Mid-Atlantic ADA Center

INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

NOVEMBER 15, 2018

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>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: It is now 2:00, and I'll now turn it over to our training specialist, Caleb Berkemeier.

>> CALEB BERKEMEIER: Thanks, Maynor. Welcome to this webinar. My name is Caleb Berkemeier. I am the training specialist for the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center. It's housed and operated by TransCen, Inc.

For this session today, we will have a Q&A period, so as you are listening to the presentation, go ahead and type questions into the chat box. It's best if you put those into the chat box as soon as they occur to you because we will be collecting them throughout the session, and we'll be able to read those at the end, so as soon as you have a

question, just go ahead and type it into the chat box. And please keep your questions to a sentence, if possible, two at the most. If questions or comments get too long, we just simply can't read them.

Okay. So I'm going to introduce our presenters for today, and then I'll turn it over to them. So first we have Eli Fresquez. He's an attorney at the New York City Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Formerly, Eli worked as a senior planner and ADA coordinator for Emergency Management. While at Emergency Management, Eli incorporated citywide strategic initiatives and policies to address disability issues.

After graduating from law school, Eli began his career in public service at the NYC Public Services, where he worked in shelters across the city and later as a hearing representative. Eli also worked for the enforcement unit for the New York State Division of Rights, where he investigated and litigated high-impact cases of discrimination on behalf of the State of New York.

Eli's co-presenter is Matthew Puvogel. He works as a community engagement outreach coordinator. In this role, Matthew educates people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs about the additional steps one should take to be prepared for the unexpected.

Matthew began his career in public service at the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. In this role, Matthew spearheaded transportation initiatives,

including an accessible parking awareness campaign, accessible transportation expo, and winter weather conference.

So with that, it's my pleasure to hand the webinar over to Eli and Matthew.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Great. Thank you for having us today. We'd like to really thank the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center for having us, also New York City Emergency Management and the team over there that work on disability and access of functional needs and also to our FEMA Region II partners. That covers New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Thank you Jim Fleming and Kathy from FEMA Region II.

Real quick, you can see here an iconic skyline of New York City, and just to note that we will be focusing on planning and preparedness for organizations and individuals with a particular focus on some coastal storm mass care in an urban setting, but we really hope that a lot of the information we provide today can be useful for all jurisdictions, including those that are more rural.

So we also want to note that a lot of the information we are providing today is going to be pretty general and basic, and so for people who are more seasoned in inclusive Emergency Management, some of this will be repetitive, but since the 2017 and 2018 hurricane seasons and the recent fires and volcanoes, we've gotten a lot of questions and concerns at a real basic level of how can

we plan inclusively, so we really wanted to take a step back and go over some basics and then delve into some particulars that deal with individual preparedness and community preparedness.

So with that said, I just want to quickly note that the New York City Mayor's office for People With p disabilities has been operating from 1973 and is a liaison for the disability community. I want to pass it over to my colleague, Matt Puvogel, to talk about Emergency Management, and then we'll begin.

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: Hi. So as Eli mentioned, my name is Matthew, and I work for New York City Emergency Management. So New York City Emergency Management, we coordinate, we provide outreach and disseminate information to the public, so we work with many different agencies throughout New York City when there is an actual emergency, specifically activations throughout the city, so it could be winter weather to a hurricane to a fire, so we work with many different nonprofits and city organizations, and also providing outreach to the public, such as community preparedness, individual preparedness, and preparedness as a whole, and then disseminating information to the public when we're going to open shelters and also service centers when there is an emergency.

We currently have about 240 staff members that work at Emergency Management, and we are in the community. We have people who provide outreach, we have CICs who

are individuals in the community that respond to emergencies, and many other members that work at the agency.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: All right. Thank you, Matt. So for the agenda today, we're going to go over Emergency Management 101, talk briefly about disability rights, very briefly cover functional planning principles of evacuation, transportation, communication, and sheltering. Then we're going to delve into personal and community preparedness that both Matt and I will speak a bit on, and hopefully we'll have extra time to talk about resources. There's a lot of information that's out there really at your fingertips, and we wanted to highlight some that we find very useful here in New York City.

All right. So one of the first things we wanted to cover was really having an all hazard approach. Oftentimes, when we're planning for emergencies, we plan for it based on the last incident, so it's important to consider the multitude of potential risks.

Here in New York City, obviously, we have terrorism and coastal storms, but we're also at risk for building collapses, fires, it disease outreach, extreme heat, flooding, so we really want to take those all into account.

Also, we want to note that there is really a growing impact of disasters. Recent studies have shown that the number of people impacted is increasing, as the population gets older, there's additional access issues and

there's been a recent CDC estimate that in 2017, nearly 12 million people with disabilities were impacted by disasters.

I also wanted to mention something called the National Incident Management System or NIMS, which was recently updated in 2017 and provides a common nationwide approach to enable the whole community to work together to manage all threats and hazards. The reason I wanted to mention this was that I think it's important for people in the disability community, in particular organizations, to at least familiarize themselves with the NIMS system, and it's very easy to do. There's online courses you can take, IS -- I'm sorry, ICS-100 at fema.gov/national-incident-management-system, and I think it's a really useful tool for people in the disability community to sort of understand the lingo of first responders and emergency managers and people in the disability community and organizations who find themselves in an Emergency Operations Center. Knowing a little bit about the NIMS system is very helpful

Okay. Now we're going to move on to our next slide, Slide 14. This is Emergency Management 101. We wanted to talk a little bit about key definitions. Access and functional needs is a term that's often used in inclusive Emergency Management, and it's really about members in the community who may have additional needs before, during, and after an incident in functional areas, including

but not limited to communication, medical, retaining independence, supervision, and transportation.

Now, access and functional needs is a bit broader than how disabilities are defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Oftentimes, access and functional needs includes people with limited English proficiency. It could also be people who have less access to public transportation or are low-income.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about some of the cases that have come up in Emergency Management that deal with disability. The first one is the Supreme Court case that deals with a correctional institution, and the Supreme Court really came down and said that the Americans with Disabilities Act does apply to programs and services by the government, and really, the takeaway here is that during a disaster, the Americans with Disabilities Act will apply, and so will other protections for people with disabilities, like the Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.

The other important case was CALIF, by the City of Los Angeles, and this is the first case that applied Emergency Management and the ADA, and a settlement was reached with the City of Los Angeles. Also I wanted to mention BCID V. Bloomberg, and that's a case that applied to New York City, and it was -- the initial filing was sent in 2012 with a decision in 2013.

And part of the BCID case, there was seven MOUs, and we'll briefly discuss some of them.

Now, if people are interested in knowing more about disability and some of the legal cases that have come up, I would suggest people look at Barry Taylor's legal brief which was funded by the ADA Pacific Center as part of the network's efforts to include inclusive Emergency Management, which can be found at adapresentations.org.

