

DHS Approved Definition

July, 2015

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