Progress in Providing Access for Disabled Visitors to Capitol Hill

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Statutory Requirements

- Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Employment 42 U.S.C. 12111 et seq.
Public Services – ADA Title II

- 42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.
  - Public Entities must provide equal access to programs and services for individuals with disabilities
  - Visitors, constituents, lobbyists
  - Removal of barriers – architectural or communication
  - Modification to rules, practices, procedures
Architectural Barriers Removed

All offices of government on Capitol Hill are accessible to individuals in wheelchairs. 28 CFR 35.150; 36.304; Pt 36 App. A.
Architectural Barriers Removed

Many protruding objects have been modified so they do not endanger an individual who uses a White Cane 28 C.F.R. Pt 36 App A Sec 4.4
Communication Barriers Removed

Signage in High Contrast, Braille and Mounted at the Correct Height 28 C.F.R. Pt 36 App A Sec 4.30
Communication Barriers Removed

- Wall maps
- Staging areas and accessible exits clearly marked

28 Pt 36 App A Sec 4.1.3(16), 4.1.(e) and 4.3
Equal Access to Programs  28 C.F.R. 35.150, 35.130(b)(iii)

- Aid, Benefit or Service Must be **As Effective As That Which is Provided to Others.**
Equal Access to Programs  28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(iii)

- Staging Areas Integral Part of Evacuation Program
Presenters for Office of Compliance Working Group meeting on Evacuating People with Disabilities
March 13, 2008

Scott R. Linsky – USCP Associate Director of Emergency Management
Michael Salmons – LOC Emergency Management Program Officer
Mobility Impaired Evacuation within the United States Capitol Complex

Scott R. Linsky
Associate Director for Emergency Management
Office of Plans, Operations and Homeland Security
United States Capitol Police
Unique Emergency Preparedness Environment

- **Challenges**
  - Multiple large, old buildings
  - More than 1,000 individual employing offices
  - Significant interagency coordination required
  - High staff turnover
  - High percentage of 1st time visitors
  - Limitations on drills training

- **Advantages**
  - High density of trained law enforcement officers
  - Active emergency preparedness community
History

Pre 9/11
- Minimal history of real emergencies
- Alarm systems and response questionable
- Emergency Plans not coordinated
- Little effort put into emergency preparedness

Progress
- Additional emergency measures added to plans
- Establishment of preparedness programs
- Emergency Measures Task Force
Life-Safety / Emergency Management Coordinating Structure

House

- House Leadership
  - Officers of the House
    - HSAA
    - OEPPO
  - USCP Office of Plans, Operations & Homeland Security

Senate

- Senate Leadership
  - Officers of the Senate
    - OSEP
  - Capitol Police Board
    - Members:
      - Senate Sergeant at Arms
      - House Sergeant at Arms
      - Architect of the Capitol
      - Chief, USCP (ex officio)

Emergency Measures Task Force

- USCP Chairs
- House & Senate
- Leg Branch Agencies
- Admin Ofc of the U.S Courts
- U.S. Supreme Court
- DC Fire & EMS

Forum for:
- Plans
- Procedures
- Equipment
- Training
- Exercises and Drills
- Concerns and Issues

Leg Branch and Other EM Agencies
History

Progress

- Establishment of preparedness programs
- Emergency Measures Task Force
- Drill program established
- Emergency actions standardized
- Elevator evacuation program
Why an Elevator Evacuation Program

- To provide for the **safe & rapid evacuation of the Capitol complex during an emergency**
  - Moves persons with disabilities to the escape floor by the most expeditious and safe means
    - Elevator Code Compliant
    - Fire Marshal Approved
  - Utilizes trained emergency responders
  - Allows persons to remain in **their** wheelchairs during evacuation
  - “Buddies” assist persons with disabilities
Why an Elevator Evacuation Program

- To standardize procedures for the safe & rapid evacuation of persons with disabilities during an emergency
  - Initiate procedures as quickly as possible when fire alarm activates
  - Evacuates persons with disabilities at same time as everyone else
  - Provides safeguards for public and police
Why an Elevator Evacuation Program Makes Sense

- The size of Congressional Office Buildings
  - 624,000 – 2,380,000 Square Feet
  - 45,000 Square Feet in a Football Field

