GENERAL INFORMATION

Evacuation of people with special needs will be given high priority in all emergencies. In an emergency situation, it is important that you are familiar with your needs during evacuation. You are encouraged to convey these needs to your instructor at the beginning of each quarter. While attending class, try to position yourself near a doorway for an easier exit. Become familiar with the building evacuation plan as posted at each exit door. Follow evacuation map to exits. The following guidelines are important to follow:

- Establish a buddy system and alternate for each class. People with special needs should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate, instructor, supervisor, or co-worker on how to assist in the event of any emergency.

- If assistance is not immediately available, disabled persons should remain near the stairwell landing or in the elevator lobby. Rescue personnel will first check all exit corridors and stairwells for those trapped. S/He should continue to call for help until rescued.

- People, who cannot speak loudly, or with voice / speech impairments, should carry a whistle or have other means of attracting attention of others.

- Be familiar with alarm signals.

- Leave school materials in the room to avoid wasting time.

- Wait for rescue and remain calm.

- DO NOT re-enter a building until permitted by emergency personnel.

If you suspect a fire is behind a door; protect your hand first, and then test the door by touching it. If it is hot then do NOT use the door as an exit. Try to find an alternate route for an exit.

CAUTION: Do NOT use elevators unless authorized to do so by police or fire personnel. Elevators could fail during a fire, earthquake or flood.
EVACUATION

The campus community should familiarize themselves with these procedures in order to assist in planning for the evacuation of people with physical and sensory disabilities.

- Evacuation of people with disabilities will be given high priority in all emergencies and will be evacuated if possible. Evacuating a disabled or injured person by only one person with no assistance is a last resort.

- Attempt a rescue evacuation ONLY if you have had rescue training.

- Check on people with special needs during an evacuation, determine if they have established a “buddy system,” and ensure their safe evacuation.

- Always ASK someone with a disability how you can help BEFORE attempting any rescue technique or giving assistance. Ask how he or she can best be assisted or moved, and whether there are any special considerations or items that need to come with the person.

- If the situation is life threatening, call 9-1-1.

- Do NOT use elevators, unless authorized to do so by police or fire personnel. Elevators could fail during a fire, earthquake or flood.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

- Most visually impaired persons will be familiar with the immediate area they are in and may have learned locations of exits and fire alarms in advance.

- Tell the person the nature of the emergency and offer to guide him/her by offering your left/right elbow (this is the preferred method when acting as a “Sighted Guide”). Do NOT grab a visually impaired person’s arm.

- Give verbal instructions to advise about the safest route or direction using compass directions, estimated distances, and directional terms or information (i.e., elevators cannot be used or if there is debris or a crowd.)

- As you walk, tell the person where you are and advise of any obstacles, e.g. stairs, overhanging objects, uneven pavement, curbs, and narrow passageways.

- When you have reached safety, orient the person to where he/she is and ask if any further assistance is needed.

- Some individuals may have Guide Dogs that may be disoriented during the emergency, and may require additional assistance.

- Canes and other mobility aids should NOT be left behind.
HEARING IMPAIRMENT

- Buildings on campus are equipped with visual (flashing light) as well as auditory evacuation alarms. However, persons with impaired hearing may not perceive an emergency exists. Where anyone appears to not be recognizing an alarm is sounding/flashing an alternative warning technique is required. Two alternative methods of warning are:
  - Write a note stating what the emergency is and what the evacuation route is i.e. “Fire – go out the rear door to Parking Lot”.
  - Turn the room lights on and off to gain attention – then indicate through hand gestures or writing (i.e. on a blackboard) what is happening and where to go.

- Offer visual instructions to advice of safest route or directions by pointing toward exits or evacuation map.

- People who cannot speak loudly, or with voice/speech impairments, may be carrying a whistle or have other means of attracting attention of others.

MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT

- Mobility-Impaired persons should NOT be evacuated by untrained personnel unless the situation is life-threatening. It may be necessary to help clear the exit route of debris (if possible) so that the person with a disability can move out or to a safer area.

- If people with Mobility Impairments cannot exit, they should move to a safer area, most enclosed stairwells, or an office with the door shut which is a good distance from the hazard (and away from falling debris in the case of earthquakes.)

- Notify emergency responders immediately about any people remaining in the building and their locations.

- If people are in immediate danger and cannot be moved to a safer area, it may be necessary, only if you have had rescue training, to evacuate them using an evacuation chair or a carry technique. Carrying options include using a two-person lock-arm position, or having the person sit in a sturdy chair – preferably with arms, or using an evacuation chair.

PEOPLE USING CRUTCHES, CANES OR WALKERS

- The same procedures outlined for the Mobility Impaired should be used. Crutches, canes and walkers should NOT be left behind.
NON-AMBULATORY

- Most non-ambulatory people will be able to exit safely without assistance out of single story buildings.

- All 2+ story buildings will require persons to be carried out. If evacuation assistance is required, always ask the person what method of assistance they prefer. Some people have minimal ability to move and lifting them may be dangerous to their wellbeing. If the person prefers to be moved in their wheelchair the wheelchair user will be carried facing away from the stairs.

- Some people have no upper trunk or neck strength to assist in being carried out. If a seatbelt is available, secure the person if use of a chair is the method employed to carry the person to safety.

- If moving a person more than three (3) flights, a “relay team” arrangement is needed. If a wheelchair is left behind, do NOT leave it in an exit path or doorway to become an obstacle.

- Wheelchairs have many movable weak parts which were not constructed to withstand the stress of lifting (e.g., the seat bar, footplates, wheels, movable armrests).

- Frequently, non-ambulatory persons have respiratory complications or rely on electric artificial respirators. They should be given priority assistance if there is smoke or fumes, as their ability to breathe are seriously in danger.

- Power wheelchairs may have heavy batteries, which are difficult to remove. In this situation, the best response may be to ask the person to transfer to an evacuation chair, if one is available, so that they can be moved immediately. If it is not possible for the person to be removed from the chair (i.e., if the person uses respiratory equipment that is attached to the chair), wait for assistance. If attempting to move a power wheelchair, remove the batteries. Make sure the footrests are locked, the motor is off, and it is in neutral gear. Some power wheelchairs and scooters may not have heavy battery packs, and may be moved with little difficulty.

- If the person prefers to be removed from their wheelchair, their needs and preferences will vary. Always consult the person as to his/her preference with regards to:
  - Ways of being removed from a wheelchair
  - Number of people needed for assistance
  - Whether to extend, or move extremities when lifting because of pain, catheter, leg bags, spasticity, braces, etc.
  - Seat cushion or pad should be brought along with him/her if he/she is removed from the wheelchair.
  - Consider the position facing forward or backward to a flight of stairs.
- After-care. If a person is removed from the wheelchair (i.e., a stretcher, chair with cushion pad, or car seat) perhaps paramedic assistance might be needed.

☐ The person will need their wheelchair retrieved as soon as possible. The wheelchair is essential to the person’s mobility and should be given a high priority to be retrieved as soon as possible. Inform the Campus Security of the location of wheelchair(s) to be retrieved.

POWER OUTAGES

☐ If an outage occurs during the day and people with disabilities choose to wait in the building for electricity to be restored, they can move near a window where there is natural light and access to a working telephone. During regular building hours, a Safety Coordinator, Office of Disability Services, or the Campus Security should be notified.

☐ If people would like to leave and an evacuation has been ordered, or if the outage occurs at night, call Campus Security at x2222 from a campus telephone to request evacuation assistance.

☐ On campus phones may not continue to operate in the event of a power failure, use a cell phone to contact Campus Security at 951-785-5222.

EVACUATION OVERVIEW

Evacuation is difficult and uncomfortable for both the rescuers and the people being assisted. Some people have conditions that can be aggravated or triggered if they are moved incorrectly. Remember that environmental conditions (smoke, debris, loss of electricity) will complicate evacuation efforts.

The following guidelines are general and may not apply in every circumstance.

☐ Occupants should be invited to volunteer ahead of time to assist disabled people in an emergency. If a volunteer is not available, designate someone to assist who is willing to accept the responsibility.

☐ Volunteers should obtain evacuation training for certain types of lifting techniques through the Office of Disability Services.

☐ Two or more trained volunteers, if available, should conduct the evacuation and relay teams established if the evacuation is more than three flights.

☐ Always ASK people with special needs, how you can help BEFORE attempting any rescue technique or giving assistance. Ask how they can best be assisted or moved, and if there are any special considerations or items that need to come with them. Lifting a person may be harmful. Ask their preference about being carried
forward or backward down a flight of stairs. Ask whether a seat cushion or pad should be brought along. Wheelchairs were not designed to handle the stress of lifting. Batteries may have to be removed and life support equipment could be connected.

