

FSL Emergency Preparedness Guide

What is FSL?

Filipino Sign Language (FSL) is the natural language of the Deaf community in the Philippines. It uses hand shapes, facial expressions, and body movements to communicate.

FSL is distinct from Signed Exact Filipino (SEF) and uses its own grammar and vocabulary recognized by Republic Act 11106 (Filipino Sign Language Act of 2018).

Before a Disaster – Prepare

- Learn key FSL emergency signs with your family and neighbors.
- Prepare a Go-Bag: water, food (3-day supply), medications, copies of important IDs.
- Identify two exit routes from your home.
- Agree on a family meeting point that everyone (including Deaf members) knows.
- Register with your local PDRRMO (Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office) as a PWD household.
- Store the Silent Signal app on your phone and keep it charged.
- Write emergency numbers on paper — do not rely only on your phone.

Key FSL Signs to Learn

- HELP — Open hand, thumb up, palm facing out, lift upward.
- DANGER — Crossed arms in an "X" shape, then push outward.
- FIRE — Wiggling fingers raised upward like flames.
- EARTHQUAKE — Both fists, shake side to side.
- EVACUATE — Point outward, then wave hand forward.
- SAFE — Cross arms over chest, then open outward.
- WATER — "W" handshape tapped on chin.
- MEDICINE — Tap wrist with index and middle fingers (like checking pulse).

Family Communication Plan

- Assign a family communication coordinator (a hearing member who knows FSL).
- Practice monthly drills using only FSL for 10 minutes.

- Keep a printed FSL emergency flashcard set in your Go-Bag.
- Use the Silent Signal app to send pre-written emergency messages.