All right. Moving on to Slide 15, I just wanted to include this slide. It really kind of covers some of the basics about Emergency Planning 101. Be sure to engage leadership, elected officials, leaders in the disability community. Be sure to plan and review. Plans are never completed, they're always ongoing.

Consider roles and responsibilities. Define who does what in disability positions. Consider resources, right. Very important to consider what kind of resources are out there and to make sure that you have agreements in place, documents and codifying efforts.

We found, actually, that it's really important to make sure that you have agreements that have disability language or boilerplate language in Emergency Management. For example, if you have an agreement with a local vendor to provide durable medical equipment, be sure to have disability language in there. Same thing

with digital media. You want to make sure you have website accessibility boilerplate language in there as well.

The most important thing about this slide, really, is making sure that we're eliminating the attitudinal barriers. Oftentimes people in the Emergency Management community are not people with disabilities, so they plan for the world they see, and that's why it's really important to -- when you're looking at your planning efforts, to really try to see outside your own box and engage the community, engage the disability community, and also try to support people and encourage people to be a part of the Emergency Management community

All right. Some functional planning principles. These are nothing new. Many different webinars have had these planning principles and have gone over them, but we thought it's important to cover our bases here and talk a little bit about them.

The first one is self-determination, and that's really about looking at people within the disability community in their own particular needs.

So, for example, our commissioner, Commissioner Calise, he's a wheelchair user. He's a former Paralympian. You're going to prepare for our commissioner differently than, say, older adults that may have additional mobility issues, so it's really about looking at each person case by case, and that leads us to our second functional principle, and that's about not

generalizing or stereotyping. Oftentimes it's easy to sort of put people in the disability community into a broad brush, to stereotype, so sometimes we've seen this in the development of voluntary registries. What we really want people to consider are the individual functional needs of people with disabilities.

Equal opportunities to benefits. So I think one way of looking at this one is thinking about transportation. Oftentimes we say, well, there's a general transportation program, but does it provide transportation for people with disabilities? What about people who use wheelchairs? Are they able to access transportation? That's what equal opportunity is.

Inclusion. This is, again, really important. Often in the disability community, they say nothing about us without us, and this is about making sure that we engage the disability community in our planning efforts. One example, though, is including people with disabilities in our exercises or tabletops that we do.

Integration. A good example of this is looking at our emergency shelter system and making sure that we don't have separate emergency shelters for people with disabilities and people who are able-bodied. We really encourage all sheltering to be accessible for everyone.

Physical access. This really goes without saying. We should make sure that at the very least, ingress and

egress in facilities are accessible, that restrooms are accessible as well.

Equal access. We often see this in the registration process. We want to make sure that people are able to register for, say, services at a recovery center or services in order to get disaster assistance and make sure there's no barriers in the registration process.

Effective communication. This is making sure that we have things in alternate format, such as Braille or ASL interpreters available.

And modifications. This one's pretty easy. I think most people understand what reasonable modifications are. One classic example that's often given is a no pets policy and allowing for service animals to be included as a reasonable modification.

No charge. Really basic, right. We're not going to be charging for any reasonable modifications or any other kinds of equal -- our obligations of equal opportunity.

All right. Slide 17. And this one goes into our functional planning principles. I'm going to hit these pretty quick. Really, one of the basic things -- and this is pretty simple -- is making sure that we allot times for different kinds of institutions, so here in New York City, when we consider evacuations, we make sure that critical care facilities and health facilities are evacuated first, so be sure to allocate time and look at your process of doing so.

Also, effective public messaging is very important when it comes to evacuating. We want to make sure that people understand what disruptions there may be to paratransit, emergency operations, making sure that paratransit's looped in so that when there is an emergency that everyone understands what the changes may be.

Considering appropriate places of intake and requests. This is really about making sure that when people make requests that they go to one particular spot or that there aren't gaps in services and we miss out on people making these kinds of requests. Here in New York City, we use a 311 system for nonemergency assistance. For emergency assistance, obviously, we use 911.

I also just wanted to highlight things about evacuations, and I think Matt will speak about it more as well, but if you're looking at evacuations from a facility, say you're an independent living center, we find it really helpful to engage the local fire department, have them come in, do an assessment of the build, get their ideas of how best to evacuate.

We actually have two new videos that Emergency Management has recently developed that I think highlight some of the preparedness and evacuation tips. They are called "Prepared for the Worst" and "Caught Off Guard," and you can access those on the New York City emergency channel called "Ready New York" What's Your Plan?"

All right. Slide 18. And, again, this is pretty basic. Understand paratransit operations for accessible transportation. Really know the number and type and protocols in place of paratransit beforehand.

Get an inventory. Really find out what is the whole scope and breadth of the paratransit system that you have. Here in New York City, we went through a whole process of inventorying all the different paratransit and other kinds of transportation options that are available to individuals.

Also, make sure to consider particular medical conditions or what level of homebound evacuation assistance may be needed for people to get transport. So, for example, people who are bedridden may need a particular kind of transport as opposed to people who may use a wheelchair or people who may be able to get down the stairs but may need additional assistance once they get out of their building or home on to the street.

All right. Slide 19, accessible communication. And here we have an image of a person using an electronic tablet. Really, this is about multifaceted use of platforms and making sure that you get as much information out in as many different ways as possible. Here in New York City, for example, press conferences obviously have ASL interpreters, but we wanted to make sure we codified that, so we developed an interpreter checklist. Also, website accessibility. There's lots of resources available on making sure that your website's accessible.

CART or Communication Access Realtime Translation is also very useful, which can be used in events, if you're ever having a town hall, for example.

We want to make sure you consider simplification of language, making sure that the terms being used for the public aren't overly complicated. We also have Notify, which Matt will talk a little bit more about, that's available in American Sign Language. We have captioning available, particularly on the mayor's YouTube channel.

I also wanted to point out that on Android, if you're sending out Twitter, you can add image descriptions pretty easily. If you were to get that into your workflow, it's not very difficult. If you just go to the Twitter Accessibility application on the Twitter iOS platform, I would say it's about -- in six clicks you can actually make sure that your image descriptions -- your images, I'm sorry, have image descriptions.

Facebook is a little more challenging to add image descriptions, but at this point, you know, we've found Twitter to be very easy.

All right. Accessible Sheltering. This is Slide 20, and here we have an image of the accessible checklist DOJ guidelines. It's an image of a shelter.

Here we suggest creating a matrix, and we've worked a lot on our emergency sheltering accessibility projects here in New York City. New York City has over 400 emergency shelters, approximately 60 evacuation centers

that are now accessible, and this matrix is really to know what you have, what needs to be fixed, what kind of ingress or egress issues may you have if there's no accessible ramp, making sure that the restrooms are accessible.

Keep this information up-to-date as well. Here in New York City, we have what's called a Hurricane Zone Finder. You can just Google that. And you can type in your address and you can find out your nearest evacuation center or also it will pinpoint the accessible evacuation center nearby as well.

