**NEVADA GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**Position on Emergency Preparedness & Access and Functional Needs**

Emergency Preparedness involves the whole community, and the approach should include those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and those with Access & Functional Needs. Ensuring that within local and state jurisdictions equal access to emergency alerts and messaging information is accessible and part of best practices. Including but not limited to being a part of the decision during public meeting conversations before, during and after an incident. It is key in creating an inclusive environment and baseline of equal and effective access to resources and services. Emergency Preparedness facilitation through the CMIST Framework ensures access to Communication, Maintaining Health, Support, Safety, Self Determination, and Transportation is given to not only people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and Access & Functional Needs but the actual needs of the entire community to the same level as anyone else. Ensuring effective access to information and services is not only about meeting legal requirements or satisfying a policy checklist - it is about constantly striving to expand meaningful participation for all.

CMIST is a functional- based framework to integrate the needs of the whole community which promotes inclusive approach for emergency preparedness before, during the response and after recovery efforts. Whether or not you are an individual with a disability and/or have access and functional need, CMIST framework is a strategy that is implanted in the planning and organizing stages. Identifying what resources are needed for the entire population rather than labeling a specific group.

At no time during an emergency, local disaster or Presidential Declaration can the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 (ADA) be disregarded in any way. The ADA provides a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities as a protected class, requiring State and local governments to communicate as effectively with people who have I/DD as someone without.

**The Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) supports and promotes the right of individuals with I/DD to have meaningful participation and equal access to information, and services through accessible documentation before, during and after any type of emergency, disaster, or declaration.**

**Policy Recommendations:**

1. Promote the active involvement of priority populations, including people with disabilities and access and functional needs, in all phases of emergency management: before, during and after a disaster or emergency, both locally and statewide.
2. Implement comprehensive training programs to educate stakeholders about disabilities and access and functional needs, dispelling myths and misinformation and prompting accurate understanding and awareness.
3. Ensure equal access to services by integrating accessible and inclusive practices such as The CMIST Framework and People First Language into all aspects of public engagement before, during and after an emergency or disaster.
4. Work with the Nevada Legislature and the State of Nevada to mandate training for all Emergency Managers and First Responders and Nevada state employees that work within the emergency response field, around functional and access needs of individuals with I/DD and Nevadans with access and functional needs. Such as the G-197 Integrating Access and Functional Needs into Emergency Management.
5. Collaborate with the Nevada Legislature and the State of Nevada to establish inclusive public meeting protocols, mandating the participation of individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) or subject matter experts across local and state emergency-related councils, committees, working groups, or commissions, ensuring a universally inclusive approach.
6. Work with the Nevada Legislature and the State of Nevada to mandate the development of inclusive public meeting protocols that would include individuals with I/DD to have a mandated position/role across local and state emergency related councils, committees, working groups or commissions. To improve the resilience of the whole community.
7. Embrace the Independent Living Model's principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us" across all emergency management efforts, prioritizing the meaningful inclusion and involvement of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs in decision-making processes.
8. Maintain a working relationship between the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities and The Division of Emergency Management’s AFN Coordinator, as it is unique and one of a kind.
9. Implement the CMIST Framework: Promote the adoption of the CMIST Framework (Communications, Maintaining Health, Independence, Security/Safety/Self-Determination, Transportation) as the primary planning guidance for Nevada Emergency Management across all phases of emergency management: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery, when planning for, and with individuals with I/DD and Access and Functional Needs, to manifest inclusion and resilience of all Nevadans into actionable plans.

**Under Communication:**

* Ensure planning for effective communication systems to disseminate timely information and warnings to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs during emergencies.
* Develop and plan accessible communication channels, including alternative formats such as braille, large print, and sign language interpretation, to reach all segments of the population.
* Prioritize inclusive messaging that considers diverse communication preferences and abilities.

**Under Maintaining Health:**

* Plan to incorporate measures to address the specific health needs of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs during emergency planning and response.
* Plan with communities to ensure access to necessary medical supplies, equipment, and support services for individuals requiring ongoing healthcare management.
* Plan and collaborate with healthcare providers and community organizations to establish support systems for individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs in maintaining their health and well-being during emergencies.

**Under Independence:**

* Promote initiatives that empower individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs to maintain their independence and autonomy during emergencies.
* Plan “with” and develop strategies to ensure equitable access to resources, services, and support networks that enable individuals to remain self-sufficient in emergency situations.
* Promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs in planning processes related to emergency management, allowing them to assert their rights and preferences.

**Under Security, Safety, Self Determination**:

* Enhance security and safety measures to protect the rights and dignity of individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs in emergency situations.
* Implement protocols to safeguard against discrimination, exploitation, and abuse of priority populations during emergencies.
* Promote self-determination and autonomy by providing individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs the opportunity to participate in planning, preparedness, and response efforts that directly affect them.

**Under Transportation**:

* Develop inclusive transportation plans that address the unique mobility challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs during emergencies.
* Plan in partnership with impacted communities to ensure accessible transportation options are available for evacuation, relocation, and access to emergency shelters and services.

Last Review Date: