



Disability Rights During Disasters:

Protecting the Rights and Independence of People with Disabilities

 www.disasterstrategies.org 

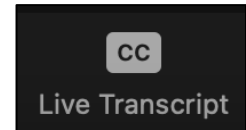
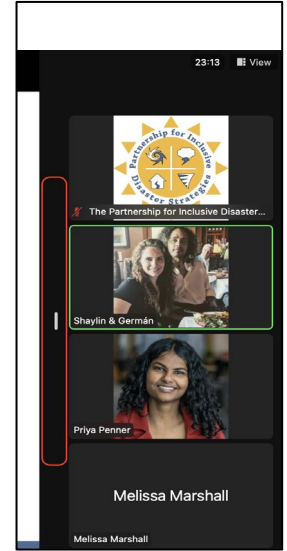
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- For technical assistance or to alert us to an issue, type in chat/raise hand
 - Ex. “slow down please”
- If the chat is not accessible to you, please email your questions to priya@disasterstrategies.org.



Accessibility for this Presentation

Friendly reminders:

- Please identify yourself before speaking
 - Ex. "This is Jessie, and..."
- Please avoid speaking while others are speaking
- Please keep yourself on mute when not talking
- Please avoid using acronyms



Welcome and About Us

Who We Are: The Partnership

The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies is the only U.S. disability-led organization with a focused mission on equity for people with disabilities and people with access and functional needs throughout all planning, programs, services and procedures before, during and after disasters and emergencies.



Thank you to our sponsor, RRCI!



Ground Rules

- Safe space
- Ask questions
- Have fun!!!



Today's Goals

For you to understand:

- Why it is important to prepare for disasters
- Civil rights in disasters
- Ways to prepare for disasters and emergencies using the Disaster Preparedness Plan for People with Disabilities
- Your preparedness responsibilities
- Some disaster resources



**Happy First Day of National
Preparedness Month!**

Disasters are Increasing

“Disasters are on the rise across the globe due to climate change. This warming trend amplifies the impacts of Utah’s natural hazards... [Higher] temperatures lead to drought, increased wildfire risk, and flooding from extreme p

- [Utah Public Safety Department](#)

“Extreme heat kills more people per year than any other weather event.”

- [National Weather Service](#)



Disproportionate Impact

“People with disabilities are 2-to-4 times more likely to die or be injured in a disaster than non-disabled people.”

- [United Nations](#)

“During Hurricane Katrina, Black people were 1.7 to 4 times more likely to die than white people.”

- [“Disparity in disaster preparedness between racial/ethnic groups”](#)



Know Your Risks: Utah Disasters

Includes:

- Extreme heat
- Drought
- Wildfires
- Flooding
- Winter storms
- Tornadoes
- Earthquakes
- Landslides



Questions?

Civil Rights in Disasters

**Disability Rights Are
Civil Rights!**

Questions for You

How familiar are you with the

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

It is okay if you don't know about them yet.



Civil Rights in Disasters

You have the same rights you did before the disaster.

**Civil Rights of people with disabilities
are NEVER suspended, including during
disasters!**



Civil Rights Laws that Protect Disabled People

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
(Rehab Act)**



Civil Rights Laws and Court Decisions

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Protects the rights of people with disabilities
including during disasters



Civil Rights Laws and Court Decisions

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act)

Section 504

Creates the obligation not to discriminate against people with disabilities for recipients and subrecipients of federal funds



Overarching Goals of the ADA and Section 504

The goal of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehab Act is to create a level playing field for people with disabilities through:

- Integration
- Full participation
- Equal opportunity

They don't give us “extra” benefits.



Who Has a Disability?

Under the ADA and the Section 504 of the Rehab Act people with disabilities are individuals with a:

- Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more **major life activities**
- Record of having such impairment
- Regarded as having an impairment



Questions?

ADA Obligations to Disabled People in Disasters

Sections of the ADA:

- **Title I:** Employment
- **Title II:** State and Local Government Entities
- **Title III:** Places of Public Accommodation
- **Title IV:** Telecommunications
- **Title V:** Miscellaneous

Today, we are just discussing Titles II and III.



Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients and sub-recipients of federal funds.

This means that if any city, town, state, organization or business gets any federal money, it can't discriminate on the basis of disability.

Obligations are nearly identical to Title II of the ADA.



Disaster-related programs and services must not discriminate against people with disabilities.

Disaster-Related Programs and Services

Include:

- Planning meetings
- Exercises
- Emergency alerts and notifications
- Transportation
- Shelters
- Disaster Recovery Centers



Disaster-Related Programs and Services

- Must not discriminate against disabled people
- Must provide equally effective communication to people with communication disabilities
- Must be physically accessible

The government is responsible for upholding these obligations.



