

The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

October 12, 2023

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Message from the Chief



L. Vance Taylor at the Anaheim Convention Center

All,

As part of the effort to lead the nation in inclusive planning, the Cal OES Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) partners with incredible emergency managers and whole community stakeholders. Together we've made great strides integrating access and functional considerations throughout California's emergency management systems.

Despite our progress, we know more work is needed. This is especially true since we live at a time when climate-driven disasters are increasing at a seemingly exponential rate. What's more, disasters aren't just

increasing in number and frequency; the scope, scale, and devastation associated with events are increasing too.

Tackling the disaster-related challenges of tomorrow requires developing the expertise and know-how today to ensure the safety and resilience of the whole community. As such, the role innovative training plays in effective emergency management cannot be overstated.

Inclusion is fundamental to developing the curriculum, modules, courses, and deliveries needed to implement successful emergency management operations.

OAFN is hard at work creating new training products to assist emergency managers and community partners everywhere. The articles below provide a few examples of the exciting training developments to come.

Once completed, we look forward to making each training product widely available to all!

Thank you.

-Vance

L. Vance Taylor

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

Inclusive Training for CERT Volunteers



The Office of Access and Functional Needs is spearheading the development of an AFN-specific training module for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers.

Working in partnership with California's CERT Administrator, subject matter experts, and community stakeholders, the new training module will adopt a whole community focus that highlights:

- The disproportionate impact disasters have on individuals with access and functional needs;
- Ways to support people with access or functional considerations; and
- How to integrate CERT teams to include volunteers and leaders

with lived AFN experience.

The AFN-specific module, which is scheduled for completion in January 2024, will be integrated throughout the training California's 450 CERT programs receive. The module will also be made available nationally to promote a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization.

For more Information about CERT, please visit [Cal OES/Community Emergency Response Team](#).

New Integrated Emergency Management Courses in Development



J.R. Antablían (California Department of Social Services) recording messages for the online mini courses

To help emergency managers take their integrated emergency planning and operations to the next level, OAFN is developing three new training courses that address each of the following topics: **Inclusive Communication; Inclusive Evacuation/Transportation; and Inclusive Sheltering.**

To ensure an inclusive process that yields the best, most innovative products, OAFN is partnering with the following stakeholders on this effort:

- The California Specialized Training Institute;
- The California Department of Social Services;
- The American Red Cross;
- NorCal Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- The California State Council on Developmental Disabilities;
- Disability Rights California;

- The California Department of Rehabilitation;
- The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services Law Enforcement Branch;
- The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers;
- Local jurisdictions;
- Disability consultants; and others

Built on actionable principles and best practices, each course will provide life-impacting and life-saving information on the integration of access and functional considerations to serve the whole community.

The courses, which are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2024, will be made available online nationwide at no charge.



Don't miss the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Annual Conference on November 3 - 9 in Long Beach, CA.

L. Vance Taylor (Chief, OAFN at Cal OES) will be speaking on *"Inclusive Planning - Meeting the Needs of the Whole Community During Emergency Evacuations."*

For detailed information on all the plenary speakers or to register, visit <https://www.iaem.org/usconf/>.

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