- Before attempting an evacuation, volunteers and people being assisted should discuss how lifting will be done and where they are going.

- Proper lifting techniques (e.g., bending the knees, keeping the back straight, holding the person close before lifting, and using leg muscles to lift) should be used to avoid injury to rescuers’ backs. Ask permission of the evacuee if an evacuation chair or similar device is being considered as an aid in an evacuation. When using such devices, make sure the person is secured properly. Rest at landings if necessary.

- Certain lifts may need to be modified depending on a person’s disability.

- Persons who must be taken out of the wheelchair to be transported can be carried by:
  - Pack-Strap Carry: Initiate the technique at the top of a flight of stairs where the carrier can use the handrail for support in lifting.
  - If the student has no arm strength or is less than half the carrier’s weight, use the “cradle”, similar to the technique used when picking up a small child.

- A straight back chair or evacuation chair requires at least three strong people are available who can control the chair (if the person agrees to this method).
SUMMARY

Everyone needs to prepare for emergencies and take responsibility in an emergency. People with abilities should consider what they would do and whether they need to take additional steps to prepare. Prepare occupants in your building ahead of time for emergency evacuations. Know your building occupants. Train staff, faculty, and students to be aware of the needs of people with disabilities and to know how to offer assistance. Hold evacuation drills in which occupants participate, and evaluate drills to identify areas that need improvement. Develop plans that include business hours, after hours, and weekends.

At alarm, options are:

- In an extreme emergency, leave the building immediately and notify emergency personnel of a disabled person needing assistance.
- In a moderate emergency, help the disabled person to your department area of safe refuge assembly point, leave the building, and notify emergency personnel of a disabled person needing assistance.
- Assist the person with special needs to evacuate.
Think about What May Happen During and After an Earthquake or other Disaster:

Consider your daily activities. Think about how a disaster will impact your life. Take into consideration what you do independently and where you may need assistance. Keep in mind that your regular sources of assistance may not be available after a disaster. Plan now for how you will meet your needs.

- What if power, gas, and phone lines are not working?
- What if roads and sidewalks are impassible or your means of transportation is unavailable?
- How will you maintain supplies of water, food, medications, and other critical needs?

  - **Right now:** Make a list of equipment and medication you may need if you had to leave your home. Store extras, labeled with your name and contact information, in your disaster supplies kit. (See Step 3, below)

This guide follows the **Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety**, featured in the *Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country* series of publications at [www.earthquakecountry.org/roots](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/roots) and online at [www.earthquakecountry.org/sevensteps](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/sevensteps). The content has been specially adapted for people with disabilities and other access and functional needs.

**STEP 1 – Secure Your Space by identifying hazards and securing moveable items:**

When you enter a room, look for safe places to Drop, Cover, and Hold On (see Step 5).

- Safe spaces are places where heavy or falling objects and breaking glass will not injure you, such as under tables or desks and along inside walls.
- The more limitations you have, the more important it is to create safe spaces for yourself - especially if you cannot Drop, Cover, and Hold On under a desk or table.
- Create safe spaces by bolting heavy furniture to wall studs, moving heavy items to low shelves, securing hanging art to walls with closed hooks, or taking other measures found at [www.earthquakecountry.org/step1](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/step1)
- Secure essential equipment such as oxygen tanks or other life support devices, so they will not fall, sustain damage or cause injury.
- When you are in public places, be aware of your surroundings and identify your safe spaces.

**STEP 2 – Plan to Be Safe by creating a disaster plan and deciding how you will communicate in an emergency.**

Include your family and Personal Support Team (PST) when creating, reviewing, and practicing your plans:

- Develop your Personal Support Team (PST) at home, work, and every place where you spend a lot of time.
  - A PST is made up of at least three people who are within walking distance
and can assist you immediately, such as family, neighbors and co-workers.

- Team members will need to know how to enter your home to check on you in case you are injured or cannot answer the door.
- Make sure your team knows your schedule, how best to assist you, how to operate any necessary equipment, and inform them when you go out of town.