Now, just as important is physical access in a shelter. We want to make sure that people are trained, and here in New York City we've developed a training program to make sure that we have disability coordinators or what we call disability and access and functional needs coordinators posted in our evacuation centers, and they have a communication protocol, logistics supply chain for them to work out, and make sure that the shelter itself is accessible.

Slide 21. So I just wanted to provide a couple of images of some of the supplies that we have in shelters and these include canes, walkers, wheelchairs, chargers, and more. And these are just small lists of some of the things that we provide in our emergency evacuation shelters. And, of course, none of this really matters if you don't have trained coordinators, and that's why we've been working with our Human Resource Administration, also

American Red Cross and our CERT teams to make sure they're trained in accessibility as well.

All right. So we're going to move on and we're going to talk a little bit about personal preparedness, and I'm going to hand it over to my colleague, Matt Puvogel. This is slide 22.

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: I'm going to talk about personal preparedness. This slide goes to three key steps to having a plan for individuals with disabilities, so this talks about making a plan, gathering supplies, and being informed. In New York City, when we present to the public, we provide presentations. The program is called The Ready New York, it's our main campaign for preparedness for the community, for New Yorkers, but especially for people with disabilities, so we present to many different populations, and we also include people with disabilities. It's really important because people with disabilities are going to have to take additional steps to be prepared when there is an actual emergency.

So we go through this plan with all groups that we speak to. I myself have done presentations to organizations that represent people who are blind and low vision, people with developmental disabilities, people who are deaf and hard of hearing, so -- and also people with mobility disabilities. So it kind of runs the gamut. We do presentations to all different types of groups, and these three key steps are really important for people with disabilities.

So making your plan, specifically actually developing a support network, people that you can reach out to pertaining to your disability. Eli mentioned before, self-determination. Certain individuals are going to need more help than others, so, again, the individual is going to be taking responsibility, thinking about what they need help with in time of an emergency.

So if someone is blind or low vision and requires additional assistance, that's going to be part of their plan. And same for people who are in a wheelchair, their plan's going to, you know, obviously be a little bit different too.

So some of the steps that we provide within the support network when we speak to groups is support networks specifically, it can be loved ones, it can be relatives, friends, could be someone's home attendant. It's basically the individuals you think are going to be able to help you during an emergency.

So we've also found -- and this is a statistic that I actually have seen -- that 70% of the time it's going to be an individual support network that's going to be there before first responders. As -- you know, we're not saying first responders are not going to help, they're going to, but in case if they're not able to come, if it's a large-scale emergency, first responders -- you know, again, it's going to be the support network that will be able to help because individuals are planning this out in advance.

Other things we recommend is to sit down with those who are in your support network and to write out where and how and when you're going to evacuate if you have a disability, taking into consideration what steps are going to be needed for your disability specifically.

And also knowing medications, like writing down medications, the dosages, how often you take medication, having that all written out in a plan.

Many people, in general, will forget information and, you know, we tell people in the public, people with disabilities too, that you should write information out specifically. We have the campaign, The Ready New York Campaign where we supply brochures to the community, and there is an actual workbook that we provide where you can write information, so that's specific to New York City, but it is transferable to many cities and states.

The main information I'm talking about, it's very similar. Obviously, our books are going to have the contact information for New York City, but, again, it's transferable to where you are located, your jurisdiction.

So in addition to having the evacuation and medications, it's also important we tell people to provide a copy of keys. That's why, again, the support network are going to be people you can trust. If someone has a disability and they cannot communicate, it's one additional backup plan that one can have providing a copy of keys, and that's why it needs to be someone you can trust and

someone you know that is going to be level-headed, be able to handle an emergency when it does happen. So those are some other tips that we usually provide.

Again, contacts are going to be really important, like we mentioned, is someone that is in your area and then also someone that might be in another city or state. That's specific for New York City during Hurricane Sandy and also 9/11, September 11th, there was no communication, so having an out-of-state contact is really important, can relay the information of your disability and what your needs are to your loved ones, relatives, and friends. So that is the main reason why you'd have those contacts out of state but also locally too.

So for making a plan also, evacuation is really important. We've touched upon hurricane evacuation centers, and that's one means of -- if one would need to evacuate, we always tell the community, people with disabilities, try your support network first. That's really key, it's really important, for some reason, if individuals are in a flood zone or for any other emergency they cannot help, your backup plan has to be Plan B, so for hurricanes specifically in New York City, we have evacuation centers, like Eli mentioned. We have 60 of them that are accessible currently, and we have a tool called The Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder, and that can be located on our website, nyc.gov/emergencymanagement, and in the city people can call 311, and basically, like Eli

mentioned, you can put in your address, and it will tell you what hurricane evacuation zone you live in.

For New York City, there's six zones. For those affected in Zones 1 or 2, those are the lower-lying areas, those are closer to water, so if one was in those locations, they could actually find out before an actual hurricane or storm by going to the Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder, and also, again, that tool provides the general accessible -- general evacuation centers and also the accessible ones too, so it lists on that -- it lists there the accommodations that we do provide in those centers.

So those are the things that we have for evacuating. You know, also, for fires too, we also recommend 911 if you have to evacuate, but, again, you're going to take into account what your disability is, so people who communicate differently, if they're using American Sign Language, or if they have a developmental disability, you need to think out your plan beforehand and know how you're going to evacuate.

For people who have service animals -- I actually have a guide dog myself -- we tell people with disabilities, service animals, to practice evacuation routes because, again, it may take us a little bit longer, but also for people who have guide dogs, myself, I usually explain to people if my dog travels to a location only on one occasion, he's not going to know where to travel. It's important to practice evacuation routes and know where you're specifically going to go, and that can go for a person in a wheelchair,

people with developmental disabilities, you want to know where you're going to be evacuating so it's not overwhelming when an actual emergency hits the city or where your jurisdictions. So that's for evacuating.

With evacuation, transportation goes hand in hand with that also. For New York City, we have, again, like I mentioned before. The Ready New York program has the My Emergency Plan booklet. It's a workbook where you can write out your transportation needs, so however you travel, that's going to be your Plan A, but Plan B, it would be another accessible type of transportation. For New York City, we have paratransit or Access-A-Ride and accessible taxis, those are the backups, and maybe friends and relatives can provide transportation, maybe they have an accessible vehicle that can help. Those are backups for transportation.

In New York City we have a program called the Homebound Evacuation Operation. We use that as a last resort for people in storm locations. And we use 311 where they can dispatch Access-A-Ride, fire department, or EMS depending on the individual's needs and disabilities. So that's for transportation.

These things are a part of the plan. There are other things you can include, depending on your disability. We tell people with disabilities whatever your disability is, it's going to be personalized. You're going to know what your needs are to plan ahead of an emergency.

