

Population monitoring in radiation emergencies is a public health process that evaluates individuals for radioactive contamination and exposure following an incident. Managed by health authorities via Community Reception Centers (CRCs) established within 24–48 hours, it includes screening, decontamination, registration, and long-term health tracking. The goal is to identify, treat, and follow up on exposed persons, including the "worried well," to minimize long-term health effects.

### **Key Aspects of Population Monitoring**

- **Community Reception Centers (CRCs):** These are the primary sites for monitoring, typically located outside the affected area. They provide:
  - **Screening:** Using devices like Geiger counters or portal monitors to detect contamination.
  - **Decontamination:** Assisting people with washing or removing contaminated clothing.
  - **Registration:** Collecting data for short- and long-term health tracking.
- **Target Population:** Includes individuals actually exposed or contaminated, those who believe they were exposed, and emergency responders.
- **Long-Term Follow-up:** Due to potential delayed health effects, monitoring may last for years, involving registries to track health outcomes.
- **Guidance for Individuals:** If in a radiation emergency, people are advised to stay inside, and if outside, to remove outer clothing, wash, and seek decontamination at a CRC.
- **Operational Support:** Tools like the RadResponder network and [CDC guidelines](#) are used for data management and planning.

Effective, scalable, and flexible operations, including potential integration with pet decontamination, are essential.

For more detail, see [Population Monitoring in Radiation Emergencies: A Guide for State and Local Public Health Planners](#) ( at <https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/media/pdfs/2024/04/population-monitoring-guide.pdf> (as of 01/27/2026)

Additional related information is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/php/population-monitoring/index.html> (as of 01/27/2026).