



## Assembly Bill 477 Planning Guidance Introduction

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) issues the following guidance, ***Integrating Access and Functional Needs Within the Emergency Planning Process*** in order to assist counties in the implementation of Assembly Bill 477, which became law effective September 4, 2019.

Assembly Bill 477 (Cervantes, Chapter 218), which amends California Government Code section 8593.3, requires each county to include representatives from access and functional needs populations in the next regular update to its emergency plan. Specifically, jurisdictions must include internal and external stakeholders throughout each phase of the emergency planning process in:

- Emergency communications;
- Emergency evacuations; and
- Emergency sheltering.

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure emergency managers recognize the need, and understand the process, of integrating whole community partners as they develop their emergency plans; to underscore the value of identifying access and functional needs-related considerations before, during, and after disasters; and to provide a blueprint for engaging Community-based Organizations (CBOs) throughout the planning cycle.

Part of any successful planning effort is to understand the impacted population(s). The legal requirements are set forth in Government Code section 8593.3, and define access and functional needs as individuals who have:

- Developmental, intellectual or physical disabilities;
- Chronic conditions or injuries;
- Limited English proficiency or non-English speaking;

Or, individuals who are:

- Older adults, children, or pregnant;
- Living in institutional settings; or
- Low-income, homeless, and/or transportation disadvantaged.

In keeping with its mission, Cal OES seeks to identify the needs of individuals with disabilities and people with access and functional needs before, during, and after disasters and to integrate them into the State's emergency management



system. Cal OES utilizes a whole community approach by offering training, technical support, expertise, and guidance to emergency managers and planners, disability advocates and other service providers responsible for planning for, responding to, and helping communities recover from disasters.

For additional questions regarding access and functional needs, contact the Cal OES Office of Access and Functional needs at [OAFN@caloes.ca.gov](mailto:OAFN@caloes.ca.gov).