

Communication

Independence

Transportation



Maintaining
Health

Support &
Safety

Annual Report

Illinois Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee

July 1, 2024



Annual Report of the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Advisory Committee
July 1, 2024

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On behalf of the Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee, I am pleased to present our third annual report to the Governor, General Assembly, and the Director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS).

I am very proud that this Committee was formed based on legislative advocacy efforts led by disability advocates and allies and was unanimously passed by both the State Senate and House of Representatives, highlighting the fact that disability-related issues are and should be a bipartisan concern. Furthermore, state statute mandates that community members with disabilities that reflect a diversity of experience of disability, age, gender, race, and ethnicity; following the adage “nothing about us, without us”, meaning that people with disabilities and other access and functional needs should be at the decision-making table as it relates to policies and services and that directly impact our lives.

Our committee is mandated to review and make recommendations for IEMA-OHS and all relevant supporting State agencies involved in drafting and implementing the Illinois Emergency Operation Plan to integrate inclusive disaster strategies that effectively address the needs of individuals with access and functional needs into State and local emergency plans; however, our Committee members are also concerned with how these plans are operationalized, resulting in larger conversations with State and partnering agencies that has led to even wider impact on our state’s emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. These initiatives have included Committee members attending stakeholder meetings as well as being presenters at Illinois’ Red Cross Access and Functional Needs Summit which took place in June 2023. During IEMA’s 2023 Training Summit in September in Springfield, Scott Gauvin, Manager of Strategic Operations and Preparedness at IEMA-OHS, and the current Chairperson gave a presentation about the development of the IEMA-OHS operational playbook guide and other AFN-related topics: addressing disability barriers awareness, emergency management professionals’ obligations, the CMIST Framework, and how to more effectively meet the needs of individuals with access and functional needs.

The following report is broken into three sections: where we have been, where we are, and where we are going. First, we explain the historical and legal landscape driving attention to the disparity between Illinois’ emergency management services and the needs of people with disabilities and how that led to Senate Bill 921. Second, we detail where the Committee stands today and what progress has been made, and finally, we provide a spreadsheet depicting what the Committee will focus on over the next year and in the years ahead.

On behalf of the Committee, we are deeply grateful to the General Assembly for making the



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Committee a reality, to the Governor's Office for implementing the law and getting the Committee members appointed, and to the Director of IEMA and Office of Homeland Security and her team for embracing the Committee and its mission.

Sincerely,
Kira Meskin Schiff, Chairperson



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Advisory Committee History

The impetus for the Committee comes from the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic when members of the disability community found themselves left out of the supply chain for personal protective equipment (PPE). Advocates for this community began to research how to improve access to services for people who have access and functional needs.

Disability Advocates evaluated best practices from California, Colorado, Florida, Arizona, and other states and recognized that the State of Illinois would benefit from having the knowledge, energy, passion, and expertise of individuals with access and functional needs directly participating in the development of policy, planning, and disaster response and recovery strategies.

This recognition led to engagement with Senators Julie A. Morrison and Laura Fine to determine how people with disabilities could best support state and local government officials and influence changes to policy that would ensure inclusive emergency management programs. Senate Bill 921 passed the Senate and was shepherded through the House by Representative Jonathon Carroll, in addition to numerous co-sponsors. This bill, which amended the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act (IEMA Act), and established the Access and Function Needs Advisory Committee (hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”) was signed by the Governor as Public Act 102-0361 and went into effect on August 13, 2021.

Previous Work Completed

Following the enactment of PA 102-0361, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency & Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS), through its Inter-Agency Strategic Planning Cell (ISPC), began an internal review of the state’s emergency management program and the integration of inclusive emergency management strategies that address access and functional needs. The Agency determined that although plans met the intent of FEMA’s planning guidance, new policies and plans should be developed, including rethinking training and exercises, and local Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) would need to be engaged to ensure emergency preparedness programs address the needs of all residents of Illinois.

The Committee met, informally, for the first time on January 26, 2022. The meeting was chaired by IEMA-OHS and was limited to the general discussion because not enough members had yet been appointed to have a quorum. On May 5, 2022, the Committee met formally for the first time, and focused on legal and administrative issues. At this meeting, the Committee adopted bylaws outlining the formal leadership and administrative foundation for the Committee.



The statutory requirement for the Committee is to meet three times a year, but usually meets at least six times a year, with additional executive board meetings and subcommittee meetings to the effort of the overall Committee and its work.

