

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 26, 2025

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 352**

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**Introduced by Senator Reyes**

February 12, 2025

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*An act to amend Section 8692 of the Government Code, and to amend Section 9120 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to emergency services; disaster preparedness.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 352, as amended, Reyes. ~~California Emergency Services Act.~~ *Disaster preparedness.*

*The California Emergency Services Act generally prescribes duties with regard to various types of emergencies and disasters. The act requires the Office of Emergency Services, in consultation with specified persons and entities, including the access and functional needs community, to develop guidelines for alerting and warning the public of an emergency, as specified, and then to provide those guidelines to each city, county, and city and county. If a state of emergency is proclaimed, the act authorizes an eligible private nonprofit organization to receive state assistance for distribution of supplies and other disaster or emergency assistance activities resulting in extraordinary cost, as specified.*

*This bill would require eligible area agencies on aging and independent living centers that provide transportation and evacuation services to individuals with access and functional needs during a state of emergency to be prioritized for the state assistance described above.*

*Existing law establishes an Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program, administered by the California Department of Aging, to provide information to consumers and their families on available*

*long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs and to assist older adults, caregivers, and persons with disabilities in accessing LTSS programs at the local level. Existing law requires ADRC programs to provide specified services, including, among other things, enhanced information and referral services and other assistance at hours that are convenient for the public.*

*This bill would further require ADRC programs to provide disaster and emergency preparedness training specifically designed to help older adults and people with disabilities prepare for emergencies and ensure their safety before, during, and after natural disasters and other emergency events, as specified.*

~~Existing law requires a county, including a city and county to, upon the next update to its emergency plan, integrate access and functional needs into its emergency plan by addressing, at a minimum, how the access and functional needs population is being served by emergency communications, evacuations, and sheltering, as specified.~~

~~This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation relating to evacuation plans for individuals that have access and functional needs.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     SECTION 1. *The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
- 2     *following:*
- 3     (a) *When a natural disaster occurs, certain individuals may*
- 4     *have needs that cannot be effectively addressed through traditional*
- 5     *emergency response and recovery methods. These needs, referred*
- 6     *to as “access and functional needs” within the emergency*
- 7     *management community, arise from a variety of factors, including,*
- 8     *but not limited to, developmental or intellectual disabilities,*
- 9     *physical disabilities, chronic health conditions, injuries, limited*
- 10    *English proficiency, age, including older adults and children,*
- 11    *institutional living, low income, homelessness, transportation*
- 12    *challenges, including reliance on public transportation, and*
- 13    *pregnancy. Emergencies impact individuals in distinct ways*
- 14    *depending on their specific needs.*
- 15    (b) *While all individuals are vulnerable during a natural*
- 16    *disaster, those with access and functional needs face heightened*

1 *vulnerabilities due to their unique circumstances. Historical*  
2 *evidence demonstrates that these individuals are disproportionately*  
3 *affected by disasters. According to a 2019 report conducted by*  
4 *the California State Auditor, people with certain access and*  
5 *functional needs are two to four times more likely to perish in a*  
6 *natural disaster compared to the general population. These*  
7 *individuals can constitute a significant portion of the affected*  
8 *population, underscoring the importance of incorporating*  
9 *strategies into emergency plans that specifically address the*  
10 *protection and assistance of these vulnerable groups.*

11 *(c) Despite the critical importance of this issue, emergency*  
12 *agencies have often faced challenges in adequately supporting*  
13 *individuals with access and functional needs during natural*  
14 *disasters. Notably, alerting and warning, evacuation, and*  
15 *sheltering have historically posed significant obstacles in meeting*  
16 *the needs of these individuals.*

17 *SEC. 2. Section 8692 of the Government Code is amended to*  
18 *read:*

19 8692. (a) If a state of emergency is proclaimed, an eligible  
20 private nonprofit organization may receive state assistance for  
21 distribution of supplies and other disaster or emergency assistance  
22 activities resulting in extraordinary cost.

23 (b) A private nonprofit organization is eligible for assistance  
24 under this section if it is eligible for disaster assistance under the  
25 federal Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency  
26 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 5121).

27 (c) An organization is not eligible for assistance under this  
28 section if it employs religious content in the provision of  
29 emergency assistance.

