

PERSONS WITH FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

In any emergency, it is critical that persons with functional or special needs receive the assistance they may need to remain safe. Persons who may require special assistance in an emergency include (but are not limited to) those who are:

- Injured or medically fragile
- Visually-Impaired
- Hearing-Impaired
- Non-Ambulatory
- Wheelchair Dependent
- Oxygen Dependent
- Physically or Mentally Impaired
- Developmentally Disabled
- Senior Citizens
- Minors and children (those under the age of 18)
- Low Income
- Homeless or displaced
- Non-English Speaking

When Assisting Persons with Functional Needs:

- Remain calm.
- Inform the person of the nature of the emergency and ask him or her if you may provide them with any assistance. Ask how you may help *before* providing assistance.
- Ask the person if there are any special considerations or items that must come with them and make appropriate arrangements to handle these or bring them along.

When Assisting Persons with Visual Impairments:

- Have the person take your elbow and escort him or her to safety. Advise the person of any upcoming obstacles (stairs, trip hazards, or overhanging objects).
- When you have reached a safe location, orient the person to the location and ask if they require any further assistance.

When Assisting Persons with Hearing Impairments:

- Communicate using simple hand gestures or by writing a note.

When Assisting Persons with Mobility Impairments:

- If a person is mobility-impaired and must be carried to safety, whenever possible, such movement should only be conducted by those who have received proper training, utilizing proper equipment.
- Whenever possible, at least two persons should be utilized to transport another.

When Assisting Children or Minors:

- Make every effort to keep children together with others in their own class or age group.
- Do not leave a child except under the supervision of a responsible adult.