

Attachment 4 - Who are "people with special needs"?

In the context of emergencies and disasters, this means members of our community with little or no ability to address their own preparedness, response and recovery and people whose life circumstance leave them needing more than what traditional emergency response agencies provide. This includes anything that prevents you or them from following emergency instructions or fully using traditional disaster preparedness and response services.

Nonprofits, as well as other care and service providers, are the trained and trusted support system for the special needs community, which includes:

- **Physically disabled** (ranging from minor disabilities causing restriction of some motions or activities, to totally disabled requiring full-time attendant care for feeding, toileting, and personal care.)
- **Mentally disabled** (ranging from minor disabilities where independence and ability to function in most circumstances is retained, to no ability to safely survive independently, attend to personal care, etc.)
- **Blind, visually impaired, low vision Deaf, hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing**
- **Frail/elderly, seniors Children, unattended minors, runaways, latchkey kids**
- **Geographically isolated** - no access to services or information, limited access to escape routes
- Limited or non-English speaking, monolingual
- **Undocumented persons, political dissidents, and others** who will not avail themselves of government or Red Cross facilities or services due to a variety of reasons Ex-convicts, registered offenders and other clients of the criminal justice system
- **Culturally isolated** - includes people with little or no interaction or involvement outside of immediate community. This is the broad meaning of the words 'culture' and 'community', including religious, ethnic, poverty, sexual orientation, etc.
- **Medically dependent** - includes those dependent on life sustaining medications such as with HIV/AIDS and diabetes, or are dependent on medications to control conditions and maintain quality of life such as pain medications, allergy medications, seizure control medications etc.
- **Medically fragile** - such as people with multiple chemical sensitivities, and those who cannot be in, or use public accommodations for a variety of reasons.
- **Chemically dependent** - includes substance abusers and others who would experience withdrawal or other symptoms due to lack of access, such as methadone users.
- Homeless, shelter dependent - including shelters for abused women and children Poor, extremely low income Single parents with no support systems
- **Owners of pets, companion animals, and livestock** - includes those who will make life and death decisions based on their animals, such as refusing to evacuate or go to a shelter if it means separating from an animal.
- **Emergent special needs** - includes those developing special needs because of the disaster, such as spontaneous anxiety/stress disorders, or recurrence of a dormant health condition, etc.
- **Transient special needs** - includes people temporarily classified as special needs due to a transient condition, status or illness - includes groups such as tourists who'll need care until they can leave, those who can't see until glasses are replaced, or can't hear until hearing aid is replaced, etc.