



Massachusetts Emergency
Management Agency

2025

Emergency Planning for People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs

A Resource Guide for Local Emergency
Management Directors/Agencies in Massachusetts

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PURPOSE

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) developed this resource guide to provide local communities with the information, resources and tools they need to better integrate considerations for people with disabilities and others who have access and functional needs (before, during and after an emergency) into their local comprehensive emergency management plan.

This resource guide complements MEMA's support guide titled *Guidance on Integrating Access and Functional Needs Considerations in Emergency Preparedness, Planning, Response and Recovery* (June 2019).

In addition, this resource guide is reviewed and revised annually by MEMA's Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee. The committee is comprised of the following agencies and organizations:

- MA Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)
- MA Office on Disability (MOD)
- MA Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Center for Living and Working Inc. (CLW)
- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)
- MA Commission for the Blind (MCB)
- MA Department of Mental Health (DMH)
- MA Department of Public Health: Office of Health Equity and Community Engagement (OHECE)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (Region 1)
- MA Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE)
- Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)
- MA Department of Public Utilities (DPU)
- American Red Cross (ARC)
- MassAbility
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council (MASILC)

SECTION 1: ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

The term “access and functional needs” refers to a set of broad, cross-cutting access and function-based needs. Access-based needs require ensuring that resources are accessible to all individuals. Function-based needs refer to restrictions or limitations an individual may have that require additional assistance before, during, and/or after an emergency. Individuals with access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, children, older adults, persons with limited English proficiency, and persons with limited access to transportation.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines access and functional needs accommodation as circumstances that are met for providing physical, programmatic, and effective communication access to the whole community by accommodating individual requirements through universal accessibility and/or specific actions or modifications.

Extended Definition: includes assistance, accommodation or modification for mobility, communication, transportation, safety, health maintenance, etc.; need for assistance, accommodation or modification due to any situation (temporary or permanent) that limits an individual’s ability to take action in an emergency.

1.1 CHILDREN’S UNIQUE NEEDS IN DISASTER

When disaster strikes, children are the most vulnerable. When the people, places and routines they depend on for safety and wellbeing are affected by upheaval, children cannot adjust on their own. The following unique needs of children in emergencies need to be addressed in emergency planning and preparation to help ensure children are safe and protected from harm.

Reliance on Caregivers: Children are physically and emotionally dependent on their caregivers and rely on the guidance and direction of adults to keep them safe. During a disaster children will tune into their caregiver to know how to respond, including where to go, what to do, what to take, and how to reunite with their family. If parents, guardians and other caregivers are unprepared for a variety of disasters, children are left vulnerable, scared and at risk of harm.

Safety Protection: Items that adults use every day can harm children. Medications, cleaning supplies, knives, plastic bags, coins, batteries and other small objects are unsafe for unattended children to be around. In the chaos of an emergency, it’s important to have enough adults to care for children and also provide them with the supplies that they need. This rule also applies in disaster shelters, where planners and shelter managers should consider how the shelter setup can best (protect?) children. For example, are there family areas and family bathrooms set aside for parents or guardians with children?

Communication and Identification: Young children may not be able to verbally identify themselves or family members. Older children may not know who their emergency contacts are or how to reach them. The approximately 68 million children in U.S. schools or childcare are separated from their family many hours a day, so all caregivers need to be equipped with the correct ID information for each child. This is critical to ensuring quick family reunification following a disaster.

Mobility: Infants and toddlers are unable to ambulate independently walk, and young children may need to hold hands for balance and move at a slow pace. Emergency plans must ensure there is a way to safely evacuate every child and necessary evacuation equipment (e.g., car seats, cribs, transportation) especially if there are a limited number of caregivers available to assist during an evacuation.

Physical Needs: Children's bodies are smaller and less developed, putting them at greater risk of illness or harm during an emergency. For example, because children have thinner skin, take more breaths per minute, and are closer to the ground than adults, they are more susceptible to harmful chemicals or carbon monoxide poisoning from fire smoke or chemical leaks. Children also require age and size appropriate doses of medication, which should be included in disaster supplies kits.

Emotional Needs: Children, no matter what age, are deeply affected by experiences of death, destruction, terror and the absence or powerlessness of their parents or guardians during a disaster. Their caregivers' reactions and responses can often add an additional layer of stress. Children process these events with limited understanding and require specialized support to develop the knowledge and healthy coping skills needed to heal and recover.

Routine and Comfort: Children depend on routine to help them make sense of their surroundings and feel comforted. Whether it is nap time, snack time or story time, keeping schedules consistent following a disaster is crucial in helping children cope and recover. Children also tend to be comforted by certain items they can touch or hold such as blankets, stuffed animals or toys. It's critical that parents, guardians and caregivers include such items in their disaster supplies kit.

Nutritional Needs: Children also have unique nutritional needs that require special emergency planning. Children require more fluids pound for pound than adults, which should be accommodated by keeping plenty of fluids in disaster supplies and ensuring children continue to hydrate even in stressful situations. Kids also require healthy and nutritious food to help them grow. Children can be picky eaters, so storing child-friendly snacks such as granola bars or fruit snacks with disaster supplies kits is advisable.

Developmental Needs: A disaster may disrupt the school year or participation in childcare. Children may also fall behind when they struggle with long-term physiological or psychological issues following a disaster. These setbacks, without the appropriate intervention, can cause children to lag behind their peers educationally and developmentally, potentially changing the course of their lives and ability to thrive.

Source: Save the Children

[The Unique Needs of Children in Emergencies A Guide for the Inclusion of Children in Emergency Operations Plans](#)

SECTION 2: KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Activities of Daily Living: The Activities of Daily Living are a series of basic activities performed by individuals on a daily basis necessary for independent living at home or in the community. There are many variations on the definition of the activities of daily living, but most organizations agree there are 5 basic categories:

1. Personal hygiene – bathing/showering, grooming, nail care, and oral care.
2. Dressing - the ability to make appropriate clothing decisions and physically dress/undress oneself.
3. Eating - the ability to feed oneself, though not necessarily the capability to prepare food.
4. Maintaining continence - both the mental and physical capacity to use a restroom, including the ability to get on and off the toilet and cleaning oneself.
5. Transferring/Mobility- moving oneself from seated to standing, getting in and out of bed, and the ability to walk independently from one location to another.

Whether or not an individual is capable of performing these activities on their own or if they rely on a family caregiver for assistance to perform them serves a comparative measure of their independence.

Consumable Medical Supplies: Medical supplies (medications, diapers, bandages, etc.) that are ingested, injected, or applied and/ or are one time use only.

Disability: An individual with a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

Disability types include persons with:

- Developmental/intellectual disabilities: Refers to a diagnosed disability that begins before an individual reaches adulthood (e.g. cerebral palsy).
- Acquired disabilities: Can occur as a result of injury. These injuries can damage the brain, spinal cord, hearing, seeing, mobility, memory and learning.
- Medical conditions (e.g. diabetes).

Children and adults may have physical, sensory, mental health, cognitive and /or intellectual disabilities potentially limiting their ability to maintain or regain their level of independence. Activity limitations and abilities can range in type and duration:

- Partial or total
- Temporary or permanent
- Mild or catastrophic

Durable Medical Equipment: Medical equipment (e.g., walkers, canes, wheelchairs) used by people with a disability to maintain their usual level of independence.

Functional Needs Support Services: Defined as services that enable individuals to maintain their usual level of independence in a general population shelter. FNSS includes:

- Reasonable modification to policies, practices, and procedures
- Durable medical equipment (DME)
- Consumable medical supplies (CMS)
- Personal assistance services (PAS)
- Other goods and services as needed

Children and adults requiring FNSS may have physical, sensory, mental health, and cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities affecting their ability to function independently without assistance. Others that may benefit from FNSS include women in late stages of pregnancy, seniors, and people needing bariatric equipment.

Personal Assistance Services: Formal and informal services provided by paid personnel, personal attendants, friends, family members, and volunteers that enable children and adults to maintain their usual level of independence in a general population shelter. These services (when necessary) may include, but are not limited to, assisting with:

- Basic personal care
- Grooming
- Eating
- Bathing
- Toileting
- Dressing and undressing
- Walking
- Transferring
- Maintaining health and safety

Service Animal: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a service animal is defined as a dog, or in some instances, a miniature horse, that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

Vulnerability: A vulnerability is the reduced capacity of a person or group to understand, prepare for and/or recover from the impacts of a disaster. Vulnerability may stem from physical, social, economic, and environmental factors. Examples include:

- Limited family income
- Language barriers
- Age
- Disabilities or access and functional needs
- Physical exposure to a risk, like living on a coastline

Whole Community: Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests. By doing so, a more effective path

to societal security and resilience is built. In a sense, Whole Community is a philosophical approach on how to think about conducting emergency management.

