



NIAGARA UNIVERSITY  
**Emergency Management**  
Disability Awareness Training

## Emergency Management Access and Functional Needs Disability Awareness Training Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Niagara University Disability Awareness Training has received funding from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council to educate anyone involved in emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery as it pertains to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs. NU has tailored a presentation that identifies the responsibilities of both emergency management personnel and disability advocates during an emergency. This program will introduce the four modules necessary for proper response that include Disability Awareness Training, the Americans with Disabilities Act specific to Emergency management, emergency plan content, and Inclusive Planning and Active Participation.

### Topics to be Discussed:

- Disability Awareness specific to Emergency Management
- Access and Functional Needs defined to include Universal Design
- Understanding how the whole community concept is imperative to proper response to individuals with disabilities and how to involve them.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act relative to Emergency management and response.
- Community resources and other materials that assist Emergency Management in proper response
- Disaster Preparedness and Planning
- Inclusive Planning and Active Participation
- NYC Lawsuit and its ramifications nationwide

**“The City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana realized in the wake of Hurricane Ida that we must center access and functional needs as part of our collective disaster preparedness and response. If major changes are not implemented, the calamitous loss of life in 2021 is all but guaranteed to repeat this hurricane season. Disability Rights Louisiana is eager to work with local and state governments to prevent future death and suffering due to a lack of adequate disaster planning and preparedness for the elderly and people with disabilities.”**



**November 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 8:30-4:30pm CST [Click Here to Register](#)**

**OR**

**November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 12:30-4:30pm CST [Click Here to Register](#)**

**Place: Red Cross Building  
4655 Sherwood Common Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70816**

Funding for this training has been provided by the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

For questions regarding this training or to request accommodations such as an ASL interpreter please email [carynewman@niagara.edu](mailto:carynewman@niagara.edu) or call 716-286-8139

**Site Phone: 225-291-4533**



**Louisiana Developmental  
Disabilities Council**



## Louisiana Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training

### Proper planning, preparedness, response, and recovery and your legal obligations

**WHEN:** November 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 8:30am-4:30pm CST

**WHERE:** Red Cross Building, 4655 Sherwood Common Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70816

**HOW TO REGISTER:** [Click Here to Register](https://frdat.niagara.edu/) or Visit <https://frdat.niagara.edu/>

This program will provide you with the information necessary to address the need areas of persons with disabilities and access and functional needs as it relates to both legal obligations, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (and other related laws), and moral intentions to serve the whole community. Content includes FEMA Access and Functional Needs guidance and lessons learned from lawsuits and citations levied against municipal EMOs

“Unfortunately, despite the obvious importance of accounting for the unique needs of individuals with disabilities in planning emergencies, New York City’s emergency plans, **like many state and local emergency plans throughout the nation**, fail to do so.” *Judge statement in ruling on NYC lawsuit – Brooklyn Center for Independence vs Bloomberg*

### Litigation re: planning for People with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs – Issues across Lawsuits:

- Building Evacuation
- Accessible Transportation
- Shelters and Evacuation Centers
- Power Outages
- Communications
- Recovery

One of the most important roles of local government is to protect their citizenry from harm, including helping people prepare for and respond to emergencies. Making local government emergency preparedness and response programs accessible to people with disabilities is a critical part of this responsibility. Making these programs accessible is also required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 – *US DOJ Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights section*

Federal law mandates that emergency planning, preparedness, response and recovery must include appropriate and accurate content that address people with disabilities and access and functional needs. This is explicitly built into the ADA and expanded upon in the Post-Katrina Act.

US DOJ, in its agreements with municipalities through Project Civic Access, have levied citations specific to Emergency Management and its Policies and Procedures. Here is one municipality’s agreement with US DOJ

- The County’s Emergency Operation Plan must comply with the ADA
  - a. EOP’s will include procedures to solicit, receive, and use input from people with a variety of disabilities.

- b. Community evacuation plans to enable people who have mobility disabilities, are blind or have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, have cognitive disabilities, mental illness to safely self-evacuate or be evacuated by others.
- c. emergency warning system effective for the deaf/heard of hearing
- d. emergency shelters have a back-up generator and a way to keep medications refrigerated (such as a refrigerator or a cooler with ice). Access to back-up power and refrigeration at such shelters will be made available to people whose disabilities require access to electricity and refrigeration,
- e. procedures ensuring that people who use service animals are not separated from their service animals when sheltering during an emergency. The procedures will not segregate people who use service animals from others but may take into account the potential presence of people who, for safety or health reasons, should not be in contact with certain types of animals.
- f. plans for providing equivalent opportunities for accessible post-emergency temporary housing to people with disabilities. The County will ensure that information it makes available regarding temporary housing includes information on accessible housing (such as accessible hotel rooms within the community or in nearby communities) that could be used if people with disabilities cannot immediately return home after a disaster if, for instance, necessary accessible features such as ramps or electrical systems have been compromised.

