



## Fostering Partnerships with Emergency Managers & Public Health Professionals

*Question: “Why should I consider and include people with disabilities in emergency planning efforts?  
What is in it for me and my organization?”*

1. Considering the community at large
  - a. If emergency plans consider and meet the needs of people with disabilities, then they will likely address the needs of other community members, as well and thus serve the broadest audience
  - b. Casting a wide net ensures more people are reached which can mean more lives potentially saved in an emergency
2. Considering and including people with disabilities is the law
  - a. Americans with Disabilities Act
  - b. Rehab Act
  - c. Section 1557 of Affordable Care Act
3. Increasing community resilience
  - a. The disability community is very resilient and continues to enact positive change despite current and historical injustices
  - b. [Research](#) shows that taking on a resiliency approach to emergency and disaster planning can help support sustainable relationships leading to increase trust and goal setting for local partners, compared to a traditional preparedness approach
4. Increasing efficacy and efficiency of emergency planning and response
  - a. Prevention and planning on the front end will save you time and money when an emergency or disaster strikes
  - b. Considering people with disabilities on the front end will help your organization gain compliance standards more easily and possibly avoid litigation
  - c. Inclusion and accessibility efforts can open doors to potential funding to further support efforts
  - d. Will provide increased ease of community rebuilding/recovery
5. Increasing community collaboration
  - a. Bringing in partners can decrease your workload for a greater return
  - b. Local disability organizations can serve as channels for sharing emergency preparedness information
  - c. Local disability organizations can serve as “trusted sources” to gain legal compliance and increase the involvement of people with disabilities in emergency planning efforts

- d. Local disability organizations can provide additional resources, supports, and connections in the community
6. Providing potential for recognition on a larger scale
  - a. Disability organizations often use their networks to share community efforts and resources on a national scale
7. Conserving emergency services and resources
  - a. Possibly decrease 911 calls during emergency because frequent concerns will have already been addressed
  - b. Decrease recovery resources needed because proper planning is done on the front end and will assist more community members

*Question: "How can we work together and what will your organization do to support our emergency preparedness efforts?"*

Our local disability organization has many existing resources and services which can be leveraged to help support local emergency preparedness efforts. **We do not intend to add additional tasks to your already full workload, but rather help you work smarter** by serving as a trusted partner to ensure people with disabilities are included in emergency planning efforts and help fill any gaps. This may include, but is not limited to, activities such as the following:

- Helping locate where people with disabilities live in our local community so they can be reached and included in emergency efforts
- Providing relevant data on the local disability community that will aid with emergency planning efforts, such as prevalence of chronic conditions and supports needed (wheelchairs, transportation, Braille resources, etc).
- Highlighting the short- and long-term benefits of including the disability community in emergency planning efforts
- Providing on-going support to ensure inclusion and accessibility in emergency preparedness such as helping create accessible emergency resources, ensuring meetings are accessible, or connecting to needed referrals (closed captioner, ASL interpreter, etc).
- Amplifying the lived experience of people with disabilities through community inclusion and participation in activities such as emergency drills