The second topic in this slide talks about gathering supplies, so in New York City, we always talk about during our presentations a go bag and also an emergency supply kit. So a go bag is for when you need to evacuate if there is a fire, if there is a hurricane, flooding, any type of emergency, maybe even a building collapse where you want to evacuate as quickly as possible. You would have the go bag near a door, maybe your front door or near your bed where you can pick up the supplies as quickly as possible.

So when we do our presentations, we talk about general supplies, such as bottled water, having copies of identification cards, having cash in small bills if there's no power, there's a power outage. Also having flashlights, having all the different general items, toiletries, a portable phone charger, but if you have a disability, you're going to include additional items. The go bag is personalized to each individual. If there's a household of four individuals, each person is going to have a go bag specific to what their needs are.

So if you have children, they're going to have certain items. They may have things to pass the time, like a game or maybe a book, but for people with disabilities, we're going to have items specific to our needs. So for myself, I have a vision disability. I would have an extra cane, I would have an extra pair of sunglasses in my bag, maybe even have my identification and information on a thumb drive, so I have that in my bag. And also I'd have

supplies for my service animal since I have a guide dog, so specific items like food and water, maybe a blanket for my service animal, identification card, vaccination records. Those things are going to be included for service animals and also for pets too.

For additional items, if someone is using hearing aids, we recommend having extra batteries for hearing aids or maybe if you can, maybe having an older set of hearing aids you can supply in your bag as a backup. So having those things in place are important.

For people who use wheelchairs, we recommend a tire inflator, and for those who have developmental disabilities, having a communication board, that's one thing we provide in our shelters, which provide pictures for communication, and also having those different supplies, like toiletries, and, again, depending on your disability, what you would need specifically. Extra, you know, flashlights, also having a whistle if you have difficulty communicating. It's one way you can reach out. Obviously, it's not going to contact first responders, but if you're in a building collapse, it's one way you can contact those in the building to tell them that you're in that location.

So that's for evacuating. For staying at home, which is called an emergency supply kit, those would be more for sheltering in place emergencies, and really sheltering in place, it's a fancy term for stay where you are, and that's going to be emergencies like a snowstorm, could be an active shooter where it's not safe to go outside, or even

chemical threats. These are some emergencies where you may have to stay for some time, you cannot leave where you are.

So we usually recommend a gallon of water per person per day. That does seem like a lot of water. One thing I usually tell people, if you can't, obviously, provide bottles of water, you know, filling your bathtub is one easy trick that you can have for having all the water either for taking a bath or for drinking water.

Canned food and a manual can opener are other key things to have, also having a first aid kit, having a flashlight, having blankets and also towels to keep heat in if, for some reason, you lose heat during an emergency. Those are important. And also having other supplies, if you have the possibility of having an extra wheelchair or extra white cane if you're blind, having those things on hand also so you can navigate in your apartment or building. So those are things we do provide that we talk about.

Again, one is for evacuating, that's the go bag, which is a small bag or a bag on wheels, and we recommend you check it at least twice a year. Certain things may go bad. If you are in an emergency, you always want to restock your bag after that happens so you're prepared for the next emergency, God forbid. So that's for evacuating and for sheltering in place. Again, it's the emergency supply kit.

Having supplies again for the general population are important, but we're thinking about with needs. If you're doing it during the emergency, it's going to be troublesome. You may forget information, you may not have certain items. It's going to make it way more difficult if you don't plan ahead.

And finally, being informed. We have certain programs like Notify NYC, Know your Zone, which I mentioned, that's for hurricane evacuation zones, knowing what zone you live in. Notify NYC, which I'll talk about in a second, that's another program we have that provides alerts to the public. And also we have a website too which is called Plan Now NYC. That's for emergencies we don't talk about as much, but it goes into information for tips on active shooter, explosive devices, certain things such as that.

Next slide, Eli.

Okay. So this slide talks about public messaging. So like Eli mentioned before, the city does message to the public when there are emergencies, so for individuals, it's important to pay attention to this messaging. New York City specifically, we have a program called Notify NYC. We encourage all New Yorkers to sign up for it. It's a free alert for it, and those in the city can sign up for up to five ZIP Codes. And we also have an app now on Android and also for Apple, so what this program does, it provides alerts in New York City specific to those ZIP Codes, and the information could be small emergencies like the transit

system is not running to streets being closed to larger emergencies that a heat wave is going to hit the city or possibly a hurricane, so it provides information but also tips before an emergency to keep those prepared.

The messaging too for people with disabilities is accessible, so note Notify NYC, we have messaging in American Sign Language, so when you sign up for this, when you receive a message, it will be in different languages and also in American Sign Language, so there would be a link to that and a YouTube video that is general messaging for people who are deaf or have hard -- or who are hard of hearing.

So we have that. We have over 100 videos in American Sign Language, and also we have provided voiceover for those who are blind and/or low vision, so the messaging, you know, is specific to all different types of emergencies, but it is general as far as that goes.

We also have another program for organizations, which is called the Advanced Warning System, and that's information for organizations, so if you work for an organization that deals with people with disabilities, you'll be providing alerts to your clients, so in New York City Emergency Management, we usually have a conference call with certain organizations that are part of the AWS, and then we have those who sign up for AWS messaging, so it would be messaging that would be sent to those individuals, but then they message it to their clients. Those running a dialysis center, maybe providing chemo

treatment, those types of organizations, but also it could be services for children and many other access for means. We talk about disabilities, but there's also access and functional needs that could be needed too, so AWS provides that messaging to all different organizations.

Also public messaging too, like Eli mentioned before, whenever we have a press conference, the mayor, we will have American Sign Language interpreters there. We have a vendor that provides that, and I mentioned before, for the shelters, there's also VRI, so when we open shelters, there will be an actual tablet we provide interpreters via an Internet connection, so there's other ways to provide assistive communications throughout the city.

Oh, go ahead.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Thanks, Matt. This is Eli here. I wanted to add a couple points here. So Notify NYC is specific to individuals while AWS, Advanced Warning System, we send out to community organizations, organizations that work with people with disabilities, so, again, it's that multifaceted communication approach, and, in fact, as Matt and I are sitting here, we're looking out and it's snowing out, and we actually got an AWS amending this morning. We got it from Emergency Management, and so myself here at the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, we got that message, we posted it on our web page and tweeted out the messages as well, so different

examples of how the AWS even today we've been working with.

I also wanted to mention that many jurisdictions are now getting texts to 911. New York City itself is expected to have text to 911 within about six months or so. Check out NIDILRR.gov to find -- 911.gov to find out if your jurisdiction's going to have it, if it currently has it, and what kind of time frames are involved in that.

There's also one called next generation 911, which is a little in the future here in the city, but other jurisdictions are starting to roll that out, and that's looking at videos and photos and incorporating that into a 911 system, so Next Generation 911 is in the future, it's in the works, and you can find out about that, and text to 911 at 911.gov.

