

Pacific ADA Center
Emergency Management and Preparedness-Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities
Thursday, June 11, 2020
2:30-4:00 p.m. ET

>> LEWIS KRAUS: Welcome to the Emergency Management and Preparedness: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Webinar Series. I'm Lewis Kraus from the Pacific ADA Center, your moderator for this series. This series of webinars is brought to you by the Pacific ADA Center on behalf of the ADA National Network. The ADA National Network is made up of ten regional centers federally funded to provide training, technical assistance and other information as needed on the Americans with Disabilities Act. You can reach your regional center by dialing 1-800-949-4232.

Realtime captioning is provided for this webinar. The captions can be accessed by choosing the CC icon in the meeting control bar at the bottom of your screen. To toggle that meeting control bar permanently on, press the alt key once and then press the alt key a second time. As always, in our sessions, only the speakers will have audio. The audio is being broadcast through your computer. Make sure your speakers are turned on or your headphones are plugged in. You can adjust the sound by navigating to the audio settings on the bottom of the panel. Adjust the sound by sliding the bar left or right in the audio tab. If you do not have sound capabilities on your computer or prefer to listen by phone, dial 1-669-900-9128 or 1-646-558-8656 and use the webinar ID: 155-545' 130. And I want to note that the webinar is being recorded. You will be able to access it on ADA Presentations website in the archives section of the Emergency Preparedness And Management region next week. This is the seventh year of this Webinar Series, which shares issues and promising practices in emergency management inclusive of people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. The series topics covered emergency preparedness and disaster response, recovery and mitigation as well as accessibility and reasonable accommodation issues under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ADA, and other relevant laws. Upcoming sessions are available at ADApresentations.org under the Schedule tab in the emergency management section. These monthly webinars occur on the second Thursday of the month at 2:30 eastern, 1:30 central, 12:30 mountain and 11:30 a.m. Pacific time. By being here you on the list to receive notices for future webinars in the series. Those notices go out two to three weeks before the next webinar and open that webinar to registration. You can follow along on the webinar platform with the slides. If you are not using the webinar platform, you can download a copy of today's PowerPoint presentation at the ADApresentations.org web page in the schedule section. At the conclusion of today's presentation, there will be an opportunity for everyone to ask questions. You may submit your questions in the chat area within the web platform and the speakers or I will address them at the end of the session. So feel free to submit them as they come to your mind during the session.

To submit your questions, type them in the chat text box area shown on the screen or press alt-H and enter the text in that chat area. If you are listening by phone and not logged into the webinar, you may ask your question by emailing them to adatech@adapacific.org.

If you experience any technical difficulties during the webinar, you can send us a private chat message and type your comment in the text box and press enter. If you are using a keyboard again, use at-H to access the chat box and press enter. You can also email us at adatech@adapacific.org or you can call us at 510-285-5600.

Today's ADA National Network learning session is titled "Integrating the Access and Functional Needs Coordinator Role Into Your Emergency Operations Center." Today's webinar is going to cover how a local agency has incorporated the role of access and functional needs coordinator into its Emergency Operations Center and we will review some of the activities they were involved in during the COVID-19 activation. Our speaker today is Laney Davidson, the Disability Access Manager and ADA coordinator for the County of Marin in California and the owner and founder of LC Disability Consulting. She has worked in the accessibility field for the past 15 years focusing on local government and agency compliance. Recently Laney has been working with a handful of other ADA coordinators in the Pacific ADA Center to advocate for education, networking and support for ADA coordinators and their uniquely challenging positions throughout the state of California. So, Laney, I will now turn it over to you...

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: Thank you, Lewis, I appreciate it. Thank you for having me today. Hello and welcome to all of you out there. I'm excited to talk about this topic today. It has been a wild ride, to say the least. In the past three months, today was the 100th day of our Emergency Operations Center activation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. So I have had 100 days of things to share with you today. I hope you find it meaningful. Again, as was stated, please type your questions in the chat area throughout the presentation and then at the end I'm hoping to have a very lively and robust conversation about -- to answer your questions about things I have been working on here and then also I would love to hear about the experiences that you are all having at different levels related to emergency preparedness and response and the access and functional needs population. Next slide, please.

So as Lewis said, my name is Laney Davidson, the Disability Access Manager and ADA coordinator for the County of Marin here in California, just across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco. We are a smaller county relative to the size in terms of population, but we are close to San Francisco in the Bay Area, close to Berkeley, so we have a very lively and active disability community, which is wonderful. I have been with the County of Marin for the past 16 years. I started off as a senior clerk/typist and was fortunate enough to be mentored by my predecessor who had been in the disability rights field for about 50 years. He was recruited from the state of California to come to the County of Marin to create a disability access program. And the reason I want to take a moment to talk about how the disability access program was created in Marin and how it's situated and how it functions is because I understand the uniquely challenging role of being an ADA coordinator as most municipalities don't have comprehensive civil rights disability access offices. Oftentimes being an ADA coordinator is a task assigned to someone who has a full-time job doing something else. And it's very challenging. It's wonderful work and meaningful work and important work, but it can be uniquely challenging. And if you added the extra layer of emergency preparedness and response on to that and then you add the additional layer of a global pandemic, which I don't think any of us were prepared for nor imagined could happen, it can feel very overwhelming. So I wanted to preface by saying that the reason that we have been able to build out the

