



# Emergency Preparedness

Presenters

**Sandy Hanebrink, OTR/L, CLP, FAOTA**  
Executive Director, Touch the Future Inc

**Marcie Roth**  
Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer, World Institute on Disability



## Inclusive Disaster Planning

We will focus on how federal, state, local entities, and communities are increasingly developing emergency management and preparedness plans to handle disasters and the need to ensure that they are inclusive. Emergencies and disasters can be particularly concerning for people with disabilities. Successful outcomes for people with disabilities in disasters depend on how inclusive these plans are.

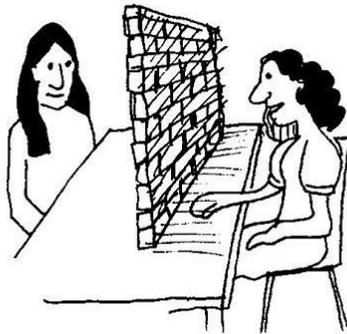
This session will focus on key strategies and approaches at various levels (federal, state, and local) toward emergency management and preparedness and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

\*This session qualifies for Foundational Level Credit for the ADA Coordinators Certification Training Program (ACTCP)

## What do we know?

- Are communities prepared to meet the emergency and disaster needs of the whole community?
- Are individuals with disabilities prepared?
- Are individuals with disabilities included in the community emergency planning process?
- Are individuals with disabilities able to access emergency services and programs?
- Are individuals with disabilities included throughout disaster recovery initiatives?

## Common Barriers?



# National & Grassroots Disability Directed Efforts

- The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
  - National level collaboration, legislation and weekly calls
  - Legislation
  - National level disaster specific efforts
    - COVID-19
    - Active disasters
    - Boots on the ground response efforts
- State & Local efforts
  - Examples
  - Benchmark

## Getting It Right!

- Working together
- What it looks like
- Systems change

“Nothing About Us, Without Us!



# Federal Legal Frameworks

## Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination in Emergency Programs on the Basis of Disability

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), as amended;
- Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006, as amended.
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006;
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended;
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended;
- Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended;
- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968;
- Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010
- Communications Act of 1934, as amended;
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975, as amended;
- Executive Order 13347 (July 22, 2004), -- Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness;
- Telecommunications Act of 1996;

## Understanding Emergency and Disaster Roles

- Types of Declarations
- Federal Responsibilities
- State Responsibilities
- Local Responsibilities
- Others –(Red Cross, Partnership for Disaster Strategies, SILC, CILs, P&As, DDCs, ATAP...)

# ADA Coordinator Considerations

- ADA Coordinator is critical to inclusion and accessibility before, during and after
- Inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the processes
- Program Access
- Physical Access
- Effective Communication & Auxiliary Aids
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Modification of Policies & Procedures
- Contracted facilities and services compliance (cannot contract away obligations)
- Complaints

## Understanding Access and Functional Needs



## Access and Functional Needs

▪ **Individual with a Disability:** Individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (an “actual disability”), or a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (“record of”), or an actual or perceived impairment, whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity, that is not both transitory and minor (“regarded as”).

▪ **Access and Functional Needs:** Individuals having access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation, and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the emergency.

**Disability** and **Access and Functional Needs** are not synonymous. People with disabilities may have an access and functional need, but not all access and functional needs are disabilities. Emergency planning processes need to recognize and plan for the needs of people with access and functional needs.

## Access and Functional Needs

- Children and adults with physical, mobility, sensory, intellectual, developmental, cognitive, or mental disabilities
- Older adults
- People with chronic or temporary health conditions
- Women in the late stages of pregnancy
- People with limited English proficiency, low literacy or additional communication needs
- People with very low incomes
- People without access to transportation
- People experiencing homelessness
- Others

## Civil Rights Obligations- DOJ

“Under federal civil rights laws, sheltering services and facilities must be accessible to children and adults with disabilities. Sheltering and temporary housing of persons with disabilities must take place in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the person, which in most cases is the same setting people without disabilities enjoy. The intent of this federal guidance is to ensure that individuals are provided appropriate accommodations and are not turned away or moved from general population shelters and temporary housing or inappropriately placed in other, more restrictive, environments (e.g., "special needs" shelters, institutions, nursing homes, and hotels and motels disconnected from other support services).”

## Civil Rights Obligations- FEMA

“providers must be aware that they may fall into more than one category of provider. For example, a state agency that receives Federal financial assistance must comply with laws that apply to Federal financial assistance recipients as well as to laws that apply to state and local governments. Non-profit organizations that receive Federal financial assistance to provide food, clothing, shelter, or transportation in connection with an emergency must comply with obligations applicable to recipients of such assistance as well as requirements generally applicable to nonprofit organizations that provide services to the public.”

## Federal Funds and Civil Rights Obligations

Any recipient or sub-recipient of federal funds is required to make their programs accessible to individuals with disabilities. Its protections apply to ALL programs and businesses that receive ANY federal funds.

- Entities selected to receive a grant, cooperative agreement, or other award of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or one of its Components, including State Administering Agencies must comply with civil rights obligations
- Sub recipients have the same obligations as their primary recipient to comply with applicable civil rights requirements and should follow their primary recipient's procedures regarding the compliance with civil rights obligations.

There are no waivers to civil rights obligations in disasters

## Access to Effective Communication

- Ask the survivor what is the best way to provide them with information
- Alternate formats include, but are not limited to:
  - Large Print and Braille
  - Speech-to-Speech interpretation
  - Electronic format-accessible websites, CDs
  - Qualified American Sign Language, and Signed English
  - Qualified Tactile Sign Language
  - TTY, Caption Phone, video phones

## Equally Effective Communication Plan

- During disaster planning, adopt procedures to provide equally effective communication for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and for people with speech and communication disabilities.
- Communication plans should build in redundancy into the plan and we need to think expansively about using many different ways to communicate with all people, including those with disabilities and those with access and functional needs.
- Train and exercise on basic procedures for providing accessible communication, including exchanging or posting written notes or announcements, using gestures to go with spoken announcements until effective communication resources can be put in place.