All right. We're going to move on to our next slide, which is Community Planning, and all of this community planning information you can find in a toolkit that's at nyc.gov/ready/communitypreparedness page, and I'm going to turn it over to Matt to talk about emergency community planning, and we're on Slide 24.

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: So Eli mentioned briefly the toolkit we have, and that is a booklet that we provide to organizations when we do presentations, community preparedness. It's a toolkit. We also have information on our website, so the toolkit specifically goes through all hazards, so different hazards that may hit the city and how to prepare for them. As far as community preparedness,

it's preparing the whole community, so when an emergency happens, it's organizations and groups in New York City thinking as a whole how to prepare for emergencies, how to include people with disabilities from the start, so if there's planning in advance, including people with disabilities, having those groups included, and knowing what their needs are, and the only way to really find that out is to work with the community, so this is, again, community preparedness where those in the community -- it can be someone's neighborhood, can be even as small as someone's block, tenant association, so all these groups working together in a community to know if an actual emergency hits a location, knowing the individuals that are in that location and knowing what their needs are, so, again, we talk about individual preparedness, but this is more community-based where neighborhoods would come together and, you know, if they know a person down the block has certain needs, they will go out if there is an actual emergency, maybe they'll go knock on doors to see if that individual is okay specifically during an emergency.

So -- and again, other organizations for community preparedness might include dialysis centers, might include schools that deal with children with disabilities, other organizations.

And we also have what we have on our website in relation to the toolkit, there is sections in the toolkit that talk about a checklist for accessibility, it talks about

evacuation, so these are some things that are in the toolkit, but we've also added on our website one-pagers for information dealing with the whole community, so information about outreach to the community, which talks about the community preparedness program. We also have an accessibilities checklist which talks about how certain locations -- how specifically they should be accessible, what to look out for specifically in regards to accessibility.

There's also a one-pager about evacuation which talks about -- we've talked about today -- how to evacuate your community as a whole but also individually, what you should look for, that we have amenities in our shelters, such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and crutches, and also refrigerators for medication, if they're using insulin or psychotropic medications. So we provide that information, and information about the homebound evacuation operation, that that is an option that we provide to the community. So that's some other information.

And also we have a one-pager about life-sustaining equipment. In New York City, there are utility companies that -- there is a list that one can sign up for if they are a life-sustaining equipment customer, and that could be using sleep apnea equipment, using a respirator, other equipment that would be lifesaving. In New York, there's Con Edison and the other utility company that we have, so they have lists that someone can sign up for in case of an emergency.

And in addition to that -- so those are some of the one-pagers that we have. One other one I forgot to mention, there's a one-pager for assistive communications, so that goes for communities and community-based organizations how to provide assistive communications for the public, and in regards to that, we have, you know, information there, simple things such as magnifying glasses or having information in large print to more complicated things that some groups -- community-based organizations may not be able to provide because it might be a little more expensive, but it goes also into providing screen reading and screen magnification software. Also talks about people who are deaf and hard of hearing, such as interpreters, CART, and also amplified telephones. Those are some of the things listed in those one-pagers, but again, this is community preparedness, preparedness for the whole community, such as neighborhoods and other neighborhood block associations, blocks -- tenant associations. That's the main difference, but, again, individuals are going to be a part of the community itself.

And also people with disabilities, you want to include them in all plans throughout the city.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Great. Thanks, Matt. So we're going to move on to Slide 25, which covers community engagement, and we wanted to just point out that we have yearly emergency planning for people with actions in functional needs symposium, and their next symposium is

December 11th at NYU. We encourage all jurisdictions, all state and local entities to think about having symposiums and outreach initiatives. I'm going to turn it over to Matt to talk a little bit about the symposiums that we've had in the past and what we're planning for this year as well, and also, Matt, if we could just mention a little bit about pets and service animals, I know we've had a couple of things on that, so Matt, I'm going to turn it over to you. This is slide 25.

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: So, again, as Eli mentioned, the symposium will be December 11th at NYU in Manhattan. In the past, we've had symposiums where we've touched upon evacuation and sheltering in place for people with disabilities, we've talked about utility companies and life-sustaining equipment, some different types of plans.

This symposium brings people with disabilities together, planners together, advocacy organizations, so all these groups are in one location to speak about how they should be planning for people with disabilities, what steps that should be taken to be planning as a whole, and also individually.

So for December 11th, we are going to have a symposium where it's going -- we're going to have actors actually speak about the disability access and functional videos that Eli mentioned before. We have two videos in a speak specifically about videos, so the plan is to have some of the actors actually speak about making of the

videos, and that's nyc.gov/readyny. That's where we'll have the videos. We're also going to have two breakout sessions, one about residential emergency preparedness for buildings, one about transportation safety, and also one about community preparedness, so there will be two workshops that people can sign up for, and also before that a planning session with the actors to talk about the Ready New York videos. This is an event we hold annually. As Eli mentioned, we support all the jurisdictions, cities and states, you know, to think about having a symposium where you can bring everyone together to see if you're on the right plan, what steps should be taken if you're not taking them in regards to people with disabilities and emergencies.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: All right. Thanks, Matt. So this is Slide 26, and we call this one Caregivers in Action, and there's a number of different icons and cartoons on this. Really what we're trying to emphasize is to make sure that we plan for healthcare delivery systems as well and that people with disabilities and the disability community loop in organizations that support people with disabilities, and particularly organizations that are centered around Medicare and Medicaid, so be sure to consider those in your planning processes as well.

In fact, everyone should check out cms.gov because recently, back in November 2017, it put into effect final rules on emergency preparedness requirements, so check that out. It's new rules that are required for Medicare and

Medicaid service provides. I think it's really interesting to check out.

Also, I wanted to mention that we have an Access and Functional Needs Working Group. They meet quarterly. The Access and Functional Needs Working Group works with healthcare providers and service providers in the community, dialysis centers, et cetera, and it's really trying to get input from the disability community and making sure that, as Matt mentioned, we're planning together.

In addition to that, we also have a Disability Community Advisory panel, which came out of the BCID litigation, and they're really a close group that examine all aspects of emergency planning and people with disabilities, they look at things like some of our emergency planning efforts with exercises, they look at accessible transportation, and we really ask for their feedback and their guidance, so there's a multiplatform way of reaching out to the community. We have different audiences that we try to support, individuals with disabilities, community leaders, et cetera.

All right. Moving on to Slide 27 -- and I wanted to include this. This slide has two images. One is our Emergency Management team and community members along with CERT, and they're at our Disability Pride parade -- every year in celebration with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we have a Pride parade here in New York City. This year we celebrated our fourth Pride

parade. We had roughly close to 8,000 people joining in our parade, and it's a great way to reach out to the community and celebrate disability rights.

Check out your local jurisdiction if they have a Disability Pride parade. It's a great way to get out the word and to celebrate, and Emergency Management always joined us in the parade gatherings.

So I also wanted to mention something called the curb cut effect, and I think it's an interesting tool or way of explaining why inclusive Emergency Management is so important. So back during the Civil Rights Movement in the '60s out in California, in Berkeley, a number of individuals who were wheelchair users started breaking down curb cuts -- or curbs and started making their own curb cuts, and over the years, curb cuts became integrated into society, and now it's hard to imagine any kind of city that doesn't have curb cuts.

Now, of course, there's a lot of work to be done to keep them up-to-date, make sure that they're being fixed and properly maintained; however, it's really hard, again, to think about a city without them. But the reason why I want to explain it this way is it's really about positive externalities because a curb cut isn't just for wheelchairs anymore, it could be used for strollers, it could be used for walkers, even for delivery for people, so there's lots of different benefits that come out of what happened back in the '60s when somebody broke down a curb and created a curb cut.

Other examples of the curb cut effect that I could think of were seat belts. Seat belts were originally designed for children, but now everyone uses a seat belt. It saved approximately 300,000 lives since 1975.

Another example is bike lanes, for example. If you notice in New York City with the creation of bike lanes, there's been a reduction in serious injuries from pedestrians and bikers. So there's lots of different examples of the curb cut effect, and it's really a force multiplier. It's a way of providing access to individuals that benefits everyone.

Another example would be our Accessible Shelter Program. After the BCID litigation, we were required to make our evacuation centers more accessible, and in doing so, many of our evacuation centers are located in Department of Education schools. Many schools are pretty old. I think on average, they were built in the '60s, so many of them were built without the idea of accessibility even in mind. This was before the Americans with Disabilities Act.

So in making our evacuation centers more accessible, it means that schools are now more accessible, and that means that every day when kids go to school, they're going to have more access to the school themselves and also the restrooms.

I just want to throw out one example. Over the weekend I was actually at a Department of Education

school. I was admiring the ramp that was installed at the school. It was on a Saturday. It wasn't even for a Department of Education event, it was for a community event, and everyone was able to utilize the ramp, everyone was able to get access to the school. It wasn't just for an emergency.

Another example is website accessibility. We've been looking at ways of making city websites even more accessible, and that has lent itself to making our hurricane zone finder more accessible for screen readers, people who have low vision, also our apps, our Notify NYC app is more accessible for screen readers, so these are some examples of the curb cut effect.

All right. Moving on to some resources, and I wanted to provide as many resources as really possible. This is Slide 28. Because there's a lot out there. The first one I just wanted to recommend was CDC. This is a really highly organized resource for public health concerns. For example, Zika.

I also wanted to point out that the California's Governor's Office of Emergency Services, this is the second resource, has lots and lots of information. Vance Taylor, who heads up the Office of Accessibilities has an AFN Library which has lots and lots of useful information. I would suggest people check that out. It also has guidance on active shooter, which is a real challenge, I think, for inclusive emergency planning.

The third one here is Homeland Security, Office of Civil Rights. They have lots of information here as well. It's very organized. They've been having listening sessions across the country, and it's a great place to find out about where and how you can file legal complaints.

Number IV, Health and Human Services, HHS. Again, it's a place with lots of information. They have a lot of information particularly around English proficiency and how can we support people who have -- who English isn't their first language or have limited English proficiency. Also, they have information on EmPower data, and this is data that's given to every public health official working in Emergency Management, hospitals and first responders, and it's information about people who use electronically dependent medical equipment, so check that out. They have EmPower data. It's not particularized to any individual, instead it's quantified at the county -- at the county level or the ZIP Code level.

No. V is Smart Cities. I wanted to include this. This is a little bit unusual, I think, to include in an Emergency Management webinar, but it's really interesting, and the purpose of Smart Cities is to bridge the digital divide between technology and people with disabilities in smart cities. I really recommend people check it out. There's lots of interesting resources on there. Individuals and organizations, family and friends should really check out all the things going on in Smart Cities and see how you can be a part of that movement.

ADA Pacific Webinars is really a great place to get information on Emergency Management preparedness for people with disabilities and excellent archived webinars really covering all kind of different facets of inclusive Emergency Management. It also has a really great resource list of different kinds of information out there if you're looking at inclusive Emergency Management.

And finally, on this page is American Red Cross. It's a really great resource, particularly for individual preparedness. There's lots of checklists that are included on there. Really recommend people check out American Red Cross as well.

All right. Slide 29, I wanted to continue talking about resources because there's a whole bunch. Obviously, you can check out our website, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities at nyc.gov/mopd. Emergency Management, nyc.gov/emergencymanagement, and we cross link a lot of our information across both pages.

Of course, there's FEMA, and, as mentioned, they have functional needs support services which is useful information on shelter planning. It was developed back in 2012, but it still has a lot of really useful information that I suggest everyone take a look at.

FEMA also has a lot of disaster-centric recovery information that I think people should take a look at as well.

ADA.gov, which is really one of the most useful places to find information about how to plan and prepare inclusively. On there, you'll find things like ADA Best Practices Toolkit for state and local government for emergency marriages managers, you'll find an emergency shelter checklist on there as well, an Emergency Management checklist and a guide to local government and other resources, so check out ada.gov. They actually -- just about last year they created their own dedicated page to Emergency Management and the Americans with Disabilities Act, so a really great resource.

Also, I wanted to point out Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies, and this is supported by Marcie Roth and Paul Timmons, who really developed a great website that has lots of great information about inclusive Emergency Management, and in particular, it covers some of the more recent disasters. They have an action report they recommend everyone take a look at from 2017. It covers things in a very in-depth way, so I really recommend people check out Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies.

All right. I think that brings us to the conclusion. If anybody wants to reach out to us, you can reach out to me. We have our contact information there, and also, Matt as well, and we'd really like to thank ADA National Network for all the support and letting us be a part of this webinar today, and I think we're ready for any kind of questions, if there are any.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Well, thanks, Eli and Matt. That was very interesting, lots of good resources as well. So, yeah, if anyone has any questions, you can, of course, continue to type into the chat box. We do have one question that someone asked. They wanted to know if you have people register with the fire departments so that they know where people with disabilities live.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: That's a great question. Can you hear me?

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Yes.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Okay. Yeah, so New York City itself doesn't have a voluntary registry or what used to be called a special needs registry. Instead, what we have, really, is a sort of multifaceted approach to emergency planning. What we found is that given the population density and the complexity of our city, that a registry really wasn't something that could support the complexity of our city.

As far as localized registries, there probably are some local fire departments in the city that, you know, do know about where people are in their local community, but there is no citywide registry.

The other thing to remember is that registries are difficult to manage. You have to keep them up-to-date. There's an issue of when to activate them. There's also concerns about people feeling like they don't have the time to prepare as much if they're on a registry, so in

jurisdictions out there that are smaller or they feel like it meets their needs, I think a registry may be helpful for them, but for here in the city, we don't have any special needs -- special registry or voluntary registry. At the precinct level, at the smaller level, there may be some lists that people keep at the fire department, but there's no protocol in place citywide for that.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: You guys talked a lot about New York City. I think that's really good. That's helpful to hear an example of what one city is doing.

