Coalition for Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP)

Ensuring Safety and Accessibility for All Washingtonians During Crises
Supported by the Washington Statewide Independent Living Council (WASILC)

THE REALITY: Disproportionate Impact in Emergencies

Approximately **23.5% of adults in Washington state live with a disability**. More new disability cases arise during disasters. During wildfires, extreme weather, and other emergencies, these Washingtonians face significantly higher risks of injury, displacement, and death. Traditional emergency response systems often lack accessible communication, inclusive evacuation protocols, and ADA-compliant sheltering. When planning isn't inclusive, lives are put at risk.

The Data Demands Action:

- **2x to 4x Higher Risk:** Across the United States, individuals with disabilities are 2 to 4 times more likely to die or sustain a critical injury during a disaster than people without disabilities.
- **Severe Post-Disaster Disparities:** Recent U.S. Census Bureau data shows extreme gaps in post-disaster recovery. For example, 70% of Deaf evacuees report living in unsanitary conditions a month after a disaster, a massive disparity compared to the general population.

OUR ROOTS: Born Out of Urgency

CIEP was formed in May 2014—literally the day before the tragic Oso landslide that claimed 43 lives—when disability advocates, public health officials, and state emergency managers recognized a critical gap in Washington's disaster readiness. For over a decade, CIEP has built a vast network of CMIST (Communication, Maintaining Health, Independence, Support, Transportation) partner organizations to ensure no Washingtonian is left behind.

THE SOLUTION: What is CIEP?

The Coalition for Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP), supported by WASILC, bridges the gap between the disability community and state/local emergency management. We provide vital technical assistance, training, and strategic guidance to ensure that emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts are fully accessible.

OUR ONGOING IMPACT ACROSS WASHINGTON

- **Comprehensive Emergency Integration:** CIEP's impact reaches far beyond Mass Care (ESF-6). We actively inform Public Health (ESF-8), Transportation via RARET (ESF-1), housing recovery transition, and accessible emergency communications.
- **Risk Management & Civil Rights:** We help local and state agencies navigate civil rights and disability laws (such as HB 5046 for ASL access), mitigating state liability and protecting human rights during chaotic disaster responses.
- **First Responder Training:** We host statewide webinars that equip first responders and Public Information Officers (PIOs) with critical skills in emergency signage/gestures, public broadcasts, and accessible communication.
- **County-Level Coordination:** We conduct targeted outreach to prepare all 39 Washington counties for inclusive responses, promoting local coalitions (e.g., the Spokane DAFN and the taskforce after the Medical Lake/OR Road fires).

SUSTAINING LIFESAVING INFRASTRUCTURE

Disasters do not wait. As climate emergencies escalate, proactive inclusive planning reduces emergency rescue burdens, ensures legal compliance, and most importantly, saves lives. Sustaining CIEP's infrastructure ensures:

1. **Capacity Building:** Expanding outreach so every county has access to inclusive emergency planning technical assistance and local coalition building.
2. **Training & Education:** Scaling our first responder and emergency manager training programs for accessible broadcasts.
3. **Community Resilience:** Empowering individuals with disabilities to develop their own readiness plans, tools for service animal preparedness, and proposed emergency credentialing for ASL interpreters.

We must ensure the principle of **"Nothing About Us, Without Us"** applies to every stage of emergency management in Washington.

Sources:

1. CDC Disability and Health Data System (DHDS), Washington State 2022 Data.
2. Center for American Progress, *Serving the Hardest Hit*, 2018.
3. *New Census Data Shows U.S. Fails Disabled People After Disasters*, analyzing U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Data.