17

## Exercises and Drills

- People with disabilities participate in realistic ratios (26% of players)
- No actors
- Exercises are not for “proving” everyone is ready, because you never will be.
- Exercises are for “breaking stuff”.
- Use exercises as no-fault opportunities to deal with unexpected problems with the plan.
- Use exercises to teach everyone to anticipate problems and find solutions.

18

# CMS Nursing Home Waivers

## CMS 1135 Blanket Emergency Waivers

SNF care without a 3-day inpatient hospital stay will be covered for beneficiaries who experience dislocations or are otherwise affected by the emergency, such as those who are

- (1) evacuated from a nursing home in the emergency area,
- (2) discharged from a hospital (in the emergency or receiving locations) in order to provide care to more seriously ill patients, or
- (3) need SNF care as a result of the emergency, regardless of whether that individual was in a hospital or nursing home prior to the emergency.

# Understanding Waivers & ADA Issues

**Sometimes Federal Agencies issue waivers during emergency declarations, but this does not mean ADA does not apply**

CMS guidance on emergency waivers and Olmstead 5/11/20 <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf>

- Language on pgs 4-5: “States are still subject to obligations under the integration mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act, to avoid subjecting persons with disabilities to unjustified institutionalization or segregation.”
- Footnote on page 5: “Please note that consistent with the integration mandate of Title II of the ADA and the Olmstead vs LC decision, States are obligated to offer/ provide discharge planning and/or case management/ transition services, as appropriate, to individuals who are removed from their Medicaid home and community based services under these authorities during the course of the public health emergency as well as to individuals with disabilities who may require these services in order to avoid unjustified institutionalization or segregation. Transition services/ case management and/or discharge planning would be provided to facilitate these individuals in their return to the community when their condition and public health circumstances permit.”

# COVID-19 and Concurrent Disasters

- Social Distancing in shelters
- Alternative shelters like use of dorms and hotels
  - Accessibility still applies
  - PPE availability
  - Personal Assistance Services, Interpreters, etc.
- NLIHC [Working with FEMA to Fund Non-Congregate Shelter During COVID-19](#).
- [HEROES Act](#) includes several priorities for housing stability during and after the pandemic
- NLIHC CARES and PKG 4 [budget chart](#) and [analysis](#).
  - \$100 billion emergency rental assistance for up to two years
  - A broad, uniform 12-month eviction moratorium
  - \$11.5 billion for the Emergency Solutions Grants program to protect people experiencing homelessness
  - It also includes significant funding for other important housing programs including \$200 million for Sec. 811 Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities, \$4 billion for tenant-based vouchers (including \$1 billion for new vouchers), and \$750 million for Project-Based Rental Assistance

# COVID-19 and Concurrent Disasters

## Recovery Considerations Checklist

- Do you have reopening and reconstitution criteria that support opening of businesses damaged by a hurricane and/or tropical storm that is also impacted by COVID-19 restrictions?
- Have you identified sufficient congregate shelter space to safely implement social distancing?
- Have you reviewed and incorporated CDC’s Interim Guidance for General Population Disaster Shelters During the COVID-19 Pandemic into sheltering plans and strategies?
- Do you have a plan to conduct health screenings of evacuees that may enter sheltering locations?
- Do you have a medical care plan for those evacuees that meet screening criteria (e.g., positive, presumptive positive, symptomatic, known exposure) upon arrival at a congregate shelter?
- Do you have a plan to support virtual PDAs and inspections?
- How will you manage building and housing inspections and re-occupancy procedures given the constraints and impacts of COVID-19 (e.g., social distancing)?
- How will you maximize community input and buy-in for your recovery efforts to ensure they are delivered in an equitable and impartial manner (e.g., by receiving input from members of low-income communities, members of communities of color, persons with disabilities, older adults, persons with limited English proficiency)?
- Can you hold effective public meetings while maintaining social distance? Do you have mechanisms to reach isolated or underserved communities?
- Do you have a process to determine eligibility for all relevant funding opportunities? Do you have access to associations that can support disaster-related projects?
- Does your jurisdiction’s financial practices and procedures for non-disaster projects follow the same practices and procedures for disaster-related projects?

See Appendix D of FEMA’s Hurricane Pandemic Plan for additional Recovery checklist considerations

## CMS Emergency Preparedness Rule

### Purpose:

- To establish national emergency preparedness requirements to ensure adequate planning for both natural and man-made disasters, and coordination with federal, state, tribal, regional and local emergency preparedness systems.
- The updated emergency preparedness rule applies to 17 provider and supplier sectors of the US health care system participating in Medicare and Medicaid and is a condition of participation and a condition of coverage.
- Failure to comply may result in citation for non-compliance and loss of Medicare or Medicaid reimbursement.

## Federal Funds and Civil Rights Obligations

### DHS Civil Rights Evaluation Tool

<https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/dhs-civil-rights-evaluation-tool.pdf>

### FAQs: DHS Civil Rights Evaluation Tool

<https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/faq-dhs-civil-rights-evaluation-tool.pdf>

## Effectively Communicating with Protected Populations during Response and Recovery

Recipients of federal funding have obligations to carry out their federally assisted activities in a manner that does not discriminate and to ensure their sub-recipients do the same.

Further-more, section 308 of the Robert T. Stafford Emergency Management and Disaster Assistance Act (the Stafford Act) prohibits discrimination in all disaster assistance programs.

## Accessibility to Emergency Information on Television

FCC rules require broadcasters and cable operators to make local emergency information accessible to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and to persons who are blind or have visual disabilities. This rule means that emergency information must be provided both aurally and in a visual format.