In addition to providing administrative support to the Committee, IEMA-OHS has begun incorporating detailed access and functional needs-related elements into the Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP). The IEOP now nests five appendices that align with the “CMIST” Framework adopted by FEMA, CDC, and HHS:

- Communications Services
- Maintaining Health Services
- Independence Devices and Equipment
- Support and Safety Services
- Non-Emergency Transportation Services

IEMA-OHS initially coordinated with the Committee last year for input and review of these draft plans in mid to late 2023.



IEMA-OHS has also supported the Committee administratively by drafting the Committee’s bylaws for review, in addition to requested amendments. These bylaws were approved at the first formal meeting. IEMA-OHS has also created and maintained an online space in the Agency’s Microsoft Teams databases where the Committee’s administrative records, work products, and other relevant resources can be accessed by its members.

In 2022, the Committee voted to hold regularly scheduled meetings every other month, exceeding the statutory mandate requiring three meetings each year. This continues to remain the current schedule the committee follows.



The following definitions have been approved by the Advisory Committee for use in the report, as well as committee efforts, as well as for use by IEMA-OHS and other local emergency management and public safety organizations throughout Illinois in updated and ongoing disaster response planning.

Disability: The term 'disability' means, with respect to an individual (*Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]*), 42 U.S.C. 12102):

- a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such an individual;
- a record of such an impairment; or
- being regarded as having such an impairment (as described in paragraph (3)).

Access and Functional Needs: Individuals who need specific resources to manage disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and age-related needs, as defined by the Illinois Act on Aging, before, during, and after a disaster or public health emergency. Access-based and function-based needs are not mutually exclusive and may overlap.

- **Access-Based Needs:** Individuals who require access to specific resources to take part in daily activities, such as but not limited to assistive technology, interpretive and translation services, wheelchair ramps, durable medical equipment, service animals, specialized transportation, and medications to maintain health.
- **Function-Based Needs:** Individuals who have limitations of their physical or mental capacity or of their skills that prevent them from living independently, such as but not limited to paralysis, schizophrenia, or blindness, and may require regular health care, behavioral health, and/or personal care services.

Through the issuance of this report, the Committee formally requested that the Director of IEMA-OHS adopt these terms and definitions as agency standards and incorporate them into appropriate policies, plans, and procedures related to the state's emergency management program.

Additionally, the Committee requests that the Director of IEMA-OHS incorporate these terms and definitions into Title 29 of the state administrative code, to ensure that be incorporated into required planning by local emergency management agencies (EMAs) within all units of local government in the state.



To accomplish this, the Director of IEMA-OHS is seeking a proposed rule change under the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, requiring the approval of the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR), following a public notice and comment period. The proposed rule changes include adding to the definition of “Whole Community” to also include those with access and functional needs. Additionally, the changes would require each EMA to demonstrate planning considerations for children, the elderly, individuals with access and functional needs, limited English proficiency, and household pets.

At present, these administrative rule changes are still under review, and IEMA-OHS has engaged with local EMAs to facilitate the whole community scheme in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

The Committee continues to engage the General Assembly in utilizing these definitions throughout state statutes. This engagement seeks to ensure consistency among emergency management-related policies, plans, and procedures which are developed by other state agencies; including, but not limited to, those of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA), and Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IDHFS).



Where We Are

Current membership of the Executive Committee is as follows:

- Executive Committee:
 - Kira Meskin Schiff, Chair.
 - Allison Anderson, Vice-Chair.
 - Jae Jin Pak, Secretary.

Voting Members

The following community members have been appointed to fill seats from the Access and Functional Needs community. As mandated by the SB921, community members must reflect a diversity of disability, age, sex, race, and ethnic backgrounds. It is also a priority of the committee that the community members represent a wide array of the access and functional needs community and geography of Illinois.

Chairperson, Kira Meskin Schiff

[Progress Center for Independent Living and PPE For People with Disabilities Coalition](#)

Appointed February 16, 2022, | Term Expires February 16, 2026



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kira has been the primary co-leader of the PPE for People with Disabilities (PPE4PWD) Coalition, which is led by and for people with disabilities and is who helped draft and pass SB 921. She oversaw the coalition's efforts to access and distribute personal protective equipment (PPE) to people with disabilities living in the community (who oftentimes are utilizing Home and Community-Based Services) and Personal Assistants in Chicagoland. As part of this distribution work, Kira collaborated with the Progress Center for Independent Living to establish it as a PPE distribution site. In this role, Kira assisted PCIL to serve as a distribution site for the Dept. of Human Services, in collaboration with Illinois Partners for Human Service, to distribute over 75,000 KN95 masks to state-funded non-profit organizations. Progress Center was the only Center for Independent Living that took on this role in our state.

