

**APHL**  
**Lab Director Transitions Guide**  
**Online Toolkit**

**[Headline]**

**Emergency Preparedness Checklist**

*Are you ready for the worst?*

In addition to their day-to-day activities, public health laboratories must act as first responders. Lab functions need to keep going under all kinds of emergency situations, and labs have a role in emergency response as well. Ensuring preparedness isn't a "just in case" issue—it's essential to the mission. Here are some ways to keep preparedness on track:

- Register the *responsible official* under the federal Select Agent Program. Every participating laboratory has a *responsible official* for emergency situations, as well as an alternate. Find out if you are that person. If so, you'll need a security screen, or a Department of Justice Federal Bureau security risk assessment.
- Familiarize yourself with the lab's and jurisdiction's emergency response plan and other documents. Who is the person you report to in an emergency? Identify emergency contacts within the parent organization.
- Learn lab responsibilities during an emergency, especially with reference to local, state and federal authorities. For example, is the lab a Laboratory Response Network (LRN) reference laboratory? What is the lab's level of response? Contact APHL's [LRN program manager](#) for guidance.
- Learn the state and local emergency response plans and the respective (and possibly overlapping) roles of local, state and federal authorities during an emergency.
- Locate and know the sites of sensitive military or industrial installations in the lab's jurisdiction.
- Get to know the laboratory resources available in your region such as sentinel, veterinary, agricultural, environmental and academic laboratories in addition to surrounding public health labs. Establish and maintain lab partner lists with contact info—then get out of the lab and meet your partners!
- Specify testing arrangements with other jurisdictions and mechanisms for specimen transport (i.e., when would another jurisdiction perform testing for you, and when might you perform testing for another jurisdiction?).
- Assure that emergency personnel policies, appropriate safety measures and emergency protocols for pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical tasks are in place within the lab.
- Contact key emergency response personnel outside the laboratory to verify their roles and expectations of the laboratory during times of emergency.