## Accessibility to Emergency Information on Television

What qualifies as emergency information?

Emergency information about a current emergency is information intended to help protect life, health, safety or property. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- immediate weather situations: tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, warnings and watches of impending weather changes
- community situations such as: discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus schedules resulting from such conditions

## Disaster Shelter Planning



Temporary Ramp



Ramp blocks access aisle use. Should not be part of parking area or access aisle



Accessible Shower

- “The ADA requires people with disabilities to be accommodated in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs, and the disability-related needs of people who are not medically fragile can typically be met in a mass care shelter. For this reason, people with disabilities should generally be housed with their families, friends, and neighbors in mass care shelters and not be diverted to special needs or medical shelters.”

## Disaster Shelter Planning



- “Special needs and medical shelters are intended to house people who require the type and level of medical care that would ordinarily be provided by trained medical personnel in a nursing home or hospital.”
- “The ADA requires emergency managers and shelter operators to accommodate people with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs, which is typically a mass care shelter” ...
- “Local governments and shelter operators may not make eligibility for mass care shelters dependent on a person’s ability to bring his or her own personal care attendant.”

## Why is Accessibility Important?

- Allows people with disabilities to access the shelter
- Allows people with disabilities to be as independent as possible in the shelter
- Reduces the need for Personal Assistance Services and other assistance in the shelter
- Allows people to maintain their health and may reduce stress related disaster impact

## Shelter Accessibility

- If you find barriers to access, work with the facility's owner to get the barriers removed. (You cannot contract away your obligations)
- If you are unable to do so, consider another nearby facility for community sheltering needs. Look for shelters with accessible features: parking, drop off area, entrance, restrooms, interior routes to the shelter and sleeping areas.
- Other planning considerations include: the ability of the shelter staff to deliver first aid and staff's familiarity with and training in providing for the needs of people with disabilities.

## Shelter Accessibility

- Compile a list of accessible sheltering facilities and publicize the locations to the public, including people with disabilities and the organizations that serve them.
- Generally people with disabilities may not be segregated or told to go to "special" shelters designated for their use. They should ordinarily be allowed to attend the same shelters as their neighbors and co-workers.

## Physical Access, More than a Ramp

- Access to the buildings and areas where services are provided including:
  - Parking
  - Entry and egress
  - Mobility within the building
  - Access to facilities and areas where services are provided
  - Emergency procedures

## Evaluating Shelters

Shelters need accessible:

- Entrances
- Parking
- Eating areas
- Sleeping areas
- Public telephones
- Check in/information areas
- Drinking fountains
- Restrooms, showers, toilet stalls including portable toilets
- Routes within toilet rooms
- Routes to all services / activity areas
- Sidewalks / walkways
- Entrances, hallways, corridors

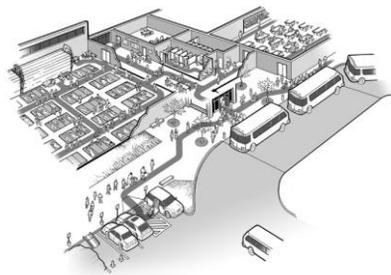
[ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters](#)

# Accessible Emergency Shelters

- One of the most important roles of State and local government is to protect people from harm, including helping people obtain food and shelter in major emergencies. When disasters occur, people are often provided safe refuge in temporary shelters located in schools, office buildings, tents, or other facilities. Advance planning for an emergency shelter typically involves ensuring that the shelter will be well stocked with basic necessities, such as food, water, and blankets. Planning should also involve ensuring that these shelters are accessible to people with disabilities. Making emergency sheltering programs accessible is generally required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

## ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters

[ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters](#)



**Accessible Shelter Quick-Check Survey is STEP 1 in determining where....**

# Accessible Shelter Quick-Check Survey

<https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7shelterchk.htm#stepone>

- A. Accessible Entrance
- B. Accessible Routes To All Service/Activity Areas
- C. Accessibility Within Toilet Rooms

## Using the Accessible Shelter Quick-Check Survey Information

If most of your answers to the previous questions are **Yes**, then the facility has some basic accessibility features and should be surveyed using the **ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters**.

Whenever most of your answers are **No**, then these problems should be evaluated before conducting a more detailed survey, or perhaps you should **consider another location** to serve as an emergency shelter.

# Step Two – ADA Checklist For Emergency Shelters

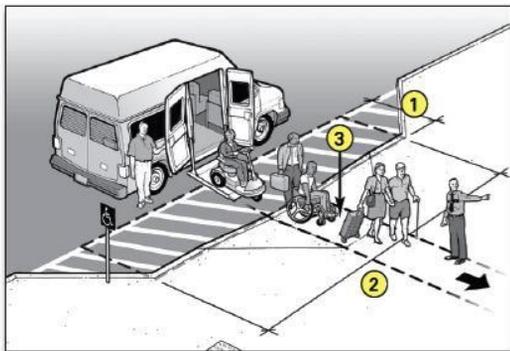
## Getting to the Emergency Shelter

- During an evacuation the most efficient method of transporting people to shelters likely will include using vans and buses. **Accessible buses and vans with wheelchair lifts will be needed to transport people who use wheelchairs, scooters, or other mobility aids.**

### A. Passenger Drop-Off Area

- An accessible drop-off area must have a level access aisle that is adjacent and parallel to the vehicle space. Where a curb separates the vehicle space from the access aisle or the access aisle from an accessible route, a curb ramp must be provided so people with mobility disabilities can get to the accessible route leading to the accessible entrance of the shelter.

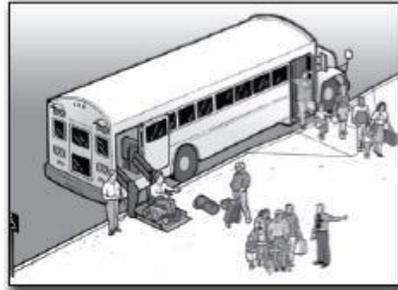
## A. Passenger Drop-Off Areas



- **1.** Access aisle depth is at least 5 feet.
- **2.** Access aisle length is at least 20 feet. **3.**
- **3.** Curb ramp connects the access aisle for the accessible drop-off area (which is at the level of the parking lot) to the accessible route to the accessible entrance of the shelter.

## A. Passenger Drop-Off Areas

- The access aisle may be at the parking-lot level or at sidewalk level. If the access aisle is at the parking-lot level, the curb ramp is provided between the access aisle and the sidewalk. If it is at the sidewalk level, an adjacent curb ramp is provided between the street and the sidewalk.

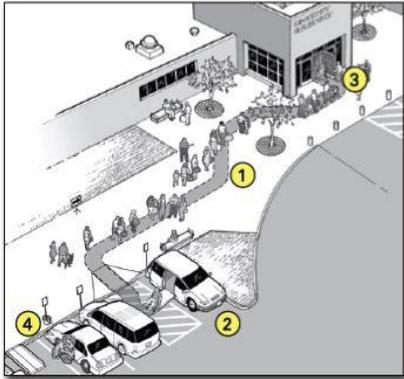


## B. Parking

During an evacuation, some individuals with a mobility disability may arrive at the shelter in a car or van. When parking areas are provided at the shelter site, accessible parking spaces must be provided. Individuals with disabilities who arrive at the shelter in their own car or van need to be able to park in an accessible parking space close to an accessible entrance. Accessible parking spaces need an adjacent access aisle that provides space for a person with a mobility disability to exit their vehicle. The access aisle connects directly to an accessible route that leads to an accessible building entrance. In order to be usable, the access aisle must be relatively level, clear of gravel or mud, and the surface must be in good condition without wide cracks or broken pavement.

An accessible route connects the permanent access aisle of each accessible parking space with the accessible entrance to the shelter. When an accessible route crosses a curb, a curb ramp must be provided. During an emergency, as a temporary measure, if additional accessible parking spaces are needed, a portable ramp can be provided in a parking space marked off by traffic cones to provide two additional accessible parking spaces

## B. Parking



An accessible entrance to an emergency shelter with accessible parking and additional temporary accessible parking spaces

1. Accessible route.
2. Accessible parking with van accessible parking space.
3. Accessible entrance to shelter.
4. Temporary accessible parking spaces.

## 3. Temporary Solutions for Emergency Sheltering - Parking

- **Problem:** Parking at the shelter facility either has no accessible parking, not enough accessible parking, or accessible parking spaces are not on level ground.
- **Solution:** Find a fairly level parking area near the accessible entrance and mark the area for accessible parking spaces.



## C. Sidewalks and Walkways

- An accessible route connects accessible passenger drop-off areas, accessible parking spaces, and other accessible elements, like a route from a bus stop, to an accessible building entrance. The accessible route is essential for people who have difficulty walking or who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids to get to the accessible entrance of the shelter.

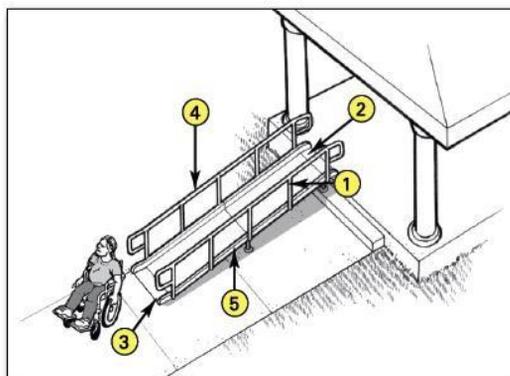


1. Accessible route
2. Accessible drop-off area
3. Accessible parking with van-accessible parking space
4. Accessible entrance to shelter

### Accessible ramp features

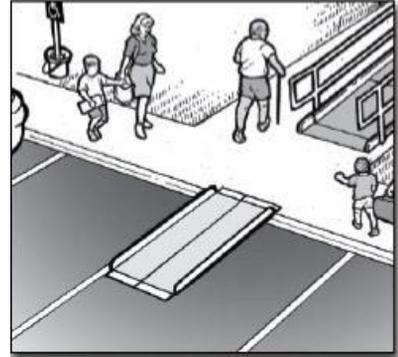
(Note: The level landing part of walk sidewalk or walking surface.)

1. At least 36 inches between handrails
2. Top landing part of walk
3. Bottom landing part of walk
4. Handrail height 34 to 38 inches
5. Edge protection.



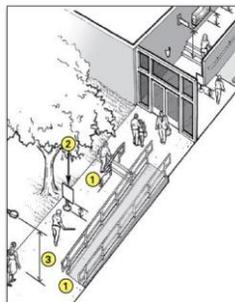
# Temporary Solutions For Emergency Sheltering - Ramps

- **Problem:** The sidewalk connecting parking to the shelter entrance is too steep to be accessible.
- **Suggestion:** Check to see if there is another accessible route to the accessible entrance. Sometimes there is a less direct route that is accessible. During an evacuation it will be helpful to put up signs or to have volunteers stationed at the accessible parking spaces to direct people along this less direct, but nonetheless accessible, route.
- **Problem:** The accessible route crosses a curb but no curb ramp is provided.
- **Suggestion:** Install a portable ramp with a slope no steeper than 1:12 with edge protection. Store the portable ramp on site so it can be easily accessed in an emergency.



## Typical Issues for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Objects that are wall mounted, that project into a pedestrian route from the side, or that are overhead can be hazards to people who are blind or who have low vision. These objects must be positioned so people will either detect the objects before they run into them or safely pass under them.



