

Establishing an Emergency Centre in Tower Hamlets



Have access to a building that could be used to support local people affected by an Emergency? Completing a 'Venue Activation Plan' as part of the [London Community Resilience Toolkit](#)?

Read this guide to understand how a formal emergency centre is most commonly established, and how organisations can support each other in supporting those impacted by emergencies in Tower Hamlets!

For any questions, please contact emergency.planning@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Emergency Services will notify the Council when displaced residents require support. If an incident occurs close to a community organisation's facility, they may be approached to determine whether the space can be used as the **Emergency Centre**. This request is likely to be made by:

- The Emergency Services at the scene
- The Council's 'Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)' at the scene
- The Civil Protection Unit (Council's Emergency Planning team)



What happens if I agree to the building being used as an Emergency Centre?

1. The Local Authority will send a trained 'Emergency Centre Manager' who will arrive within an hour, to manage the emergency centre and coordinate the support provided.
2. The Local Authority may also arrange for additional staff to attend or request the support of the British Red Cross and neighbouring borough councils.
3. Your staff may support the response at the centre but may be asked to report to the 'Emergency Centre Manager' or to assist in tasks outside of their day-to-day role.
4. The Emergency Centre Manager will meet the key holder/manager of the building upon arrival to complete a short risk/suitability assessment of the venue. It is requested that the organisation provides a point of contact for the building.
5. Where possible, the Emergency Centre Manager is generally looking to identify a reception/registration area, a main hall (seating, waiting, rest area), a quiet/family space, an information point, a refreshments area and a private area for staff.

6. Displaced residents will be asked to register upon arrival, and to wear a wristband for:
 - Security purposes
 - To provide an opportunity for residents to communicate their immediate needs
 - To allow the emergency services to account for affected individuals.
7. Residents are free to leave – but will be asked to ‘check out’ and ‘check in’ at the reception desk if leaving or returning to the centre.
8. As soon as practicable, a full registration form will be completed with affected individuals, to identify the ongoing support that they will require. The Local Authority is responsible for coordinating the ‘humanitarian assistance’ (welfare support) required.
9. The facility will be used as a place of ‘temporary shelter’ for those displaced, whilst alternative arrangements are made. These may include:
 - Landlord arranging hotel/alternative accommodation
 - Residents notifying home insurance
 - Residents arranging self-funded provisions or to stay with family or friends
10. Examples of welfare support provided to residents whilst at the Emergency Centre may include:
 - Food and refreshments
 - NHS attendance to support with replacement medications and primary care advice
 - Attendance from council services (e.g. Social Care, Homelessness & Housing options)
 - Support from voluntary and community organisations
 - Arranging for the replacement of essential items lost during the incident
11. Following the emergency, the Local Authority will return the building in the condition that it was provided in.
12. In the hours or days after the incident, it may be requested that the facility is used as a ‘Humanitarian Assistance Centre’ (a place within the community, to access information and support).

In a situation where your facility is being used as an ‘Emergency Centre’ please inform the Local Authority, to ensure that support can be directed to the centre.

To do this in Tower Hamlets, please call 020 7364 7070 and select option 6 for emergencies.

VCFSE organisations are not expected to provide an Emergency Centre on their own! The Local Authority are committed to fully support any centre opened with trained support staff and resources.

