

Replacing Items

ITEM	WHO TO CONTACT
Driver's license	Dept. of Public Safety www.dps.texas.gov/ DriverLicense
Passports	U.S. Dept. of State (877)487-2778
Birth/death/ marriage records	TX Dept. of State Health Services (512) 458-7111 www.dshs.texas.gov
Social Security or Medicare Cards	Social Security Office (866)627-6991
Insurance policies (home/auto/life)	Your insurance agent
Titles to deeds	Travis County Clerk (512) 854-9188
Mortgage papers	Your lending institution
Auto registration	Dept. of Motor Vehicles (512)465-3000
Checking/Savings	your bank
Credit Cards	issuing companies
Health Insurance Cards	employer or issuing company
Medical records	your doctor
Medications	your pharmacy
Income tax records	Your accountant or IRS: www.irs.gov
Divorce/Custody Papers	Travis Co. Dist. Clerk (512) 854-9457
Veterinary records	Your veterinarian
Military papers	Department of Veterans Affairs (512)206-0857
Citizenship papers	U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (800)375-5283
Wills	your lawyer

Who can help?

The Victim Services Unit within the Travis County Sheriff's Office can assist in responding to the needs of individuals following a critical incident. The VSU is also available to provide referrals to appropriate community helping professionals or organizations according to your specific needs.



Resources

American Red Cross – Central Texas
(512) 928-4271 or
Toll-free: (800) 928-4271
www.redcross.org

Austin Fire Department
(512) 974-0130
www.ci.austin.tx.us/fire

Travis County Fire Marshal
(512) 854-4621
www.traviscountytexas.gov/fire_marshal

First Call For Help - Dial 211
Capital Area United Way
www.211centraltexas.org

US Fire Administration
<http://www.usfa.fema.gov>

Structure Fires

Victim Services Unit
5555 Airport Blvd
Austin, TX 78751
512-854-9709



Name/ID Number:

Direct Number:

Mailing Address:

PO Box 1748
Austin, TX 78767

When a fire strikes, the lives of you, your family members and pets are turned around. **Be Safe! and Be Smart!**

Cautions

- Do not reenter the damaged structure! The fire may rekindle. The structure may be weakened and subject to collapse.
- Normally, the Fire Department will ensure that utilities are safe or disconnected before they leave the scene. Do not attempt to turn the utilities on yourself.
- Food, beverages, and medicine exposed to heat, smoke, soot and water should not be consumed.
- In some cases, you may need to board up openings such as doors and windows. Ask the Sheriff's Office to keep a close patrol on the structure.

If it is safe to do so (the Fire Department and/or Fire Marshall will notify you of the integrity of the structure), try to locate the following items:

- Social Security Cards
- Drivers License
- Insurance contracts
- Medication information
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids, ambulation devices such as canes and walkers, CPAP machines, dentures, etc.
- Valuables such as credit cards, jewelry, cash, bank books, etc.
- Cell phones
- Address books

After the Fire

The American Red Cross provides for basic needs such as shelter, food, clothing, medical equipment and medications. You should contact the Red Cross immediately so their representative can complete an assessment. If you need assistance in contacting the Red Cross, ask the Fire Department or Sheriff's Office to notify Victim Services of your circumstances. If you need to take your pets with you into shelter provided by the Red Cross, let the Red Cross representative know so proper arrangements can be made.

You may need to contact the following entities:

- American Red Cross - for shelter, food, clothing, medication, medical equipment
- Insurance company - to begin claim process
- Mortgage company - works closely with your insurance company
- Physician - to reorder any prescriptions and/or schedule a physical evaluation
- Employer
- Child's school - many schools and their associated organizations such as PTA will offer replacement school supplies and/or other resources for children who have experienced loss in a structure fire
- Local Post Office - for mail delivery options
- Utility companies

Retaining records associated with the fire is essential. Beginning immediately, save all receipts of expenses. These will be important in negotiations with your insurance company and they verify losses claimed on your income tax. Do not discard any damaged goods until a complete inventory is made.

All damages and losses are important in relation to your insurance claim. Do not contract for clean-up or repairs until you have negotiated this with your insurance company. If needed, you may contact the Fire Department or the Fire Marshall for a copy of the fire report.

If you are uninsured you may need to rely upon your own resources or help from community resources such as religious organizations or ministries, nonprofit organizations, state and municipal social services/emergency services, and civic organizations.

Benefits of Counseling

Some benefits of seeking counseling are:

- Reviewing and processing the incident can help clarify what actually occurred.
- Counseling can help develop coping skills and strategies—allowing for the continuance of school, relationships, or work.
- Asset recovery and financial decisions can be discussed and utilized as part of the promotion of healing and resolution.
- Establishment of a support network can help decrease the negative physical, emotional, and psychological effects that often result from involvement in traumatic experiences.

You can utilize the traumatic experience as an opportunity to build and practice confidence, assertiveness, and protective instinct skills.