access and functional needs role in our Emergency Operations Center is because of the robust comprehensive disability access program that we already have. So as I said, my predecessor came and he created this program, which is a civil rights office. We have long advocated here at the County of Marin that we have an office on civil rights. And currently, finally, after 16 years there are discussions of having an Office on Equity. We recently hired within the past year and a half an equity officer. So I'm hopeful that that overarching office on equity and civil rights will be created and I will be able to join that office and expand even further the efforts that I'm currently undertaking here with the County of Marin. So the disability access program here has three main components. There is a graphic on the screen that depicts that. One component is civil rights training and technical assistance. So this involves lots of different types of education that goes out to all 26 departments. The most important and foundational training that we deliver is etiquette and awareness, so people have an understanding about what disability is. We can address some of the stereotyping and stigma that goes along with it and start to dispel some of that. It's an important foundational training. But there are lots of other types of training that we do. We also offer training around effective communication, program modification, and then we specialize spraining with each of the departments and programs within the departments. Either upon request or proactively, to make sure that people really understands the work we do, what their responsibilities are under the law and how to reach us for support and resources. Technical assistance we provide... we review plans and specifications for county-owned facilities around projects that are happening, and we also recently have created a separate office that addresses digital accessibility, digital access program. There is a digital access manager, Susan Levine, and then a digital technical specialist, Kathy Clary, who work in the IST, so the information services technology department here at the county. They have been extraordinarily important in efforts in the Emergency Operations Center, and I will talk a little bit about that later. We also offer program accessibility consultation and resources. When most people think about accessibility in the municipal arena, they think about physical access or architectural accessibility. So it's really important to push out information about program access, so that people understand that all program services and activities of the county have to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, including parks, programs, that they do for children during the summer and so on and so forth. And then the final component is architectural and engineering accessibility plan reviews and site surveys. We have done, I feel, a really good job of training our capital projects team and working with our building department to ensure that their plan checkers and building officials have adequate accessibility training. So a lot of that work has been able to be delegated down to those other divisions, but we're still very involved in doing etiquette and awareness training and specialized training as needed, and then again, as I stated before, any plans and specifications for county facilities get reviewed by our office. We also through the capital improvement program are allocated \$1 million a year for transition plan barrier removal projects. That includes both county facilities and public right-of-way. So the living active document that our transition plan is, I work with that document very frequently. We keep it updated and that money is used every year to identify what the priorities are to get projects done to make our way through our transition plan. Also, as Lewis stated, I own LC Disability Consulting where I offer consulting services around disability access to other government agencies, private businesses, and nonprofits. And more information can be found about that on the web. Next slide, please. So to start, I think it's important to understand the definition of access and functional needs. This is a relatively new term to myself, maybe over the course of

the past seven years. It has become more prevalent. And I think it's important to talk about the scope and breadth of this definition because as an ADA coordinator, my subject matter expertise is around disability, but access and functional needs is much broader than that. So when you move into the emergency preparedness and response realm, it's important to understand, if you get identified or you volunteer yourself or you're voluntold, as sometimes happens, that you're going to be responsible for access and functional needs you really need to understand what the scope is, because nine times out of ten you have to pull in other subject matter experts to help you. So individuals with access and functional needs refers to individuals who are or have -- and I'm going to read through the list now.

Physical, developmental, mental health or intellectual disabilities. Chronic conditions or injuries. Limited English proficiency. Older adults. Children. Low income, homeless and houseless individuals. Transportation disadvantaged individuals. And pregnant women. So as you can hear and/or see from this list, it is a large cluster of a lot of different types of folks. And the explanation that I have gotten from the emergency preparedness and response community when I have asked... why are you grouping all these people together for one or a group of individuals to address all of their needs? It's because these are the individuals that they have identified are going to require additional support or additional resources in the event of a disaster scenario. So as I stated before, my background and expertise is related to disability. And while I may have experienced or been in any of these other categories during the course of my life, I am in no way asserting that I am a subject matter expert. So through the course of working with our emergency services department, I continue to encourage them to pull in other people and I pull in other people to offer their expertise. Because we really want to make sure that we are able to reach these often hard-to-reach populations, both in our preparedness, which is an extraordinarily important component, but also in our response efforts. Next slide, please. So, a lot of background work and history has gone into the point that we're at now where we have a division within our Emergency Operations Center, but this is how the organizational chart is currently configured. There are many other branches and positions and several organizational charts that our current emergency operation center has, but I want to show you the hierarchical structure so you could understand where and how it fits in. So our emergency services department is the regular full-time department dedicated to emergency preparedness and response for the County of Marin. In the event of a disaster scenario, the Emergency Operations Center is triggered and activated to deal with and respond to a specific emergency scenario. So back on March 3rd, our Emergency Operations Center was activated to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, this is how the Emergency Operations Center organizational chart was configured. So as you can see, there's an EOC director, and then in the management section, which appears in green on the org chart on the screen, there are included the following positions: The EOC coordinator, the safety and security officer, the legal adviser, the public health officer, the public information officer, the liaison officer and the AFN officer. So historically the AFN position was not in the management section and was rarely included in EOC activations. And my predecessor and I thought very hard and did lots of years of collaborative work with our emergency management department to get the AFN position in the management section. And the reason that we wanted to do that was the same reason that we think it's important for ADA coordinators to have management level positions in municipalities and organizations. And that is because there needs to be some level of authority in order to advocate on behalf of and enact policy

and procedures around access and functional needs activities, and it's really important that you have a seat at the table where decisions are being made where the inception of decisions is happening to make sure that you have comprehensive reach, so that you're able to work with all of the other decisions within the Emergency Operations Center in this particular scenario, to make sure that accessibility is built in. If we know accessibility is an afterthought or an annex or an addendum, then it doesn't happen, particularly in high-stress scenarios such as disasters where people are responding very quickly and the logistics are changing very rapidly. So it's important to ensure when you're advocating for inclusion of an AFN officer position within your Emergency Operations Center, that you advocate for it being part of the management section. Also, people in the management section have access to all the meetings where decisions are being made. And it's very important to be involved in the meetings so you understand what is happening on a daily and hourly level, sometimes with this particular activation things were changing by the hour initially. So it was really important to have access to all that information. As I said, the org chart is much larger in real-life and there are several org charts, but I wanted to share with you all have we have it configured here at the County of Marin and I feel it has been very successful, particularly in this activation, there's been much more inclusion of AFN activities and of the AFN staff.

Also in the AFN division is the position of AFN assistant. And that rotates between two other individuals. Obviously this activation is much longer. It's the longest activation in the history of Marin County for the Emergency Operations Center to be activated, but burnout is a real thing. I was working seven days a week for the first couple months, and although I was very committed and more than happy to support the efforts, it can become very exhausting. Particularly because of all the emotions that go along with this type of work. So really we identified that we needed to build that out. Originally I was working with the digital accessibility manager, who I mentioned earlier, and we were alternating as AFN officer, but because of incident command structure, which I'll talk about next, and the way that the hierarchy of these types of responses work, we really identified that we needed one AFN officer and then other AFN assistants to support the efforts. That is in order to ensure that the AFN officer can make decisions, create policy, and advocate for planning and procedural changes. It just puts a little more emphasis on the AFN officer and authority for that individual. And then the AFN assistants provide input and cover on the days when the AFN officer is not available, and do all sorts of other extremely important work that we'll talk about a little later in the presentation. Next slide, please. So, for those that are new or unfamiliar with the world of emergency preparedness and response, it was a whole new world for me. Very structured. Very hierarchical in nature. I understand now that there's a need for that. But it was foreign because as we know, disability access work, while it is governed by laws and regulations, it's highly individualized and typically very case specific. So if any of you have ever contacted the Department of Justice to ask for -- to ask questions around specific scenarios, you'll know that the answer you usually get is "it depends." So it often depends on the dynamics of the situation, and it is very highly individualized. So I am used to a much more collaborative environment and command structure is just that, it's very structured and very formalized and very different world to be working in. A lot of adaptation is required and you need to be very adaptable to that environment in order to be successful to do this work. That's not to say that there's not a lot of collaboration that happens within that environment, but it's a different environment than I was used to operating in. So it took some acclimation on my part and then

also some work within that structure, culture change work within that structure in order to work towards a more successful working relationship. So I'm going to read a definition of the incident command structure just to give you some all context if you're not familiar. So the Incident Command System, or ICS, is a standardized hierarchical structure that allows for a cooperative response by multiple agencies both within and outside of government to organize and coordinate response activities without compromising the decision-making authority of local command.