SECTION 3: C-MIST FRAMEWORK

A useful approach for addressing the access and functional needs of people with and without disabilities in your community is the CMIST Framework. It provides a structure to identify and address access and needs; and therefore, it builds competencies for emergency managers, public health officials, and CBOs towards implementing inclusive emergency planning. A function-based approach avoids generalizations and assumptions that are based on unhelpful medical labels. Functions look at the capabilities and the needs of the individual, not their diagnostic labels. A plan based on optimizing function rather than “specialness” increases the chance of successful accommodation of predictable needs. The National Response Framework (NRF) endorses establishing a flexible framework to address broad and common functional needs (children, older adults, individuals who are transportation disadvantaged, and people with limited or no ability to speak or read English regardless of diagnosis, statuses, or labels. For example, the fact that a person has survived a stroke tells us nothing about their functional needs for maintaining their health, safety, and independence, which can range from no needs to many needs.

The CMIST Framework is an acronym that organizes access and functional needs into five crosscutting categories:

C – Communication: Addresses the needs of individuals with accessibility issues or needing assistance with receiving information in formats that allow them to understand and use the information provided. These individuals can include Individuals who speak sign language, who have limited English proficiency (LEP) and/or no ability to read or speak English, who have limited ability to speak, see, hear, or understand (cognitive or intellectual disability). Successful communication includes the continual use of multiple and redundant forms of information sharing such as: Announce it; Describe it; Caption it; Picture it; E-mail it; Relay it; Share it; Tweet it; Text it; Post it; Interpret it (language & sign); and repeat it (frequently).

M – Maintaining Health: Individuals who require specific medications, supplies, services, durable medical equipment, electricity for life-maintaining equipment, breastfeeding and infant/childcare, nutrition, etc. Preventing and/or minimizing the negative impacts from a disaster on an individual's health begins with identifying, planning for, and meeting their actual health-maintenance needs. This includes:

- Maintaining chronic health conditions
- Minimizing preventable medical conditions
- Avoiding decompensation or worsening of an individual's health status

I – Independence: Addresses individuals who function independently with assistance from mobility devices (i.e., wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, etc.), or assistive technology (i.e., diapers, bandages, catheters, ostomy supplies, nebulizers, etc.), vision and communication aids, service animals, essential medications, etc. Independence is the outcome of ensuring that a person's access and functional needs are addressed as long as they are not separated from their devices, assistive technology, services animals, etc.

S – Support and Safety & Self-determination: Emphasizes an individual's right to independent living and self-determination while acknowledging that this does not mean having to do everything

without assistance, but retaining control of the type and level of assistance that one requires. Some individuals may become separated from caregivers and need additional personal care assistance; may experience higher levels of distress and need support for anxiety, psychological, or behavioral health needs; may require a trauma-informed approach or support for personal safety. Individuals with safety and support needs can also include individuals experiencing difficulty with understanding and/or remembering information and directions. Determination of an individual's support and safety needs should always be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to avoid any assumptions regarding capabilities.

T – Transportation: Addresses the needs of Individuals who lack access to personal transportation, are unable to drive due to decreased or impaired mobility that may come with age and/or disability, temporary conditions or injury, or legal restriction. Essential components of transportation support include access to vehicles equipped with lifts and/or ramps as well as a multi-faceted messaging system to inform and direct individuals to where they can gain access to these accessible vehicles.

SECTION 4: LEGAL FOUNDATION

4.1 Federal Legislation, Regulations and Policy

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (Title II): Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.

Title II covers all programs, services, and activities of state and local governments regardless of the government entity's size or receipt of Federal funding. Title II requires that state and local governments give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services, and activities (e.g. emergency programs, public education, transportation, recreation, health care, social services, courts, voting, and town meetings).

Source: [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended | ADA.gov](#)

Architectural Barriers Act of 1968: Requires that facilities designed, built, altered, or leased with certain Federal dollars, to comply with accessibility standards. It also applies to non-government facilities that have received Federal funding, such as certain schools, public housing, and mass transit systems.

Source: [ABA Standards \(enhanced single file version\)](#)

Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a landmark piece of civil rights legislation in the United States that outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Source: [Civil Rights Division | Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)

Executive Order 13347: Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness (2004): On July 22, 2004, President Bush signed Executive Order 13347 to strengthen emergency preparedness with respect to individuals with disabilities. This Executive Order directs the federal government to address the safety and security needs of people with disabilities in emergency situations including natural and man-made disasters. To this end, the Executive Order created a Federal Interagency Coordinating Council of Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities chaired by the DHS and comprised of several federal agencies.

Source: [Executive Order 13347 Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness](#)

Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended: Prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin. The Act covers all types of housing intended as a short or long- term residence, including the following types of housing that are often used to house persons who are displaced by disasters: shelters that house persons for more than a few days, transitional housing facilities, nursing homes, and manufactured housing.

Source: [Fair Housing Act \(as amended\) \(Title VIII of 1968 Civil Rights Act\)](#)

Pet Evacuation Transportation Standards Act of 2006: Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 - Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure that state and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency. Authorizes the Director to: (1) study and develop plans that take into account the needs of individuals with pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency; and (2) make financial contributions, on the basis of programs or projects approved by the Director, to the states and local authorities for animal emergency preparedness purposes, including the procurement, construction, leasing, or renovating of emergency shelter facilities and materials that will accommodate people with pets and service animals.

Authorizes federal agencies to provide as assistance essential to meeting threats to life and property resulting from a major disaster, rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs to individuals with household pets and service animals and to such pets and animals.

Source: [H.R.3858 - 109th Congress \(2005-2006\): Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006: Includes provisions that amend the Stafford Act to better integrate consideration of all populations and needs into general emergency management planning, response, recovery, and mitigation.

Source: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/109th-congress/senate-bill/3721>

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504- Programs, Services and Activities), as amended: Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance, including federally subsidized housing programs. Section 504 requires that

both Federal agencies and those receiving Federal assistance ensure that their programs are useable and accessible to people with disabilities, including making changes to policies, practices, and procedures, and structures as a reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities unless doing so would require a fundamental alteration of the program or constitute an undue financial and administrative burden. In addition, Section 504 requires effective communication with people who have communication disabilities including hearing, vision, or cognitive disabilities.

Source: [Guide to Disability Rights Laws | ADA.gov](#)

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 508 – Federal Electronic and Information Technology), as amended:

Establishes requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by the federal government. Section 508 mandates federal electronic and information technology to be made accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

Section 508 further defines an accessible technology system as one that can be operated in a variety of ways and does not rely on a single sense or ability of the user.

Source: [Guide to Disability Rights Laws | ADA.gov](#)

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988, as amended:

The law that authorizes Federal assistance when the President declares a State to be a disaster area. The Act ensures that the Civil Rights of all people receiving services or benefits from agency programs and activities are protected. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, nationality, age, disability, limited English proficiency, or economic status, be denied the benefits of, be deprived of participation in, or be discriminated against any program or activity conducted by or receiving financial assistance from FEMA.

These prohibitions extend to all entities receiving Federal financial assistance from FEMA, including state and local governments.

Source: [Stafford Act | FEMA.gov](#)

Sandy Recovery Act of 2013: Under the Act, Recovery Policy 9461.1 Disaster Assistance for Child Care, provides FEMA the specific authority to pay for “childcare” expenses as disaster assistance under the Other Needs Assistance (ONA) provision of the Individuals and Households Programs in addition to funeral, medical, and dental expenses. A Policy reflecting this authority was released in January 2013.

Source: [H.R.219 - 113th Congress \(2013-2014\): Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

Telecommunications Act of 1996: Requires that people with disabilities will have access to products and services such as telephones, cell phones, pagers, call-waiting, and operational services that were previously not accessible for many people with disabilities.

Source: [Guide to Disability Rights Laws | ADA.gov](#)

4.2 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Legislation and Regulations¹

- Massachusetts Constitution – Article 114: Inclusion and non-discrimination.
- Massachusetts General Law Chapter 272 Section 92A and 98: Inclusion and non-discrimination.
- Massachusetts General Law Chapter 151B: Prohibits housing discrimination.
- Massachusetts Architectural Access Board- 521 CMR: Accessibility standards.
- Ensuring the Safety of People with Pets in Disasters:
 - On March 24, 2014, Chapter 54 of the Acts of 2014 was signed into law. This law protects both humans and animals from severe storms and natural disasters. It requires cities and towns to have a plan in place to address the evacuation and sheltering needs of household pets and service animals before, during and after an emergency or natural disaster.

4.3 Legal Foundation for FNSS

The Stafford Act and Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA), along with Federal civil rights laws, mandate integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities in general population emergency shelters. To comply with Federal law, those involved in emergency management and shelter planning should understand the concepts of accessibility and nondiscrimination and how they apply in emergencies.