Kira currently serves as a Community Reintegration Advocate at Progress Center, assisting consumers who reside in nursing homes and long-term care facilities against their choice, and helping them navigate Illinois' Consent Decree transition programs so that they can live effectively in the community. Additionally, she is an Occupational Therapist, and, because of



her training, she is that much more aware and knowledgeable of how our physical and social environments can impact individuals' health and quality of life.

She currently is a member of The Arc of Illinois' Public Policy Committee and Community Choices for Seniors Advocacy Group. In May 2023, she was selected to present on a panel to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual about the importance of inclusive emergency preparedness at the local, state, and federal levels.

Vice Chairperson, Allison Anderson

[Will County Emergency Management Agency](#)

Appointed February 7, 2022, | Term Expires February 7, 2026



Allison is the Director of the Will County Emergency Management Agency. She has over 13 years of experience in emergency management, including nearly 5 years of experience in the focus area of Public Health. As 1 of approximately 2,200 Certified Emergency Managers (CEM) in the world, Allison brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the committee.

Secretary, Jae Jin Pak

[University of Illinois Chicago](#)

Appointed April 21, 2022, | Term Expires April 21, 2026



Jae Jin Pak is a social justice advocate, educator, and ally with over 30 years of experience. He identifies as an Asian immigrant with disabilities. He has worked on issues of gender-based violence, anti-trafficking prevention, mental health, disability, immigration justice, and anti-oppression. He has conducted thousands of hours of training with diverse communities and professionals nationally. His core values of collaboration and recognizing intersectionality have allowed him to build strong connections with diverse communities and providers. He is a co-founder of the Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition (DPOCC), which works to promote disability pride in communities of color in the Chicagoland area, and even globally. Chicagoland DPOCC brings awareness to the issues that face the disabled, autistic, deaf, and neurodivergent people of color.

Jae Jin is the Coordinator of Community Education for the Institute on Disability and Human Development and a Self-Advocacy Training Mentor for Illinois LEND at the University of IL Chicago (UIC). He serves on the Quality Care Board, the Health & Human Services Taskforce, the



Disability and Immigration Taskforce of IL, and The National Human Trafficking & Disability Working Group. He is a graduate of Northern Illinois University and an IL LEND Fellow.

Angela Botz

IMPACT Center for Independent Living

Appointed February 25, 2022, | Term Expires February 25, 2026



Angela Botz is a leader, mentor, civil rights advocate, and civil liberties proponent. Angela is committed to her community, both state and national, as well as the people and world around her. Ms. Botz started her professional career as the sole art designer at Picturesque Graphics in St. Louis, Missouri, then left to pursue her community advocate career after 25 years as Art Director.

Ms. Botz has years of experience in leadership, value-based decision-making, and mentoring. She is a Community Outreach Coordinator and Independent Living Specialist for Deaf Services at IMPACT Center for Independent Living in Alton, Illinois. Angela became the first deaf woman to serve a second consecutive term as President of the Illinois Association of the Deaf. In 2001, she became President of Show-Me Accessible Health Care, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping deaf and hard of hearing individuals increase access to, and improve the quality of, health care in the Saint Louis metropolitan area as well as other counties in Missouri and Illinois.

In 2012, Angela received the Robert M. Greenmun Memorial Award, a National Association of the Deaf honor recognizing a State Association member who has demonstrated volunteer leadership excellence and contributions to his or her State Association. She also received the Legislative Advocate of the Year Award from LINC, Inc. Ms. Botz recently received the 2021 Meritorious Service Award from the Illinois Association of the Deaf.

Ms. Botz is involved in numerous committees and boards, including the Illinois School for the Deaf Advisory Board. She was the current State Association Affiliate Coordinator (SAAC) for the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). She was the Sponsorship and Exhibition Coordinator as well as Gala Coordinator for the 2016 St. Louis DEA Festival. Angela is currently a District 5 Representative for the Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation. Angela is currently Co-Chair of the 2023 United National Conference Art Gallery and gala committee member for Deaf Women United's Deaf Women of Chicago. Ms. Botz is currently Co-Chair of the Illinois Network Centers of Independent Living Advocacy Team. In addition, she serves as Co-Chair of the Illinois Statewide Deaf Services Coordinators.



Ms. Botz graduated from Illinois School for the Deaf in 1985 and then studied at Florissant Valley Community College and Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Ms. Botz plans to continue to build a professional and positive image and brand for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind, including the people with disabilities community, by assisting individuals through self-advocacy, political empowerment, cultural preservation, and disability awareness for equality so this community can continue to be a driving force to empower all generations.

Ms. Botz is known for her enthusiastic personality, optimistic attitude, and undeniable passion and fight for civil and disability rights. Angela is an expert fundraiser, having acquired sponsorship, donations, and contributions, as well as arranging event preparations, event activities, and all manner of event planning.

