

Evacuation Planning for Persons with Disabilities and Caregivers

Considerations for Caregivers

- The needs of older people often are similar to those of persons with disabilities.
- Because disaster warnings are often given by audible means such as sirens and radio announcements, people who are deaf or hard of hearing may not receive early disaster warnings and emergency instructions. Be their source of emergency information as it comes over the radio or television.
- Some people who are blind or visually impaired, especially older people, may be extremely reluctant to leave familiar surroundings when the request for evacuation comes from a stranger.
- People with impaired mobility are often concerned about being dropped when being lifted or carried. Find out the proper way to transfer or move someone in a wheelchair and what exit routes from buildings are best.
- Some people with cognitive disabilities may be unable to understand the emergency and could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react.
- Many respiratory illnesses can be aggravated by stress. In an emergency, oxygen and respiratory equipment may not be readily available.
- People with epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, and other conditions often have very individualized medication regimes that cannot be interrupted without serious consequences. Some may be unable to communicate this information in an emergency.
- A service animal could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind or partially sighted may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their service animal, to safety during a disaster.
- Service animals are allowed to stay in emergency shelters with owners, but pets may not.



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