



Phoenix Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Disability Stakeholder Work Group

Providing FNSS in Mass Care Shelters Training

The City of Phoenix and BCFS HHS delivered a one-day training that detailed recent updates to the City's mass care and sheltering plan, including plans to provide functional needs support services (FNSS) to people with disabilities and other with access and functional needs.



Training attendees included American Red Cross (ARC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and City personnel who will work in a mass care shelter or support mass care operations from the City's Emergency Operations



Center (EOC). Members of the Disability Stakeholder Group (DSG) were guest presenters, including Heidi Lervik with the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) and Aimee Mousavi from the [Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(ACDHH\)](#). Beth Boyd, Regional Disaster Officer of the ARC, also presented on ARC shelter training, plans, and protocols. We greatly appreciate Heidi, Aimee, and Beth's contributions!

Disability Community Highlight

Emergency Response Interpreter Credentialing

Until now, providing access to communication in emergency situations was challenging. Emergency management officials partnered with ACDHH to develop the [Emergency Response Interpreter Credentialing \(ERIC\)](#) pilot program. The 3-day training provided an approved curriculum that focused on emergency operations involving basic terminology, sheltering, and the nature of emergency sites with physically austere and operationally challenging conditions.



Training attendees included American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) providers, experts who can deploy and support first responders quickly to avoid delays in reaching communities for the deaf and hard of hearing during an emergency.

The City is currently revising its emergency response plans and procedures to incorporate ERIC interpreters. The ERIC Program is expected to be operational early next year.

BCFS HHS Update

The City and BCFS HHS continue to collaborate to enhance the City's emergency plans ensuring the needs of people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs are fully integrated. In addition to plan development and review, BCFS HHS has also provided the City with guidance on mitigating outstanding gaps related to providing functional needs support services (FNSS) within all phases and functions of emergency management.

For instance, the City continues to meet with local partners to establish agreements and/or contracts necessary to implement the revised plans, including Talking Stick Resort Arena, Salvation Army, Assisteo Home Health, and Mercy Maricopa Behavioral Health. Also, BCFS HHS introduced three new positions that will provide guidance and technical assistance to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to programs and services in an emergency. They include the Disability Access and Functional Needs (DAFN) Coordinator, DAFN Technical Specialist, and the DAFN Unit Leader. Newly developed job action sheets (JAS) were provided to the City along with the Disability Stakeholder Group (DSG) for input to ensure these roles are applicable to coordinate the provision of FNSS during an emergency. Positions will be located within the City's emergency operations center (EOC) and active mass care shelters.

In addition, guidance has been developed on how to provide effective communication access by meeting inclusive and accessible messaging standards. The initial *draft* of the Citywide Guidance for Effective Communication is currently under review. The guidance ensures that all materials produced by City personnel will be developed following these standards to integrate the needs of persons with disabilities.

Need to Know:

The City along with BCFS HHS will be conducting a functional exercise next year to test revised emergency management plans and will be recruiting individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs to participate. If you or anyone you know, would be interested in volunteering for this exercise with the City, please contact Phoenix OEM for more information.

- BCFS HHS Inclusionary Planning Project Team

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Send questions, comments
or suggestions to:
City of Phoenix
Office of Homeland Security
& Emergency Management

EMERGENCY.MANAGEMENT
@PHOENIX.GOV
602-534-0642



*Lisa Jones,
Director of Homeland Security
and Emergency Management*