

## **HURRICANE** **DISABILITY PROGRAM NAVIGATOR**



### **Disability Program Navigators (DPN)**

In the areas most affected by the Gulf Coast hurricanes, there are many people with disabilities in immediate need of assistance. The life-disrupting impact of these disasters is likely to fall heavily on people with disabilities and presents both a challenge and an opportunity for states and localities. To help meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, the U.S. Department of Labor, in partnership with the Social Security Administration, is funding additional Disability Program Navigators.

Disability Program Navigators (DPNs) are state and local professionals currently working in 17 states who are experts in integrating services for people with disabilities through One-Stop Career Centers. Navigators are experts at better connecting disabled customers with workforce investment services, as well as the full spectrum of rehabilitation, benefit, training and related services available.

### **The DPN Hurricane Initiative**

Through the DPN Hurricane Initiative, up to 50 Navigators from the 17 Navigator states will be temporarily reassigned to the Gulf Coast area under the direction of the state workforce and rehabilitation agencies in order to locate people with disabilities, provide assistance that enables them to be prepared to accept employment and connect them to reemployment services.

The first 14 -member DPN team will operate in Mississippi. The team includes DPNs from Colorado, Maryland, Oklahoma and Wisconsin. Teams will then begin operations in Louisiana, and the expansion of operations will be supported by the participation of Navigators from California and Iowa. Finally, the initiative may be further expanded to provide recovery and reemployment services in Alabama and in evacuee host states such as Texas and Arkansas.

The DPN Hurricane Initiative is funded through existing grants to states for the Disability Program Navigators.