- Fire History/Containment
  - Construction of Buildings
  - Smoke Detection and Sprinklers
  - DCFD Response

- Elevator Availability
  - Elevators selected meet specific criteria
    - Emergency Back-up Power
    - Location
Multi-Agency Approach

- Congressional Offices
  - Evacuation Assisters
- House/Senate/AOC Emergency Planners
  - Identification of persons needing assistance
  - Smoke Hoods
- USCP
  - Elevator Evacuation Program
  - Building Sweeps
  - Community Outreach
- DCFD
  - Rescue
Usual Signage at Elevators
Emergency Staging Areas

- Located in designated elevator lobbies
- Protected by smoke detectors
- Protected by sprinklers
- Monitored as Police Officers Clear Building
- Emergency phones being installed
Emergency Call Box
Being installed and activated at Staging Areas
Elevator Evacuation Training

- USCP Officers
  - Elevator Operations
  - Evacuation Procedures
    - Staff
    - Visitors
  - Officer Safety
    - VRU
- Community
  - Trained by House and Senate on emergency actions and USCP protocols
Elevator Evacuation Procedure

- **USCP Officer**
  - Retrieves keys and captures elevator
  - Begins at highest floor and works down to ground level. Assist those waiting at the elevator bank.
  - Officers do not leave the elevator area, they let the officers clearing the floors direct people to the mobility impaired staging areas.
  - Repeated until the floors are cleared, the incident commander suspends operations, or the officer’s safety is jeopardized.
VRU
Victim Rescue Unit

- Voluntary device issued to elevator key posts
- To be used in an actual or perceived hazardous environment.
- If the officer dons this hood: EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY
Summary

- The Capitol Complex uses elevators to evacuate persons with disabilities.
- The program has been in place for more than three years with considerable success.
- Everyone affected must understand the program limitations and be prepared to use alternate procedures.
- Police Officers will address security of the building and then will assist in safe evacuation and facilitate communications.
  - Visitors not familiar with the procedure
  - All on what to do when alternate procedures must be employed.

- The program works!
Emergency Preparedness Program
Assisted Evacuations

Kenneth E. Lopez
Director
Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness
1. Emergency Preparedness Program Overview
2. Compliance and Guidance
3. Equipment, Systems, and Procedures
4. Collaboration and Outreach
5. Discussion
OSEP Emergency Preparedness Staff

Kenneth Lopez
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Medical Emergency Coordinator
Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Management Team

Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness

Collections Security Oversight Committee

Protective Services

Emergency Preparedness

Personnel Security

Police Force

Physical Security

Electronic Security

Information Technology Support
Facilities Overwatch

Emergency Preparedness integrated at all eight Library facilities

- Madison Building
- Jefferson Building
- Adams Building
- Landover Annex
- NLS for the BPH - Taylor St
- Packard Campus - Culpeper
- Child Development Center
- Collections Warehouse - Meade

House Page School

Child Development Center
Emergency Preparedness Framework

Core Missions:
- Evacuations
- Shelter in Place
- Continuity of Operations

Core Functions:
- Contingency Planning
- Collaboration and Coordination
- Communications
- Education and Training

Support Functions:
- Special Events
- Facilities Overwatch
- Medical Services
- Members Briefing Center
Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, Guidelines for Assisted Evacuations

The President
Executive Order 13347 – Individuals With Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness
Laws, Regulations, Orders, Guidelines for Assisted Evacuations

Americans with Disabilities Act

An ADA Guide for Local Governments

Making Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities

Introduction

In light of recent events, many employers are developing or re-evaluating emergency procedures to ensure the safe evacuation of all employees. A comprehensive emergency evacuation plan should provide for prompt and effective assistance to individuals whose medical conditions may necessitate it. Many employees have asked how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act affect their ability to achieve the goal. Specifically, employers have asked whether they may request information to help identify individuals who might need assistance because of a medical condition and whether they can share this information with others in the workplace. As the following questions and answers demonstrate, federal disability discrimination laws do not prevent employers from obtaining and appropriately using information necessary for a comprehensive emergency evacuation plan.

1. May an employer ask employees whether they will require assistance in the event of an evacuation because of a disability or medical condition?