Randy Colón

[ADA Participatory Action Research Consortium \(ADA PARC\)](#)

Appointed March 28, 2022, | Term Expires March 28, 2024



Randy is a research assistant for the ADA Participation Action Research Consortium (ADA PARC). He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Disability Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and is working on a tool that will allow communities to assess whether people with disabilities are attaining affordable, accessible, and integrated housing. He is also legally blind.

Dorothy Cox-Stowe

[Home Services Advocate for Independent Living](#)

Appointed February 25, 2022, | Term Expires February 25, 2024



Dorothy Cox-Stowe has four adult children and resides in Decatur, Illinois. She is a widow, as her husband, Joe L. Stowe, was the first person in Macon County to succumb to the COVID-19 Virus. He passed away on April 7, 2020. He was a resident of the Fairhaven nursing facility. He was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2006. Dorothy had to place him in a facility in 2012 because she could no longer care for him at home.

She retired from Soyland Access to Independent Living in 2018 after 9 years and 9 months of being the Home Services Advocate (Coordinator). She enjoyed her work assisting people with



disabilities. The position was often challenging, but very rewarding. She has a disability as well, therefore, the information she acquired was and still is very helpful in her daily life.

Dorothy previously worked for the State of Illinois in the position of Mental Health Tech at Adolf Meyer Zone Ctr., as well as Elgin State Mental Health in Elgin, Illinois, Decatur Mental Health (Detox Unit, and Halfway House). She is grateful for the opportunity to serve on this committee.

[Kenneth Jennings](#)

[Disability Community Member](#)

Appointed March 16, 2022, | Term Expires March 16, 2024



Kenneth Jennings was paralyzed 33 years ago while playing high school football. Kenneth Jennings is the CEO of Gridiron Alliance, a non-profit organization, a peer-mentor at LIFE Center at Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, and a football coach, advocate, motivational speaker, and poet. He also does 2 podcasts, works for a California company named Neuralink, is on the board of Bright Promises Foundation, and is soon to be the author of his book titled “How 8 Seconds Change My Life”.

Kenneth is the father of a 28-year-old daughter and a 4-year-old grandson. He lives by his on-motto: Blessed To Be Able.

[Robin Jones](#)

[Director of the Great Lakes ADA Center](#)

Appointed September 16, 2022, | Term Expires September 16, 2024



Robin Jones is the Director of the Great Lakes ADA Center and an Instructor in the Department on Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Robin has served as director since the Center’s inception in 1991. Formerly, she served as director of the Progress Center for Independent Living and as an Occupational Therapy practitioner at the institution formerly known as the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. She has extensive experience assisting individuals and entities to understand their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Robin has served on several state and local task forces and committees related to disability policy and procedure to further the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.



Sam Knight

Disability Resource Center

Appointed March 30, 2022, | Term Expires March 30, 2024



Samuel Knight is an Independent Living Advocate with the Disability Resource Center in Will County. He has worked for the Disability Resource Center in Joliet since 2012, 9 ½ years now. Before that, he worked for the Progress Center for Independent Living in Suburban Cook County from 2006 until 2012. He has largely worked on the issues of affordable accessible housing and public transportation. He sits on the Advocacy, Housing, and Transportation Committees within Centers for Independent Living. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Concordia University.

Todd Roach

Disability Community Member

Appointed February 7, 2022, | Term Expires February 7, 2026



Todd is the Human Resources Director for The Marmon Group, as well as an alderman for the City of O'Fallon. Todd has been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and is a member of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The following individuals have been appointed to fill seats from state agencies:

Scott Gauvin

Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)



Scott has over twenty-one years of emergency management experience and is the Manager of Strategic Operations and Preparedness (i.e., Chief Planner) for the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS). In this role, he is charged with the strategic development of the Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP) and other hazard and function-specific planning documents for the State of Illinois. Scott is a graduate of the University of Illinois Springfield and retains certification from IEMA-OHS as an Illinois Professional Emergency Manager. Scott is also a



proud graduate of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Emergency Management Executive Academy (NEMEA) and he is presently attending Jacksonville State University to gain his master's degree in Emergency Management.

Judith Levitan

Office of the Illinois Attorney General



Judith is the Chief of the Disability Rights Bureau at the Illinois Attorney General's Office. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education of the Hearing Impaired; a Juris Doctorate from Northwestern University School of Law; and a Master of Laws in Child and Family Law from Loyola University Chicago School of Law. In addition to this committee, Judith also serves on three other state committees working to advance the rights of individuals with disabilities.

