

Emergency Preparedness for People With Disabilities: Lessons Learned After the California Lawsuit

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Faculty

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Resources

**ADA Hotline
800 – 205 – 9986**

Governor's Office On Disability

888 – 879 – 3582 (Toll Free)

**Montgomery GOOD Office
334 – 293 – 7189**

**Birmingham GOOD Office
205 – 290 – 4540**

www.good.alabama.gov

Considerations

- All information provided is non-binding
- Ultra "Reader's Digest" version
- County perspective
- Top 10 list and best practices during April 2011

Legal Considerations

- **Communities Actively Living Independent and Free v. City of Los Angeles and County of Los Angeles**
- **ADA (Title II or III)**
 - Prohibits discrimination on basis of disability in the provision of programs, services, and activities

Legal Considerations

- Emergency preparedness is a program of a governmental entity
 - Must provide equal opportunity or benefit for persons with disabilities (PWD)
- Include PWD in organizational plans and make reasonable accommodation for a disability

Legal Considerations

– Rehabilitation Act, Section 504 is same as ADA Title II

Top Ten Tips (Not in Order of Importance)

1. Mass shelter and care must be accessible to PWD
2. Include input from the disability community when creating emergency plans
3. Identify in advance the needs of and resources for PWD during an emergency

Top Ten Tips (Not in Order of Importance)

4. Develop a plan for notifying PWD
5. Provide assistance to PWD, if required to shelter in place
6. Provide for needs of PWD in providing evacuation and transportation to shelters

Top Ten Tips (Not in Order of Importance)

7. Mass evacuation plans should include provisions to meet the needs of PWD
8. Plan for emergency housing
9. Recovery plan should provide any assistance
 - Provide resources for long-term recovery needs

Top Ten Tips (Not in Order of Importance)

10. Provide remediation
 - Removing barriers

Accessible Shelters and Care

- Architectural and care accessibility
- Survey existing shelters
- Evaluate medical supplies
 - Medicine, DME, CME, Foley catheters, blood sugar test strips, etc.
- Refrigeration capabilities
- Service animal needs

Accessible Shelters and Care

- **Inclusive shelter policies**
 - PWD remain with families and / or caregivers, no pets
- **Advertise in accessible formats**
location of accessible shelters and care
 - Still allow personal choice

Accessible Shelters

- **This is an area where improvement is needed, but great strides are being made**
- **Shelters operated by state or local governments would be covered by Title II of the ADA**
- **Shelters operated by private entities would be covered by Title III**

Accessible Shelters

- **These shelters would also be covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act where federal funding is received**

Disability Community Input

- **Governor's Office On Disability (GOOD) has local advisory committees around the state and contact with disability organizations**
- **We can assist with contacting PWD for purposes of input**

Involve People with Disabilities in the Planning Process

- **User's perspective**
- **Can share cross disability perspective**
- **Can provide concrete, practical knowledge**

Identify Needs and Resources

- **Identify accessible shelter and transportation***
- **Learn general location or areas of concentration of PWD needing assistance****
- **Have agreements (MOUs) with disability organizations to identify their roles**

Identify Needs and Resources

- **Identify support resources for medication and equipment for PWD and their families*****

Develop Notification Plan for PWD

- **Ensure accessible formats***
- **Test for effectiveness**

Effective Communication

- **Emergency or disaster warnings should be communicated in a format that is accessible to persons who are deaf or blind or otherwise unable to receive warnings by usual methods**
 - **Examples: auditory warnings for those who cannot see and text messages for those who cannot hear**

Effective Communication

- **Emergency broadcast messages on television should be closed captioned**
- **Others**

Accessible Temporary Housing

- **This should be included in emergency recovery plans**

Recovery Plans

- **Should provide assistance for PWD**
- **PWD require specific assistance during recovery in returning to homes and in restoring accessible features**
- **Check to see if PWD are safe in new housing or changed environment**
- **Include disability community in recovery planning**