

# The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

April 26, 2024

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## Message from the Chief



L. Vance Taylor at the Disability Rights California 2024 Gala

All,

As we close out the month of April, my thoughts are on the meaningful engagement and partnerships we have enjoyed with stakeholders throughout the State and beyond.

In partnership, we have been able to collaboratively increase the

overall levels of preparedness and resilience among the whole community, including individuals with access and functional needs. The benefits of doing so have played out time-and-time again as we have worked through the many incidents and events that have challenged us during the front end of 2024.

Inclusive collaboration enables enhanced alerting, accessible messaging, safer evacuation, integrated shelter environments, and a more efficient recovery process.

As we move deeper into Spring, it's essential to remain vigilant in the protection of our health, safety, and independence. Stay informed, plan ahead, and support one another through whatever comes our way. Together, there is much we can do to mitigate the risks of incidents and minimize the impacts of events.

Thank you for your steadfastness and ongoing commitment to the mission of inclusive emergency management. We're in this together!

-Vance

**L. Vance Taylor**

Chief, Office of Access and Functional Needs  
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

## Inclusive Recovery Efforts for DR-4758

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Damaged cars in San Diego following the January 2024 flooding

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Since severe storms impacted San Diego County in late January, causing widespread flooding and debris flows, the Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) has been working in partnership with local, state, and federal emergency management partners and whole community stakeholders to support inclusive recovery efforts.

During the storms, OAFN activated to the State Operations Center to facilitate inclusive response activities. Immediately following the storms, OAFN worked with partners to assess local shelters, ensure accessibility at Local Assistance Centers, and identify language service needs at Disaster Recovery Centers.

To help ensure survivors with access and functional considerations had an increased understanding of the response process, OAFN collaborated with emergency management partners to host a Community Recovery Workshop via Zoom. Bringing everyone together enabled the sharing of detailed information regarding available resources, promoted dialogue, and created an opportunity for survivors to ask specific questions. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, Spanish translation, and live captioning in English and Spanish were provided.

Throughout the event, and the recovery process, OAFN has shared information about benefits, programs, and resources; highlighted important deadlines; provided updates on the hours, locations, and closures of Disaster Recovery Centers; engaged with whole community partners serving older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with other access or functional needs; and supported the equitable rollout of recovery services.

As we move forward, OAFN will continue to promote collaboration and inclusivity for all Californians.

## AFN Web Map

The screenshot shows the home page of the California Access and Functional Needs Viewer. At the top, the title "California Access and Functional Needs Viewer" is displayed, followed by a subtitle: "An interactive, GIS-based tool to assist emergency managers in identifying, locating and deploying access and functional needs (AFN) related assets and resources during all phases of emergencies." A navigation bar contains buttons for "Home", "Active Shelters", "Census", "Assets", "Resources", "Health and Medical", and "CalOES Regional Contacts". The main content area is split into two columns. The left column has the heading "CalOES Access and Functional Needs Web App" and a welcome message. Below this is a list of categories for access and functional needs: Physical, Developmental, or Intellectual Disabilities; Chronic Conditions or Injuries; Limited English Proficiency; Older Adults; and Children. The right column features a map of California with several red and black icons indicating specific locations. A search bar is visible in the top right corner of the map area.

The AFN Web Map home page

Did you know Cal OES has an interactive web map with a wide range of access and functional needs-related information that can assist emergency managers and planners to meet the needs of the whole community before, during, and after disasters?

Developed and maintained by the Cal OES Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) and the Cal OES Security, Data, and Geographic Information System (GIS) Division, the AFN Web Map is the first inclusive, statewide, interactive tool available with access and functional needs-specific information to help jurisdictions better plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

The AFN Web Map can be used as a starting point for developing or improving integrated emergency operations plans, developing a better understanding of whole community needs, and identifying access and functional needs-related assets and resources.

- The Home tab of the AFN Web Map features a statewide look at current fires, recent earthquakes, and evacuation data.
- The Active Shelter tab tracks emergency shelters established by local jurisdictions.
- The Census tab provides static information on access and functional needs-related demographics categorized by county.
- The Health and Medical tab assists in identifying operational and regional partners and licensed facilities (e.g., hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, etc.)

The AFN Web Map also includes AFN-specific asset information such as accessible hygiene and transportation providers, assistive technology services, and potential sources for language service providers.

Be sure to check out the [AFN Web Map](http://www.Caloes.ca.gov/AFNWebMap) on our web page:  
[www.Caloes.ca.gov/AFNWebMap](http://www.Caloes.ca.gov/AFNWebMap)



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A thumbnail for Linell Walker's, I am Cal OES video

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Meet Linell Walker, an Assistant Program Manager with the Office of Access and Functional Needs. Linell works to ensure all Californians have access to accessible resources before, during, and after disasters.

Linell is an amazing part of the OAFN team!

Visit [www.YouTube.com/lamCalOES](http://www.YouTube.com/lamCalOES) or click the thumbnail below.

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