

Key Earthquake Safety Tips for People with Disabilities and Other Access or Functional Needs

If you have a physical disability or movement limitation:

During earthquakes it is important to protect yourself from falling, or being hit by falling objects. When shaking begins, if possible:

- **Drop** down to the floor (before the earthquake knocks you down);
- Take **Cover** under a table or desk (or cover your head and neck with your arms); and
- **Hold On** to the leg or other part of the furniture until the shaking stops.

If you have mobility or balance issues, the shaking motion may increase your difficulties. Get to the floor in a seated position (and against an inside wall if possible). Protect your head and neck with your arms.

If you are unable to “Drop, Cover, and Hold On”:

If you have difficulty getting safely to the floor on your own, get as low as possible, protect your head and neck, moving away from windows or other items that can fall on you.

- If in a recliner or bed, do not try to move during the shaking. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.
- If using a wheelchair, lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops.
- Always protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.

Deaf or hard of hearing:

Be sure to have more than one method to receive warnings and evacuation information.

Blind or low vision:

Earthquakes can cause items to fall and furniture to shift. Regular sound clues may not be available afterwards. Move with caution.

Developmental/Cognitive/Intellectual disabilities:

For anyone who has difficulty understanding, remembering, or learning - keep simple, short instructions and important information with you and in your kits. If they use augmentative communication supports, include these in your planning.

Additional Guidance: www.earthquakecountry.org/disability

Additional Disaster Preparedness Recommendations:

- Develop or update your individual and family plans. Be sure to include your communication plans and contacts.
- Make emergency Go Kits (portable or backpack size) for your home, car, and office... and don't forget your service animal and pets too! Store extra batteries and any needed supplies in your kits.
- Label any adaptive equipment or other devices you use with your contact information in case they are separated from you.
- Create safe spaces by securing heavy furniture and other items that could fall, injure you, or block your way out.
- Build a Personal Support Team of several people to check on you in case you need assistance. Include them in all phases of your planning.
- Care providers should also practice drills *with the individuals they serve* on a regular basis.
- Make sure you are included in emergency plans and practice drills at home, work and in your community.
- Get involved! Volunteer with your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), or another emergency response organization in your area.
- If you live near the coast, find out if you are in a tsunami hazard zone. Practice tsunami evacuations with your care provider or support team.
- Practice your disaster plan and "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" regularly.

Find out more

www.earthquakecountry.org/disability