Yes, some employers may need assistance because of medical conditions that are not visually apparent. Others may have obvious disabilities or medical conditions but may not need assistance. Employers, therefore, are allowed to ask employees to self-identify if they will require assistance because of a disability or medical condition.

2. How may an employer identify individuals who may require assistance?

There are three ways that an employer may obtain information:

a. After making a job offer, but before employment begins, an employer may ask all individuals whether they will need assistance during an emergency.

b. An employer also may periodically survey all of its current employees to determine whether they will require assistance in an emergency, as long as the employer makes it clear that self-administration is voluntary and explains the purpose for reducing the information.

c. Finally, whether an employer periodically surveys all employees or not, it may ask employees with known disabilities if they will require assistance in the event of an emergency. An employer should not assume, however, that someone with an obvious disability will need assistance during an evacuation. For example, many individuals who are blind may prefer to walk down stairs unassisted, and people with disabilities are generally in the best position to assess their particular needs.

An employer should inform all individuals who are asked about their needs for emergency assistance that the information they provide will be kept confidential and shared only with those who have responsibilities under the emergency evacuation plan. (See Question 4 below.)

3. May an employer specifically ask what type of assistance will be needed?

Yes, an employer may ask what type of assistance an employee will require in the event of an evacuation.
Four Categories of Disabilities

- Hidden
- Obvious
- Temporary
- Emergent
Disability Duration

- Lifelong
- Early-onset
- Progressive
- Recent
Disabilities and Evacuation

- **Mobility** - limitations that interfere with walking stairs as in joint pain; mobility device used: wheelchair, canes, crutches, walkers

- **Exertion** - reduced stamina, fatigue or tires easily due to a variety of temporary or permanent conditions

- **Respiratory** - inability to breathe triggered by stress, exertion, or exposure; cardiac conditions, asthma, emphysema or reaction to dust, smoke etc.

- **Cognitive** - confusion when dealing with unfamiliar and unusual activity as in loss of sense of direction; emergency directions maybe too complex
Disabilities and Evacuation

- **Emotional** - inability to function triggered by stress, exertion, or disturbing circumstances; anxiety attacks, panic disorders

- **Low Vision** - unable to see visual cues for mobility and egress; low vision, loss of glasses, limited sense of direction

- **Blind** - unable to see visual cues for mobility and egress; loss of independent mobility, separation from personal assistant or service animal

- **Hard of Hearing** - inability to hear alerts notifications or emergency instructions; alternatives to spoken instructions; loss of sense of direction if emergency lighting fails
Disabilities and Evacuation

- **Emergent disabilities** - accidents and injuries, sprains, broken bones; loss of assistive technology

- **Medical** - problems of medical nature as in diabetes, epilepsy, hemophilia, hypertension, kidney dysfunction, or pregnancy; recent surgery, accidents, or injuries (sprains, broken bones)
General Etiquette

- Speak directly to the person
- Maintain focus on the person, not the disability
- Approach individual without stereotypes
- Don't assume; ask what their needs are
- Defer to individual’s description of their needs
- Be willing to listen and implement suggestions
Guide Dog Etiquette

- Don't touch, talk, feed or otherwise distract the dog while he is wearing his harness.
- Don't treat the dog as a pet. It is a working dog.
- Don't give the dog commands. Only the master should do so.
- Don't take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or master.
- Don't walk on the dog's left, as this may distracted or confuse.
- Don't attempt to grab or steer the person while the dog is guiding or attempt to hold the dog's harness.
- Don't allow children to tease or abuse the dog.
- Don't allow your pets to challenge or intimidate a guide dog.
- Don't attempt to discipline the dog, leave that to his master.
- Don't pat the dog on the head, rather on its shoulder with his master’s approval.
Emergency Personnel Collaboration

- LOC Police, Capitol Police, OSEP, HSO, and AOC staff the ICP
- ICP maintains radio communication with OSEP, Police, FWs and LC medical personnel to maintain control of assisted evacuations
Evacuation Diagram and Narrative Plan

-posted on all office doors-
Emergency Evacuation Team (EET) Organizational Chart