So as you can see, it is a very structured process. It's very militaristic in nature, and that is important, because in the chaos that often ensues with disaster scenarios, it's very critical to have a very structured organized response. And I am still learning. This is a very... this position is still growing. We have not built out all the facets of this position, the AFN officer position, so today I'm offering you what my experience and interpretation has been, and it's probably important to say that my opinions don't necessarily reflect those of the entire Emergency Operations Center or the County of Marin at large. This is just based on my experience as an ADA coordinator entering this world and beginning to exist within this new environment. Next slide, please.

So every organization is required -- municipal organization is required to have an Emergency Operations Plan. And this plan basically describes who will do what, when, with what resources, and by what authority -- before, during and immediately after an emergency.

So this plan is the who, the what, the why, and the how. This is a very important plan. It is not a detailed action plan, but it is a broad overarching plan that really sets the stage. Our Emergency Operations Plan at the County of Marin was in the process of being updated at the time that the Emergency Operations Center was activated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our current emergency operation plan was last updated in 2014. So, while it included information saying that the county will respond to people with access and functional needs and we will include people with access and functional needs, the "how" was not really beefed up. So we were working on building that out and identifying an action plan, a detailed action plan that would say specifically who will do what and how, what education needs to happen, what resources will be used, what agreements need to be put in place in advance, and really, as I said before, baking accessibility in at the time that the pandemic hit. So, we sort of had to hit the ground running right away. What one of our EOC staff often says, refers to it as "building the plane while you're flying it." It's a little shaky ground, but I've been very happy and pleased with the way that the County of Marin has responded and welcomed myself and colleagues in to provide all that input and guidance related to people with access and functional needs. So I would encourage all of you to review and familiarize yourself with not only the Emergency Operations Plan for your organization but any plans, policies, and procedures that are related to emergency preparedness and response, so that you have a sense of how prepared the organization is to include people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into those plans. It's really important to make sure that it's baked in. And the first step is to look at all the documentation and to see what needs to be built out there. And then the conversations that happen through the process of updating those plans and procedures, those are invaluable. So many wonderful changes have just come out of having a conversation about how we should change those plans and how that changes the

operationalization of those plans. Again, I recommend the inclusion of an AFN officer and their roles, responsibilities and functions into those plans, into the staffing plans, into the Emergency Operations Plans, and that you reference the AFN officer in other plans, like building evacuations and so on and so forth, so that that role and responsibility is spread out wide throughout the organization.

Again, insuring accessibility is baked in and an integral component of that cannot be emphasized enough. Because if it's a separate documents, it's going to get put on the shelf and no one will think to pull it out in the event of an emergency. So it really has to be baked into the entire operation. Next slide, please.

So building the framework. I want to state that I had not had all this work that I'm recommending that everyone do. I had not had that completed before this particular activation. We were in the process of doing all this work, but this activation in particular really highlighted a few key departments that I think it is extremely important to establish a very close and positive working relationship with. Having said that, this takes a lot of time, a lot of networking, a lot of relationship building, a huge amount of work that we do as ADA coordinators is about building relationships. So this is an extension of that. But, again, I want to respect and acknowledge the fact that most ADA coordinators don't have a huge amount of bandwidth and a lot of their roles and responsibilities aren't directly related to accessibility. And then on top of that aren't directly related to the access in functional needs role, which is expanded even further off of disability. So, again, these are just my recommendations for how I think a very successful AFN officer position can be built into your Emergency Operations Center. I'm not saying that it's easy. Nor has it been easy for myself. So the following departments I think are really important for you to have, especially positive working relationships with. And those are your Office of Emergency Services, law enforcement, fire department, public health department, administrator and/or manager's office, public works department, IT or information technology department, and then most critical of all, the disability community. It is extremely important to have a lively active and positive relationship with the disability community, so that you can work to identify where those hard-to-reach target populations are going to be, which are going to be the people that are likely most impacted by a disaster scenario. As we know, and as we have seen through the playout of this COVID-19 pandemic, people with disabilities are among the most impacted by this particular disaster scenario. So it is incredibly important that we are able to get information out effectively to connect people with resources, to reach out and do wellness checks. And you can't do any of those things if you don't know who your community is and where they're at. So I can't emphasize enough the importance of engaging with the disability community. And having not only the AFN officer and/or the ADA coordinator being the one doing that engagement, but encouraging all these departments that I have listed to also engage with the disability community and to offer all of them education and training around disability so that they understand the disability culture and so on and so forth. Also important to engage with these departments, because all these departments are likely going to be engaged in the activation of your Emergency Operations Center. So already knowing who the key players are in each of those departments is really going to help and carry you a long way in forming relationships and being able to effect positive change. It also, if you have the time and the inclination, it's good to know and look at who -- and look at the staffing chart for Emergency Operations Center and see who from the departments will be activated during an

