

Disaster Readiness

Why are changes needed? Breastfeeding saves lives, especially during emergencies that impact water supplies, fuel, and electricity.¹ In times of crisis, equitable distribution of resources, lactation support, accessibility to human milk, and preserving the breastfeeding relationship should be a top priority for maintaining public health and safety.

MIBFN Recommends:

- All emergency shelters should adopt a clear written policy supporting and protecting breastfeeding during times of crisis.
- All first responders should receive evidence-based breastfeeding training.
- Medical providers in areas with ongoing air/water pollution should understand blood contamination levels that would contraindicate breastfeeding.
- Vulnerable areas should undergo systemic breastfeeding changes to ensure best outcomes during times of disaster.
- Disaster response policies should ensure that infant formula is only supplied when necessary.
- The United States should comply with the WHO Code in order to protect against predatory marketing of breast milk substitutes and to protect breastfeeding under all circumstances.

To learn more about the MIBFN Disaster Readiness campaign, visit www.mibbreastfeeding.org/disaster-ready

1. United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC), Breastfeeding and Emergencies Position Statement, "Statement on Infant/Young Child Feeding in Emergencies."