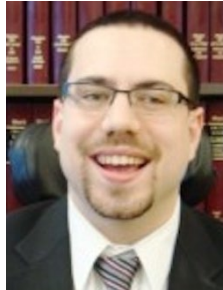
The Disability Rights Bureau enforces state and federal laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities in Illinois. The Bureau has exclusive authority to enforce the Illinois Environmental Barriers Act and its design standards, the Illinois Accessibility Code. These laws and regulations require physical accessibility in new construction, additions, and alterations to public facilities, and new multistory housing.

The Disability Rights Bureau also enforces the Illinois Human Rights Act, which provides jurisdiction to investigate complaints that allege a pattern and practice of disability discrimination in housing, public accommodations, employment, or financial services. The Disability Rights Bureau also investigates pattern and practice discrimination complaints under relevant federal laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Fair Housing Act. In addition to the Bureau's enforcement work, the Disability Rights Bureau regularly provides technical assistance and referrals to individuals with disabilities and public and private entities seeking to comply with disability rights laws. The Bureau conducts disability rights training programs for law enforcement, architects, engineers, building code officials and inspectors, judges and court personnel, business owners, disability rights organizations, and other groups all in furtherance of its mission to advance the rights of individuals with disabilities to access all aspects of society in Illinois.



David Kuriniec

Illinois Department of Human Services



David Kuriniec has spent his career advocating on behalf of people with disabilities, beginning when he could not enter the door of his high school. Quickly thereafter, he worked with the facility managers to ensure that automatic openers were placed on the doors at the school. This experience, along with meetings with members of Congress and the Illinois Legislature to discuss physical and attitudinal reforms that could benefit people with disabilities, convinced David that a career in the law/government was most appropriate.

After graduating from Lake Forest College summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and Communications, David received his law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law. He has spent nearly a decade in state government, first with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and currently serving as Bureau Chief of the Home Services Program (HSP), a Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waiver that provides in-home supports including, among other things, personal assistants, home-delivered meals, and emergency home response services to over 35,000 Illinoisans with disabilities.

John Eckert

Illinois Department on Aging



John is the Deputy Division Manager for the Division of Planning, Research, Development, and Training at the Illinois Department on Aging, where he has worked for nearly 17 years. His primary focus is ensuring people with disabilities and the elderly have every opportunity to live independently. He has an M.A. in Rehabilitation Administration and Services from SIU-Carbondale.



Anu Meka

Illinois Department of Public Health



Anu has been employed with IDPH for almost 20 years, with experience in the Division of Disaster Planning and Readiness under the Office of Preparedness and Response for 10 years. She previously worked in the communicable disease section (now ODC – Office of Disease Control) under INEDSS program as well as the Hospital program within IDPH’s Office of Policy and Planning. She has a bachelor’s in social Preventive Medicine and Alternate Medicine from India. She graduated from the University of Springfield with a master’s in public health with a focus in Epidemiology. She has completed the data management series from SAS (Statistical Analytical Software).

*Presently, the Committee has five additional vacant positions that it hopes to fill through nominations and appointments from the Governor’s Office:

- (1) Local Emergency Manager
- (4) First Responders

Non-Voting Members

The Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee is pleased to have the following non-voting advisory members engaged in the process and effort to enhance emergency planning at both the state and local levels in Illinois. The following individuals participate regularly in the committee’s bi-monthly meetings and sub-committee meetings.

- Kristin Busch
- Scott Clarke, American Red Cross
- Pam Heavens, United Cerebral Palsy
- Thane Hunt, Advocates for Access Center for Independent Living
- Megan Norlin, Illinois Network for Centers for Independent Living
- Libby Oxenham, LINC Center for Independent Living
- Barb Pritchard, Statewide Independent Living Council, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, Institutional Rescue and Recovery Coalition
- Shelly Richardson, Statewide Independent Living Council
- Karen Tamley, Access Living
- Laura VanPuymbrouck, Rush University
- Tom Wilson



Subcommittees

In mid-2022, the AFN Advisory Committee voted to adopt a subcommittee structure to begin reviewing plans and documents presented by IEMA-OHS to the committee. In addition, these subcommittees were charged to meet frequently on the topic areas of their respective committee, report back findings and recommendations, and create products as appropriate to the topic. The design of the subcommittee structure was established to mimic the existing federal CMIST framework (defined below). The following subcommittees have been established and are active at this time:

- Communications Subcommittee
- Maintaining Health Subcommittee
- Independence and Autonomy Subcommittee
- Support, Safety, and Self-Determination Subcommittee
- Transportation Subcommittee

Currently, the subcommittees have been assigned efforts to address the development of a local emergency manager's guide for implementing best practices into their programs for people with AFN. The committee's goal is to develop a workbook guide addressing the CMIST areas and others as necessary to ensure proper guidance, recommendations, and organizational contacts (state-wide) are provided to implement sound practices and procedures for programs needing to enhance their access and functional needs-related preparedness posture.