The following are key nondiscrimination concepts applicable under Federal laws, and examples of how these concepts apply to all phases of emergency management².

1. **Self-Determination:** People with disabilities are the most knowledgeable about their own needs.
2. **No “One-Size-Fits-All”:** People with disabilities do not all require the same assistance and do not all have the same needs.
 - Many different types of disabilities affect people in different ways. Preparations should be made for people with a variety of functional needs, including people who use mobility aids, require medication or portable medical equipment, use service animals, need information in alternate formats, or rely on a caregiver.
3. **Equal Opportunity:** People with disabilities must have the same opportunities to benefit from emergency programs, services, and activities as people without disabilities.
 - Emergency recovery services and programs should be designed to provide equivalent choices for people with disabilities as they do for people without

¹ Please note, Commonwealth Executive Branch agencies aim to ensure everyone has equitable access to online information and the services they provide as outlined in [Enterprise Information Technology Accessibility Policy](#)

² Source: [FEMA Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters \(2010\)](#).

disabilities. This includes choices relating to short-term housing or other short- and long-term disaster support services.

4. **Inclusion:** People with disabilities have the right to participate in and receive the benefits of emergency programs, services, and activities provided by governments, private businesses, and nonprofit organizations.
 - The inclusion of people with various types of disabilities in planning, training, and evaluation of programs and services will ensure that all people are given appropriate consideration during emergencies.
5. **Integration:** Emergency programs, services, and activities typically must be provided in an integrated setting.
 - The provision of services such as sheltering, information intake for disaster services, and short-term housing in integrated settings keeps people connected to their support system and caregivers and avoids the need for disparate services facilities.
6. **Physical Access:** Emergency programs, services, and activities must be provided at locations that all people can access, including people with disabilities.
 - People with disabilities should be able to enter and use emergency facilities and access the programs, services, and activities that are provided. Facilities typically required to be accessible include: parking, drop-off areas, entrances and exits, security screening areas, toilet rooms, bathing facilities, sleeping areas, dining facilities, areas where medical care or human services are provided, and paths of travel to and from and between these areas.
7. **Equal Access:** People with disabilities must be able to access and benefit from emergency programs, services, and activities equal to the general population.
 - Equal access applies to emergency preparedness, notification of emergencies, evacuation, transportation, communication, shelter, distribution of supplies, food, first aid, medical care, housing, and application for and distribution of benefits.
8. **Effective Communication:** People with disabilities must be given information that is comparable in content and detail to that given to the general public. It must also be accessible, understandable and timely.
 - Auxiliary aids and services may be needed to ensure effective communication. These resources may include pen and paper; sign language interpreters through on-site or video; and interpretation aids for people who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or have speech impairments. vision or are blind, deaf-blind, have low vision, or have cognitive disabilities may need large print information or people to assist with reading and filling out forms.
9. **Program Modifications:** People with disabilities must have equal access to emergency programs and services, which may entail modifications to rules, policies, practices, and procedures.

- Service staff may need to change the way questions are asked, provide reader assistance to complete forms, or provide assistance in a more accessible location.

10. **No Charge:** People with disabilities may not be charged to cover the costs of measures necessary to ensure equal access and nondiscriminatory treatment.

- Examples of accommodations provided without charge to the individual may include ramps; cots modified to address disability-related needs; a visual alarm; grab bars; additional storage space for medical equipment; lowered counters or shelves; Braille and raised letter signage; a sign language interpreter; a message board; assistance in completing forms or documents in Braille, large print or audio recording.

4.4 State Guidance on Service Animals

Under the ADA, state and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go, including areas where food is served and most areas where medical care is provided.

A service animal is any dog, or in some instances a miniature horse, that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability including, but not limited to: assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medications or a telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability, and helping people with neurological or psychiatric disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Service animals are required to be leashed or harnessed except when performing work or tasks where such tethering would interfere with the service animal's ability to perform. In cases where the individual is not able to hold a leash, the animal must be under control and respond to verbal commands. In addition:

- Service animals are exempt from breed bans as well as size and weight limitations.
- Service animals may or may not be certified.

How does the Americans with Disabilities Act apply to service animals in emergency shelters?

The ADA generally requires that shelters provide equal access to the many benefits that shelters provide, including safety, food, services, comfort, information, a place to sleep until it is safe to return home, and the support and assistance of family, friends, and neighbors. The ADA generally requires emergency managers and shelter operators to make reasonable modifications to policies to allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals and remain with them

at all times, including if being transported to the emergency shelter, to another facility, transitioning home, etc.

Emergency shelters must make exceptions to “no pets” or “no animals” policies to allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals. Service animals are not pets and are therefore not subject to restrictions applied to pets or other animals. This does not mean you must abandon your “no pets” policy altogether, but simply that you must make an exception to your general rule for service animals.

How can a service animal be identified?

Service animals come in all breeds and sizes. Many are easily identified because they wear special harnesses, capes, vests, scarves, or patches. Others can be identified by the functions they perform for people whose disabilities can be readily observed. When none of these identifiers are present, shelter staff may ask **only two questions** to determine if an animal is a service animal:

1. “Do you need this animal because of a disability?”
2. “What tasks or work has the animal been trained to perform?”

If the answers to these questions reveal the animal has been trained to work or perform tasks for a person with a disability, it qualifies as a service animal and must generally be allowed to accompany its owner anywhere other members of the public are allowed to go, including areas where food is served and most areas where medical care is provided.

Under the ADA, shelter staff may not require a license, certification, ID tag, medical certificate, or any other type of documentation for a service animal. In addition, questions about the nature or severity of a person’s disability or ability to function may not be asked. It is also inappropriate to question a person’s need for a service animal or to exclude a service animal on the grounds that shelter staff or volunteers can provide the assistance normally provided by the service animal.

Can a service animal be removed from a shelter?

In most instances, you may not remove a service animal or ask the owner to leave the service animal elsewhere. Service animal owners may be asked to remove their animal only if:

1. The service animal is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to control the animal.
2. The service animal is not housebroken.

In either of these situations, the emergency manager and shelter operator should try to work with the owner to provide the needed services in an alternative form or location.

Service animal planning considerations for shelter operations:

Many people with disabilities rely on service animals. Although it is the responsibility of the owner to feed and care for their service animals, when evacuating during an emergency, some individuals may be unable to transport the items needed to sustain their service animal in an emergency shelter environment.

Local plans should direct that, prior to an emergency or disaster, the following issues are addressed regarding service animals in an emergency shelter:

- Integrate into your emergency shelter plan those people with expertise in supporting service animal needs. Include your animal control officer and consider having a plan for emergency veterinary services.
- Identify reliable sources for food, water and supplies (ex., water bowls, food bowls, leashes, collars, disposable containers) for service animals and make sure agreements are in place to ensure that these items are available.
- Consider how you will set up the emergency shelter to accommodate people and their service animals. When estimating shelter capacity, consider that a person with a service animal may require up to 100 square feet.
- People with allergies or a fear of animals should be directed to spaces away from the service animal(s).
- Identify where service animals will be exercised and an animal relief area.
- Ensure the owner understands their responsibility for feeding and care of their service animal.

Miniature Horses

1. Height: 24"- 34"
2. Weight: 70- 100lbs
3. Covered entities must permit miniature horses based on:
 - Whether the miniature horse is housebroken;
 - Whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control;
 - Whether the facility can accommodate horse's type, size, and weight;
 - Whether the horse's presence will comprise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operations of the service.

Additional Resources

For additional information on service animals refer to the following resources:

- Information and Technical Assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act
<https://www.ada.gov>
- ADA Best Practices Toolkit for State and Local Governments
<http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/toolkitmain.htm>
- Chapter 7 Emergency Management Under Title II of the ADA
<http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7emergencymgmt.htm>
- Chapter 7 Addendum 1: Title II Checklist (Emergency Management)
<http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7emergencymgmtadd1.htm>

- Chapter 7 Addendum 2: The ADA and Emergency Shelters: Access for All in Emergencies and Disasters
<http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7shelterprog.htm>
- Commonly Asked Questions about Service Animals in Places of Business -
<http://www.ada.gov/qasrvic.htm>
- Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA (2020)
[Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA | ADA.gov](http://www.ada.gov/frequently-asked-questions-about-service-animals-and-the-ada)

SECTION 5: MUNICIPAL ADA IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

This Program will support capital improvements specifically dedicated to improving programmatic access and/or removing barriers encountered by persons with disabilities in applicant facilities throughout the Commonwealth.

Examples include but are not limited to increasing both physical access and programmatic access through the addition of features such as ramps, elevators, power lifts and Limited Use/Limited Application (LULAs) signage, communication access devices, curb cuts and/or any other features that are designed to improve architectural access and/or programmatic access. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects that demonstrate real and tangible positive impacts to people with disabilities.

Eligible applicants include any Massachusetts city, town, special purpose district and/or regional governmental organization.

