![Cal OES Governor's Office of Emergency Services logo]

The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

November 13, 2024

Message from the Chief

L. Vance Taylor in the California State Operations Center

All,

I am truly fortunate to interact and partner with emergency managers throughout the state. Having a ringside seat to the innovative work being done to integrate access and functional needs enables me to see how the dedicated efforts of so many are moving the mission forward.

To support the inclusive planning processes being championed by jurisdictions across California, Cal OES has released a newly-developed resource,"Jurisdictional Guidance for the Development of an AFN Advisory Committee." This document was created in coordination with government and non-government partners, including representatives from the Cal OES Statewide AFN Advisory Committee, and a variety of jurisdictions, including the counties of Sonoma, Santa Clara, and Merced.

The establishment of an AFN Advisory Committee is a best practice that enables jurisdictions to be more inclusive in the ways they plan, prepare, respond, and recover. They include representatives with lived experience and serve as a platform to partner in meaningful ways, such as assisting to strengthen communication, evacuation, and sheltering plans. An AFN Advisory Committee helps foster trust, leads to better products, and promotes resilience.

I invite jurisdictions everywhere to use the new guide as a valuable resource to enhance their efforts to ensure the emergency management system works for everyone.

Thank you.

-Vance

L. Vance Taylor
Chief, Office of Access and Functional Needs
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

ADA Shelter Assessment Training

Instructors presenting at the ADA shelter assessment training class

To help ensure physical and programmatic accessibility at shelters, the Office of Access and Functional Needs partnered with the Pacific ADA Center to deliver essential training for emergency managers and shelter operators from Cal OES and the California Department of Social Services' Disaster Services Branch.

The "Identifying Accessible Shelters," training course provided participants with the technical information, knowledge, and tools needed to assess whether shelter facilities meet State and Federal accessibility regulations. Adhering to these requirements is a crucial step in supporting individuals with disabilities, and people with access and functional needs, as they seek to maintain their health, safety, and independence.
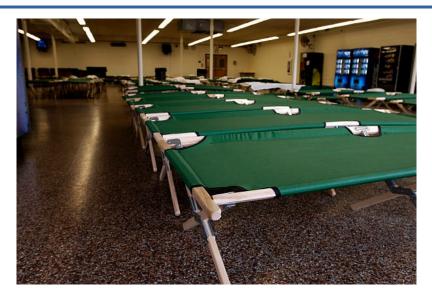
As a leader in advancing the understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability rights laws, the Pacific ADA Center provided practical, hands-on guidance.

Participants reviewed ADA and California Building Code requirements for public buildings, conducted on-site accessibility surveys, and had the opportunity to beta-test new online assessment tools.

The training will be hosted again in the first quarter of 2025.

For those interested in learning more about accessible sheltering resources, visit www.adapacific.org.

Available now! New Online Course on Inclusive Sheltering Plans and Operations

Cots set up at an emergency disaster shelter

Cal OES, through the Office of Access and Functional Needs and the California Specialized Training Institute, has released a free new online training course on [Developing Inclusive Sheltering Plans and Operations](#).

The new online training course is available now for emergency managers and whole community partners everywhere. The course supports local jurisdictions with the best practices, guidance, and information needed to create integrated sheltering plans and maintain operations that identify, address, and incorporate the access and functional considerations of the whole community.

Course objectives include:

1. Identifying ways to create inclusive sheltering plans.
2. Identifying the elements needed to operationalize physically and programmatically accessible shelters.
3. Identifying accessible communication strategies at shelters.
4. Identifying the accessibility needs of all shelter clients.
5. Identifying accessible transportation resources to/from shelters.
6. Identifying how inclusive planning benefits the whole community.

Strengthen and enhance your sheltering plans by logging on to take this free online Inclusive Sheltering course today!

An exclamation mark with the words "Emergency Alert" under it

Each County in California has an alerting program you can sign up for through CalAlerts to receive notifications when disasters arise. Stay informed by signing up today!

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