“My experience tells me if we wait and plan for people with disabilities after we write the basic plan, we fail.” Craig Fugate, FEMA Administrator - Washington, DC August 4, 2009 – testifying before the Senate Ad hoc committee on Disaster Recovery



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For more information, contact Cary Newman, Program Manager, 716-286-8139  
[carynewman@niagara.edu](mailto:carynewman@niagara.edu)

Red Cross Phone: 225-291-4533





## **Niagara University Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training Inclusive Planning and Active Participation Specialist**

Niagara University (NU), through funding from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (LA DDC) is addressing the on-going challenges emergency management (EM) faces regarding accurate and appropriate response to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs as it relates to planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. This can only take place with the involvement of individuals in all aspects of the process.

NU has developed the role of Inclusive Planning and Active Participation (IPAP) Specialist. The individual will go through a 2 day training course. That will provide them the tools and resources to engage the disability community while working in conjunction with the EM personnel of the region. Their primary responsibility will be to recruit individuals to be active (active participants), assist in their role within the EM process, ensure recording of activities, and provide guidance and direction as needed. Independent Living Centers (ILCs) will be encouraged to have at least one IPAP Specialist.

The program will work as follows;

1. NU DAT has developed a working manual of which IPAPs and EM personnel, and those invested such as American Red Cross and Departments of Health, will be trained on its content and how to use it.
2. The training will consist of two days, with the afternoon of the second day being a training for individuals who are interested in being an active participant (AP). This training will allow for the connection to be made with the IPAP, EM, and AP. AP is defined as a presence on committees/councils/boards that address the needs of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs as it relates to planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. Other forms of active participation and inclusive planning include accessibility reviews, contact for EM on all topics specific or in general, disability-specific information to include outreach and networking, and direct advisement and consult.



3. All presence, participation, and activities carried out by IPAPs and APs should be tracked. This ensures a record of individuals' roles as well as holding EM accountable. Gaps in presence and planning will be noted and followed up by NU and its partners.
4. The content is broken down into four modules
  - a. Disability Awareness Training; providing base education as to how access and functional needs and disabilities may present and the needs specific to each as it relates to emergency and disaster planning and response.
  - b. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as it relates to EM. The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) has clear guidance on EM within the ADA. This guidance will be utilized to educate EM. Application of this content is mandated by federal law. The three lawsuits against municipalities is examined and incorporated into the content, utilized as a tool to learn from.
  - c. Inclusive Planning and Active Participation is more than a concept. It is an expectation as identified through the FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC) and indicated in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Brooklyn Center for Independence, et al and the City of New York and other lawsuits. It is recognized that the **without** AP emergency planning is non-functional and detrimental to the lives of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs.
  - d. The emergency plan and its content needs to have within it how to respond to individuals. Assumption that EMs should do this without guidance and direction is erroneous. Conversely, EMs are asking for assistance in how to ensure a comprehensive plan.

It is the intentions of this program to define emergency planning, preparedness, response mad recovery from both the emergency management role AND the disability community, leading to the Whole Community Planning process and the establishment of the Core Advisory Group, a FEMA concept that serves as an ultimate objective of the program.



### Role of the IPAP Specialist

- I. Establish relationship with the County EM office and its main personnel.
- II. Identify the core advisory group (CAG), committee or council that has its primary role the topic of emergency planning.
  - A. Become a member of that CAG
  - B. Identify key representatives from across the disability community who may also be members
  - C. Infuse a presence that represents individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs
    1. This would include an eventual training on disability awareness
    2. Provision of tools and resources to the CAG (manual will contain all necessary components)
- III. Through recognition of the emergency manager, utilization of IPAP and APs in the review of all aspects related to planning, preparedness, response, and recovery
  - A. Accessibility reviews
    1. Shelters
    2. Disaster Recovery centers
  - B. Presence at Emergency Operation Center
  - C. Outreach
    1. Disability community
    2. Disability specific
  - D. Education

IPAP Specialists receive the entire program to include the working manual, three power point programs, and several tools and resources. The process to achieve the ultimate objective is on-going and calls for a commitment beyond the training and CAG sessions.

Project Director – David V. Whalen, Niagara University Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training [frdat.niagara.edu](http://frdat.niagara.edu) 716-286-7355

