

# The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

April 14, 2026

## Welcome!

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## Message from the Chief



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*L. Vance Taylor with family, friends, and partners at the Disability Rights California Gala*

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All,  
We often focus on hazards like wildfires and power outages, which makes sense. They are visible, frequent, and often come with some level of warning. However, there is another major threat that does not always get the same level of attention: earthquakes.

Earthquakes pose a significant risk because they are no-notice events with the potential to cause serious damage in a matter of seconds.

That reality makes earthquake preparedness essential.

April is Earthquake Preparedness Month, and it provides an opportunity to reassess both our personal and organizational readiness.

As part of this effort, I encourage you to explore earthquake alerting resources such as the [MyShake app](#), an earthquake early warning system supported by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES).

MyShake uses ground-motion sensors to detect earthquakes that have already started and can send an alert to your phone seconds before shaking begins. Those seconds matter. They give you time to take protective action like Drop, Cover, and Hold On.

The app is free, available in multiple languages, and designed to be accessible to a wide range of users.

Preparedness does not happen all at once. It is built over time through awareness, planning, and follow-through. Each of us plays a role. Downloading the MyShake app, helps protect not only ourselves, but our communities and the people we care about.

Thank you for the work you do every day to support inclusive, whole community preparedness. Here's to being informed, aware, and prepared.

-Vance

**L. Vance Taylor**

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

## Earthquake Preparedness Month



*Icons for Drop, Cover, Hold On, and Lock, Cover, Hold On for different abilities*

Earthquake preparedness is not one-size-fits-all. It requires thoughtful, inclusive planning to ensure individuals with access and functional needs can maintain safety, independence, and dignity before, during, and after an earthquake.

For many people, mobility limitations, communication needs, reliance on medical equipment, or transportation barriers can make emergencies more complex. That's why planning ahead matters.

The good news is, there are practical things we can do now to be better prepared when the time comes.

#### **Take action today:**

- **Build or Update Your Emergency Plan**: Make sure it reflects your current needs, environment, and support network.
- **Sign Up for Alerts**: Connect with local systems and stay informed with accessible alerts in formats you can use.
- **Know Your Resources**: Explore tools like ***Earthquake Guidance for People with Disabilities*** and ***Earthquake Safety Accessibility Tips***.

- **Prepare an accessible emergency kit:** Keep supplies within reach and tailored to your daily needs.

Preparedness is not just about getting through the event. It is about ensuring everyone has the ability to respond, recover, and stay connected.

Taking action today helps ensure no one is left behind tomorrow.

## Strengthening Inclusive Earthquake Preparedness



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*A participant of the Secure Your Space Program, showing off mitigation equipment before having the items installed*

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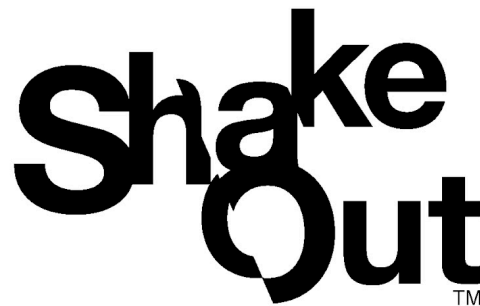
As part of an effort to broaden inclusive outreach, the Cal OES Seismic Hazards Branch partnered with the Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) to expand access to earthquake safety resources for individuals with disabilities.

Through this partnership, Cal OES administered the *Secure Your Space* program, providing individuals with disabilities free earthquake mitigation kits and educational materials designed to reduce risk before an earthquake occurs. These kits included items such as furniture straps to secure appliances and equipment, along with guidance to help make homes and workspaces safer.

To ensure these resources reached the communities that need them most, the effort was carried out in partnership with five Independent Living Centers (ILCs) across the state. The ILCs played a critical role as trusted community partners, using the resources to secure their own facilities and support individuals with disabilities throughout their service areas.

Through this collaboration, office environments were made safer, and consumers received direct support to secure their homes and reduce potential hazards.

This effort underscores the importance of partnership in emergency management. By bringing together technical expertise, trusted community networks, and a shared commitment to accessibility, Cal OES continues to advance inclusive preparedness strategies that have real, lasting impact.



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*Shake Out Logo*

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Check out the Great ShakeOut Earthquake Safety Video Series on [\*\*YouTube\*\*](#) to learn simple, life-saving preparedness tips. Don't miss the "[\*\*If You Have a Mobility Disability\*\*](#)" segment, which offers tailored guidance.

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