emergency scenario. So you already know who the players are and you can engage and formulate positive working relationships with them in advance. And also to understand what their roles and responsibilities are during an activation, so you know who to go to to accomplish the things you need to accomplish. Again, this is an inordinate amount of front-end work, and it's not always possible depending on the size and influence of your organization's disability access program, but doing your best to reach out and establish these relationships is really important. And as we can see, a disaster can and will strike at any time. Currently topic of much discussion in our Emergency Operations Center is looking at the intersection between the COVID pandemic and the likely upcoming public safety power shutoffs that will be happening related to fire season. And then also fires. And how do we prepare to respond to multiple disaster scenarios happening concurrently or consecutively. So that's the next challenge on the horizon. A lot of work needs to be done. It was challenging to deal with the PSPS and fire events for the last five years. It is going to be even more challenging to deal with them this coming fire season with the added layer of the pandemic, looking at how are we going to safely shelter displaced persons if we have a large wildfire, for instance. So there's a lot of work that needs to be done to prepare for that. We will never be adequately prepared, because disasters are very chaotic and surprising in nature, but we can do our due diligence to try to be as prepared as possible. Next slide, please. So the access and functional needs position within each of your organizations, again, I advocate that it needs to be in the management section. I think that's the only way it can be truly successful, and then you need staff to back it up. In order to be able to truly fulfill all of the roles and responsibilities that are tasked to the AFN officer position. The AFN position, again, in the management section, you should start with a good position description. I am in the process of developing still all of this documentation that goes along with our AFN officer position. When I originally started, I reached out to Vance Taylor from the state Office of Emergency services, the California State Office of Emergency Services. He was able to provide me with a couple really wonderful examples of position descriptions that were comprehensive and robust. I recommend you work with your state offices on emergency services and see what they have already created. You're more than welcome to reach out to me. I'm happy to share what we're working on. And you can also reach out to the California State Office of Emergency Services. Their website for the AFN section has many, many, many wonderful resources there. So I highly recommend checking that out as well. Checklists should be included. So our Emergency Operations Center for each of the positions has position description and checklists that go through the things that, while working on a shift in that position, you should typically be working through and remember to accomplish and people you should be connecting with. So that's also really important. When you have multiple people working in that position, you want to make sure that they know what they're responsible for and that it's very clear. This activation has been unique because originally we were activated into the Emergency Operations Center, which is an actual physical location in our emergency services department over in our sheriff's office building. As many of you probably read in the Press, our public health officer, Matt Willis, caught COVID-19 and was working in that Emergency Operations Center with all of us. So we then de-centralized after that happened, after that outbreak happened in our Emergency Operations Center and most of us began working remotely. So it's a bit of a different and even more challenging scenario now to be working remotely. It's much easier for all those people from all of those departments that I listed on the previous screen to be in one room together. You can just get up and walk over and collaborate and have a conversation and you overhear

things happening. It's much easier to catch accessibility and other access and functional needs issues while they're happening while you are sharing physical space with people. It's been much more challenging as that has been de-centralized, although we needed to for health concerns, to accomplish those things. So having positions descriptions and checklists even more important when you're working in a decentralized scenario.

Integration of AFN processes and procedures into other section operations. That has not been formalized yet in our Emergency Operations Center, although I work very well with the other section chiefs. They know about access and functional needs. I worked with them outside the Emergency Operations Center so they know who I am. We have already positive working relationships. But one of the goals is to have where necessary and appropriate language built into the other processes and procedures and plans of the other sections related to access and functional needs, so that it's baked in again, so that it's just part of how business is being conducted on a daily basis when we're responding to disaster scenarios. Next slide, please.

So as I mentioned earlier, our Emergency Operations Plan was in the process of being updated when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and our Emergency Operations Center was activated. At the time, the position description for the access and functional needs role in the EOC was titled the AFN Advocate. For multiple reasons, I advocated for that title to be changed. No other position in the Emergency Operations Center was referred to as an advocate. They were all officers or chiefs or leads, and I felt like "advocate"... while advocacy is a really important component, it just watered down the position and didn't have as much authority. And I knew for culture change to happen people needed to understand and respect the importance of the access and functional needs role. So this position description is the one that currently exists that is in the process of being updated and I just want to read it to you very brief live. The access and functional needs advocate evaluations operations in the context of people with disabilities and access and functional needs, ensures that they receive adequate attention in planning and communications, functions, and ensures that language and disability program access and physical accessibility issues are addressed at all levels of emergency response.

So, a pretty good and fairly comprehensive definition, but there were a lot of areas that I thought needed to be addressed. For instance, saying that it ensures that people receive adequate attention, that is a very subjective term. So a lot needs to be done. I really want to strengthen and build out this position description, and, again, I reached out to my colleagues to see what they were doing and how strong their definitions were to make sure that ours really ends up being concrete and a very strong description that we all feel good about. Again, this description doesn't encompass all the functions that are detailed in the AFN definition. So really looking to build this out and make it more comprehensive. Next slide, please.

So who do I, Laney Davidson from the County of Marin, think is the ideal candidate for the access and functional needs position? Remember, emergency activations can last quite a long time. In the instance of the wildfires, the EOC was activated 24 hours a day seven days a week. So there were people that needed to work night shift. So just identifying and tagging one person to fulfill this role is going to be a disaster in and of itself. You really need to identify multiple people. Having said that, that's difficult to do because it's a highly specialized skill set.

So you need to think creatively about who can be tasked to fill this position. Obviously the first recommendation would be the ADA coordinator for the organization because that person likely is knowledgeable about disability access laws and regulations and can adequately fulfill that portion of the role. But as I said before, the ADA coordinator is often tasked to an individual that has another full-time job and they may not have had access to all the resources and training they need in order to have a comprehensive knowledge of disability access laws, regulations, and a good relationship with the disability community. So who are other people that we can pull in that would make the emergency response more robust and adequate? So another organizational employee or community partner with strong organizational knowledge. As I said it's important to understand how the organization works and who the players are in order to be successful in the Emergency Operations Center. So having another organizational employee is really important. I am fortunate, as I said, to have Suzanne Levine, who is the digital access manager, digital accessibility manager, excuse me, to be able to have her work in the EOC as well. Although she was fairly new to the county, she still had been here long enough to know who the people are, and she has emergency response and EOC experience from her time with the city and county of San Francisco, so she also brought that to the table, which was really valuable. A community partner with strong organizational knowledge can be very helpful too. We also have a gentleman named Peter Mendoza, who works for the Marin Center for Independent Living. He supports the weekend functions for the emergency operations as the AFN assistant. Peter has been working with the County of Marin for decades. He has been a huge advocate and partner. He has strong connections to the disability community. And he has worked a lot with law enforcement and emergency preparedness and response staff. So he had a unique history and skill set that made him very successful in the Emergency Operations Center environment. So having someone knowledgeable, again, about the organization itself with strong community ties is very important. Also having an individual with strong ties to the other local jurisdictions. Disasters very rarely happen to just one jurisdiction. Usually it's a multi-jurisdictional response. So having strong connections with the other local jurisdictions and municipal agencies is very important and helpful. Also, again, strong connections with the disability community and community-based disability organizations. The municipalities are not going to be able to provide everything that is needed to the community in the event of a disaster. Community-based organizations are a huge component of disaster response. So bringing those disability-related organizations into the fold early having memorandums of understanding set in advance and being very clear about what the expectations are on the side of the government and what the expectations are on the side of the CBOs and non-profits is going to be really helpful. It's difficult and challenging to flesh all that out during a disaster response. So having someone with strong ties with those is also very important. And then having knowledge, as I said, of digital accessibility laws and applications. What is also important, as we realized when we looked at the AFN definition in the beginning of the presentation, it's much broader than just disability. So having someone who is familiar with what the prevalent cultures are in your community, what the prevalent and predominant languages are other than English. Having community-based organizations that serve all of those populations that you can work with to identify how to reach people. As we know with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is disproportionately affected people of color. Working with community-based organizations so that you can get testing out to the communities that need it. Quarantine and isolation information out. Information about best practices to avoid contracting the virus in languages

that people speak. All of these are really important functions, so making sure that you are working with your community at all times to reach all sectors of the community is really, really important. Extremely challenging, takes a lot of work, but it's a very important component of the work. Next slide, please.