Each subcommittee has appointed leadership and an Executive Committee Member assigned to them to provide guidance and direction as necessary.

Below is the document provided to all committee members for review and reference as they engage in subcommittee work:

Outline for Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee's Subcommittees

Based on the CMIST Framework and Whole Community Approach:

State agencies should incorporate the CMIST framework and a Whole Community Approach in all phases of emergency planning, such as those addressing preparation, notification, evacuation, transportation, sheltering, medical and social services, temporary lodging and/or housing, clean-up, and remediation. The CMIST framework is a tool for identifying the functional needs of people with disabilities before, during, and after a disaster:

https://emilms.fema.gov/is_0368/groups/22.html



CMIST is the acronym for:

1. **C**ommunication
2. **M**aintaining Health
3. **I**ndependence
4. **S**afety, **S**upport Services, and **S**elf-Determination; and
5. **T**ransportation

The Whole Community Approach is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests. By doing so, a more effective path to societal security and resilience is built. In a sense, Whole Community is a philosophical approach on how to think about conducting emergency management:

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/whole_community_dec2011_2.pdf

Communication Subcommittee:

The Communication Subcommittee will focus on ensuring the utilization of effective and accessible communication for individuals who speak sign language, who have limited English proficiency (LEP), and who face challenges with speaking, seeing, hearing, and/or processing information. People with communication and/or literacy needs may have limited ability to hear announcements, see signs, understand messages, or verbalize their emergency needs and concerns.

This Subcommittee will also recommend strategies to enhance communication between state agencies (i.e. IEMA-OHS, Dept. of Public Health, Dept. of Human Services, Dept. of Aging, Dept. of Healthcare and Family Services, etc.) as well as trusted community partners (i.e. Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, assistive technology centers, local disability, and ethnic groups, home health agencies, etc.) to effectively integrate emergency management services for people with access and functional needs.

Maintaining Health Subcommittee:

The Maintaining Health Subcommittee will focus on emergency preparedness and response for individuals who may require specific medications, supplies, services, durable medical equipment, electricity for life-maintaining equipment, breastfeeding, infant/childcare, personal care services, nutrition, etc. This includes shelters having access to secure refrigeration for medications and food for people with medical conditions who have specific diets.



The Subcommittee will focus on early identification and planning for access and functional needs to reduce the negative impacts of a disaster on individuals' health. This includes:

- Maintaining chronic health conditions
- Minimizing preventable medical conditions
- Avoiding decompensation or worsening of an individual's health status

Independence and Autonomy Subcommittee:

The independence and autonomy subcommittee will focus on emergency preparedness and response for individuals who function independently and autonomously with assistance from mobility/assistive devices, assistive technology, durable medical equipment, vision and communication aids, services animals, personal care services, etc.

The Subcommittee will work to ensure individuals' independence, autonomy, and self-determination are addressed and that person's with access and functional needs are not separated from their mobility/assistive devices, assistive technology, aids, service animals, personal care services, etc.

Safety, Support Services, and Self-Determination Subcommittee:

The Safety, Support Services, and Self-Determination Subcommittee will focus on the emergency preparedness and response needs of individuals who may become separated from caregivers, or service animals, need additional personal care assistance; experience higher levels of distress, and need support for anxiety, psychological, or behavioral health needs; or require a trauma-informed approach or support for personal safety.

The Subcommittee will focus on early identification and planning for Access and functional needs to reduce the negative impacts of a disaster on individuals' well-being. Some people may lose caregiver assistance or support animals and require additional support; some individuals may find it difficult to cope in a new or strange environment or have difficulty understanding or remembering information; some individuals may have experienced trauma or be victims of abuse.

All state-recognized and state-supported emergency shelters are required to be ADA-compliant and accessible to all people. Accessibility applies to the routes to, from, and within the facility, as well as the usability of public facilities, such as the restrooms and showers. Additionally, pet-friendly shelters are critical for individuals who require service animals. Access and functional needs - related emergency equipment also need to be made available for use during crises. This may include specialized evacuation chairs, transfer-height cots, communication boards, and reverse 911 notification systems that have been reviewed and trialed by the appropriate



members of the disability community and emergency professionals before such items are written into plans or purchased by municipalities.

Transportation Subcommittee:

The Transportation Subcommittee will focus on emergency preparedness and response for individuals who lack access to personal transportation and are unable to drive due to mobility needs that may come with age and/or disability, temporary conditions, injury, or legal restriction.

