

Department of Homeland Security official definition for Access and Functional Needs:

Term: Access and Functional Needs Accommodation

Synonym: Access and Functional Needs

Definition: circumstances that are met for providing physical, programmatic, and effective communication access to the whole community by accommodating individual requirements through universal accessibility and/or specific actions or modifications

Extended Definition: includes assistance, accommodation or modification for mobility, communication, transportation, safety, health maintenance, etc.; need for assistance, accommodation or modification due to any situation (temporary or permanent) that limits an individual's ability to take action in an emergency

Annotation: When physical, programmatic, and effective communication access is not universally available, individuals may require additional assistance in order to take protective measures to escape to and/or from, access either refuge and/or safety in an emergency or disaster, and/or may need other assistance, accommodations or modifications in an emergency or disaster through pre-planning by emergency management, first response agencies and other stakeholders or in sheltering or other situations from notification and evacuation, to sheltering, to return to pre-disaster level of independence.

Individuals having access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, people with disabilities, older adults, and populations having limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation, and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the emergency.

Federal civil rights law and policy require nondiscrimination for certain populations, including on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, and economic status. Many individuals with access and functional needs are protected by these provisions.

Source: PPD-8 Access and Functional Needs Working Group 2014

Whole Community Concept:

<http://www.fema.gov/about/wholecommunity.shtm>

Whole Community is an approach to emergency management that reinforces the fact that FEMA is only one part of our nation's emergency management team; that we must leverage all of the resources of our collective team in preparing for, protecting against, responding to, recovering from and mitigating against all hazards; and that collectively we must meet the needs of the entire community in each of these areas. This larger collective emergency management team includes, not only FEMA and its partners at the federal level, but also local, tribal, state and territorial partners; non-governmental organizations like faith-based and non-profit groups and private sector industry; to individuals, families and communities, who continue to be the nation's most important assets as first responders during a disaster. Both the composition of the community and the individual needs of community members,

regardless of age, economics, or accessibility requirements, must be accounted for when planning and implementing disaster strategies.

When the community is engaged in an authentic dialogue, it becomes empowered to identify its needs and the existing resources that may be used to address them. Collectively, we can determine the best ways to organize and strengthen community assets, capacities, and interests. This allows us, as a nation, to expand our reach and deliver services more efficiently and cost effectively to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.