So the emergency preparedness and response world is a huge world in and of itself with lots of acronyms that are very difficult to learn. I mean, I understand as a bureaucrat that we love acronyms, but you would not believe the number of acronyms in the emergency preparedness and response world. So that is a task all alone, learning all of those. But it's also a fairly organized world to enter into. And there's a lot of federal, state and local guidance, resources, laws, regulations, best practices, and tabletop exercises and activities. So getting involved in and understanding how the world of emergency preparedness and response works, and then also volunteering to participate in the different tabletop exercises before an activation are really going to help you understand how activations work, and also introduce people in that world, in that arena, to access and functional needs and disability-related concerns. So now is a wonderful time to start the conversation. We are all in the midst of responding to this pandemic. It is not going away. Today on our Emergency Operations Planning call we were talking about long-term staffing planning and how we're going to continue to deal with this pandemic for months and months and months.

So now is a wonderful time to have this conversation and bring it up. Because it's on people's minds. And as I said, people with disabilities are disproportionately affected by this particular disaster. Side note: Usually most disasters people with disabilities are greatly impacted. But this one is of great import to the disability community. So making sure you're having that conversation. Engage early and often. There is a way with diplomacy and finesse to insert yourself all over the place when it comes to emergency preparedness and response. Just as we do in our work, our regular work as ADA coordinators, infiltrating the entire organization and trying to make sure that everything that we do is accessible and that people are thinking about disability access in their daily work. So make AFN a household term. Educate people about what access and functional needs is. Make sure that people understand how broad the definition is. And that there are legal requirements in an emergency response scenario for municipalities to be responding to these sectors of our community. Educate the AFN community on preparation. Preparation and preparedness are so important for people with disabilities in particular, but the whole access and functional needs community, I can't stress enough how important that is. Right when the COVID pandemic broke out, we were in the process of... I had created a training program and we were in the process of rolling that out to our community on personal preparedness, working with our IHSS in-home support service, workers and other disability support organizations throughout the county, to really help people to understand how to prepare themselves for a disaster. The response of local municipalities is scaled and is only as great as the individuals that they have working on it. So it's going to vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Really important for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs to have plans in advance in place about how they will get additional medications, what transportation options they have. If they need to evacuate the area, what are the options for where they can go and so on and so forth. So personal preparedness is really important. A huge component of this. So making sure moving forward preparing for other disasters, that you're starting to do that work now, and that you're engaging

the other departments that are involved in energy response, in creating that curriculum that they give you input so that you're providing accurate timely and useful information and making sure that you're updating that education and training so that you're providing always accurate because emergency response is very fluid and dynamic. Again, FEMA and the state of California have great resources. Also the Pacific ADA Center, wonderful resource, lots of wonderful information. As Lewis stated, this particular Webinar Series is in its seventh year, and those webinars are archived. So going back and looking at those and contacting the Pacific ADA Center frequently to get support on information. They have wonderful staff that can help you. They also can customize training and education for your organization. So I highly recommend engaging with the Pacific ADA Center for additional resources and supports. Next slide, please. So now I want to take a few minutes... because I do want to leave a lot of time for question and answer. Again, hopefully we have a lot of conversation and I would love to hear from all of you about what activities you're engaged in or how your organizations are responding to the AFN community during this pandemic.

There is lots of activities that we have been engaged in. These were the most prominent and time-consuming of those, so I wanted to share them with you all so you get an idea of what things you might be pulled into. If you are serving the AFN officer role in an Emergency Operations Center. So executing contracts and securing services. So these include services such as American Sign Language, CDI interpreters, CART captioning and language translation for documents and events. At the time that I was activated into our Emergency Operations Center, I contacted the ASL interpretation vendor that we had an existing contract with to identify how we could get interpreters for our town halls and press conferences and so on and so forth. And they told me that they were not able to support our organization during this particular activation for those services. So basically they told me they could not help us. They could not provide interpreters. Their interpreters were not trained to provide this type of support at this time. That was not what I wanted to hear. But it sent me on a path of reaching out to other Bay Area organizations that provide these services and executing contracts with them. I had only a couple days. In one situations a few hours to secure and execute a contract. Any of you who have gone through the contracting process with the government agency, that is next to impossible and extraordinarily stressful. So I highly encourage you to review what your organization contracts are for these different types of translation services and make sure that they are able to support disaster scenario translation services and make sure they have multiple persons on staff to provide those services. Like I said, this has been an ongoing process and a long activation. So we've had lots of needs for translation. Also unique to this activation is the need to translate remotely, because we can't all be in a room together right now, and having things like virtual town halls presented challenges in terms of just having the technology worked out and having the captioning correct and making sure that the Spanish language translation aligned with the Spanish CART captioning. So there were just a lot of technical challenges that we had to navigate and continued to have to navigate, but making sure you have the right contracts with the right people in place in advance is really important. Linking community-based organizations that serve individuals with disabilities with emergency response personnel. So at the beginning of the activation, when we started having the big policy and planning meetings, I made sure there was a representative from each of the community-based organizations that I knew of that represents people in the access and functional needs community at that table. And at the time we were still meeting in person. So