Disaster-Related Programs and Services

- Must allow people with disabilities to participate in programs and services
- Cannot charge people with disabilities more to participate
- Must make reasonable modifications to policies or practices when necessary



Disaster-Related Programs and Services

Examples of modifications to policies and procedures:

- Providing a specific diet to someone who requires it because of their disability
- Allowing service animals into shelters, disaster recovery centers and other programs



Equally Effective Communication

Equally effective communication means public entities must communicate with people with disabilities in ways that are as effective as communications with people that do not have disabilities.

Disaster-related programs and services must provide equally effective communication to people with **visual, hearing and speech disabilities**.



Equally Effective Communication

Examples of accommodations for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

- American Sign Language interpreters
- Tactile interpreters
- Oral interpreters
- Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)
- Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART)
- Assistive listening system
- Using a microphone



Equally Effective Communication

Examples of accommodations for people with speech disabilities:

- A disabled person using a communication board or speech synthesizer
- Allowing for extra time
- Pen and paper
- Using a screen



Equally Effective Communication

Examples of accommodations for people with visual disabilities:

- Large print
- Readers
- Screen reader-compatible electronic material
- Braille



Questions?

Institutionalization During and After Disasters

Disabled People End Up in Institutions During Disasters

When people go to nursing facilities and other institutions, they:

- Lose their independence
- Lose their social networks, jobs, and homes
- Get lost
- Get sick
- Die



Right Not to Go to a Nursing Facility

Disabled people have the right under the ADA through the **Olmstead** Supreme Court decision to get services in “the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.”

This means that you have the right not to go to a nursing facility if you don't want to go there.



Tips to Stay Out of a Nursing Facility

- Know your rights. You have the right not to go into a facility if you don't want.
- If you go to a shelter, don't separate from loved ones.
- Keep a contact list of friends, family and advocates with you.
- Have a plan for non-institutional places you can evacuate to in a disaster.
- Don't go to a hospital unless you have a medical need to be there.



Disability Rights During Disasters Review

Disability Rights in Disasters: Review

Whenever disaster-related programs and services are provided to the general public, they must be accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities.

- Shelters cannot deny you entry because you're disabled.
- You have the right to enter shelters that are physically accessible and ADA compliant.
- You have the right to equally effective communication.
 - ASL interpreters, large print, braille, assistive technology



Disability Rights in Disasters: Review

- You have the right to request reasonable modifications of policies or practices.
- You have the right to bring your service animal with you in a shelter, disaster recovery center, or other public places providing disaster-related programs and services.
- You have the right not to go into a facility if you don't want.

Disability Rights are NEVER suspended in Disasters!



Questions?

What to do to be ready

✓ Know your risks

⇒ Stay informed

✓ Know your rights

⇒ Make a plan

Emergency Alerts

Types



News broadcast



Radio



Social media



911register.com



FEMA app



Fire alarm and
carbon monoxide
detector



Make a Plan

Plans start with having conversations



Family



Friends



Support Network



Place of worship



Coworkers

About



Sheltering-in-place



Evacuation plans



Make a Plan

Shelter-in-place:

 Chemical spill  Dirty bomb  Snowstorm

Evacuate:

 Wildfire  Earthquake  Building fire










Building Your Emergency Kit

- ✓ **Water** (one gallon per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation)
- ✓ **Food** (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food) and manual **can opener**
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Masks
- ✓ Battery-powered or hand **crank radio** and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- ✓ Flashlights and extra batteries
- ✓ Plastic sheeting and duct tape
- ✓ Chargers
- ✓ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties
- ✓ Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)
- ✓ Local maps
- ✓ Whistle



Important documents

Keep important documents in waterproof bag and saved electronically.

-  List of emergency contacts
-  House deed, mortgage, or lease
-  Health insurance and primary doctor information
-  Birth certificate and social security card (if applicable)
-  Prescription medication details
-  Dietary requirements
-  Information on your customized equipment



Disability Preparedness



Think about your equipment

- Wheelchair, walker, white cane, hearing aids, speech device, breathing machines



Think through what needs power to function?

What other supplies do you need to maintain your independence?

- Urinary and/or bowel supplies, wound care supplies, gloves, wipes



Disability Preparedness

What are your communication needs?

- ASL, using a communication device, plain language, large print, braille, etc.

What is your communication plan if you are unable to communicate during a disaster?

- Communication board, support network, paper and pen

How will you communicate with your support network?



Building Your Emergency Kit

- Build your kit to meet your needs
- Prepare a go bag to survive at least 3 days
- Prepare a 2-week shelter-in-place kit



Important reminders:

- Check on and update your supplies (as need) every six months
- Keep your kit in a cool, dry place, out of direct sunlight



Questions?