1. The bottom of the handrail extensions turn down to 27 inches or less above the route so a person who is blind or has low vision can detect the hazard before running into it.
2. Signs or other objects in the pedestrian route can be a hazard if the bottom is more than 27 inches but less than 80 inches above the route.
3. Objects that overhang the pedestrian route must be at least 80 inches above the route.

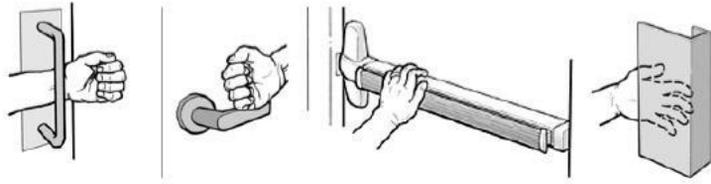
# Temporary Solutions For Emergency Sheltering - Protruding Object Hazards

- **Problem:** Objects protrude too far from the side into the route causing a hazard for people who are blind or who have low vision.
- **Suggestion:** When people who are blind or who have low vision use a cane to detect hazards, objects located at 27 inches or lower are detectable. When an object is located higher than 27 inches above the ground it is a hazard if the object protrudes more than 4 inches into the circulation path. To make a protruding object cane-detectable:
  - Place an object below, or on either side of, the protruding object that is not higher than 27 inches above the ground.
  - If the protruding object can be moved, lower the object so that its bottom is not more than 27 inches above the ground.
  - Prune or alter the protruding object so it does not protrude above the route.

## D. Entering the Emergency Shelter

- Building Entrance
- A shelter must have at least one accessible entrance that is on an accessible route. An accessible entrance must provide at least one accessible door with maneuvering space, accessible hardware, and enough clear width to allow people who use crutches, a cane, walker, scooter, or wheelchair to use it.
- If the accessible entrance is not the main entrance to the facility that is being used as a shelter, signs must be located at inaccessible entrances to direct evacuees and volunteers to the accessible entrance. The accessible entrance must be unlocked when other shelter entrances are unlocked.

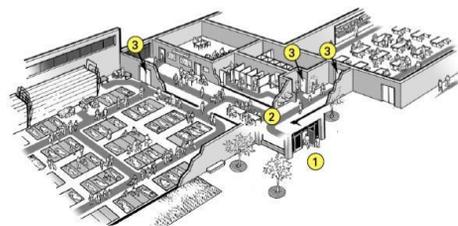
## D. Entering the Emergency Shelter



Examples of handles and door hardware that can be used without tight grasping, pinching, or twisting.

## E. Hallways and Corridors

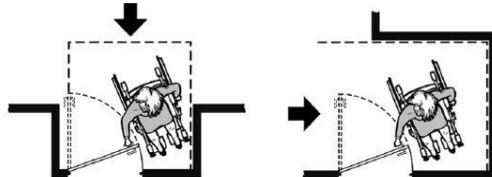
- The interior accessible route connects the accessible entrance with the various service and activity areas within the shelter. Typically made up of hallways, corridors, and interior rooms and spaces, the accessible route is essential for people who have difficulty walking or who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids to get to all of the service and activity areas of the shelter.



1. Accessible Entrance
2. Accessible Route connects the accessible entrance with shelter service and activity area
3. Accessible door to service and activity areas

## E. Hallways and Corridors

- A clear floor space on the latch side of the door (pull side) allows a person using a wheelchair or scooter to pull the door open and then enter. The size of the clear floor space varies depending on the direction of approach (shown by the arrows) and the door swing.



## E. Hallways and Corridors

### Considerations for individuals who are blind or low vision

- Individuals who are blind or have low vision may walk along any route or through any shelter activity area, not just the accessible routes. That means any area where people using the shelter can walk, including hallways, corridors, eating areas, and sleeping areas, must be free of objects that cannot be detected by a person who is blind or has low vision. Objects that are wall mounted, that project into a pedestrian route from the side, or that are overhead must be located so that individuals who are blind or have low vision will either detect the objects before they run into them or safely pass under them.



- 1Wall-mounted drinking fountains are a hazard when the front projects more than 4 inches beyond the wall and the bottom is more than 27 inches above the floor.
- 2Wall-mounted objects cannot project more than 4 inches beyond the wall if the bottom is not in the cane-detectable area below 27 inches off the floor.
- 3Overhead objects must be at least 80 inches off the floor.

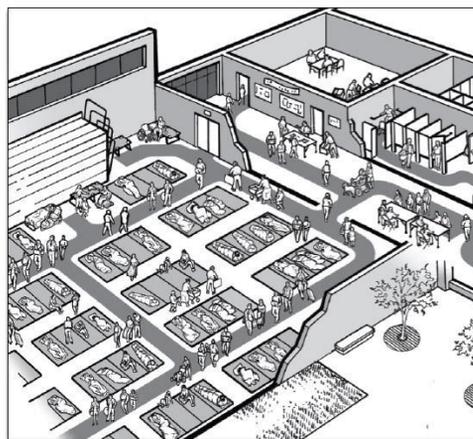
## F. Check-In Areas

- A shelter usually has one or more check-in areas located near the entrance to the shelter. When check-in areas are provided, then at least one accessible check-in location should be provided. The accessible check-in area should be at the accessible entrance or signs should give directions to the accessible check-in area.



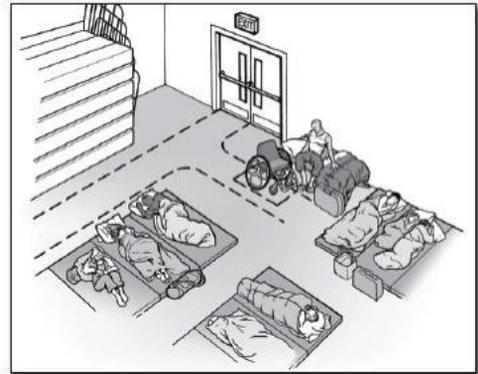
## G. Sleeping Areas

- Each accessible sleeping area needs to be on an accessible route connecting it to other activity areas in the shelter, including toilet rooms and bathing areas. An accessible route with adequate circulation and maneuvering space provides access in the sleeping areas for people who use wheelchairs or scooters and this route serves each accessible bed or cot.