- Label all your adaptive equipment with your current contact information.
- Identify an out of area contact. Preferably someone who lives out of state and is willing to be your main point of contact for family and friends on your status. Make sure your PST has your contact’s information.
- Have an evacuation plan – identify a meeting place just outside your home where you can make sure everyone has gotten out safely. Identify a second meeting place outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot return home. Share this information with your PST and family members.
- If you are near a beach, large lake or in a tsunami evacuation zone, learn what to do at www.tsunamizone.org.
- Make a care plan for your pets as they most likely will not be allowed in shelters. Only service animals are allowed in shelters. Check with your local animal control or SPCA about pet sheltering in a disaster.
- More recommendations for how to Plan to be Safe are at www.earthquakecountry.org/step2.
STEP 3 – *Organize Disaster Supplies in convenient locations*

Create a kit specific to your needs. Include the following:

- Food (consider your specific dietary needs)
- Water
- Medications (both prescription and over-the-counter medications) and medical supplies
- Medical information and medication list
- Copy of prescriptions
- Emergency contact information
- Communication supplies
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Supplies for your specific needs
  - Examples: Hearing aid batteries, eye glasses, walking stick, oxygen or nebulizer supplies, blood glucose tester, special equipment or hygiene and catheter supplies, feeding equipment, and VNS magnet
- Radio with extra batteries. Consider getting a NOAA weather radio too
- Cash
- Set of clothes, appropriate for the season
- Heavy gloves (suitable to clean debris and chemicals)
- Hygiene Supplies
- First Aid Kit
- Face mask to protect from dust and debris
- Copy of photo ID/driver’s license and utility bill
  - For identification and proof of address (may be needed if you must go to a shelter, re-enter an evacuation area or apply for disaster assistance)
  - Attach a Go Bag to your bedpost or bed frame with flashlight, batteries, sturdy close-toed shoes, heavy gloves, a whistle or noise maker, and an emergency information list.

Service animal/pet owners need to make a kit containing supplies for these animals. For more information about pet/service animal preparedness see [http://www.ccadt.org/emergency-kits-for-household-pets.html](http://www.ccadt.org/emergency-kits-for-household-pets.html)

Learn more about Organizing Disaster Supplies at [www.earthquakecountry.org/step3](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/step3).

STEP 4 – *Minimize Financial Hardship* by organizing important documents, strengthening your property, and considering insurance.

STEP 5 – *Drop, Cover, and Hold On* when the ground shakes

**Practice what to do:**
- Participate in a *Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill* in your region ([www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org)) and encourage others, including your personal support team, to participate with you!
- Put your plan into action during your drills. Include family members, personal support team members, and caregivers.
- Challenges identified during your drill will provide the opportunity to revise your plan to better accommodate your needs.

**What to do During an Earthquake:**
Protect yourself in the safest place possible near where you are. The greater your limitations the more critical it is to create safe spaces for yourself.

Do NOT try to exit a building during an earthquake. You are more likely to be injured when you attempt to exit structures during the shaking.

**Drop** under a sturdy piece of furniture or against an inside wall. Take **Cover** under a desk or table if possible and protect your head and neck with one arm/hand. **Hold On** to a desk or furniture leg to keep it from shifting or uncovering you until the shaking completely stops. Learn more at [www.earthquakecountry.org/step5](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/step5).

**If it is difficult to Drop, Cover, and Hold On:**
- If you are in a wheelchair, recliner or bed, **stay put** and do not try to transfer during the shaking. Cover your head and neck with your arms or a pillow until the shaking stops.
- People who use wheelchairs: lock your wheels and cover your head and neck until the shaking stops. The force of the earthquake may knock you to the ground.
- The shaking motion may increase difficulties moving around for those with mobility or balance issues.
- If you have difficulty getting back up after dropping under a desk or table, get as low as possible and move away from windows or other items that can fall on you.
- If it helps, count out loud until the shaking stops. Hearing your voice can ground you, help reassure others you are okay and keep them calm and focused.

STEP 6 – *Improve Safety* after earthquakes by evacuating if necessary, helping the injured, and preventing further injuries or damage.

Once the shaking stops:

- Check yourself for injury, paying extra attention to areas where you have reduced sensations.
- A tsunami may be possible for coastal regions that experience shaking for more than 20
seconds. In those instances you should move inland to a nearby hill or to a higher floor of a large building. Do not wait for an official warning.

• Be prepared for aftershocks. Stay close to and aware of the safe spaces in your environment.
• Look around for hazards such as broken glass and objects in your way.
• Furniture may have shifted and sound cues may not be available to individuals with visual disabilities.
• Evacuate only if necessary, otherwise stay where you are.
• If the authorities advise an evacuation for your area, follow their directions immediately.
• Learn more about how to Improve Safety at www.earthquakecountry.org/step6.

