



FEMA

Fact Sheet

Integrated Assistance Inclusive of People with Disabilities

FEMA is committed to preparing individuals and strengthening communities before, during, and after disasters, and considers the needs and requirements of the whole community during the planning, response, and recovery phases of emergencies.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, provide a mandate to integrate the access and functional needs of people with disabilities into general emergency management planning, response, recovery, and mitigation.

The FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination

In February 2010, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate established the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC) and appointed Senior Advisor, Disability Issues and Acting Disability Coordinator Marcie Roth to the role of Director. ODIC provides guidance, tools, methods, and strategies to integrate and coordinate emergency management efforts to meet the access and functional needs of all citizens, including children and adults with disabilities.

ODIC works actively to engage emergency management stakeholders and coordinates internal FEMA program offices and relevant external parties to achieve inclusive, community-wide emergency planning and disaster response and recovery.

Recent program initiatives

FEMA is adapting traditional human resource practices to hire a more diverse workforce that looks like the communities we serve, including recruiting qualified applicants with disabilities. FEMA has begun to hire Disability Integration Specialists for each of the ten Regional Offices to increase agency-wide capacity to serve all citizens.

In July 2010, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Council on Independent Living which allows the Centers for Independent Living to access FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers in order to better assist people with disabilities impacted by a disaster.

FEMA recently developed guidance and provided training for emergency managers and shelter planners on functional needs support services in all ten regions. This curriculum provides tools and strategies for accommodating individuals with disabilities in general population shelters during emergencies, as required by law.

In September 2010, FEMA hosted the 'Getting Real Inclusive Emergency Management National Capacity Building Conference'. It brought together hundreds of disability community leaders, emergency managers, and other key stakeholders to optimize limited resources and improve inclusive emergency management practices and ensure equal services for everyone during emergencies.