physically coming to the office, sitting down, meeting face-to-face, making those connections and relationships, speaking up and advocating their concerns and perspectives, that was really important. And we continue to do that through virtual meetings and remotely, and through email and all these other channels, but it's really important to make sure that representatives of the access and functional needs community are at the table. Coordinating with public information teams to ensure accessible communications. So we have this legal requirement for effective communication, right? But we also have requirements to provide -- documents, websites, all our digital accessibility components in accessible formats. So it's important to coordinate with your PIO team and make sure you're on the same page and they know they have your support. The public information team in an Emergency Operations Center in a disaster scenario is working 24 hours a day/seven days a week. They are pushing out information at an incredibly rapid pace, in particular when scenarios are rapidly changing, that information is going out really quickly. So it's important to work closely with them to make sure they understand the importance of reaching the whole community and making sure that people with access and functional needs are included in their outreach efforts. Coordinating with human resources and information technology to ensure digital formats are accessible to employees with disabilities and the public. So another phase that we moved into is our work lives have become very virtual and very technology-based. So you might be pulled into the world of making sure that these formats are accessible to employees with disabilities also. And as we come back to offices we're in phase 2 opening right now in the County of Marin, so some people are starting to come back into the office and work from the office and we're looking at having things like hand sanitizer and wipes available, making sure that those are all in accessible spaces, that people have access to them, that they're mounted at accessible heights and so on and so forth. So there's all of this accessibility-related stuff that goes along with our internal operations as well as external operations that are unique to this particular emergency response to the pandemic. But something to think about and something that I myself and the digital accessibility manager have been pulled into time and again as we start opening things back up. Next slide, please. So coordinating with other departments to ensure that policies and procedures are accessible. For instance, one thing that happened was the public health officer in our shelter in place order closed all our county parks to the public. And when we started reopening them, it was you could access your local parks and open spaces that were in your neighborhood that you could walk to. But we had to work with the public health officer to build an exception into that public health order to allow people with disabilities that because of the functional limitations of their disabilities that were not able to walk, that they could drive and have access to parking at their local parks and open spaces. Then we had to work with the parks and sheriff's staff to identify representatives from each of those departments that would work with the public when people had requests so that they could access those particular parks and if for whatever reason they couldn't because of safety and health concerns, the staff from the parks and open space department worked with members of the public to identify other similar activities in their area that they could participate in. We had wonderful collaboration and participation from our parks and open space office. They identified a senior park ranger, Ian McLord. He worked with our department and talked with so many members of the community with disabilities and other access and functional needs to help them identify places they could go so they could engage in the essential activity of exercise outdoors and do it safely and do it in a way so it was equitable. So we were very lucky to have wonderful engagement from our parks and open space. Also important to

educate your sheriff's office or local law enforcement on not ticketing people with disabilities who under these public health standards are able to access parks and park there when the rest of the population is not, making sure those people aren't ticketed. So you have to work with local law enforcement to educate them about the why and the how. So that was a critical component of what I worked on. Coordinating with food security initiatives. So because so many people were unable to go to work and leave their homes during this pandemic and continue to be unable to do so, coordinating with local food banks to make sure that food is made available, and then that advertising in an accessible format and people with disabilities have access to those food security initiatives and also using those channels. So, for instance, food delivery channels, as a way to funnel information to people with access and functional needs in their native languages, make sure that they know how to get access to other services incorporating well checks into those food delivery operatives. So coordinating with food security initiatives was very important and a critical way for I believe for us to push a lot of information out to an otherwise hard-to-reach population. Educating call centers on how to place and receive California relay calls. There was a lawsuit against local municipality a while back where someone with a disability was trying to place a call to the California relay service and the person answering the phone kept hanging up because they thought it was a telemarketer. Really important to educate your call centers on how to place and receive California relay calls. I created a training curriculum and did a quick training for the folks working in the call center so they would know about that. I talked about a few other disability and access and functional needs issues. Made sure they had people Spanish speaking in the call centers and ta knew how to use our translation services in case they got calls from people who spoke other languages as well.

Coordinating with your logistics section to ensure all supplies procured include accessible options. I worked with our wonderful logistics section many times to obtain accessible equipment, equipment to adapt hotel rooms. We are using local hotels to isolate and quarantine folks that are -- that have tested positive or persons under investigation, so making sure that they have shower chairs if they need. They may not need an accessible room, they may need additional equipment. So having your logistics team aware of the needs of people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs is very important, and it's really going to help your efforts function much more smoothly.

Next slide, please. So providing input on all planning strategy objective and action plan processes. This is probably the most challenging thing for me so far, is trying to get myself into all the spaces all of the time, and then being able to make the decision for myself about when I need to step out and don't need to be involved. It is very hard in a hierarchical environment to have that happen when you're seen as an outsider. So even though I work with wonderful people who are very collaborative, it took a lot of active culture change to get myself into all those spaces. But it's really important to make sure that accessibility is baked in and the way to do that is get a seat at the table. So that takes a lot of strategy and a lot of finesse and a lot of diplomatic efforts to get that to happen.

Serving sites for accessibility. So temporary housing, sheltering, temporary work sites, testing sites. All of these need to be accessible, so having someone with knowledge of architectural accessibility laws and regulations is really important. I highly recommend -- and I'm working on

having a CAST certified individual, having a contract with the CAST certified individual to send them out to do all of these surveys. Really important and helpful to have reports so that we know what modifications need to be made in order to make things functionally accessible for our use. Coordinating with medical surge planners and identifying methods for obtaining durable medical equipment and medications. So I began this work back in the fires of 2017, the work in practice, because we had open to shelter in Marin County that was overflow from Sonoma County shelters and we had lots of people come to that shelter that Spanish was their first language, that were people with disabilities, and that evacuated their homes and didn't have time to grab anything. So they didn't have their medication refills. They didn't have their walkers and wheelchairs. And we really honestly scrambled to pull all that together. We did a great job. We have a great team. But coordinating in advance to make sure that you know how you're going to get these things, where you're going to get them, who is going to pay for them. If you can get donations. What are you going to do with all the equipment if you're left with it afterwards? These were all challenges that we faced and efforts that we continue to build out now in the current response. The Marin Center for Independent Living has been extremely supportive and wonderfully helpful. I can't encourage enough for you to connect with your local independent living centers. And ensure that you know who works there and support each other. They're going to be a great way to connect with the disability community during a disaster and before a disaster when you want to do training and outreach. They have just been wonderful partners. And they also have helped us in identifying how to obtain durable medical equipment and medications and what avenues to go through. So they have been really helpful. So I can't emphasize enough having a good relationship with the local CILs. So a lot of work has been done, and I'm tired, but I have lots of energy to keep going. There's so much work still to be done. Much of what I've covered today and spoken about has been what we're in the midst of creating and what I would like to see created, but all that still needs to be done. I'm very proud of the team. I have a disability access specialist named Rafael, started work two weeks after I was activated in the Emergency Operations Center. We didn't even work in the office together for the first few months of his employment in that position. He's been amazingly supportive. You need lots of support and a good team to get this done. And if you are a party of one and an ADA coordinator of one in your organization, don't lose heart. You can form relationships and identify allies in other departments that will have their heart in this work and will support you and will encourage you. So don't be discouraged, but keep fighting the good fight and working on every day taking another step towards having a really robust access and functional needs position and office within your Emergency Operations Center. So what we still need to do here are some of the big chunks of work that I still need to do are policy and procedure creation and changes. So writing high-level policy and having it adopted by the board and various departments and programs to make sure it is built in.