I'm curious if you have a sense of the differences between New York City and other cities around the country?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Matt, I can take a first --

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: Okay.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: I think one of the big differences is New York City has a lot of resources available. It's a big city and it's very top-down, so I know when we've worked with our colleagues out in California. They have -- they have different counties and cities that are sort of multilayered, and it does make a challenge for emergency managers and planners to plan inclusively.

Here in New York City we have the benefit that we have one mayor, we have five boroughs, but really, all of New York City government reports to the mayor. You do get some complications with the system at MTA, which is

a quasi-state/city function, but I think one of the benefits here in the city is we do have that sort of top-down approach, and we are resource rich, so I think those are some big differences.

I think in rural communities, what I would recommend for emergency managers is really meet people with disabilities in your community. They're going to be the best ones positioned to know how to plan and prepare for emergencies, and so reach out to independent living centers, reach out to your local Health Department, find out who's in your community and plan and prepare.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: So you mentioned that one of the problems that other cities have is that it's not a top-down structure where they're just reporting to a single authority. I'm sure that must be very difficult, and it probably can get very messy. Do you have any advice for people who are working in government who are trying to provide effective emergency services but have to deal with maybe some bureaucracy or, you know, extra steps that's difficult to get things done quickly?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Yeah. Two things that come to mind. First one is engage leadership. Reach out to elected officials. Make sure it's a priority. Do your homework. Find out what are the issues in the community and really try to engage leadership as much as you can in order to have that top-down approach.

So that's what comes to mind right away is really trying to engage leadership.

The other thing is communication. Communication is really essential for emergency managers to reach across different city agencies, so I think really trying to establish connections with people before an incident, before a disaster is really crucial, so I would say reach out to elected officials, do your homework, show them why it's important to plan and prepare for emergencies, and also, communicate across different city agencies. Reach out to your state partners. Again, the most important things for Emergency Managements often is that communication aspect, so those are my two recommendations.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: So how is New York City doing when it comes to emergencies, like what are some of the recent disasters you've had, and do you have any numbers on how disabled people are getting through it? Are people still dying out there? Are they getting injured? What's the situation?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: So post-Sandy, there's been a whole lot of work being done in order to really plan and prepare for people with disabilities. New York City itself has about one million people with disabilities, and if you go to nyc.gov/emergencymanagement and go to their Settlement page, you can actually pull up the seven MOUs that cover things like community planning through a community panel, post-emergency canvassing, transportation, sheltering, high-rise evacuation,

emergency communications, and power, and these MOUs really have -- are aiming, I think, in the right direction to help plan and prepare for people with disabilities.

So knock on wood, we haven't had a major hurricane, but I think there's a lot of things that we put into place to really support people with disabilities in a disaster.

And, again, I want to emphasize also the personal preparedness aspect of it as well, and I think it's a big challenge to try to get the word out and get people to plan and prepare, particularly people who may be living day by day and don't have the income to necessarily think about planning and have that go bag, but I think of the analogy of smoking as an example. For many years, people knew smoking was bad, through the '50s and '60s there was a lot of public ad campaigns to encourage people to stop smoking, and eventually people stopped smoking and the numbers started to go down, and I think that's a way to continue to think about emergency preparedness is continue to put that information out to communities and individuals to get them to slowly sort of socialize the ideas of planning and preparing, and that's what Matt and I do. We often go out to the community and talk about how to plan and prepare and trying to really sort of get people to understand the importance of it.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: So we have another question that someone submitted. They are wondering if you have any recommendations for inclusive emergency preparedness on college campuses?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Yeah. So I think at the collegiate level there's a lot of information out there. Nearly every college campus has an Office of Disability, and so I would recommend going to them and then trying to marry what they have in place with the local emergency manager or the -- whatever the Emergency Management facilities people are. Oftentimes the facilities people who may be also first on the responder side aren't necessarily talking with the Office of Disability, so making that connection, I think, is really useful.

There's -- the benefits of a campus is it's often closed, it's a closed system in the sense that you know who the students are, if you have a dormitory, you know who people in the dorms are, so that's a benefit going for you, so I would recommend really collaborating between the Office of Disability that's there and then the first responders and facilities staff that are there as well. There's lots of different resources at the collegiate level to take a look at. If you go to some of the larger colleges, they have some pretty good emergency plans already in place, so I would take a look at that as well, and, so, yeah, I would recommend looking at some of those -- at the collegiate level, looking at what some of the bigger colleges have in place in particular and then striking up that conversation between the first responders and facilities staff at the college and the Office of Disability.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Yeah. I think that's a good idea. Earlier in the presentation, I thought -- maybe it was

Matt. I thought I heard a distinction being made between disabilities and functional needs. Is there a difference there, and could you clarify that?

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: So on our website, we have Section DAFN, so its Disability Access for Functional Needs, so people who have functional needs, they have limitations and, you know, at least two areas, so, I mean, someone -- that's usually how we describe people with disabilities, trying to describe that during presentations. Access and functional needs can be anything from English as a second language, people who need interpreters for certain situations, women who are pregnant, maybe they can't stand on a certain line, or if they're in a shelter, maybe they have to -- you know, we try to move them to the front if we can if there was a need or provide assistance to them if they're waiting on line, so trying to think of other things. Obviously, disabilities are important, but access to functional needs can be part of that too.

Seniors can be part of that. Seniors may have access to functional needs, but they become disabled, so that's a couple ways we try to distinguish the differences, but they kind of go hand in hand also in certain situations.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Okay. Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. Thank you.

Something else I'd like to ask you guys, I think one of the best ways that we'd learn about how to do things better is by learning from mistakes, and I like the fact that

both of you are focusing on kind of the different sides of this issue, Eli maybe more from, you know, the standpoint of the governmental agencies that are responding, and Matt, you from the perspective of individuals with disabilities.

I'd like to ask both of you if you have in mind any mistakes that you've encountered in the past, maybe some that NYC has made or maybe ones you've heard about that just made you stop and think, oh, man, I wish we had thought about that before it came up, so maybe, Matt, we could start with you. I mean, when it comes to individuals with disabilities trying to be as prepared as they can for these disasters, I mean, are there any mistakes that people have made in the past, like a concrete example that you are aware of that people could learn from?

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: I mean, possibly people that didn't evacuate on time. Obviously, they -- people were told to evacuate but, you know, because of their disability, maybe they couldn't, so maybe they should have thought of things beforehand but just thought, you know, I'll be okay, but that wasn't the case.

So for someone who's in a wheelchair or someone who is -- you know, if they didn't think of things in advance, those are things, like, that they should have considered, you know, how am I going to evacuate, how will first responders help me specifically, so those are things we've come in contact with. People who have service animals or

guide dogs again, what can I do, if my service animal is not able to go through an emergency, like what are my next steps?

