

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO

**EMERGENCY
OPERATIONS
PLAN**

ADDENDUM
FOR
PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AT THE University of Hawaii at Hilo

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Organization on Disability, the number of persons with disabilities reflect a wide range of accessibility needs including the four million persons requiring assistance in daily living activities, the eight million who have limited vision, the 28 million with hearing loss, the 1.5 million who use wheelchairs, and those with multiple disabilities (National Organization on Disability, 2002).

State of Hawaii figures reflect a higher need for persons with disabilities with 20 percent of the 1.2 million residents identified as persons with disabilities; the national average is 10 percent (National Organization on Disability, 2002). Out of the 248,980 identified subjects, 12.3% were registered as living on the Big Island (Disability and Communication Access Board, personal communication, June 28, 2004).

As part of the equal access to program and services component of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), all states are required to have programmatic inclusion for persons with disabilities in all disaster plans developed under the Title II of the ADA. The attached document is to assist persons with disabilities while on the University of Hawaii at Hilo campus to be better prepared for their own safety during large or small scale emergencies, and to ensure equal access to all UHH evacuation procedures. Persons from the disability community (internal or external) were contacted to review and provide input to the preliminary drafts of this document.

IDENTIFICATION

Self-identifications by persons with disabilities attending any University sponsored program, activity, class, event is critical for the University to provide the appropriate accommodation. However, such declaration of the person's disability needs is purely an optional choice, but the University highly encourages persons with disabilities to notify the institution of their needs. The information will be kept on a confidential basis in the University Disability Services Office as a master list that will be made available to the appropriate emergency personnel during the time of an emergency. It is important for persons with disabilities to be aware of the fact that self-identification does not require a person to access disability accommodations. In times of crisis, planning to have the additional supports may prove to be a valuable proactive decision that may save a life. The danger in not declaring one's disability needs is that when assistance is required, it may not be there when needed. **Notice of Safe Evacuation Guidelines (Appendix A)** Posters will be strategically placed throughout the UHH campus.

If desired, the person with a disability could complete the voluntary **Request for Accommodation form (Appendix B)**, and indicate the request for **evacuation assistance in the time of an emergency**. Submit this signed form to the ADA Coordinator located in the University Disability Services Office (Student Services Center, Room E-215). The ADA Coordinator will contact the person with disability to begin discussions on the accommodation based on the individual's disability needs.

PREPARATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that employers, public services, public entities, and services operated by private entities modify their policies and procedures to include people with disabilities.

As such, it is highly encourages that each person, with or without a disability, develops his or her own emergency evacuation plan for his or her home/work/living environments.

In preparing an **Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan**, it is important to build in flexibility, and begin preparing a plan as early as possible. Repetition, modification and familiarity with the personal plan will be critical factors to the success of the plan.

Complete the optional **Ability Self-Assessment Form (Appendix C)** to assist you in identifying additional factors in the development of the individual Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan.

Any person with a disability can provide input on the Emergency Operations Plan for Persons with Disabilities to the campus ADA Coordinator at anytime by contacting the University Disability Services Office at 932-7623 (V), 932-7002 (TTY). Although each person has ultimate responsibility for their own safety during an emergency, proactive discussion with the campus ADA Coordinator to ensure that selection of, and use of the accommodation, procedures, equipment and assistive devices will work for the person with a disability. The following are the minimal considerations in the creation of the individual's **Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan**:

- 1) **KNOW HOW TO GET TO ALL THE EXITS, OR AREA OF RESCUE (Appendix E), AND PRACTICE THIS AS PART OF A REGULAR DRILL SCHEDULE (i.e., minimally on a yearly basis). Ask to alert the Police or Firemen of your position in the AREA OF RESCUE;**
- 2) **PRACTICE USING EVACUATION DEVICE (as appropriate);**

The University of Hawaii at Hilo does not have evacuation chairs, and relies upon the use of the existing AREAS OF RESCUE as one of the available Emergency options.

- 3) **LEARN TO REPORT SAFETY HAZARDS (i.e., fire extinguishers that need to be replaced, furniture and other items that block passages, emergency call boxes in need of repair, etc.) to the UDS Office;**

- 4) IF YOU ARE HARD-OF-HEARING OR DEAF, PRACTICE COMMUNICATING IMPORTANT INFORMATION WITH YOUR CO-WORKERS BY GESTURES OR OTHER MEANS;
- 5) IF YOU ARE BLIND, PRACTICE WITH CO-WORKERS ON GUIDING YOU OUT OF PREMISES;
- 6) IF YOU USE A SERVICE ANIMAL, INCLUDE THE ANIMAL IN ALL YOUR PRACTICE DRILLS;

It is important to anticipate how you will function if your service animal becomes confused, disoriented, or frightened. In addition to the emotional status of your service animal, it is important to anticipate the distinct possibility of having hazardous debris scattered throughout your local vicinity. Be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate with your immediate environment (i.e., trained sighted guides, and members of your “buddy” support system);

- 7) IF ENGLISH IS NOT YOUR PRIMARY LANGUAGE, LEARN TO COMMUNICATE USING PICTOGRAMS, PRE-PRINTED MESSAGE CARDS, OR SPEAK USING CONCISE SHORT PHRASES;
- 8) PRACTICE DEALING WITH DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND UNFORSEEN SITUATIONS, SUCH AS BLOCKED PATHS OR EXITS; and,
- 9) PRACTICE WITH YOUR “BUDDY” SUPPORT SYSTEMS (as Appropriate).

A “Buddy” Support System is recommended, but not mandatory, for certain Persons with disabilities. For an effective “buddy” support system to work, it is recommended that the “buddy” be someone with whom the person with a disability is familiar, is reliable and dependable, and will meet the physical needs of the person with a disability. The optimal situation is to have two, or more “buddies,” who are in the same work, residential unit, or recreational area. The person with a disability will be responsible for informing his/her “buddy” of his/her emergency evacuation needs.

In the time of emergency it is recommended that the “buddies” attempt to locate The person with a disability. If unsuccessful to identify the whereabouts of the person, they are to immediately alert the **Building Administrator or Assistant Building Administrator (see Appendix D)**. It is also recommended that the person with a disability identify themselves to the Security Office (974-7911) when in any building after hours.

- 10) Be prepared by carrying important medical or essential supplies, including:

medication, small flashlight, fully charged portable communication devices, paper, and pencil, customized pre-printed messages, and emergency health information.

- 11) Know how to contact emergency personnel in the event of an emergency. Refer to the attached **Building Administrators and Assistant Building Administrators list (Appendix D)**.
- 12) If you are assisting a person with a vision, hearing, mobility, or learning Disability it is recommended that you use the suggested information for **Spontaneous Assistance Techniques (Appendix E)** for these specific disabilities.
- 13) For those requiring captioned text for televised information on statewide emergencies. KHON/FOX network on Channels 2 or 3 will broadcast with this text option.
- 14) For emergencies on the Big Island, current updates are provided on the County of Hawaii Civil Defense web site (www.hawaii-county.com/directory/dir_defense.htm).
- 15) If you are a Red Cross volunteer with a disability, the Red Cross has Information on their web site that you might find helpful (www.redcross.org/services/volunteer/0,1082,0_424_00.html).