

# Disabled? Know Your Rights in a Disaster!

**All people with disabilities have civil rights protection in disasters, without exception.**

**You have a right to all disaster alerts & information in a format that is accessible to you.**

- All emergency information must be provided in clear, plain and actionable language.
- ASL interpreters provided at public events must be qualified. When televised, the interpreter should be in-frame at all times.
- Televised information must include captions for individuals who are Deaf and hard of hearing.
- If you require sign language interpreters, Braille, large print, or other alternative formats, you have a right to reasonable accommodations throughout the disaster assistance process.

**You have a right to be included in community evacuation transportation plans.**

- Community evacuation transportation plans must include accessible options for people with mobility disabilities or limited transportation.

**You have a right to disability services and supports in an accessible community shelter, not transferred to a “special” shelter, hospital or nursing home.**

- If you lived in the community before the disaster, you have the right to be provided with the disability and health maintenance supports and services you require to maintain your health, safety, and independence;
- It is a violation of your civil rights to be directed towards a “special needs or medical shelter,” a nursing home, hospital or other medical or psychiatric facility. Only people who require hospital or nursing home care should be separated from the community during or after a disaster.

**You have a right to barrier-free shelter and temporary housing.**

- Shelters cannot discriminate when providing safety, comfort, or basic needs.
- Shelters must be physically accessible. You have the right to accessible sleeping, eating, medical and recreation areas, toilets, showers and transportation (when transportation is available to others).
- You have a right to a qualified sign language interpreter, Braille, large print, plain language, and other information, and to shelter-provided personal assistance services, back-up power for medical devices, privacy for personal care and accommodations for meeting disability-related needs for reduced stimulation.
- You have a right to meals and snacks that meet your dietary and medical needs.

**You have the right to keep your service animal with you throughout evacuation, sheltering and temporary housing.**

- Disaster services providers are required to allow individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals & must provide reasonable accommodations for meeting their needs.

**You have a right to advocate for your needs and file an official complaint.**

- Contact the [Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](https://www.inclusivedisaster.org/): (800) 626-4959 or [info@disasterstrategies.org](mailto:info@disasterstrategies.org)
- File civil rights complaints by emailing [fema-civilrightsoffice@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-civilrightsoffice@fema.dhs.gov) | 202-212-3535 and [crcl@dhs.gov](mailto:crcl@dhs.gov) | 202-401-1474 | 1-866-644-8360 (toll free) | TTY: 1-866-644-8361 (toll free)