For additional information and the complete requirements for the grant program, please visit:
www.mass.gov/mod/ADAGrant

SECTION 6: WEB-BASED RESOURCES

6.1 Non-Governmental Organizations

AmeriCares

- A world leading nonprofit that is a health-focused relief and development organization providing health programs, medicine, medical supplies and emergency aid to individuals affected by poverty, disaster, and crisis.
- <https://www.americares.org/>

American Academy of Pediatrics

- An organization consisting of 67,000 pediatricians committed to supporting the physical, mental, and social health and well-being of all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.
- <https://www.aap.org/>
- [Council on Children and Disaster \(COCD\)](http://www.aap.org/council-on-children-and-disaster)

- The COCD provides expertise in incorporating equitable and inclusive disaster planning and management for all types of children and young adults throughout the disaster cycle (preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation).
- [AAP Equity and Inclusion Efforts](#)
 - AAP aims to use policy, advocacy, and education to promote inclusivity and cultural diversity for all.

American Red Cross of Massachusetts

- A national non-profit organization that uses an extensive volunteer base to support humanitarian efforts to support individuals experiencing suffering during disasters and emergencies.
- <http://www.redcross.org/local/massachusetts>
- American Red Cross: ARC works with Language Line Solutions to provide translation services.
- <https://www.language.com>

Ascentria Care Alliance (formerly Lutheran Social Services of New England)

- Provides the following services: Children and Family, Older Adults, Mental Health and Disability, Refugee and Immigrant, in addition to others.
- [Home - Ascentria Care Alliance](#)

Assistive Technology (AT) Services

- A service offered by MassAbility provides resources for finding, demoing, and obtaining equipment to support independent living.
- Offer an extensive catalog of AT equipment which includes: communication devices, mobility devices, vehicle modifications, adaptive housing, worksite modifications, computer hardware adaptations, assistive computer software, environmental control devices, training on all provided equipment and services.
- [Assistive Technology Services | Mass.gov](#)

Boston Cares

- Largest volunteer agency in New England that seeks out non-profits that can use volunteers on a flexible basis. Provide volunteer support for hunger relief and basic needs, adult; adult education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tutoring; and youth success.
- <https://www.bostoncares.org>

Center for Living and Working Inc.

- A non-profit independent living center helping individuals with disabilities take active roles in their lives and in the communities in which they live. They provide the following 7 core services: ADA Consulting, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Independent Living, One Care Long Term Supports and Services, Options Counseling, Personal Care Management, and Youth Services.
- <http://www.centerlw.org>

DisabilityInfo.org

- An informational website stood up as part of the INDEX project run by Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. This website is dedicated to assisting individuals with disabilities and older adults find the information they need. INDEX values digital inclusion and diversity and through the collection and keeping of up-to-date information on programs, providers and services in Massachusetts that have something to offer people with disabilities and older adults aims to further digital accessibility for all.
- <https://disabilityinfo.org/>

DelValle Institute for Emergency Preparedness Learning Center

- The DelValle Institute for Emergency Preparedness Learning Center is part of the Office of Public Health Preparedness, a division of the Boston Public Health Commission
- Offer several online courses and training courses focused on emergency preparedness for public health, healthcare, and public safety partners. A focus on all-hazards training aims to prepare individuals and organizations for how to more effectively respond to emergencies.
- Also work on advancing public health preparedness policy development and guidance to ensure the needs of Boston's residents are represented.
- <https://delvalle.bphc.org>

Disability Law Centers of Massachusetts

- A non-profit organization which provides legal protection and advocacy regarding disability issues and promotes the fundamental rights of all people with disabilities in Massachusetts.
- [Disability Law Center – Massachusetts Protection and Advocacy](#)

Easter Seals Massachusetts: Disability Resource Information

- Easter Seals provides programs and services for children and adults with disabilities throughout the Commonwealth.
- Easter Seals also actively advocates and participates in local disability policy, state legislation, and community activism to further advance equal opportunities for all people living with disabilities.
- [Easterseals Massachusetts | Home](#)

Mass 2-1-1

- Mass 2-1-1 is a free, 24/7 resource that provides information about critical health and human services available in Massachusetts communities. In times of emergencies or disasters, fields callers regarding the crisis and aids by directing them to resources and services in response to the emergency or disaster.
- [Mass 211 |](#)

Massachusetts Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MA VOAD)

- MA VOAD is an affiliate of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). MA VOAD consists of several locally based organizations and local representatives of National Organizations (faith-based, community-based, and non-profit organizations). Similar to NVOAD, the purpose of MA VOAD is to more effectively promote

the cooperations, communication, coordination, and collaboration of these various organizations in securing and providing resources and services to communities impacted by disasters.

- <https://voadma.wpengine.com/>

Medical Reserve Corps of Massachusetts (MRC)

- The Massachusetts MRC is a part of the national network of Medical Reserve Corps of volunteers. The Massachusetts MRC network consists of 35 locally based medical and non-medical volunteer units that are comprised to best address the unique challenges of the areas they serve and contribute their skills to supporting various public health initiatives and response and recovery actions during disasters.
- [Medical Reserve Corps of Massachusetts](#)

National Organization on Disability

- A non-profit organization seeking to advance disability inclusion through providing businesses with tools and resources, data analysis, hands-on support, subject matter expertise and leadership in creating more inclusive and accessible work environments.
- [Home - National Organization on Disability](#)

Northeast ADA Center

- The Northeast ADA Center is a member of the ADA National Network. The goal of the Northeast ADA Center is to provide education and empower all stakeholders to increase their knowledge of the ADA. The Northeast ADA Center provides information, guidance, and training on the use of all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- [ADA Information, Guidance, and Training | The Northeast ADA Center](#)

Pacific ADA Center

- The Pacific ADA Center is a member of the ADA National Network. The mission of the Pacific ADA Center is to provide resources, training, support, and build further awareness about the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal disability laws.
- [Pacific ADA Center - Proudly Serving](#)

The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies (The Partnership)

- Serves as the only U.S. disability-led 501(c) (3) organization that believes advocating for people with disabilities, older adults, and people with access and functional needs during the disaster continuum begins with and should be led by individuals with disabilities who traditionally are the most marginalized and disproportionately impacted during disasters. The Partnership focuses on supporting disability-inclusive emergency management, community organizing, policy, advocacy, and training.
- [The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](#)
- Disaster & Disability Hotline
 - Call/Text: 1 (800) 626-4959 / Email: hotline@disasterstrategies.org
 - Provides information, guidance, referrals, technical assistance and resources to people with disabilities, loved ones, and stakeholders during disasters and emergencies.
 - <https://disasterstrategies.org/hotline/>

Salvation Army- Massachusetts Division

- A non-profit, Christian faith-based organization that provides various forms of humanitarian and disaster relief services. The Salvation Army – Massachusetts Division services communities within Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Northeast Kentucky, Main, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands
- <https://easternusa.salvationarmy.org/massachusetts/>

Save the Children

- The world's leading independent organization for children. Promote the improvement of children's lives globally through a focus on health, education, awareness, and ensuring the rights of all children are recognized. For information on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery programs in the U.S.
- <https://www.savethechildren.org/>
- <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/what-we-do>

6.2 State

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR)

- Support, regulate, and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production.
- [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Department of Children & Families (DCF)

- Work in partnership with families and communities to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. Seek to provide support and services to keep children safe with parents or family members. When necessary, DCF provides foster care or finds a new permanent family for children through kinship, guardianship or adoption. DCF also supports young adults, age 18-22 who are transitioning from DCF custody to independent living.
- [Massachusetts Department of Children & Families](#)

Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

- Provides support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities including autism spectrum disorder to enhance opportunities to become fully engaged members of their community
- [Department of Developmental Services | Mass.gov](#)

Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)

- It was established in 2023 to create more homes and lower housing costs for Massachusetts residents. EOHLC also distributes funding to municipalities, oversees the state-aided public housing portfolio, and operates the state's Emergency Family Shelter (EA) program.
- [Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH)

- As the State Mental Health Authority, DMH assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individuals of all ages; enabling them to live, work, and participate in their communities.
- [Massachusetts Department of Mental Health | Mass.gov](#)
- Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL)
 - A service provided by the Commonwealth and operated by the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP). Provides the following services:
 - 24/7 support – call or text 833-773-2445
 - Free, confidential, and no insurance is required
 - Real-time interpretation in 200+ languages
 - Deaf or hard of hearing services through MassRelay at 711, or through video relay or a caption provider of choice.
 - [Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line](#)

Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

- Assists and empowers low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long term economic self-sufficiency. DTA serves one in six residents of the Commonwealth with direct economic assistance (cash benefits) and food assistance (SNAP benefits), as well as workforce training opportunities.
- [Department of Transitional Assistance | Mass.gov](#)

Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS)

- Provides the highest quality programs, benefits, and advocacy to Massachusetts veterans alongside federal and local partners. The office oversees programs and services for Massachusetts veterans, including Chapter 115 benefits for eligible veterans. It also manages the state's two Veterans Homes in Holyoke and Chelsea and the Memorial Cemeteries in Agawam and Winchendon.
- [Executive Office of Veterans Services | Mass.gov](#)

Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)

- Comprised of 11 agencies and the MassHealth program. EOHHS supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities; older adults; blind, Deaf, and hard of hearing residents; those struggling with substance use disorders, mental illness, or co-occurring illness; refugees and immigrants; system-involved youth; survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking; and many other people throughout the Commonwealth. Provide access to medical and behavioral health care, substance use disorder treatment, long term services and supports, and countless nutritional and financial benefits. Connect older adults and individuals with disabilities with employment opportunities, housing, and supportive services.
- [Executive Office of Health and Human Services | Mass.gov](#)

Executive Office of Aging and Independence (AGE)

- Provides quality aging-related resources, tools, and support through a network of regional non-profit agencies and municipal agencies across the state.
- [Executive Office of Aging & Independence | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)

- A division of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the MBTA provides subway, bus, Commuter Rail, ferry, and paratransit services to eastern Massachusetts and parts of Rhode Island.
- Offers “The RIDE”, the MBTA’s door-to-door paratransit service. If an individual has a disability that prevents them from using the MBTA bus, subway, or trolley all or some of the time, the RIDE may be able to assist with their transportation needs
- [MBTA - Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority](#)

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB)

- Provide individualized training, education, and empowerment to people who are legally blind, and advocate for inclusive policies across the Commonwealth, with the goal of life-long independence and full community participation
- [Massachusetts Commission for the Blind | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)

- Provides accessible communication, education, and advocacy to consumers and private and public entities so that programs, services, and opportunities are fully accessible to persons who are Deaf and hard of hearing.
- [Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH)

- Promote and protect health and wellness and prevent injury and illness for all people. Prioritize racial equity in health by improving equitable access to quality public health and health care services and partnering with communities most impacted by health inequities and structural racism.
- [Department of Public Health | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

- Provide Massachusetts residents and visitors with emergency preparedness resources, emergency alerts, and information during and after emergencies and disasters. MEMA coordinates with federal, state, and local government agencies, non-profits, and businesses to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies and disasters.
- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency | Mass.gov](#)

Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD)

- Provides information, guidance, and training on disability-related civil rights and architectural access. MOD does not enforce laws, provide financial assistance, or provide direct services.
- [Massachusetts Office on Disability | Mass.gov](#)

MassAbility

- Empowers people with disabilities to live life on their own terms. Our programs and services expand possibilities in careers and training, home and community life, and legal rights and benefits – including disability determination for federal programs.

- [MassAbility | Mass.gov](#)

Office for Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)

- ORI's mission is to promote the full participation of refugees and immigrants as self-sufficient individuals and families in the economic, social, and civic life of Massachusetts. Eligible group include Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa Holders, Amerasians, Asylees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Human Trafficking Victims, Legal Permanent Residents, and Refugees.
- The Office administers programs that provide direct services to clients through a network of resettlement agencies, faith-based organizations and ethnic community-based organizations, which have the capacity to serve the culturally and linguistically diverse needs of newcomer populations.
- [Office for Refugees and Immigrants | Mass.gov](#)

6.3 Massachusetts-Based Councils and Commissions

Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts (ACOAM)

- Promote and improve through education and training, skills, professionalism, knowledge of applicable laws, personal safety and security of animal control officers employed by the cities, towns, counties or other municipalities located within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- [Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts](#)

Massachusetts Animal Coalition

- Providing the Massachusetts animal welfare community with informational resources, opportunities for professional growth, collaboration, and networking to improve the welfare of companion animals in our state.
- [Massachusetts Animal Coalition](#)

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)

- It is a regional planning agency that serves 40 communities in Central Massachusetts. CMRPC's programs include Transportation, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Regional Collaboration and Community Planning.
- [Central Mass Regional Planning Commission - CMRPC](#)

Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging (MCOA)

- Provide support services to older adults and their families and caregivers. The Massachusetts Councils on Aging provides support and training to, and advocacy for, the Councils on Aging statewide.
- [Massachusetts Councils on Aging | Advocate | Educate | Collaborate - At the Center of it All](#)

Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council (MASILC or "the SILC")

- Governor-appointed Council tasked with advancing disability policy and advocating for greater access, inclusion, and independence for individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts. The MASILC works closely with 10 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in Massachusetts along with developing the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

- [Home - MASILC](#)

Northeast Homeland Security Advisory Council (NERAC)

- A regional planning council that serves 85 communities in Northeastern Massachusetts. Responsible for enhancing the ability of the region to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terror and other disasters. The Council also serves as a forum to promote regional, interdisciplinary collaboration and idea sharing for further advancing public safety efforts.
- [NERAC - Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council](#)

Southeast Homeland Security Advisory Council (Part of the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD))

- A regional planning council that serves 27 cities and towns in Southeastern Massachusetts. Provides administrative, financial, and legal support to the Southeastern Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council (SRAC) in developing and completing exercise design and facilitation of operational capabilities.
- [Homeland Security - SRPEDD](#)

Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC)

- A regional advisory council that serves the four counties of Western Massachusetts: Berkshires, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden. Administer and coordinate the State Homeland Security Grant to fund regional activities promoting prevention, protection against, mitigation, response, and recovery actions in response to threats and hazards.
- [WRHSAC](#)

Western Massachusetts Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance (IRAA)

- Represents a part of WRHSAC that undertakes several preparedness projects aimed at protecting the lives of IRAA individuals throughout the community, minimizing physical and psychological trauma from disasters and reducing demand on First Responders and Emergency Management Directors (EMDs). The website below provides resources, links, and guidance related to access and functional needs.
- [Functional Needs \(IRAA\) | WRHSAC](#)

6.4 Federal

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

- The CDC aims to increase the health of the nation by serving as the nation's health protection agency, fighting disease and supporting communities and citizens to do the same by conducting critical research, providing health information and guidance, and responding when health threats arise.
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | CDC](#)
- [CDC's Commitment to Disability Inclusion](#)
 - The website below provides resources, links, and guidance documents on Americans with disabilities looking to address health disparities and improving inclusion in public health.

- [CDC's Commitment to Disability Inclusion | Disability and Health | CDC](#)
- About Children in Disasters
 - The website below provides resources, links, and guidance on the impacts of disasters on Children and the unique needs of children during and following a disaster.
 - [About Children in Disasters | Children & School Preparedness | CDC](#)

Federal Communications Commission, Disability Rights Office

- Addresses disability-related matters, including access to telecommunications services and equipment. Propose policies to ensure communications services and technologies are accessible to individuals with disabilities and conform with existing disability laws and policies.
- [Disability Rights Office | Federal Communications Commission](#)

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- An agency under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security responsible for coordinating the federal government's response to natural and human-made disasters. Its mission is to help individuals before, during, and after disasters.
- [About Us | FEMA.gov](#)
- FEMA-Youth and Emergency Planning
 - Provides guidance on how to address the unique needs and abilities of children during disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts.
 - [Youth and Emergency Planning | FEMA.gov](#)
- FEMA, Office of Disability Integration & Coordination
 - Helps support FEMA's mission of helping people before, during, and after disasters in ways that maximize the inclusion of, and accessibility for, people with disabilities.
 - [Office of Disability Integration and Coordination | FEMA.gov](#)
- Ready.gov
 - A National public service campaign designed to educate and empower the American people to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies and disasters. The goal is to promote preparedness through public involvement.
 - [About the Ready Campaign | Ready.gov](#)
- Ready.gov/kids
 - This web site from FEMA provides information for families, teens, and children on emergency preparedness. This web site offers games and activities for children to learn all about emergency preparedness.
 - <https://www.ready.gov/kids>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 - The SAMHSA serves as a lead agency in public health efforts to advance behavioral health across the nation, under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
 - [SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)

- The SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH) is the nation's first domestic helpline dedicated to providing disaster crisis counseling. This domestic toll-free helpline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This free, confidential, and multilingual crisis support service is available via telephone or text message (1-800-985-5990) to U.S. residents who are experiencing psychological distress as a result of natural or human-caused disasters. TTY for deaf and hearing impaired: 1-800-846-8517. Callers are connected to trained and caring professionals from crisis counseling centers in the network.
- Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator: A confidential and anonymous source of information for persons seeking treatment facilities in the United States or U.S. Territories for substance use/addiction and/or mental health problems. Visit [Home - FindTreatment.gov](#)
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
 - A private, non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation whose mission it is to aid in preventing child abductions, the recovery of missing children, support the reduction of child sexual exploitation, and the prevention of child victimization. NCMEC works with multiple partners to include families, victims, private industry, law enforcement and the public to accomplish its mission objectives.
 - [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#)
- Unaccompanied Minors Registry
 - [Unaccompanied Minors Disaster Registry \(UMDR\)](#)
 - The Unaccompanied Minors Registry supports the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) by allowing the public to report information related to children who have been separated from their parents or legal guardians as a result of a disaster. This tool will enable NCMEC to provide assistance to local law enforcement and assist in the reunification of displaced children with their parents or legal guardians. If you experience any trouble reporting online, please contact NCMEC 24 hours a day, at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).
 - An unaccompanied minor is a child who has been separated from parents, legal guardians, and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