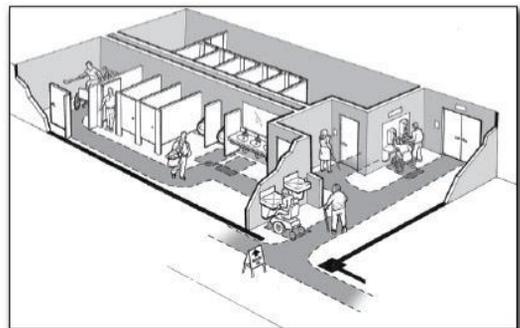
## G. Sleeping Areas

- Accessible cots have a sleeping surface at approximately the same height above the floor as the seat of a wheelchair (17 to 19 inches above the floor). When placed in several sections of the sleeping area, individuals who use a wheelchair, scooter, or other mobility device will be able to sleep near their family or other companions. An accessible route is needed to provide access to each accessible cot and a clear space at least 36 inches wide is needed along the side of the cot to make it possible to transfer between the mobility device and the cot. A preferred location for accessible cots is to have one side against a wall. This helps to stabilize the cot and the wall can act as a backrest when the person sits up on the cot.



## H. Restrooms and Showers

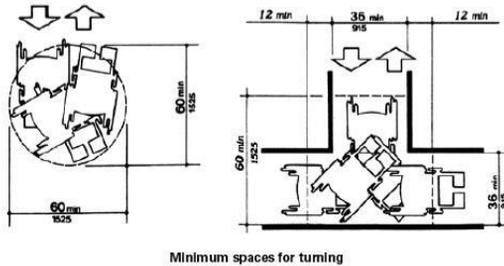
- At least one set of toilet rooms serving the shelter must be accessible to individuals who use a wheelchair, scooter, or other mobility device. In large shelters where more than one set of toilet rooms is needed to serve the occupants, it may be necessary to provide additional accessible toilet facilities or to establish policies to assure that individuals with disabilities have access to the accessible facilities.



# H. Restrooms and Showers

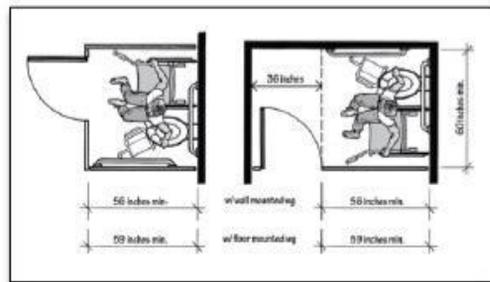
Minimum Turning spaces

- 60 inch diameter circle
- T shaped turn area



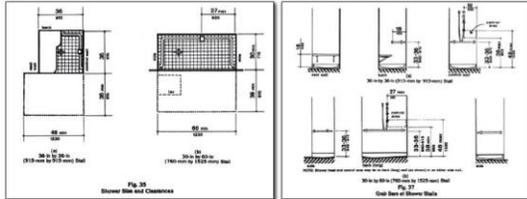
# H. Restrooms and Showers

Toilet Stalls

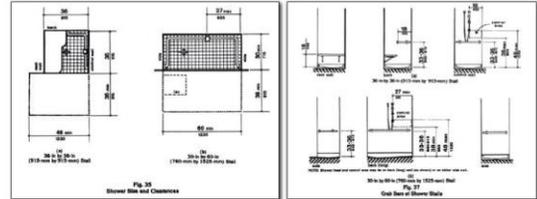


# H. Restrooms and Showers

## Accessible Shower Stall Minimum Size and Clearances

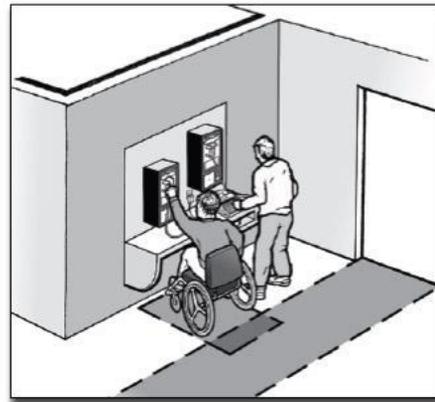


## Accessible Shower Stall Grab Bars and Seat, Shower, and Control Area



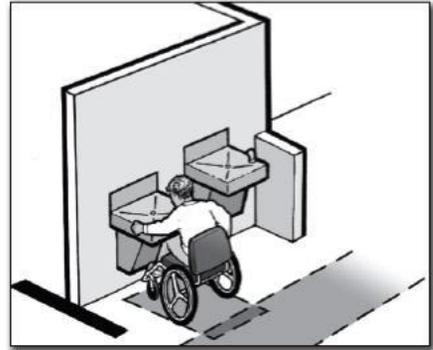
# I. Public Telephones

- When public telephones are provided, then one or more accessible public telephones should be provided in areas serving shelter activity and service areas. Whenever accessible telephones are provided, each should be on an accessible route. In shelters it is common to provide additional telephones on tables or desks and some of these telephones should be accessible.



