openings and label each sheet.
- Duct tape plastic at corners first and then tape down all edges.
- Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination.

“Sealing a room” is considered a temporary protective measure to create a barrier between you and potentially contaminated air outside. This type of sheltering in place requires pre-planning, by purchasing plastic sheeting and duct tape that you would keep in your emergency supply kit.