National Council on Disability

- The NCD's mission is to serve as a trusted advisor, in collaboration with people with disabilities to the President, Congress, Federal entities, State, tribal communities, local governments and other entities and organizations. NCD advises on disability policies, programs, procedures, and practices aimed at enhancing equal opportunities
- [National Council on Disability | Home](#)

U.S Access Board

- An independent federal agency that aims to further accessibility through leading work in assessable design and the development of accessibility guidelines and standards. The

Access Board develops and maintains design criteria for the built environment, transit vehicles, public right-of-way, information and communication technology, and medical diagnostic equipment under the ADA and other laws. The Access Board also provides technical assistance and training on ADA accessibility standards that apply to federally funded facilities under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968.

- [U.S. Access Board - Home](#)

U.S. Department of Education

- The mission of the U.S. Department of Education is to foster educational excellence and ensure equal access for students of all ages.
- [Home | U.S. Department of Education](#)

U.S Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov>

- U.S Department of Health and Human Services: Outreach Activities & Resources
Special Populations: Emergency and Disaster Preparedness visit
<http://disasterinfo.nlm.nih.gov/outreach/specialpopulationsanddisasters.html>
- U.S Department of Health and Human Services, ASPR, Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE)
<https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security- Ready.Gov

www.ready.gov

U.S Department of Justice

<https://www.justice.gov/>

- U.S Department of Justice: Information and Technical Assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
www.ada.gov

SECTION 7: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN MASSACHUSETTS

7.1 Architectural Review/Site Visits

MA Office of Disability frequently assists communities, businesses and advocates; either through plan review or on-site visits, to ensure compliance with the various building requirements specific to persons with disabilities.

If you are interested in this free service, visit the MOD website www.mass.gov/mod and click on the “Monitoring” tab for more information.

SECTION 8: PLANNING GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Public health workbook to define, locate and*

reach special, vulnerable, and at-risk populations in an emergency. Retrieved from http://emergency.cdc.gov/workbook/pdf/ph_workbookFINAL.pdf

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Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2025). *Developing and maintaining emergency operations plans: Comprehensive preparedness guide version 3.1.* Retrieved from [Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans Comprehensive Preparedness Guide](#)

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2010). *Guidance on planning for integration of functional needs support services in general population shelters.* Retrieved from http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/odc/fnss_guidance.pdf

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2013). *Post-Disaster Reunification of Children: A Nationwide Approach.* Retrieved from [Post-Disaster Reunification of Children: A Nationwide Approach | The Administration for Children and Families](#)

Inclusive Preparedness Center. (2011). *Shelter worker's guide to accommodate children with access and functional needs.* Retrieved from http://www.pediatricemergencypreparedness.org/2.%20shelter_workers_guide_final_final.pdf

Kailes, J. (2007). *Moving beyond "special needs": A function-based framework for emergency management and planning.* Journal of Disability Policy Studies. Retrieved from [KailesEndersbeyond.pdf](#)

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management. *Access and functional needs resource guide.* Retrieved from [Access and Functional Needs Resource Guide](#)

Massachusetts Department of Public Health. (2013). *Communication and assistive technologies in emergencies: Guidance for local emergency planners.* Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/emergency-prep/risk-communication/assistive-technologies-in-emergencies.pdf>

National Council on Disability. (2009). *Effective emergency management: Making improvements for communities and people with disabilities.* Retrieved from [National Council on Disability | Effective Emergency Management: Making Improvements for Communities and People with Disabilities](#)

National Fire Protection Association. (June 2016). *Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities.* Retrieved from [Emergency Evacuation Guide for People with Disabilities PDF.](#)

National Mass Care Council. (2012). *National mass care strategy: A roadmap for the national mass care strategy service system.* Retrieved from <http://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/national-mass-care-strategy-september-2012-comp.pdf>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. *A Guide to Interacting with People who have Disabilities.*

SECTION 9: RESOURCES AND TOOLS TO IDENTIFY COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

American Community Survey

<http://www.census.gov/acs>

- A resource available to local officials, community leaders and businesses that provides detailed population and housing information about the nation.

SAMHSA: Behavioral Health Treatment Facility Locator

<http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

- For a map of adult and youth behavioral health treatment centers, substance abuse treatment centers, and residential facilities (at the state, county, and city/ town level) visit

Community Level Information on Kids (CLIKS)

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#MA/2/0>

- Annie E. Casey Foundation Economic, education, demographic, health insurance, and other county-level data about children.

Disability Statistics: Resources for Disability Statistics

www.disabilitystatistics.org

- Allows for the creation of maps, charts and tables using up-to-date national, state, and local disability statistics.

Emergency Preparedness Planning Tool

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-preparedness-and-emergency-management>

- The Department of Public Health Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management has developed a tool that provides data gleaned from the American Community Survey for each community and census tract in Massachusetts and aggregate data for each Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition in the Commonwealth. The profiles in the portal feature summarized information on disability, transportation, age, poverty, and limited English proficiency along with mapping of critical infrastructure and locations of hospitals, long term care facilities, police, and fire stations.

This portal will allow emergency management directors, researchers, hospitals, emergency planners, and local boards of health to have greater visibility of their communities and provides them with information needed for inclusive community planning.

HealthData.gov

HealthData.gov

- A collaboration of U.S. government agencies, public health organizations, and health sciences libraries

HHS emPOWER Map 2.0

<https://empowermap.hhs.gov/>

- Every hospital, first responder, electric company, and community member can use the map to find the monthly total of Medicare beneficiaries with electricity-dependent equipment claims at the U.S. state, territory, county, and zip code level and turn on “real-time” natural hazard and NOAA severe weather tracking services to identify areas and populations that may be impacted and are at risk for prolonged power outages.

Social Security Online

http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/2007/index.html

- US Social Security Administration County level data on numbers of people receiving supplemental security income (i.e., low-income, blind, disabled, or aged).

Social Vulnerability Index (SVI Index)

<http://svi.cdc.gov/>

- Provides an interactive map that compiles demographic and socioeconomic data (such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing) among other factors that adversely affect communities when they encounter emergencies, disasters and other hazards that result in additional community-level stressors.

U.S. Census Data: American Fact Finder

<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/time-series/cff.html>

- A series of topical brochures that can be used individually, in selected interest groups, or as a complete series. Each brochure describes the range of census materials that are available on a given subject and provides suggestions for some of their uses. The subjects include the following
 - Minority statistics
 - Census records about individuals and populations
 - Census records about housing and construction
 - Census records about retail and wholesale trade
 - Census records about manufactures, minerals, foreign trade, transportation, agriculture
 - Census records about Governments, geographic tools, reference sources, and the history and organization of the Census Bureau

SECTION 10: FREE MOBILE PHONE APPS

Show Me for Emergencies

A mobile app, piggybacked on the foundation of the Show Me booklet, and incorporated and expanded upon all of the icons and concepts from the booklet. The app includes not just shelter

environments, but also emergency dispensing sites (EDS) and door-to-door outreach required for shelter-in place or evacuation directives. Much like the paper-based tool, the Show Me app is an interactive tool that was created for effective two-way communication: just as users of the booklet can use a dry erase marker to modify or create their own messages, the app incorporates a 'write' ability, that when selected, brings up a keyboard for custom entries to be typed.

The audience for this app includes volunteer organizations and staffers, mental health workers, and various public safety personnel. Upon opening the app, users have the option either to get started immediately or walk through a brief tutorial. The app is organized by response scenario, and end users choose their scenario based on the real-life incident.

Show Me for Emergencies is available to download from both the iTunes and Google Play stores.



Show Me for Emergencies: FAC (Family Assistance Center)

Show Me for Emergencies: FAC (Family Assistance Center) is the final tool in the Show Me suite. It, too, is a free app that was built upon the foundation of the tools before it and incorporates and expands upon some of the previous icons and concepts. Show Me: FAC is intended to be used within the scenario of a mass casualty or mass fatality incident, and it's thought that disaster relief and medical professionals like American Red Cross volunteers and forensic nurses would use the app to supplement the tools they employ to communicate information to and collect data from families and loved ones of victims. Show Me for Emergencies: FAC is available to download from both the iTunes and Google Play stores.