That might be a couple things too where people may not have thought I may need other contacts, other people to help if my service animal or guide dog is not able to work specifically during an emergency, so those are a couple of examples, I guess.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: And this is Eli here. So at the organizational level, at a state and local government level, I think oftentimes -- this has happened in the past that emergency managers have applied sort of a reasonable accommodation standard. So, for example, in an employment context, if I want to make an accommodation at my work, say I have difficulties sitting at my desk and I want to get a reasonable accommodation to the kind of chair I sit in, that would be something I would proactively tell my employer and say, I would need this reasonable accommodation, here's the reasons why.

And I think there has been an instance where emergency managers have said, well, we don't know what particular reasonable accommodation you may need, so we're going to ask you to tell us what accommodation is needed at the Emergency Management level. It's what they call, like, ad hoc planning, and what we've found is that, one, the courts don't like that. They say that you have to think about proactively about what kinds of issues,

concerns, and functional needs a person with disabilities may have in an emergency and really act proactively.

So ad hoc planning and sort of assuming that you're going to get reasonable accommodations requests at the time of a disaster is not a way to plan inclusively. Instead, you should involve the disability community, ask them what are the functional needs they need in order to evacuate, get transportation and sheltering, et cetera, so that's one example.

The other one that we do see is in the context of contracting or procurement when you involve a second party and you think, oh, well, my obligations are no longer there under the Americans with Disabilities Act because we've contracted them away, and, really, that's the wrong way to think about things because if you're a state or local entity and you're involved in Emergency Management, you can't contract away your legal obligations.

So I would say that when you're considering these things, make sure that when you are working with a secondary party that they understand that they're going to have obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act as well and that you are equal partners.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Thank you. That's very helpful.

We have a listener who submitted a question. They want to know how you handle emotional support animals vs. service animals in emergency shelters?

I think the question here might be twofold. First of all, how are your emergency shelters just handling service animals, and also, I think the listener wants to know if you make a distinction between a service animal and an emotional support animal, is there any different treatment there?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: That's a great question. Matt, do you want to take this one?

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: So in our emergency shelters, we have a pet-friendly room for pets, and then for service animals, we don't separate the individual from their service animal. As far as the distinction goes for emotional support animals, for during an emergency, you know, we want to help all the general public, people with -- if they come in and say we have an emotional support animal, you know, we're going to take their word for it. We want to help everyone during an emergency.

Obviously, per the ADA, there's two questions someone can ask, is it a service animal, what are they trained for, but specifically for emotional support animals or service animals, there really isn't a distinction because we want to ensure everyone is safe during an emergency, that they're able to come to a shelter and stay there to be safe during an actual hurricane.

I know for other jurisdictions and other places -- other locations, there might just be the service animals are allowed and not pets, so there is, you know, some issues

with that, but for New York City specifically, we allow pets and service animals in the shelter at the same time.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Here's another question. You might have dealt with this earlier when you talked about registries, but this question is, is there an emergency list that I can register with and help in times of emergency?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: So, yeah. As mentioned, there's -- in New York City we don't have a voluntary registry or special needs registry, and like I mentioned, you know, there are lots of -- the city itself is so big and dense that it would be very difficult to keep a registry and keep it up-to-date.

Also, there are questions about when do you activate the registry, and we don't want people to think that just because they're on a registry they don't have to go through the individual preparedness or the community preparedness as well.

I would encourage people to take a look at ADA Pacific. They had a couple of really great presentations on registries and where they worked and, frankly, where they haven't worked. And I'd also take a look at some of the recent After Action reports that have come out of Harvey and in it particular about the usefulness of registries, which I think they've really called into question, again, for some of the reasons why we've mentioned.

Instead, what we'd really encourage people to do is to plan and prepare individually and with your community, but with that said, there may be instances -- and I think it's really up to the emergency managers in the community and the jurisdiction they're in to decide what registry -- if a registry makes sense to them, so I think it's case-by-case. Here in New York City, though, we don't have a voluntary registry that's citywide.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Okay. Let me just ask one more question here. How do you handle evacuation of people with disabilities who have bulky equipment, like maybe stuff that's -- it's very heavy, it's hard to move? Do you have any practices in place to make that effective?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: So we have a program called the Homebound Evacuation Operation, so in that instance, it's a program that we provide for evacuation, so in New York City through 311, individuals with disabilities can call 311, and then from what they tell the call representatives as far as what they need assistance with pertaining to their disability, there will be questions that are asked. They're transportation assistance level questions, so pertaining, some questions could be can you get to the curb, can you sit up, can you get out of your apartment, so questions specifically like that that the call representative will go through, and the forms of transportation, that if someone has a disability, they will be routed to our paratransit Access-A-Ride if they can get to the curb. If they have

additional needs, either the fire department or EMS will assist with evacuating people with disabilities.

>> This is a last resort program that we have for these, but if someone has bulky equipment, it's one way that evacuation is possible.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Okay. Great. Let's go on to Slide 31. I want to thank Eli and Matt for presenting to us today. Do you guys have any final words for our audience?

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: Thanks for having us today. Feel free to reach out to us directly. Both Matt and I are happy to talk more about Emergency Management and planning inclusively for everyone.

>> I think given what we've seen and even just today in the devastating fires out in California, Emergency Management and planning for people with disabilities is so important, and it really has an effect to help all emergency managers plan more effectively across the country, so feel free to reach out to us, and thank you so much for having us today. I don't know, Matt, did you have any final thoughts?

>> MATTHEW PUVOGEL: Nope.

>> ELI FRESQUEZ: He said he's good. Okay. Thank you so much.

>> MAYNOR GUILLEN: Thank you. Let's go to Slide 32, and here you will see the Certificate of Participation

code. The code is Plan. And for the people on the phone, I'll say that again. It is Plan, p-l-a-n.

Now you will receive an email with instructions for how you can use this code to get that Certificate of Participation, so be on the lookout for that. You will also receive information through email about session evaluations, so we'd like to hear your thoughts on this session today, and we pay very close attention to what you guys think and the feedback that you give. We've actually been making some changes recently based on feedback you've given us, so we really appreciate it, and please keep it coming.

Okay. On Slide 33, we have our contact information. Again, we are the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center. We are a grant-funded project of TransCen, Inc.

You can call the ADA Center toll free, 800-949-4232. If you call that number, you'll be directed to which ADA Center your area code is linked to.

If you are in our region, you can call us directly at 301-217-0124, and we cover the Mid-Atlantic region, so that's Washington, D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware.

You can send us an email at adainfo@transcen.org, and you can also check out our website, adainfo.org. We have lots of resources for you and other upcoming webinars, so check back frequently to see what we have coming up.

So thank you, everyone, for joining us, and have a great day.

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