Disasters can significantly reduce transportation options, inhibiting individuals from accessing services, personal care supports from accessing an individual they work for, staying connected, etc. Disaster planning requires coordination with mass transit and accessible transportation services providers as well as statewide and local transit authorities to establish accessible evacuation routes and door-to-door pick-ups.

Where We Are Going

In 2023, at the request of IEMA-OHS, the Committee began reviewing upcoming changes to the Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP). During the Committee's regular bi-monthly meetings, representatives from IEMA-OHS present updates on the status of changes to plans, procedures, and policies as well as providing further in-depth discussions on the emergency management process, planning, and community of practice. Together by having these open, and productive sessions, voting and advisory non-voting members of the disability community learn more about emergency management and gain a better understanding of how the committee and its fellow cohorts can positively impact preparedness in the state and at the local level.

The legislation that formed this committee discussed enhancing state and local planning efforts. IEMA-OHS will be working with the committee this year to complete a guidance document to help local emergency management programs to incorporate the CMIST framework into their program as well as incorporating people with access and functional needs in their communities into their programs for preparedness activities such as training and exercises.

Previous recommendations from the Committee have been utilized to assist IEMA-OHS in crafting an Access and Functional Need Appendix which will be housed in the ESF 8 Annex – Public Health, Healthcare, EMS, and Mental Health. This plan along with the rest of the IEOP is scheduled for completion and promulgation in the summer of 2024.



Once complete, the IEMA-OHS will embark on a strategy to enhance the IEOP into a whole-community-centric document that may be the first of its kind in the industry. This strategy will engage each of the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) (including sister state agencies and other partner organizations), to review each role and responsibility in the IEOP to ensure that all Illinoisans, no matter their access and functional needs are considered.

For example, a present role and responsibility may be for Central Management Services to contract with busing companies to support a local evacuation. The review will advise that proper language is included to ensure such buses include wheelchair lifts to accommodate mobility-impaired persons.

Finally, IEMA-OHS is working to develop a training course to complement the guidance document mentioned above to help guide and teach local emergency managers and programs on incorporating CMIST into their programs.

Status of Recommendations

In 2022, in the first submission of this report, the Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee developed priorities and recommendations of effort for itself and state agencies who are represented on the Access and Functional Advisory Committee. The listing of recommendations and priorities was divided into three timeline categories:

- Short-Term – July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023
- Intermediate - July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025
- Long-Term – after June 30, 2025

The following pages of this annual report will address the recommendations and priorities established by the Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee, their status, and any new efforts or work being undertaken by the committee for the upcoming year and years ahead.



Goals	Actions Taken	Responsible Agencies	Timeline Category	Status
<p>Develop and finalize the Committee's strategic framework, encompassing its mission, vision, objectives, and core strategies, while delineating short-term, intermediate, and long-term priorities.</p>	<p>This goal was completed in 2022 to provide content and structure to the committees' initiatives and focus.</p>	<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Establish a robust sub-committee framework designed to facilitate collaboration among individuals possessing specialized knowledge, experience, and dedication, enabling them to convene and work together outside of full Committee meetings. This structure will empower members to conduct thorough research and propose innovative policy, technological, and resource-based solutions aimed at addressing challenges related to communication, health maintenance, independence and autonomy, support, safety and self-determination, and non-emergency transportation (CMIST Framework).</p>	<p>Executive Committee provided the whole committee with a document that delineates the structure and scope of the subcommittees. Both voting and non-voting advisory</p>	<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Completed</p>



Annual Report of the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Advisory Committee
July 1, 2024

	<p>members volunteered to be part of each subcommittee. Within the subcommittees, one member was selected as their Chair to serve as a liaison between the whole committee and subcommittee.</p>			
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Annual Report of the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Advisory Committee
July 1, 2024

<p>Review the advisory committee’s current bylaws. A subcommittee will be formed to independently review the bylaws, with the Executive Committee providing consultative support. Once proposed revisions are made, IEMA-OHS will consult with its legal team to ensure that the bylaws comply with the mandated law.</p>		<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee Secondary: IEMA-OHS</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>Collaborate with IEMA representatives and supporting state agencies to complete an in-depth review of the Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP) annexes and appendices, identifying areas where strategies may not accurately align with effectively addressing the preparedness, response, and recovery requirements of individuals with access and functional needs.</p>		<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee Secondary: IEMA-OHS</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Pending release of new IEOP</p>
<p>Work with IEMA to develop an access and functional needs-related operational playbook that guides local emergency managers on how to vertically integrate their access and functional needs-related policies, planning, and response operations with the policy and planning completed by IEMA-OHS with advice from the Committee.</p>		<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee Secondary: IEMA-OHS</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>In Progress</p>



