Earthquake Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities or Access and Functional Needs

No individual who sees or experiences a disaster is untouched by it, and Persons with access and functional needs face additional challenges. Planning ahead can make all the difference.

Before an Earthquake
- Create a disaster plan. More information is available at dhs.in.gov/2779.htm.
- Create safe spaces by identifying hazards and securing items.
  - Safe spaces are places where falling objects or breaking glass are not as likely to cause fatalities or injuries.
- Assemble an emergency preparedness kit. More information is available at dhs.in.gov/2783.htm.

When Shaking Begins: Drop, Cover and Hold On
- Drop down to the floor.
- Protect head and neck by taking cover under a table or desk.
- Hold on to the legs or other part of the furniture until the shaking stops.

If Drop, Cover and Hold On Is Not Possible
- Get as low as possible and move away from windows or other items that can fall.
- Do not try to transfer from a wheelchair, recliner or bed during an earthquake. Wait until the shaking stops before transferring.
- If in a wheelchair, lock wheels and remain seated until shaking stops.
- Duck and cover to protect the head and neck.
- NOTE: Most earthquake-related injuries and deaths in the U.S. are caused by falling or flying objects, not collapsed buildings.

Once the Shaking Stops
- Check for injuries.
- Be prepared for aftershocks by staying close to safe spaces.
- Identify hazards in immediate surroundings (broken glass, sharp objects, debris).
- Evacuate if possible, otherwise remain in safe place.
- Follow the instruction of emergency authorities immediately.

For more information on how to plan for flooding preparedness:
Visit GetPrepared.IN.gov
Situation-Specific Safety Consideration

**Persons who have a Physical Disability or Movement Limitations**
- Shaking motion may increase difficulties for persons who have mobility or balance limitations.
- If possible, get to the floor in a seated position and against an inside wall.
- Protect the head and neck with arms.

**Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**
- Prior to an earthquake, identify and test multiple ways to receive warnings and evacuation information.
- Store extra batteries in disaster kits for hearing or communications devices.
- Keep pen and paper in kits as a backup to receive and communicate information.

**Persons Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired**
- Regular sound clues may not be available following an earthquake.
- Move with caution—shuffle feet and take small steps to reduce likelihood of falling.
- Store an extra cane with emergency kit.
- Label emergency supplies using large print, fluorescent tape, braille or other preferred methods.

**Persons Who Have a Developmental/Cognitive or Intellectual Disability**
- Keep a simple written or visual checklist of what to do and important information in safety kit.
- Practice emergency plans (including drop, cover and hold on) in advance.
- Store extra batteries for portable communication devices.

**Persons Who Have a Service Animal**
- Keep license and ID tags on service animal at all times.
- Keep copies of the animal’s health records, animal certification and veterinarian contact information.
- Maintain instructions on how to care for the service animal, as well as a photo in the event separation occurs.

**Consideration for Refrigerated Medication**
- Keep at least a week-long supply of prescription medicines, along with a list of the dosages and any allergies. Talk to a doctor about possible alternative medication in place of refrigerated medication to have on hand in the event of an emergency.
- If medications require refrigeration and that is not available due to power outage or other issues consider using the freezer or a small cooler with cold packs.
- When being evacuated, notify first responders about refrigerated medications as soon as possible.