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Reference- Lite Edition

The ADA Reference – Lite Edition mobile Android app is available to download for **free** from Google Play stores.



Americans with Disabilities Act

The ADA Reference – mobile iPhone app available to download for **free** from the Apple App Store



Everbridge – branded as AlertsMA

AlertsMA is a communication tool built on the Everbridge platform. Massachusetts government organizations can use AlertsMA to notify staff and stakeholders about safety situations and other important events using people's preferred communication methods. AlertsMA is the local emergency alerting app for residents of, and visitors to Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) will send you up-to-date public safety information to keep you informed and safe. You will receive public safety alerts relevant to where you are in the state. As long as your phone's Location Services are turned on, you will receive alerts and information based on your location, proximity to an event or incident, and the preferences you select. Your privacy is 100% protected. AlertsMA will never require personal information. There are no advertisements. No Spam. No direct marketing lists. You are in control every step of the way. Customize Alert Settings to receive public safety information that is relevant to you!

If you are in or near a public safety incident or major event, you will receive critical real- time information that will keep you safe and informed:

- Severe Weather alerts
- Amber Alerts about missing children
- Critical information about natural disasters such as evacuation and shelter-in-place information
- Shelter information
- Information about power outages, including restoration times
- Tips to prepare and stay safe - and More



iTranslate

iTranslate is very easy to use. It consists of one menu where you choose from over 100 languages and then just plug in a word or phrase. iTranslate is available to download for free from both the Apple App Store and Google Play stores.



Nextdoor

Nextdoor is the free, private social network for you, your neighbors and your community. It's the easiest way to connect and talk with your neighbors about the things that matter in your neighborhood. When neighbors start talking, good things happen. People across the country are using Nextdoor to:

- Quickly get the word out about an emergency
- Organize a neighborhood crime watch
- Recommend a trustworthy babysitter
- Find out who does the best painting job in town



FEMA App

The FEMA app is your one-stop shop with tools and tips to keep you safe before, during, and after disasters. Stay updated with weather-related alerts from the U.S. National Weather Service. Upload and share your disaster photos to help out emergency managers with Disaster Reporter. Save a custom list of the items in your family's emergency kit, as well as the places you will meet in case of an emergency. Get tips on what to do before, during, and after over 20 types of disasters. And locate open shelters and where to talk to FEMA in person at Disaster Recovery Centers. Terms of use: www.fema.gov/mobile-app



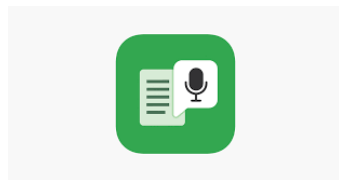
SAMHSA Disaster App

The SAMHSA Disaster App makes it easy to provide quality support to survivors. Users can navigate pre-deployment preparation, on-the-ground assistance, post-deployment resources, and more—at the touch of a button from the home screen. Users also can share resources, like tips for helping survivors cope, and find local behavioral health services. And self-care support for responders is available at all stages of deployment.



Live Transcribe- Speech to Text App

Now the hearing and the deaf and hard of hearing can have conversations easily, with just an Android phone. Live Transcribe is a free app that automatically transcribes speech in near-real time, allowing people to communicate in situations where they might not otherwise be able to. When you open the app, it simply starts writing out what it hears in large, easy-to-read text. Choose your languages: Pick from over 60 languages and dialects to read accurate captions in the language that's being spoken. Live Transcribe is easy to use, anywhere you have a wifi or network connection. It's free to download on over 1.8B Android devices operating with 5.0 Lollipop and up. This new Android Accessibility service is available to download as an app on the Google Play store. After installing the app, turn on Live Transcribe in your phone's Accessibility settings and tap on the app to use it.



CDC Mobile App

The CDC Mobile application is now available on your smartphone. Whether you are an iPhone or Android user you now have 24/7 access to timely, vital health information, wherever you go.



SECTION 11: TOOLKITS FOR PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING

The following toolkits are available **free** of cost. While these toolkits are not endorsed by MEMA, the agency believes sharing such information will help local communities in their efforts to plan for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

Tool: Tips for First Responders (5 th Edition)	
Website: http://www.cdd.unm.edu/dhpd/pdfs/FifthEditionTipsSheet.pdf	Description: Quick easy-to-use procedures for assisting individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
Source: Division of Disability and Health Policy, University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability	
Type: Tip book	

Tool: Durable Medical Equipment in Disaster	
Website: https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/aspr-tracie-durable-medical-equipment-in-disasters.pdf	Description: Updated 2018: Fact sheet provides information on general durable medical equipment (DME) categories and focuses on electricity-dependent DME that may be affected by disasters and emergencies, including power failures. It also includes information to assist healthcare system preparedness stakeholders plan for medically vulnerable populations who rely on DME.
Source: ASPR TRACIE	
Type: Fact Sheet	

Tool: Press Conference Checklists	
Website: https://www.adapacific.org/assets/documents/press-conference-checklist-factsheet-12-7-2015.pdf	Description: The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) requires emergency communication to be accessible to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired. During an emergency, press conferences provide critical information to the public. It is important that information is accessible to people with disabilities. Use the following checklist as a tool to ensure that your press conference is accessible to people with disabilities. This checklist includes general guidelines on site accessibility, sign language interpretation and filming guidance.
Source: Pacific ADA Center	
Type: Checklist	

Tool: Space, Staff, Stuff: Identifying Your Community's Resources	
Website: https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/77908/	Description: Customizable tool for community planners. This tool helps planners identify their community organizations' roles, responsibilities, and resources and determine potential gaps in their all-hazards planning efforts. It is designed to benefit any community regardless of demographics, infrastructure, current levels of planning, or availability of public health and health care resources.
Source: CDC	
Type: Guide, Workbook and Poster Template	

Tool: ADA Title II Action Guide for State and Local Governments	
Website: https://www.adaactionguide.org/	Description: This website leads public entities through a process to comply with the ADA.
Source: New England ADA Center	
Type: Web-based guide	

Tool: ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities	
Website: https://www.adachecklist.org/checklist.html	Description: Some people think that only new construction and alterations need to be accessible and that older facilities are “grandfathered,” but that’s not true. Because the ADA is a civil rights law and not a building code, older facilities are often required to be accessible to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate. The ADA has different requirements for state and local governments and for places of public accommodation (businesses and non-profit organizations that provide goods to or serve the public).
Source: New England ADA Center	
Type: Web-based tool	

Tool: Extensive listing of online courses covering all ADA topics	
Website: https://rockymountainada.org/services/training	Description: Provide training on all ADA topics, and on all levels from basic to advanced. Online classes are available at no cost. Online training covers such

Source: Rocky Mountain ADA	topics as accessible parking, recreation facilities, social media, transportation, emergency preparedness, communication in addition to many other courses.
Type: Web-based tool	

Tool: Tips for Providing Services for Individuals Living with Functional and Access Needs	
Website: http://www.adph.org/disability/assets/TipsForProvidingService.pdf	Description: This brochure offers valuable Tips for Providing Services for Individuals Living with Functional and Access Needs.
Source: Alabama Disability and Health Program	
Type: Brochure	

Tool: Foreign Language Materials: “Get the Facts, Be Prepared”	
Website: http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library	Description: The American Red Cross has created a Disaster and Safety Library where you can find and print fact sheets, preparedness checklists, recovery guides and other helpful information for the public. These materials are available in English and foreign languages.
Source: American Red Cross	
Type: Guides and checklists	

Tool: RX Open	
Website: https://www.healthcareready.org/rxopen	Description: Rx Open helps patients find nearby open pharmacies in areas impacted by disaster. Combining multiple data feeds from the pharmaceutical industry, Rx Open displays the precise location on Google Maps of open pharmacies, closed pharmacies, and those whose status is unknown. This critical information assists government officials in assessing an emergency's impact on public health in a disaster area.
Source: Health Care Ready	
Type: Interactive Map	

Tool: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Treatment Services Locator

Website: https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator	Description: A source of information for persons seeking treatment facilities in the United States or U.S. Territories for substance use/addiction and/or mental health problems.
Source: U.S. HSS	
Type: Interactive Map	

Tool: Capacity Building Toolkit for Including Aging & Disability Networks in Emergency Planning	
Website: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Capacity-Building-Toolkit-for-Aging-and-Disability-Networks-2-5-19.pdf	Description: This toolkit can help emergency managers and public health officials to understand the capabilities and expertise of community-based organizations within the aging and disability network.
Source: U.S. HHS and ASPR	
Type: Toolkit	

Tool: Safe and Well	
Website: The American Red Cross Safe and Well Website	Description: A web-based registry that may be used for the assistance of reunifying individuals (i.e. unaccompanied minors) with their families. Shelter staff can use this tool or assist shelter residents on how to use this tool to (1) post "safe and well messages" that family and friends of shelter residents can view, or (2) search shelter registrants.
Source: American Red Cross	
Type: Disaster victim registry	

