

Responding to a Mass Violence Incident: Developing a Personal “Go Kit”

Please note that this document offers recommendations for a variety of professionals who support victims of mass violence. While some of the tips may apply to all victim assistance professionals, others may only be relevant to a specific subset i.e. victims compensation professionals, court based victim advocates, community based victim advocates, etc.

When victim assistance professionals (VAPs) are contacted to work at a response center or family assistance center in the aftermath of a mass violence incident, it is helpful for them to be prepared with a “Go Kit” containing personal resources to enhance their comfort and safety, and to minimize their use of onsite resources. VAPs may be called upon to work long hours in a potentially stressful environment.

Suggestions for the contents of a personal “Go Kit” for VAPs*:

- Agency/organization identification card
- Any personal medication and/or wearable bracelet that indicates personal allergies
- Bottle(s) of water
- Card for mass transportation
- Cash/ATM card
- Cell phone
- Cell phone charger (portable and/or adapter)
- Comfortable clothing with pockets
- Comfortable shoes
- Credit card
- Drivers’ license or other government identification
- Emergency contact information (family, neighbor, or friend)
- Fanny pack, backpack or cross-body strap purse
- Gum and mints
- Light jacket and/or shawl
- Notepad
- Pens/pencils
- Personal hygiene products
- Power snacks
- Small bottle(s) of hand sanitizer
- Tablet and/or computer
- Vitamins
- Wet naps or tissues

NOTE: It’s helpful to “group inform: your family and friends that you are involved in a crisis response, and to *not contact you for a specified period of time*, as it is important to keep your cell phone line open. It is also helpful to send out a group text or email (or and e-communication to a trusted family member or friend who can share with others) about how you are doing as the day goes on.

**Recommendations for an “Agency/Organization Go Kit” are also available on the NMVVRC website in the Helping Survivors section.*