Procedure creation and changes. Every day something new comes up and I have to figure out how to get it done. When things slow down and when the activation ends, making sure that we're documenting all that and putting those procedures into place.

Culture change is still needed. Culture change work is never done. There's still a lot to be done and worked on and the envelope still needs to be pushed around disability and others with access and functional needs, so all that work needs to happen still. Infrastructure of the

position, the AFN position still needs to be built out. As I said we're in the process of updating our Emergency Operations Plan and building out those position positions and documentation that goes along with the position. Networking and trust building is still needed. We need to network and build trust with the disability community. We need to network and build trust with all the different departments so they know we're partners and we're here to collaborate. That I am not the ADA police as I have lovingly been referred to on several occasions. But that I'm here to partner and collaborate. And that, yes, I need to verify and ensure that things are being done correctly but that it's with a very collaborative spirit. And then layering of additional disasters as I talked about before. The PSPS situations in the fires are going to further complicate and likely delay this work. So in the little down time I have right now, keeping my nose to the grind and making sure that I am building out as much of these things as I can in the meantime is really important. I have to stay committed to that and then also relying on the network that I have built and my teammates to help me do that.

So all of that is one step at a time, one day at a time. Sometimes it's one hour at a time but like anything else, any other comprehensive culture change and policy work, we need to stay patient and stay committed, but luckily being ADA coordinators or the accessibility field, that's sort of the nature of the work anyway. So I think we have a uniquely well-built skill set to acclimate ourselves to emergency preparedness and response work.

So I know that's a lot of information. That's all I have in terms of slides prepared. I would like to open it up to question and answer now and I'm going to turn it back over to Lewis as our moderator to walk us through that. I want to thank you so much for taking the time to hear me today and to listen to my experience here in the County of Marin. I welcome all types of feedback and constructive criticism on how I and we can be doing it better. And I really look forward to hearing about all of your experiences and how you have been activated and incorporated into this response to the current pandemic. I also hope that you are all healthy and well and taking care of your physical, emotional and psychological health during this time. It's been a very stressful time for everybody. And I wish you all the best. And thank you again.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: Thank you so much, Laney. That was a tremendous presentation. Everyone please remember to submit your questions in the chat window now and we'll get to those in a moment. I wanted to start off with a couple of questions here for you, Laney. And before I even go to that, can you put your contact information for people to reach you in the chat window where it goes to everyone? Do we have it there. That's good. Thank you. That way anybody who wants to contact you will have that information. The first question, when you were talking about your set-up of the... well, the whole structure. If there were an equity officer, one person asked, do you think that person should be in the management -- should also be in the management section, and is it... is even an equity officer worth someone to have?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: Yeah, so I absolutely think that it is a wonderful idea to have an equity officer in the Emergency Operations Center. I think, yes, it should also be in the management section. We have an equity officer, as I mentioned here at the County of Marin. She's been intricately involved with Emergency Operations Center activities, but she does not have a formalized role in the org chart per se. So it would be helpful to have an equity officer because

it would take some of the burden and pressure off the AFN officer to provide such a wide array of support and subject matter expertise. So that would be, yes, I agree, a great idea, and one way to really help relieve some of the burden off of the AFN officer, and ensure that we're truly supporting our entire community. I think that's a wonderful idea.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: Thanks. I wouldn't say this is a question. I would just say here is someone who is quite eagle eyed and on your reporting structure there for the command staff. She says "I like there is an AFN position as part of the command staff, however, this chart shows 11 positions reporting to the EOC director, which is against ICS reporting structure." So you may want to take that back to the County of Marin. The next item is... is there a state AFN officer and how do you work with that person?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So, yes, the state AFN officer, his name is Vance Taylor, for the State of California. And I... so he holds a weekly on Thursday afternoons, a weekly meeting about AFN response to the current pandemic, where folks can join in and ask questions and have a dialogue, and he offers information and resources. So that's been a really great resource. I reach out to him periodically. Historically I've worked with him. He's come and spoken at a couple events we had here in the County of Marin. He's a vast source of knowledge. He's a wonderful human being, incredible to work with, so I really encourage all of you to reach out to your state level AFN officers. I don't know if that's a mandated position, but I know that exists here in California, and that office has been really supportive and helpful.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: I can add to that. That is actually California was one of the first states to create that position. I don't think that that is something that is across the country. We do have a previous webinar by the person who set up that office several years ago. That's one of our earlier webinars to describe how he set that up and why he set that up. Some states have started to do that, but I don't think that's universal. But you may be able to find somebody else in the state OES structure that would be able to -- someone you can bounce ideas off of.

Next question for you: Can the position descriptions and checklists be shared?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So, as I said, we are still in the process of building out our position descriptions and checklists for the AFN officer. I did reach out to Vance Taylor again, as I mentioned before from the State, to get theirs, and theirs are finalized. So I would recommend reaching out to them to get finalized, and then at which time ours are finalized, I believe I'm able to share them. Because of advice from our County counsel, they don't want a lot of draft items related to the EOC being shared. But as soon as I get the green light from them, I'm more than happy to push that stuff out through our California network of ADA coordinators group, which is hosted by the Pacific ADA Center, and then that could be made available by them if you're not part to have that California group.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: All right, the next item... this is the Northern California Coast Region for the American Red Cross, Liz, wanted to make sure she connected with you. Laney's information is on the screen. Laney, your information for Liz is in the chat if you would like.

Another comment from someone. It's gratifying to hear that the issue the presenter is highlighting with newness of this position building the plane while flying it and disconnect of virtual EOC collaboration are all things that others are experiencing too. It makes me feel like I am not alone. Next question... who collects all the information about how many people with AFN are impacted by disaster? Is that part of the county, state or federal responsibility?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So all of the above. Lots of different data is being collected at all times at all levels, because access and functional needs is such a wide population, information and data is coming in at all levels at all points at all times. So at this time the County of Marin doesn't have one aggregate area where we report out just on access and functional needs numbers. And the data that is collected is more specific to the type of disaster typically. But emergency preparedness and response people love data and they love data dashboards in my experience. So there's lots of that information being collected. For instance, information around people -- the number of people contracting the disease, the demographics of those individuals, that is collected by public health and distributed through public health channels, but then information about people experiencing food insecurity, that's collected by health and human services social services division at the county level. So the responsibility is spread wide but there's not one concerted effort at this time to look at and break the data down by access and functional needs in one space.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: I would encourage you, as a partial answer to this as well, just like we always say that all disasters start locally and then they elevate up to increasing levels of the government. Your data will also be probably found that way, start local, see if your local emergency management office or health office has the data, and if they don't, they may bump you up to the next level. Next question: Is there a state AFN task force of agencies and organizations established to assist with the EOC systems set up to handle and properly notify teams? Or did you have to create special configurations? And what type of internal training did you conduct for the county, state and local municipalities?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: Well, that is quite a question.