30 (d) *Area agencies on aging and independent living centers shall*  
31 *be prioritized for the state assistance provided pursuant to this*  
32 *section if both of the following apply:*

33 *(1) The entity provides transportation and evacuation services*  
34 *to individuals with access and functional needs during a state of*  
35 *emergency.*

36 *(2) The entity is an eligible private nonprofit organization*  
37 *pursuant to subdivision (b).*

38 ~~(d)~~

39 (e) Any grant of assistance under this section shall comply with  
40 Section 4 of Article I and Section 5 of Article XVI of the California

1 Constitution, state and federal civil rights laws, and the First  
2 Amendment to the United States Constitution in regard to the  
3 funding of religious organizations and activities. These legal  
4 constraints include prohibitions on the discrimination against  
5 beneficiaries and staff based on protected categories, on the use  
6 of public funds for proselytizing of religious doctrine, religious  
7 instruction, or worship, and on the use of other religious means to  
8 accomplish programmatic goals.

9 (e)

10 (f) The Office of Emergency Services shall adopt regulations  
11 to implement this section.

12 *SEC. 3. Section 9120 of the Welfare and Institutions Code is*  
13 *amended to read:*

14 9120. (a) There is hereby established an Aging and Disability  
15 Resource Connection (ADRC) program to provide information to  
16 consumers and their families on available long-term services and  
17 supports (LTSS) programs and to assist older adults, caregivers,  
18 and persons with disabilities in accessing LTSS programs at the  
19 local level through ADRC programs operated jointly by area  
20 agencies on aging and independent living centers.

21 (b) This article shall be administered and implemented by the  
22 California Department of Aging, in collaboration with the  
23 Department of Rehabilitation and the State Department of Health  
24 Care Services.

25 (c) Area agencies on aging and independent living centers shall  
26 be the core local partners in developing ADRC programs. The  
27 California Department of Aging shall assist interested and qualified  
28 area agencies on aging and independent living centers in  
29 completing an application to be designated as an ADRC program.

30 (d) An ADRC program operated by an area agency on aging  
31 and an independent living center shall provide all of the following:

32 (1) Enhanced information and referral services and other  
33 assistance at hours that are convenient for the public.

34 (2) Options counseling concerning available LTSS programs  
35 and public and private benefits programs.

36 (3) Short-term service coordination.

37 (4) Transition services from hospitals to home and from skilled  
38 nursing facilities to the community.

39 (5) *Disaster and emergency preparedness training specifically*  
40 *designed to help older adults and people with disabilities prepare*

1 *for emergencies and ensure their safety before, during, and after*  
2 *natural disasters and other emergency events.*

3 *(A) The training shall utilize emergency preparedness and*  
4 *response tools developed by the Office of Emergency Services, the*  
5 *California Department of Aging, the Department of Rehabilitation,*  
6 *and other relevant community partners.*

7 *(B) The training shall raise awareness of existing available*  
8 *resources and guidance, including, but not limited to, local alert*  
9 *systems, local emergency plans, information from the local fire*  
10 *department, and information related to utility services during*  
11 *emergencies and natural disasters.*

12 (e) An ADRC program operated by an area agency on aging  
13 and an independent living center shall do both of the following:

14 (1) Provide services within the geographic area served.

15 (2) Provide information to the public about the services provided  
16 by the program.

17 (f) (1) The California Department of Aging, in consultation  
18 with the Aging and Disability Resource Connection Advisory  
19 Committee within the California Department of Aging, shall  
20 develop a core model of ADRC best practices. These best practices  
21 shall be implemented by July 1, 2022, by all ADRC programs  
22 operated by area agencies on aging and independent living centers.  
23 To the extent feasible, the best practices shall be considered in the  
24 development and continued updating of the master plan on aging.  
25 In the development of these best practices, the department and  
26 advisory committee shall consider, at a minimum, all of the  
27 following practices:

28 (A) A person-centered counseling process.

29 (B) Public outreach and coordination with key referral sources,  
30 including, but not limited to, caregiver resource centers, the medical  
31 centers of the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, acute  
32 care systems, local 211 programs, local multipurpose senior service  
33 programs, Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE),  
34 adult day care services, and LTSS providers.

35 (C) A formal followup procedure to ensure that services for  
36 which a person received a referral were received and methods for  
37 correcting service provision if needed.

38 (D) A model for the best ways for area agencies on aging and  
39 independent living centers to share necessary data and client  
40 information.

1 (E) A model for the collection and reporting of data to the  
2 California Department of Aging, which shall include, but not be  
3 limited to, the demographic information for each individual  
4 counseled, the number of consumers served by category of service,  
5 and the number of caregivers served.

6 (2) The California Department of Aging shall review  
7 implementation of the ADRC Infrastructure Grants Program  
8 described in Section 9121 for consideration in developing and  
9 updating the best practices model.

10 (g) The implementation of this section is contingent on an  
11 appropriation in the annual Budget Act, or another act, for that  
12 express purpose.

13 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact~~  
14 ~~legislation relating to evacuation plans for individuals that have~~  
15 ~~access and functional needs.~~