- 400+ Volunteer EET Members
- 200+ Office Emergency Coordinators

- Incident Command Post
- OSEP Emergency Preparedness Staff
- Floor Warden
- Alternate Floor Warden
- Zone Monitor
- Stairwell Monitor
- Evac Chair Carrier
- Disability Monitor
- Alternate Zone Monitor
- Alternate Stairwell Monitor
- Alt Evacuation Chair Carrier
- Alternate Disability Monitor
- Disability Buddy
Emergency Evacuation Team (EET)

The Emergency Evacuation Teams consist of:

- Floor Wardens
- Zone Monitors
- Stairwell Monitors
- Disability Monitors and Disability Buddies
- Stairchair Carriers

EETs are based on geography, not organization

- One Floor Warden with alternates per floor
- Numerous OECs on each floor for individual units
Floor Warden Equipment
Radio, Vest, Badges, Mini Strobe

Strobes play a crucial role in smoke filled rooms during rescues
Disability Monitors

- Report to Areas of Rescue Assistance/Staging Areas and remain there until relieved by a Zone Monitor or Floor Warden
- If necessary, move persons with disabilities to another area of the floor, or into a stairwell when cleared
- Provide Library Police (7-1000) with the number of individuals and their location
- Once outside the building, remain prepared to assist persons with re-entry if a “buddy” is not available
Disability Buddies

- Assigned to assist self-identified persons with disabilities
- Communicate nature of emergency to the disabled
- Assist persons with disabilities reach an Area of Rescue Assistance or Staging Area or escort them outside
- Remain with persons with disabilities until relieved
- May be asked to assist during re-entry
LC Population Identification Badges

- LC Contractor
- LC Police
- LC Temp.
- AOC Access Card
- LC FTE
- Congressional
- Volunteer
- LC Contract Guard
- LC/CRS Courier
- Escort
Evacuation Assistance for persons with disabilities

**Madison Areas of Rescue Assistance**
Primary: Yellow Quadrant Elevators
Alternate: Blue Quadrant Elevators

**Adams Staging Areas**
Primary: West Side 2\(^{nd}\) St. Elevators
Alternate: East Side 3\(^{rd}\) St. Elevators

**Jefferson Staging Areas**
Primary 1: East Side 2\(^{nd}\) St. Elevators
Primary 2: West Side 1\(^{st}\) St. Ctr Elevators
Alternate 3: Stacks Elevator
Areas of Rescue Assistance/
Staging Areas

Area of Rescue Assistance
If you are unable to evacuate using the stairs, gather here for emergency assistance
Areas of Rescue Assistance
Stair Signage

Braille on all stairwell signs
Evacuation Chair Training
Ferno Model 42 Evacuation Chair

Specially designed for confined areas such as narrow hallways or multiple-landing stairways; anywhere access is severely limited.
Model 42 Features

Two 4" rear wheels & two 2" low-profile front guide wheels facilitate transport on most floor types.

Locking safety latch prevents the chair from unexpected closing during use.
Ferno Model 49 Sirocco Evacuation Chair

Designed to provide evacuee transfer in a seated position in any situation, i.e. up and down stairs, over uneven surfaces and curbs.
Sirocco Features

• Tri-wheel assembly reduces operator strain and passenger anxiety

• Can be used to ascend and descend stairs
Horizontal Egress
Four-Person Carry
Three-Person Carry
Two-Person Carry
Two-Person Descent
One-Person Descent
Appropriate Footwear
Model 42 Chair Locations

- There are approximately 50 Model 42 evacuation chairs in the Areas of Rescue Assistance (AORAs), Staging Areas, and stairwells throughout the Madison, Adams, and Jefferson Buildings.

- The evacuation chairs are wall-mounted; to remove, chair is pulled up and out to break the retaining band.
Model 49 Chair Locations

There are 30 Model 49 Sirocco Evacuation Chairs placed throughout LC Buildings:

**Madison** - Blue & Yellow AORAs (LM-B thru LM-6)
  Green AORA (LM-5)
  Red AORA (LM-6)

**Adams** - NE & SE stairwell landing LA-SB thru LA-5 (except for LA-4)

**Jefferson** - Gallery, 2nd floor Staging Area, SE center stairwell landing, Stacks Deck B outside south stairwell, Great Hall emergency exit
Who can use evacuation chairs?