Tool: MA Statewide Mass Care and Shelter Coordination Plan: Local Shelter Toolkit	
Website: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mass-care-and-shelter-coordination-plan	Description: To enhance the overall mass care and sheltering capabilities of the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) with the aid of other mass care and shelter partners has developed a statewide mass care and shelter strategy and created this toolkit to assist local emergency managers with mass care and shelter planning.
Source: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency	
Type: Shelter planning toolkit	

Tool: Communication with Vulnerable Populations: A Transportation and Emergency Management Toolkit	
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Website: http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/166060.aspx	Description: The toolkit provides a guiding framework and tools for constructing a scalable, adaptable communication process built on a network of agencies from public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
Source: Transit Cooperative Research Program	
Type: Framework and tools	

Tool: Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN)	
Website: https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dphps/phpb/Pages/koin_archive.aspx	Description: A public information alert concept. The goal of KOIN is to ensure that, in the event of an emergency, communication channels are in place and KOIN members understand and perform their roles in notifying individuals in their appropriate channels. This network can be used in emergencies and disasters as well as to protect the health of citizens in day-to-day situations, like providing immunization clinics.
Source: The Cabinet for Health and Family Services/Kentucky Department of Public Health	
Type: Public information communication tool	

Tool: Functional and Access Needs Support: A Toolkit for Empowering Inclusive Action	
Website: http://www.nationalmasscarestrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Functional-Access-Needs-Toolkit-Chicago-Red-Cross-2014.pdf	Description: This toolkit was compiled by the American Red Cross Greater Chicago Region from partner resources. It is not a replacement for training regarding the inclusion of people who have functional and access needs in emergency and disaster planning, preparedness, response and recovery.
Source: American Red Cross, Greater Chicago Region	
Type: Guide and toolkit	

Tool: Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)	
Website: http://svi.cdc.gov/index.html	Description: ATSDR has created a tool to help emergency response planners and public health officials identify and map the communities that will most likely need support before, during, and after a hazardous event. The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) uses U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of every Census tract. Census tracts are subdivisions of counties for which the Census collects statistical data. The SVI ranks
Source: Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	
Type: Mapping tool	

	each tract on 14 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access, and crowded housing, and groups them into four related themes. Each tract receives a separate ranking for each of the four themes, as well as an overall ranking.
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Tool: HIPPA. Disclosures for Emergency Preparedness - A Decision Tool: Overview	
Website: http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/decision-tool-overview/index.html	Description: To guide you in determining how the Privacy Rule applies to the disclosure in question, this tool focuses on the source of the information being disclosed, to whom the information is being disclosed, and the purpose of the information being disclosed. To make your determination, go to the question that is most relevant to your emergency preparedness planning need and follow the information flow to find the appropriate answer. Many terms used in the tool are defined by law or have a special meaning. The definitions or special meanings are discussed on the relevant pages or will be linked to other locations on this Web Site to assist you.
Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	
Type: Web-based interactive decision tool	

Tool: Community Preparedness Index (CPI): Being Ready to Protect Children	
Website: Charity Organization for Children	Description: The Community Preparedness Index (CPI) is an online self-assessment for local communities to assess how prepared they are to meet the needs of children in disasters. The tool focuses on institutional settings such as schools, childcare, and hospitals where children may be during the day or after a disaster. Learn more by downloading the CPI Fact Sheet CPI FACT SHEET.pdf To access the Guide: CPI GUIDE FINAL.pdf
Source: Save the Children	
Type: Online community assessment tool.	

Tool: Planning for People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs Toolkit

Website: Maryland Department of Disabilities Publications Archive	Description: This toolkit outlines inclusive planning strategies and considerations and emphasizes the importance of planning for people with access and functional needs and how they are affected by different preparedness, response, and recovery activities. To access the Guide: Planning for People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs Toolkit
Source: Maryland Department of Disabilities – link through FEMA website	
Type: Online Tool or Toolkit	
Tool: Addressing Access and Functional Needs for Disaster Survivors	
Website: https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/addressing-access-and-functional-needs-disaster-survivors	Description: This toolkit outlines inclusive planning strategies and considerations and emphasizes the importance of planning for people with access and functional needs and how they are affected by different preparedness, response, and recovery activities.
Source: FEMA Website	
Type: Online	
Tool: Functional Needs Support Services: Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters	
Website: https://www.fema.gov/about/offices/disability	Description: - Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters - Provides guidance on requirements related to sheltering children and adults with AFN in general population shelters. Describes Functional Needs Support Services (FNSS) and identify methods for achieving a lawful and equitable program through the delivery of FNSS for children and adults To access the Guide: Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters
Source: FEMA – Office of Disability Integration and Coordination	
Type: Online	

SECTION 12: COURSES AND TRAININGS

12.1 Online Self-Paced Courses

The following online training courses are available **free** of cost. While these online training courses are not endorsed by MEMA, the agency believes sharing such information will help create a better awareness, and understanding, of individuals with disabilities and others with

access and functional needs, and the assistance they may require before, during or after an emergency.

Title: Planning for the Needs of Children in Disasters	
Website: https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-366.a	Description: The purpose of this course is to provide guidance for Emergency Managers and implementers of children's programs about meeting the unique needs that arise among children as a result of a disaster or emergency.
Source: FEMA	
Course ID: IS 366	

Title: ADA Title II Tutorial	
Website: http://www.adatitle2.org	Description: Provide education and resources on the requirements applicable to State and Local government under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Source: National Network of ADA Centers	
Course ID: N/A	

Title: Introduction to Mental Health and Disaster Preparedness	
Website: Johns Hopkins – Introduction to Mental Health and Disaster Preparedness – Traumatized.com	Description: Dr. Cindy Parker introduces the topics of disaster mental health services, mental health surge capacity, and psychiatric first aid.
Source: Johns Hopkins Center for Public Health Preparedness	
Course ID: N/A	

Title: Emergency Shelter Training: Assisting People with Disabilities, Access and Functional Needs	
Website: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCI67K0eS5o	Description: View the video to learn about emergency shelters and how staff are trained to provide accommodations for individuals in need of additional assistance.
Source: NYC Emergency Management	
Course ID: NA	

Title: Ready, Willing, & Able - Disaster Preparedness and Response Course on Meeting the Needs of Persons with Disabilities	
Website: Home - TRAIN Learning Network - powered by the Public Health Foundation	Description: Training covers disability etiquette, terminology, and communications and assistance techniques during disasters for assisting people with disabilities. Course participants will become familiar with various disaster assistance needs of people with sight, mobility, hearing and cognitive disabilities.
Source: Public Health Foundation: Train National	
Course ID: 1020884	

Title: Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance (IRAA)	
Website: https://delvalle.bphc.org/enroll/index.php?id=685	Description: This course reviews considerations for emergency planning and response related to a range of specific vulnerabilities that comprise the larger category of Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance (IRAA).
Source: DelValle Institute for Emergency Preparedness	
Course ID: N/A	

12.2 Instructor- Led Trainings

Instructor-led training courses are continuously offered through various local, state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. Please contact the specific agency or organization for more information about the training/course (e.g. there may be a fee for taking the course/workshop). While training courses outside of MEMA are not endorsed by MEMA, the agency believes sharing such information will assist local communities in their efforts to incorporate considerations for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into their community's emergency plans, activities, programs and services.

Title: NEW – COMING SOON - Access and Functional Needs (AFN) in Emergency Planning	
Website: https://www.mass.gov/northeast-emergency-management-training-education-center-nemtec	Description: This introductory course provides a foundational understanding of Access and Functional Needs (AFN) in emergency planning. The course explores who may have AFN during emergencies, why inclusive planning matters, and how to begin addressing barriers in communication, transportation, sheltering, and medical access. Participants will be introduced to the CMIST framework, key legal requirements, and strategies for engaging community stakeholders using a
Source: Northeast Emergency Management Training & Education Center (NEMTEC) led by MEMA	
Course ID: N/A	

	<p>Whole Community approach. No prior knowledge of AFN is required.</p> <p>Additional training courses in Emergency Management are also available through NEMTEC.</p>
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Title: U.S. Emergency Preparedness Trainings	
Website: https://www.savethechildren.org/	<p>Description:</p> <p>Save the Children knows that every day in the U.S. millions of care providers, teachers, program implementers and community leaders are on the front lines of children’s safety, and we want to equip these professionals with the knowledge, skills and resources to best protect children in disasters. Save the Children has various emergency preparedness workshops and training that can help your community keep children and families safe. To learn more and schedule a training, please email GetReady@savechildren.org and find additional resources at www.savethechildren.org/GetReady.</p>
Source: Save the Children	
Course ID: N/A	