<p>Collaborate closely with IEMA-OHS to revise its Crisis Communications, Public Education, and Information Plan, focusing on enhancing procedures and technology infrastructure to guarantee that all disaster communications directed towards the public are readily accessible to individuals with access and functional needs. This initiative involves comprehensive reengineering efforts to ensure inclusivity and effective dissemination of critical information during emergencies.</p>		<p>Primary: IEMA-OHS Secondary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>	<p>Pending completion of IEOP</p>
<p>Collaborate with representatives from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to assess the IDPH Emergency Support Function 8 Plan and its Access and Functional Needs Annex. Identify areas where strategies and tactics may not align with effectively addressing the preparedness, response, and recovery requirements of individuals with access and functional needs. Recommend pertinent modifications to enhance inclusivity and efficacy, ensuring that the IDPH is optimally positioned to meet the diverse needs of all populations during emergencies.</p>		<p>Primary: IDPH and Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>	<p>Not Started</p>



<p>Collaborate closely with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IDHFS) to formulate comprehensive plans and procedures aimed at bolstering the state's capacity to assist local Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) in fulfilling their requirements for non-emergency transportation services tailored to individuals with access and functional needs. This initiative involves developing robust frameworks to ensure timely and effective support for transportation needs during non-emergency situations, thereby enhancing the state's overall preparedness and response capabilities.</p>		<p>Primary: Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>	<p>Not Started</p>
<p>Collaborate closely with IDHFS, and other support agencies and organizations identified in the IEOP to formulate comprehensive plans and procedures aimed at bolstering the state's capacity to assist local EMAs in fulfilling their requirements for providing assistive devices and equipment for individuals with access and functional needs that are critical to maintaining their independence and autonomy. This initiative involves developing robust frameworks to ensure an in-state cache and timely provision of equipment during emergencies, thereby enhancing the state's overall preparedness and response capabilities.</p>		<p>Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services</p> <p>Secondary: Support agencies and organizations identified in the IEOP</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>	<p>Not Started</p>



Evaluate the IEMA Act to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would legislatively mandate the inclusion of access and functional needs-related strategies in the state’s emergency management program, including the related efforts of state agencies with responsibilities under the IEOP, and the emergency management programs of local units of government.		Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Secondary: IEMA-OHS	Intermediate	Not Started
IEMA-OHS will coordinate with the Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee on the redevelopment of the IEOP to a whole community-centric plan.		Primary: IEMA-OHS Secondary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory	Intermediate	Will commence on completion of the current IEOP update.
Evaluate Title 29 of the state administrative code to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would outline and mandate and outline specific inclusive activities to effectively address access and functional needs in IEMA-OHS policies and plans and those managed by local EMAs.		Primary: Access and Functional Needs Advisory Secondary: IEMA-OHS	Intermediate	Not Started



Best Practices

The following initiatives are best practices that the Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee supports to ensure an inclusive approach to emergency preparedness; however, the implementation is outside the mandated requirements of the committee.

Initiatives	Responsible Agencies	Status
Establish an Office of Access and Functional Needs within the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS)	Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	A contracted position was posted by IEMA in late April 2024 for an Access and Functional Needs Planner.
IEMA-OHS, Illinois Dept. Of Human Services (IDHS), and Illinois Dept. Of Aging (IDoA) to develop a Functional Assessment Service Team (FAST) and Mobile Support Team (MST) with consideration of the model adopted by California.	Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department on Aging, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, and Office of Homeland Security	IDPH is hosting a summit detailing this concept this June further details on development will follow.
Evaluate the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Act, Disabled Persons Rehabilitation Act, and Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would legislatively mandate the inclusion of access and function needs-related strategies in IDHS' emergency management program.	Illinois Department of Human Services	
Evaluate the Illinois Act on Aging to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would legislatively mandate the inclusion of access and functional needs-related strategies in IDoA's emergency management program.	Illinois Department on Aging	



<p>Evaluate the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Act to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would legislatively mandate the inclusion of access and functional needs-related strategies in IDPH’s emergency management program.</p>	<p>Illinois Department of Public Health</p>	
<p>Evaluate Title 77, Chapter I, Subchapter f, Section 515.240 of the state administrative code to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would outline and mandate inclusive strategies associated with access and functional needs, which would be included in the activities of regional health care coalitions (HCCs) funded by subgrants from IDPH's Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP).</p>	<p>Illinois Department of Public Health</p>	
<p>Evaluate Title 77, Chapter I, Subchapter h of the state administrative code to determine what deficiencies may need to be addressed that would outline and mandate strategies associated with access and functional needs, which would be included in the activities of local health departments funded by subgrants from the IDPH’s Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEP).</p>	<p>Illinois Department of Public Health</p>	