Evacuations

From home



Your Go Bag



Easy to grab



Add: power equipment chargers, consumable medical supplies, communication device, fidget devices

Places you go often



Accessible egress



Evacuation instructions



Evacuations

Where will you go?

- Family, friends, neighbor, shelter, place of worship

How will you evacuate?

- Car, friends, family, public bus, paratransit service



Shelter-in-place: Tips

- Stay informed and wait for officials to declare it is safe to go out
- Keep doors and windows closed, cover air vents and fireplace openings
- Keep fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems OFF
- Go into the center-most room with as least windows as possible
- With the plastic sheeting and duct tape, seal doors, windows and air vents

What are some places you go often?

What do their shelter-in-place plans look like?



Question for You

What other things are you considering for your emergency kits?

Things to Think About as You Plan

- ✓ How will I know about a disaster or emergency
- ✓ What is my plan for sheltering
- ✓ What is my plan for evacuating
- ✓ What is my plan if power is out for an extended period of time
- ✓ Who is a part of my support network
- ✓ What is my communication plan
- ✓ Do I have what I need



Questions?

Create a Culture of Preparedness

- Know that a disaster can happen at any time
- Update your plan regularly
- Make preparedness a part of your routine

**Practice your plan
often!**



Scenarios

Scenarios

What do you do if disaster shelter staff tells you that you can't come into a shelter and must instead go to a hospital because you use a wheelchair?

Scenarios

What do you do if a disaster shelter provides Video Remote Interpreting and you prefer a live American Sign Language Interpreter?

Scenarios

What do you do if you are blind and a disaster recovery center does not have electronic or print material in accessible format?

Questions?

Your Preparedness Responsibilities

Your Responsibilities in Disasters

Even though first responders, emergency management and others may assist you, ultimately YOU are responsible for your safety.



Your Responsibilities in Disasters

Your responsibilities include

- Knowing your rights- the first step to preparedness
- Knowing your risks and staying informed
- Making a plan
- Carrying out your plan



Questions?

Disaster Preparedness Plan for People with Disabilities

Overview

- ✓ Disability Rights in Disasters
- ✓ Staying Informed Resources
- ✓ Emergency Kit Checklist
- ✓ Disability-related Preparedness Checklist
- ✓ Your Planning Guide



My Emergency Kit

- ☐ Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- ☐ Fire extinguisher ☐ Matches in a waterproof container
- ☐ Period hygiene supplies ☐ Personal hygiene items
- ☐ Paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- ☐ Paper and pencil, pen, and/or marker
- ☐ Books, games, puzzles, fidget devices, or other stimulating or distracting activities or devices

Build your kit to meet your needs.

Prepare a go bag to survive at least 3 days.

Keep your kit in a cool, dry place, out of direct sunlight.

Prepare a 2-week shelter-in-place kit

Check on and update your supplies (as needed) every 6 months

Know escape routes and places where disaster services are provided. In a fire or other emergency, you may have to suddenly evacuate.



My Disability Preparedness

What equipment do I use?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair or scooter | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech device |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walker | <input type="checkbox"/> White cane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing aids | <input type="checkbox"/> Commode chair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoyer lift | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing machine (ventilator, respirator) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oxygen, suction, or home dialysis equipment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write in other | <input type="text"/> |

What equipment needs power to function?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair or scooter | <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing aids (batteries) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech device | <input type="checkbox"/> Hoyer lift |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing machine (ventilator, respirator) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine that needs to be kept refrigerated (i.e. insulin) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write in other | <input type="text"/> |

What other supplies do I use?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary and/or bowel supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves and wipes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult diapers | <input type="checkbox"/> Wound care supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bed pads (CHUX) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write in other | <input type="text"/> |



My Emergency Plan

My plan if power is out for an extended period of time

My communication plan (support network and contact information)





Thank you!

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Resources

- Local alerts: www.911register.com
- Download the [FEMA App](#)
- Finding a [shelter near you](#)
 - Text SHELTER and your ZIP Code to 43362
(Example Text: "Shelter 84770")
 - Call Red Cross 1-800-733-2767
- [Ready Resources](#)
- [Poison control](#)
 - Call 1-800-222-1222



Resources

- [The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](#)
 - **Disability & Disaster Hotline:**
 - Call / Text: +1 (800) 626-4959
 - Email: hotline@disasterstrategies.org
- [Utah VOAD](#)
- [Red Cross UT](#)
- [211 / United Way](#)
- [Rocky Mountain ADA Center](#)
- [Disability Law Center](#)