[chuckles]

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So the state has teams that I believe are referred to as FAST teams, functional assessment service teams, and they have people they can send out to assist in the event of a disaster response. They also encourage and disseminate -- it's like a train the trainer program on FAST teams and each of the local jurisdictions can have their own FAST teams which are basically people that are trained on access and functional needs that can go to the different areas of response and provide assistance. So that infrastructure is to some degree built in because of the scale of this particular response, those resources were much less scarce than they were, for instance, during the fires. And we were in the process of reactivating our FAST team and getting people trained up, so we hadn't quite gotten to that before this particular activation, so it would have been nice to already have that in place, but it takes training and time and education to get those people really trained up so that they can be

effective. That is the infrastructure and training supports that I'm aware of. But I really recommend you contact the state office of access and functional needs to get more information. Because they have so many resources and supports that there's likely things that I don't even know exist that I am sure I will learn about eventually. But I encourage you all to contact your state offices as well, your emergency -- your State Office of Emergency Services. They should be able to direct you to the right place for those resources.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: And if you are interested in the FAST teams, there is a webinar we've had about FAST teams. You can review that. That went over the FAST teams in California and I believe it was Wisconsin and another state. So there are a few states that use FAST teams. That is not universal across the country. But that might be something that you can bring up in your state if that's something you want. Next comment... awesome presentation. Napa County is operating similarly, but I fill the ADA function from the safety officer position. My reclassification has been approved and I'm officially the safety officer ADA coordinator for the county. ASL contracts are key. PIO coordination is critical. My last ADA access issue was with transportation to food. Public transportation was reduced and we coordinated with HSSA and our transportation authority for alternatives. The request came to me via the PIO webmaster. Marin is lucky to have you.

Next question. How did you make virtual public meetings accessible to people who don't have Internet or computers? How did you ensure they could participate in the meeting? This is for ADA title VI compliance.

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So we also did broadcast through television, local access television. So that is how we ensured that people that didn't have Internet access had access to the meetings and then there was also captioning made available on those TV broadcast versions of the meetings. We also had an option to phone in, and here the meeting in languages other than English, if the -- because not all formats of translation were available on all formats of broadcast. So those were the ways we ensure that people that didn't have Internet access had access to that information.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: I'm scrolling through here but finding it hard to find questions because so many people are saying fantastic presentation, excellent presentation. So if you would like, you should really look through the chat and enjoy how many people really enjoyed your presentation. Here is one question for you... how would I find out who my ADA coordinator is for the Tri-Valley area?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So each agency that has 50 or more employees is under Title II required to have an ADA coordinator. Each organization should have their own. That doesn't mean they all do or they're adequately staffed. So it's by city, town, county, organization, so on and so forth. So I would start at the local level of wherever -- whatever jurisdiction you or your organization is in and start there and move out. Likewise you can contact the state and see if they have information on who is in that area. Also, the Pacific ADA Center, on their web page, under ADA coordinator resources, we have been working on developing a list of all the ADA coordinators for all the counties, cities and towns in the state of California. It's always

expanding list, but there's a lot of people with contact information listed on there, so you can try that list... those lists as well.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: Or give us a call at 1-800-949-4232 in California, or Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, and we would be able to tell you what we know about ADA coordinators. Next question... can you describe your outreach to CBOs before a disaster occurs, particularly the disability community.

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: Sure. So having a disability access advisory committee or some type of disability access council that meets to discuss issues that are relevant to the disability community coming out of or into the local agency is really important. Forming good relationships with your local Centers for Independent Living, even just doing a Google search of what service providers are in your area that provide disability-related services and working with them is really important both public and private agencies. All of that is going to be really helpful in making sure that you have a robust relationship with the disability community. Advocacy organizations, skilled nursing facilities. So knowing where the skilled nursing facilities and who the people are who work there has been helpful in this particular activation because they have been hit so hard by this pandemic. Yeah, getting out into the community and knowing who is providing services to people with disabilities is going to help you connect with people with disabilities.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: Okay. Next question. I have been at the Alameda County EOC for 61 days and I just want to say this was awesome. Any comments or relationships with VOAD, voluntary organizations active in disaster, or comments about that?

>> LANEY DAVIDSON: So our VOAD has been really great here. They have provided tremendous support to the food distribution programs, to staffing, the various activities. So what are needed a lot of times, they call them runners. And it's basically people to get stuff from point A to point B. People to pick people up and take them to testing and isolation and quarantine. So there's lots of traditionally volunteer roles, but just on a very large scale. So our VOAD has been really helpful in supporting a lot of those areas and they continue to be very supportive. I had formed a really good relationship with VOAD prior to the activation, and actually the Marin VOAD I had participated in their annual conference and spoke at their conference about access and functional needs, so I was already familiar with the players there, and I had worked with them even prior to that in the wildfires in 2017. So really important to have a good relationship with your VOAD. And to help your VOAD, conversely, build up and be as strong and robust VOAD. It's very important.

>> LEWIS KRAUS: All right, everyone, well, we realize that many of you may still have questions. There were a lot of questions piled up in the chat room and we apologize if you did not get a chance to ask your question, but we are running out of time and I want to be respectful of your time. If you have a question that is an ADA-related question, like some of you have put in there, do contact your regional ADA Center at 1-800-949-4232. You can ask that question and they'll be able to answer that for you free of charge confidentially. You will receive an email with a link to an online session evaluation. Thank you for being here. Please complete that evaluation for today's program as we really value your input and we want to

demonstrate its value to our funder. We want to thank Laney today for sharing her time and knowledge with us. It was a great presentation. A reminder to all of you, this session was recorded and it will be available for viewing next week at ADApresentations.org in the archive section. Our next webinar is July 9th, we will have a presentation on... which follows what Laney was saying before, on California's emergency plans for wildfire season in a COVID-19 environment. That will have many California representatives on the call. So we hope you can join us for that. Watch your email two weeks ahead for the announcement of the opening of the registration. Thank you all for attending today's session. Thank you again, Laney, for a fabulous presentation. We hope you all stay safe and have a good rest of your afternoon.