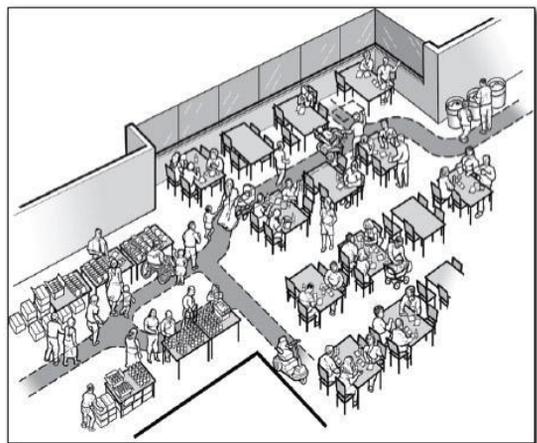
## J. Drinking Fountains

- Approximately 50% of the drinking fountains serving the shelter must be accessible and located on an accessible route. Accessible drinking fountains must have enough space for a person using a wheelchair, scooter, or other mobility device to use the drinking fountain. The spout and controls of the drinking fountain must be near the front edge. The controls must be usable with one hand without tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The other 50% of drinking fountains serving the shelter must be configured for use by people who have difficulty bending or stooping while standing.



## K. Eating Areas

- An accessible route, at least 36 inches wide and without steps or steep slopes, must be provided to and throughout the food service and eating areas of the shelter. The accessible route allows people who use wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility devices to get to all of the food and drink items in the shelter and to accessible tables and seating.



## Other Issues-

### L. Availability of Electrical Power

- Emergency shelters should have a way to provide a back-up power supply when the electrical service is interrupted. The back-up power is needed to provide refrigeration of medicines, operation of supplemental oxygen and breathing devices, and for charging the batteries of power wheelchairs and scooters. Individuals whose medications (certain types of insulin, for example) require constant refrigeration need to know if a shelter provides supplemental power for refrigerators or ice-packed coolers. Individuals who use medical support systems, such as supplemental oxygen, or who require periodic breathing treatments using powered devices rely on a stable source of electricity. These individuals must have access to electric power from a generator or other source of electricity while at a shelter.
- In general, in each community or area where a shelter is provided, **a facility must have one or more back-up generators or other sources of electricity** so that evacuees with a disability who rely on powered devices can have access to electrical power while at the shelter.

## Other Issues-

### M. Single-User or “Family” Toilet Room

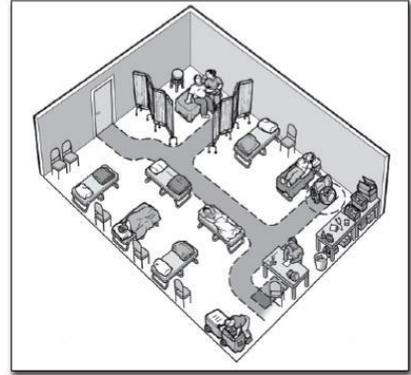
- As part of the planning for operating an emergency shelter, facilities operators should consider using an available staff toilet room, if provided, as a single-user or “family” toilet room. When provided in addition to large accessible toilet rooms, this type of facility permits a person with a disability to receive assistance from a person of the opposite sex.



## Other Issues-

### N. Health Units/Medical Care Areas

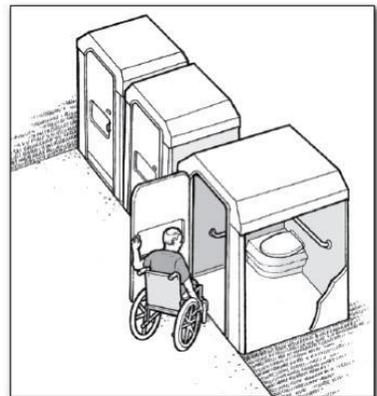
- In many schools, where emergency shelters are often located, nurses' rooms or other types of health care facilities may be provided. These health care facilities should be on an accessible route and have accessible features, including an accessible entrance, an accessible route to the different types of services offered within the medical care unit, turning and maneuvering spaces, and cots or beds that are at a height to which people who use mobility devices can easily transfer.



## Other Issues-

### O. Accessible Portable Toilets

- Portable toilets are often used at emergency shelters to supplement permanent toilet facilities. When portable toilets are provided, at least one must be a unit with accessible features that is located on an accessible route connecting it with the shelter. For the entrance to an accessible portable toilet to be usable, there must either be no step or a ramp must be installed that extends from the hinge side of the door to at least 18 inches beyond the latch side of the door.
- Accessible portable toilets should have similar features to a standard accessible toilet stall including an accessible door, side and rear grab bar, clear space next to the toilet, and maneuvering space.



# Programmatic Access

- Equal access to programs
- Reasonable modifications to rules and policies
  - Example:
    - Ensuring rules and policies allow services animals\* stay with the survivor in shelters and disaster recovery centers
    - Information is provided in multiple formats

## Pet and Service Animal Plan

- By law only service animals must be allowed into public shelters.
- Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that work best for you and your animals.
- [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) has some publications you can download that can assist you in planning for the needs of pets during disasters.



A woman has a service animal lying on the floor next to her cot.

## Medications, Refrigeration and Back Up Power



Many people with disabilities may require access to electricity and refrigeration for using life sustaining medical devices, providing power to motorized wheelchairs and to preserve medications such as insulin that require refrigeration.

As part of the shelter planning process make sure the facilities have a reasonable number of back up generators and a way to keep medications refrigerated. Regularly notify the public of the location of these facilities.

## Pending Legislation



2 minute video

<https://youtu.be/THaeVYQPCw>

**Pending Legislation:  
The READI In Disasters Act**  
[www.readi.com](http://www.readi.com)

- Address federal disaster funding in compliance with disability civil rights laws.
- Create Training, Technical Assistance and Research Centers for disability inclusive emergency preparedness and disaster response, recovery and mitigation.
- Establish a National Commission on Disability Rights and Disasters.
- Review all DOJ Project Civic Access Settlement Agreements.
- Require a GAO investigation of all federal funds since hurricane Katrina to ensure compliance.

