**Emergency Preparedness Resources**

August 9, 2018

As we approach the anniversary of last year’s hurricane season and as much of the west deals with devastating forest fires, this seemed like a good time to remind chapters of the resources and contacts in their communities to assist people with disabilities in an emergency. If you have questions about this material or have additional resources to share with PVA members and chapters, please feel free to contact Susan Prokop, Senior Associate Advocacy Director at 202-416-7707 or [susanp@pva.org](mailto:susanp@pva.org).

As you know, most emergency preparation and response efforts are handled at the state and local levels and there is a certain degree of responsibility that falls on individuals when mass natural disasters occur. A wealth of information about emergency preparation, response and recovery can be found at **Ready.gov.**

**Your local/state disability coalition** - Local Center for Independent Living (CIL) or Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) - [**a directory for local CILs and SILCs can be found at** [**www.ilru.org**](http://www.ilru.org)] or to your state **Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system** [a directory for which can be found at [**https://www.acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/state-protection-advocacy-systems**](https://www.acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/state-protection-advocacy-systems) ]. Ask your SILC or P&A if there is a disability emergency preparedness and response coalition in your state and how your chapter might become involved with that group or at least get a briefing about what your chapter members need to know in the event of a catastrophic emergency.

**Contact your State and Territorial level resources** – This page contains contact information for emergency management agencies and offices - <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies>. There, you will find an alphabetical listing by state and territory with phone numbers and websites for each office. Officials at these agencies should be able to connect your chapter with the individuals responsible for addressing the needs of people with disabilities in an emergency.

Is there a VOAD in your state, city or county? Some nonprofits are part of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) or Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD), which are responsible for meeting disaster-caused unmet needs of disaster survivors. State VOADs work pre-disaster to promote training and preparedness. They work post-disaster to facilitate coordination of response and recovery efforts to assist in immediate coordination of voluntary agency response. The state VOAD often serves as advocate and liaison between member agencies and the state government agencies. Some communities develop COADs, which are coalitions of organizations based within a community or geographic area and composed of representatives from public, private, and not-for-profit agencies.

**Reach out to the FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialist** - Each regional office for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is supposed to have a **Regional Disability Integration Specialist (RDIS)** tasked with ensuring that people with disabilities are included in preparation, response and recovery plans. Your chapter should consider contacting the RDIS in your state to develop relationships with these individuals through invitations to your meetings or other community events. Below is a list of these regional disability integration specialists and while some positions are vacant, you can contact the nearest RDIS for referral to an alternative official in your region.

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| **Region** | **RDIS** |
| One-Boston | Kate Barnett McCarthy  Office of Regional Administrator  Kate.mccarthybarnett@fema.dhs.gov |
| Two-New York | James Flemming  Office of Regional Administrator  James.fleming@fema.dhs.gov |
| Three-Philadelphia | Philip (PJ) Mattiacci  Recovery Division  Philip.mattiacci@fema.dhs.gov |
| Four-Atlanta | Vacant  External Affairs |
| Five-Chicago | Vacant  External Affairs |
| Six-Denton | Christin Bradley  Recovery Division  Christin.bradley@fema.dhs.gov |
| Seven-Kansas City | Georgette Wallace (Starts Aug. 2018) External Affairs  [Georgette.wallace@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Georgette.wallace@fema.dhs.gov) |
| Eight-Denver | Mike Houston  External Affairs  Mike.houston@fema.dhs.gov |
| Nine-Oakland | Roxann Crawford  External Affairs  Roxann.Crawford@fema.dhs.gov |
| Ten-Bothell | Danielle Bailey  Office of Regional Administrator  Danielle.bailey@fema.dhs.gov |

**Federal resources** - Finally, this link - <https://www.dhs.gov/civil-rights-emergencies-and-disasters> - connects to a website for the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties that contains resources for ensuring nondiscrimination in disaster preparation, response and recovery. It also contains links to transcripts from listening sessions conducted in California, Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands concerning FEMA’s response to the 2017 disasters in those states which may offer to advocates suggestions for improving disability inclusion in emergency preparedness in their own communities.

**Additional select state level resources** - Some states and major cities have incorporated disability personnel into their emergency planning. Below are some names and contact information for disability integration officials in those states and territories with the greatest exposure to natural disasters that PVA has been able to collect through contacts in the disability advocacy community. If you don’t see your state or major urban center listed, you can reach out to your state or local government emergency management agency for that information.

**Alabama** - The Governor's Office on Disability is listed as a support agency in the state emergency operations plan. Graham Sisson is the director of the Office on Disability and can be reached at [graham.sisson@good.alabama.gov](mailto:graham.sisson@good.alabama.gov). His telephone number is 334-293-7189.

**Florida** – the state division of emergency management has a website devoted to information that people with disabilities should know at <https://www.floridadisaster.org/planprepare/disability/> and a list of Florida County Emergency Management Offices - <https://www.floridadisaster.org/counties>.

**California** - Vance Taylor is a disability policy advisor in the Governor’s office. He can be reached at [vance.taylor@cal-oes.ca.gov](mailto:vance.taylor@cal-oes.ca.gov) and 916-845-8202.

**Houston, Texas** - Maria Town is the city’s disability specialist and may be able to point to the right people to connect with at the state level. Her email is maria.town@houstontx.gov and her number is 713-204-3832.

**Mississippi** - Christy Dunaway is the Disability Integration Advisor for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. Her contact information is [cdunaway@mema.ms.gov](mailto:cdunaway@mema.ms.gov) and (601) 506-6454.

**Puerto Rico** - Jose Ramos Alicea is the 504 Coordinator for the Commonwealth. His email is jramos@avp.pr.gov and his number is 787-759-9407 x 3123.

**Additional On-Line Resources** - Below are links to a number of organizations that specialize in disaster preparedness and response for people with disabilities.

* Pacific ADA Center – this member of the network of ADA Centers has developed particular expertise in emergency preparedness and response for people with disabilities. They sponsor regular webinars on relevant topics and can be reached at <https://www.adapacific.org/>.
* National Organization on Disability (NOD) – has developed a number of fact sheets on disaster readiness:
  + <https://deldhub.gacec.delaware.gov/pdf/Readiness-Tips-Disabilities.pdf>
  + <http://www.tohsep.com/uploads/files/Readiness-Tips-Mobility-Disabilities.pdf>
  + <https://deldhub.gacec.delaware.gov/pdf/Readiness-Tips-Owners-Pets.pdf>
  + Functional Needs of People with Disabilities: A Guide for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders <http://nod.org/research_publications/emergency_preparedness_materials/>
* Portlight Inclusive Disaster Strategies - Portlight Strategies, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, founded in 1997 to facilitate a variety of projects involving people with disabilities, including post-disaster relief work. <http://www.portlight.org>
* Pass It On Center – national and state resources for reuse of assistive technology -<https://texashelp.tamu.edu/browse/disaster-preparedness-information/hurricane-evacuation-planning-for-people-with-special-needs/>
* Hurricane Evacuation Planning for People with Special Needs - <https://texashelp.tamu.edu/browse/disaster-preparedness-information/hurricane-evacuation-planning-for-people-with-special-needs/>