



FEMA

**Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin
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TO: All State Administrative Agency Heads
All State Administrative Agency Points of Contact
All State Homeland Security Directors
All State Emergency Management Agency Directors
All Tribal Nation Points of Contact

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SUBJECT: Integrating Disability Access and Functional Needs Efforts in Grant Applications

The purpose of this Information Bulletin (IB) is to emphasize the importance and heighten the awareness of integrating those with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs into local and state government homeland security and emergency preparedness programs. Last year marked the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As required by the ADA, Homeland security and emergency managers at all levels are to plan for the whole community by integrating and coordinating emergency preparedness, response and recovery for children and adults with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. The Grant Programs Directorate supports FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC) efforts in this area.

As you develop your grant applications for FY 2011, we strongly encourage grantees to address how your Investments will increase the effectiveness of emergency preparedness planning and response and to increase the involvement of disability inclusion experts as partners across all aspects of emergency management. FEMA expects that integration occurs at all levels from planning, to purchasing of equipment and supplies and exercises/drills. In order to assist state, local and tribal governments, FEMA has updated allowable grant expenditures for planning and purchases under the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI), Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS), Citizen Corps Program (CCP), Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP), and the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG).

Efforts to develop plans, and making decisions to purchase equipment and supplies should be done by including the whole community through meaningful dialogue and inclusion on planning committees. The following are examples that demonstrate the integration of disability access and functional needs efforts in emergency planning and response:

- Inclusive meeting practices may require providing Sign Language Interpreters, Computer Aided Real time Translation (CART), materials in alternate formats, facilitators with expertise in supporting inclusive discussions, accessible transportation or other assistance for community members with access and functional needs to participate on planning teams.
- Engaging disability groups in preparedness and evacuation planning may require supporting the work of local NGOs to produce materials and tools that are user friendly for a broader audience.
- General population shelter planning may require investments in training, equipment and supplies to meet access and functional needs.
- General population shelter planning may also benefit from practices that engage a broader planning team and may require the development of tools and resources by experts in disability inclusive practices.
- Tools may be needed for gap analysis and tracking the resources needed to support access and functional needs, rather than relying on registries of people. (e.g.: accessible transportation, durable medical equipment, personal assistance services providers, sign language interpreters, accessible housing resources, etc.).
- Cross-training for disability and other community groups, planners and emergency managers may be required to improve capacity for integrating access and functional needs in emergency preparedness and response.
- It may be necessary to conduct an analysis and evaluation of potential shelter locations for access compliance and to establish priority for utilization based on concluding results.
- Support may be needed for a planner to integrate access and functional needs. Support of the full spectrum of accessible Emergency Alert, Warning and Notification systems for those with access and functional needs, such as but not limited to: Close Captioning (CC), visual and audible notification and motion/vibration alerts may be needed.
- It may be necessary to engage disability organizations in leading inclusive community emergency preparedness programs to increase preparedness.
- Support may be needed for inclusive neighborhood programs to increase skills and abilities of residents with disabilities as neighborhood leaders.

Questions regarding this IB may be directed to your assigned Program Analyst or the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk at askcsid@fema.gov or 1-800-368-6498.