



Guidelines for Multihazard Emergency Operations

504 accommodation or Individualized Health Plan (IHP) in place which would highlight the need for continuing a special medical regime, particularly during a crisis or disaster.

The IDEA, as amended, is a federal law that ensures special education services to children with eligible disabilities. The IDEA specifies thirteen primary categories under the lead definition of a “child with a disability.” These federal definitions guide how states define who is eligible for a free appropriate public education under special education law. The IDEA requires schools to provide an individualized educational program (IEP) designed to meet the child's unique needs and provide the child with educational benefits.

The Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) has issued regulations to implement Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which apply to institutions receiving federal funds. Section 504, as revised, states in part: “No otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of the disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Only staff members can assume the responsibility of assisting students in an evacuation or other emergency situation. Refrain from utilizing students as buddies for students with disabilities during emergency situations to limit students being solely responsible for other students during emergency situations. Additionally, educators in an adjacent classroom can be pre-assigned joint responsibility for both classes if one is busy assisting another student.

Medicines or medical devices may not be available in emergency shelters or reunification sites. Make alternative arrangements to meet these needs, planning with school nurses or other designated staff who support students during daily medication distribution.

Communication access enables effective interaction with people who are deaf, blind, or who have speech, vision, or hearing limitations, which includes making written materials available in alternative formats (e.g., Braille, large print, visuals, disks, and audio cassettes). Consider providing hearing-assistive technologies such as amplified phones, auxiliary aids and other services such as sign language interpreters. An emergency is not the time to learn how to work a rarely used assistive device. Alarm systems for fire, public address systems, severe weather notifications, and lockdown alerts would benefit everyone by incorporating both audible and visual elements. The most effective communication systems are those used regularly. These systems should be tested frequently.

Classrooms should store disability-related supplies, assistive equipment, and tools required in an emergency for an individual with a disability.

- ◁ When using a powered wheelchair for evacuation:
 - turn off the wheelchair's power b