- Anyone can use the evacuation chair for **horizontal** egress.

- Vertical egress is limited to **trained personnel**
  - Must be able to lift and carry a minimum of **50 pounds**
  - Must **not have a medical condition** that affects the heart, respiratory system, neck, back, knees, or ankles.
Evacuation Chairs used when....

... Directed by Police

... Directed by Fire Rescue

... Directed by Floor Wardens

... Directed by Library EP Staff
Liability

According to the Office of the General Counsel.....

• If a operator is injured while PROPERLY using the evacuation chair, they will be covered under worker’s compensation

• If the rescuers drop a person while using the evacuation chair, the rescuers are protected against civil liability
Things to Remember

- Always lift with your legs (Model 42)
- Advise evacuee to keep hands on their lap and not to grab onto anything
- Make sure straps are snug
- When possible, use 3 or 4 person carry (Model 42)
- Verbalize lift on the count of 3 (Model 42)
- When using evacuation chair for horizontal movement, pull chair, DO NOT PUSH (Model 42)
Dialogic Pagers for Deaf Staff

- PCC issues an evacuation message to all deaf pagers when a building evacuation is called, and an all clear message when safe to return.

- Pagers are tested daily to ensure proper functioning.

- PCC has pager to confirm page was received.
Police Communications Center

Strobe Lights for Deaf Persons
Stair Interrupters
Library of Congress

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

• Employee volunteers, drawn from all Service Units, who receive specialized medical training; modeled after FEMA CERT

• Level of commitment similar to the Library’s Office Emergency Coordinator and Floor Warden System
Mass Casualty Tent and Health Services Canopy

Health Services Office role in Parks:

- Establish medical treatment operations
- Triage/treat staff with injuries and illnesses
- Establish staging areas for EMS and Fire
- Assist OSEP prepare for further egress
How does the Library rate?

1. Ensure people with disabilities are an integral part of the planning process

2. Inform the local fire department about any particular issues regarding employees with disabilities

3. Communicate with AOC about the various communication, alarm and sprinkler systems in the building, as well as areas of refuge

4. Do not rely solely on the buddy system
How does the Library rate?

5. Purchase evacuation chairs, and plan to evacuate any mobility devices that may be required after the evacuation

6. Plan for communications during and after an evacuation

7. Designate an emergency situation room

8. Conduct training and exercises
Library’s NLS for the BPH
Washington, DC
NLS-BPH Assisted Evacuations
Ramp Egress at NLS-BPH
Communications with the Hearing Impaired
The Library’s Emergency Manager, Michael Salmons, discusses recent participation in emergency planning workshops for persons with disabilities with Eric Eldritch, Office of Workforce Diversity Access Program Manager.
Classes taught by Library OSEP Staff:

1. Basic EET Training
2. Evacuation Chair
3. Assisted Evacuations
EP Website (508 Compliant)

- Employee Emergency Action Guide (EEAG)
- Emergency Evacuation Plans (EEP)
- Office Emergency Coordinator (OEC) and Floor Wardens are responsible for data
- Training calendar and descriptions
- Evacuation maps
- Assembly Areas and Shelter-in-Place Info
- Current Terrorist Threat level
- Emergency Preparedness (EP) calendar of events and updates
- E-mail link for EP questions (epp@loc.gov)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Links to external emergency information updated bi-weekly

www.loc.gov/staff/epp
Additional Information

National Organization on Disability
www.nod.org/emergency

Office of Disability Employment Policy
www.dol.gov/odep

Department of Homeland Security
www.ready.gov

S.A.F.E.T.Y. First Evacuation Program
www.easter-seals.org

Employer's Guide to Including People with Disabilities in Emergency Evacuation Plans
www.jan.wvu.edu/media/emergency.html

Persons with Disabilities Evacuation Checklist
www.nbdc.com

www.cdihp.org/evacuationpdf.htm

Information regarding the senior population
www.aoa.dhhs.gov

Encountering and Assisting Blind and Visually Impaired Persons
www.guidedogsofamerica.org/etiquette.html
Questions and Discussion

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OSH/ADA Working Group Meeting

Thank you for your participation.
Have a great day.