STEP 7 – Reconnect and Restore: Restore daily life by reconnecting with others, repairing damage, and rebuilding community

• Follow your disaster plan.
• Notify you’re out of area contact of your status, then keep phone lines clear. Text messaging may be more reliable than phone calls.
• Expect aftershocks and remain aware of your surroundings. The aftershocks may change conditions or create new hazards; continue to be prepared to protect yourself.
• Repair or replace damaged items as needed.
• After any disaster, review and revise your disaster plan. Apply any lessons learned.
• Learn more about how to Reconnect and Restore at www.earthquakecountry.org/step7.

Considerations for refrigerated medications:

• When there is a loss of power, keep medications in the refrigerator until it becomes warm, at which point they can be moved it to the freezer. When the freezer becomes too warm, transfer medication to a small, insulated container and use chemical cold packs to keep cool.
• Ask your doctor or pharmacist how long your medications can be unrefrigerated.
• If you evacuate to a shelter, tell shelter staff that you have refrigerated medications.

Disability-Specific Tips:

People with Developmental/Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities:

• Have a written or visual checklist with short, easy steps.
• Include communication tools in your kit that you know how to use. People who are nonverbal can include pictures, written phrases, or Kwik Points for easier communication.
• Store extra batteries for portable communication devices.
• Practice Drop, Cover, and Hold On and your plan. Regular practice will help you to remember what to do and to remain calmer when a disaster occurs.
• Practice telling care assistants and responders how to communicate with you, such as using simple, short, and clear language for instructions.

People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

• Have more than one method to receive warnings and evacuation information.
• Store extra batteries in your disaster kits for hearing or communication devices.
• Keep pen and paper in your kits for receiving and communicating information.
• Prior to an earthquake, identify and test multiple ways to receive warnings and evacuation information. Ask a PST member to keep you up to date on emergency information as it is released.

**People who are Blind or Visually Impaired:**
• Earthquakes can cause items to fall and furniture to shift making navigating the room more difficult.
• Sound clues may not be available.
• While evacuating move slowly and check for obstacles in the way. Shuffling your feet when there is a lot of debris on the ground will reduce your likelihood of falling.
• Store extra canes, batteries and supplies for your communication devices.
• Label emergency supplies using large print, fluorescent tape, Braille, or other preferred methods.

**For Service Animals:**
• Keep license and ID tags on service animals at all times.
• Create a Service Animal Disaster Kit; keep copies of any service animal certification or documentation including immunization records, medications, and veterinarian’s contact information in that kit.
• Store extra animal food, water, and feeding bowls.
• Keep an extra harness and/or leash with your disaster supplies.
• Your service animal may be frightened or injured and may not be able to work after the earthquake. There is increased risk of injury to their paws from broken glass or debris on the ground.
• Be prepared to use alternate equipment if your animal cannot provide its normal services.
• Arrange for your PST to check on you and your animal.
• Service animals are allowed in shelters, pets are not. Be prepared to explain what services your animal performs for you.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THESE TIPS:**
• Create safe spaces for yourself.
• Develop your Personal Support Team (PST) and include them in all phases of your planning.
• Help members of your PST develop their individual and family plans.
• Make disaster supply kits for your home, car, and office and for your service animal.
• Practice Drop, Cover, and Hold On and your disaster plan.
• Advocate for yourself! Make sure you are included in practice drills at home, work and in your community.
• Volunteer with your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or other community-based emergency response organization.
• Update your plan, contacts, and supplies at least annually so they are current.
Additional Resources for People with Disabilities and Other Access & Functional Needs:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs

Earthquake Country Alliance/ShakeOut
www.earthquakecountry.org/disability

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov/Features/EmergencyPreparedness

Preparing Together – Salvation Army
www.preparingtogether.org/mm5/merchant.mvc

EPI Global – inclusive emergency management practices and resources
www.epiglobal.org

Disaster resources for people with disabilities and others with access & functional needs
www.JIK.com/disaster.html

CA Emergency Management Agency, Office of Access & Functional Needs (OAFN)
www.calema.ca.gov/ChiefofStaff/Pages/Access-and-Functional-Needs.aspx

Preparedness for Pets and Service Animals
www.ccadt.org/disaster-preparedness.html