**Pending Legislation:  
The Disaster Relief Medicaid Act**  
[www.readi.com](http://www.readi.com)

- Ensures that individuals eligible for Medicaid who are forced to relocate to another state due to a disaster are able to continue to access their Medicaid supported services.
- Provides states with resources to support the Medicaid needs of individuals forced to relocate through:
  - a limited time one hundred percent federal match for displaced individuals
  - technical assistance
  - support to develop innovative state strategies to respond to an influx of out-of-state individuals
- Creates a grant to help states develop an emergency response corps to provide home and community-based services.
- Guarantees that a 100 percent federal matching payment for medical assistance is provided to states in disaster areas.

# Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies



DISABILITY HOTLINE

800-626-4959

[info@disasterstrategiies.org](mailto:info@disasterstrategiies.org)

[www.disasterstrategies.org](http://www.disasterstrategies.org)

24/7

## COVID-19 Disability Community Wide Resources:

<https://tinyurl.com/COVIDisabilityResources>

- Systems Advocacy Tools
- Legislative/Congressional Advocacy Tools
- Federal Resources/Information
- Good & Promising Practices
- Model State Examples
- Other resources/information
- Webinars
- Media Coverage
- Community Organizing Resources
- Global Advocacy & Inclusion
- Acronym Guide

## COVID-19 Disability Community Wide Resources:

Preserving Our Freedom: Ending Institutionalization of People with Disabilities During and After Disasters. National Council on Disability.

- <https://ncd.gov/publications/2019/preserving-our-freedom>
- <https://www.ndrn.org/resource/recap-of-recommendations-virtual-roundtable-series>

Getting It Wrong: An Indictment with a Blueprint for Getting It Right Disability Rights, Obligations and Responsibilities Before, During and After Disasters.

- <http://www.disasterstrategies.org/index.php/news/partnership-releases-2017-2018-after-action-report>

## DOJ Technical Assistance: Emergency Management

- [Letter from DOJ and DHS to State and Local Emergency Management Agencies](#) | [\(PDF\)](#) (2018)
- [Emergency Management under Title II of the ADA \(HTML\)](#) | [\(PDF\)](#) (2007)
- [Title II Checklist \(Emergency Management\) \(HTML\)](#) | [\(PDF\)](#) (2007)
- [The ADA and Emergency Shelters: Access for All in Emergencies and Disasters \(HTML\)](#) | [\(PDF\)](#) (2007)
- [ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters \(HTML\)](#) | [\(PDF\)](#) (2007)

An ADA Guide for Local Governments: Making Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities ([HTML](#)) | ([PDF](#)) (2006)

# Other Federal Emergency Resources

## [Department of Homeland Security \(Federal Emergency Management Agency\)](#)

- [Rumor Control: Service Animals in Shelters \(HTML\)](#) (2017)
- [Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters \(PDF\)](#) (2010)

## [Department of Homeland Security \(Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties\)](#)

- [Notice for Recipients on Nondiscrimination During Disasters \(HTML\) | \(PDF\)](#) (2017)
- [Tips for Effectively Communicating with the Whole Community in Disasters \(HTML\) | \(PDF\)](#) (2017)
- [Guide to Interacting with People Who Have Disabilities \(PDF\)](#) (2013)
- [Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities in the Provision of Disaster Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services \(PDF\)](#) (2007)

## [Department of Health and Human Services \(Office of Civil Rights\)](#)

- [OCR Identifies Practices and Resources for Emergency Responders/Officials to Help Ensure Individuals Have Equal Access to Emergency Services](#) (2017)

## FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialists

Region	Regional Disability Integration Specialist
One Boston	Kate McCarthy Barnett Office of Regional Administrator Desk: 617-816-6351 Cell: 617-956-7552 Kate.mccarthybarnett@fema.dhs.gov
Two New York	James Flemming Office of Regional Administrator Desk: Cell: 212-680-3685 James.fleming@fema.dhs.gov
Three Philadelphia	Philip (PJ) Mattiacci Recovery Division Desk: 267-270-5804 Cell: 202-340-4289 Philip.mattiacci@fema.dhs.gov

## FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialists

Region	Regional Disability Integration Specialist
Four Atlanta	Jawana Latimer External Affairs Desk: 770-220-5306 Cell: 202-924-0455 Jawana.latimer@fema.dhs.gov
Five Chicago	Rodney Garrott External Affairs Director Desk: 312-408-4492 Cell: 202-704-5429 Rodney.garrott@fema.dhs.gov
Six Denton	Christin Bradley Recovery Division Desk: 940-297-0241 Cell: 202-705-9997 Christin.bradley@fema.dhs.gov

## FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialists

Region	Regional Disability Integration Specialist
Seven Kansas City	Georgette Wallace External Affairs Desk: Cell: 202-549-5681 Georgette.wallace@fema.dhs.gov
Eight Denver	Mike Houston External Affairs Desk: 303-235-4763 Cell: 202-440-2740 Mike.houston@fema.dhs.gov
Nine Oakland	Roxann Crawford External Affairs Desk: 510-627-7022 Cell: 202-440-2415 Roxann.Crawford@fema.dhs.gov

# FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialists

Region	Regional Disability Integration Specialist
Ten Bothell	Danielle Bailey External Affairs  Desk: 425-487-4780 Cell: 425-381-3400 Danielle.bailey@fema.dhs.gov

Updated April 22, 2020

## 2020 Hurricane Pandemic Operational Guidance

[https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1589997234798-adb5ce5cb98a7a89e3e1800becf0eb65/2020\\_Hurricane\\_Pandemic\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1589997234798-adb5ce5cb98a7a89e3e1800becf0eb65/2020_Hurricane_Pandemic_Plan.pdf)

## Contact us

- Sandy Hanebrink, OTR/L, CLP, FAOTA  
Executive Director, Touch the Future Inc  
[admin@touchthefuture.us](mailto:admin@touchthefuture.us)



- Marcie Roth  
Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer,  
World Institute on Disability  
[marcie@wid.org](mailto:marcie@wid.org)

