



## Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) About the Buddy System

In emergencies, many tenants in Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing face barriers to evacuation due to mobility, health, or cognitive challenges. **Most SROs are independent living environments, meaning tenants are expected to self-evacuate—but that’s not always possible.**

**In developing a PEEP, using the Buddy System can be invaluable,** pairing tenants with trusted neighbors who can assist during emergencies helps ensure no one is left behind, especially when time, coordination, and trust are critical.

<b>Key benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Builds trust and community resilience.</li><li>• Fills gaps in emergency response where infrastructure is limited.</li><li>• Supports tenants with disabilities or temporary conditions.</li><li>• Aligns with evolving legal and ethical standards internationally.</li></ul>
<b>Before you begin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operators should assess existing life safety systems (e.g., alarms, sprinklers, evacuation chairs) to ensure the Buddy System complements—not replaces—critical infrastructure.</li></ul>
<b>How-to tips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify tenants who may need support.</li><li>• Recruit and train capable, trusted buddies.</li><li>• Match buddies based on proximity, capacity, and availability.</li><li>• Document and update plans regularly.</li><li>• Practice through drills and community engagement.</li></ul>
<b>Backed by research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trust and community connection improve emergency response.</li><li>• Delays in evacuation are common.</li><li>• Trusted buddies reduce hesitation.</li><li>• No single strategy works for all—PEEPs and Buddy Systems must be part of a layered safety approach.</li></ul>
<b>The takeaway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Buddy System is not just helpful—it’s lifesaving.</li><li>• It works best when:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Buddies are trained, trusted, and available</li><li>○ Plans are documented, practiced, and updated</li><li>○ Integrated into a broader strategy—not used in isolation</li></ul></li></ul>