

The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

October 14, 2024

Welcome!

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Message from the Chief



L. Vance Taylor with Christina Mills (Disability Advocate) and Roxann Crawford (FEMA) at the Government and Disability Summit

All,
October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), which celebrates the invaluable contributions and talents individuals with disabilities bring to the workplace. NDEAM is a vital reminder about the significance of inclusivity and the positive impacts associated with a diverse workforce of employees with different lived experiences.

Employment is about more than economic stability; it's about dignity, belonging, and the opportunity to participate fully in a community. For individuals with disabilities, it also provides an opportunity to represent the community in ways that improve their fields of employment.

In celebrating NDEAM, it's important to acknowledge the significant contributions individuals with disabilities have, and continue, to make throughout the field of emergency management. It's through an integrated emergency management workforce that the perspectives of individuals with disabilities are being leveraged to identify and address unmet access and functional considerations; develop inclusive communication, evacuation, and sheltering plans; and inform the methods and processes used to prepare, respond, and recover from disasters in ways that serve the whole community.

Let's use NDEAM as a springboard to continuously ensure individuals with disabilities can work in, and improve, the field of emergency management.

Thank you.

-Vance

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

**Available now! New Inclusive Evacuation and
Transportation Training**



An individual using a wheelchair on a lift entering a van

Cal OES, through the Office of Access and Functional Needs and the California Specialized Training Institute, has created a free new online **Inclusive Evacuation and Transportation** training course that is now available to emergency managers and whole community partners everywhere!

The new course supports local jurisdictions with the information, technical knowledge, and resources needed to develop comprehensive, inclusive, emergency transportation and evacuation plans.

Course objectives include:

1. Describing how including representatives with access and functional needs throughout the development of emergency evacuation and transportation plans benefits the whole community.
2. Identifying best practices to create a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that individuals with access and functional needs can use to secure accessible transportation services before, during, and after disasters.
3. Recognizing the need to create contracts with transportation providers within, and beyond, a given jurisdiction.
4. Identifying the value of ensuring accessible transportation is available 24/7, on demand, and at no cost to evacuees during emergencies.
5. Identifying traditional and non-traditional transportation resources that may need to be utilized during large-scale evacuations.
6. Describing the importance of accessible communication and the need to use plain language.
7. Outlining barriers and challenges associated with the use of voluntary disaster registries.
8. Highlighting how advance planning closes gaps and reduces the barriers individuals with access and functional needs face

to successfully evacuate impact areas when disasters strike.

Take the next steps in building a safer, more inclusive evacuation and transportation plan.

The Great ShakeOut



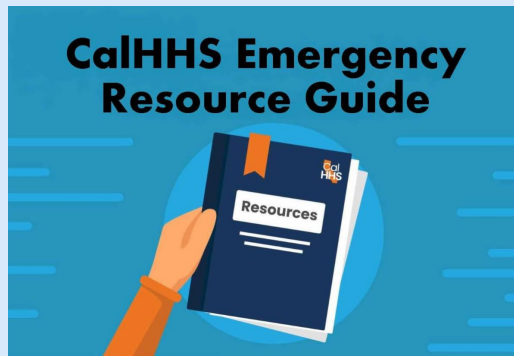
ShakeOut icon showing someone in a wheelchair covering their head, a person taking cover under a table, and a book falling.

The Great ShakeOut earthquake drill is on October 17th at 10:17am. The drill, which is a yearly tradition, is a great opportunity for individuals, families, and organizations to practice earthquake preparedness.

Earthquakes can cause serious interruptions to communication, transportation, and evacuation services – all of which have serious impacts on the general population but hold particularly dangerous consequences for individuals with disabilities or access and functional needs.

It is vital for the safety, health, and independence of the whole community that individuals with access and functional considerations develop and practice personalized earthquake plans. Participating in the Great ShakeOut is a great starting place and helps individuals, service providers, and caregivers build confidence, assess risks, and develop specific strategies to ensure they will be ready when disaster strikes.

Register to participate in the 2024 Great ShakeOut at www.shakeout.org and join millions of people worldwide in practicing earthquake safety.



The CalHHS Emergency Resource Guide held by a cartoon hand

The California Health and Human Services Agency's **Emergency Resource Guide** provides key information about available disaster-related tools, services, and programs. Download it today!

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