

# FAST

## Functional Assessment Service Teams



# Part of FEMA's 'Whole Community Philosophy'

Except for people who are medically fragile, **all** people should be able to stay in general shelters during emergencies and disasters.



# A Brief History of FAST...



The FAST concept started in 2006, involving these departments and organizations in California:



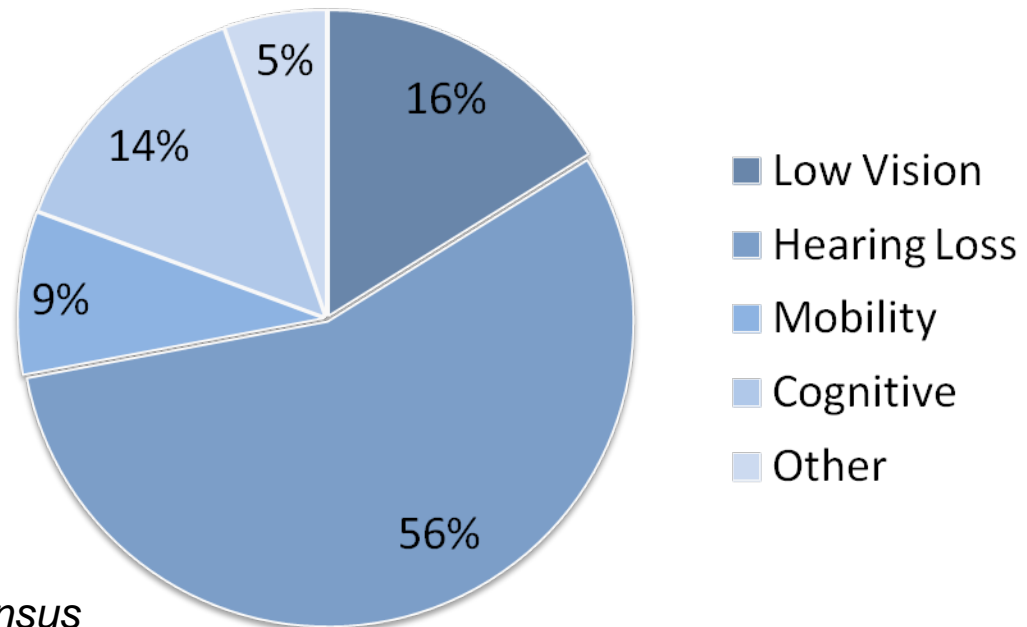
American Red Cross



SWARDENSKI CONSULTING  
Innovative Emergency Planning & Guidance



# 54 Million Americans with disabilities (About one in five)



*Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau; all categories not mutually exclusive; persons may also have more than one disability.*



# Hurricane Katrina in 2006

According to CBS News, following Katrina, of those who stayed behind:

**38% did not evacuate because they had a disability, or were caring for individuals with a disability.**



# Katrina was a wake up call

- People with different disabilities did (and will) show up at shelters during disasters.
- DEM has lead responsibility for coordinating at the local level.



# People with access and functional needs

Five categories of functional needs under  
FEMA's definition (C-MIST):

1. Communication
2. Medical
3. Independence
4. Supervisory
5. Transportation





# Key concepts behind FAST

People with access and functional needs can be accommodated in general population shelters ***if given the proper support.***



# Key concepts behind FAST

Meeting the needs of people with access and functional needs *requires proper **planning** done pre-incident and **coordination** done during an incident.*



# Complement to Personal Preparedness

**The FAST program does not relieve the person with access and functional needs from personally preparing for disasters**

- All individuals should have an evacuation plan
- All individuals should have an out-of-area contact
- All individuals should put together an emergency kit, which includes personal items such as hearing aids, wheelchair tools, medications, etc.



# Key concepts behind FAST

Support for sheltering people with access and functional needs comes from the community - government, non-governmental organizations, faith based organizations and private resources.



# FAST Philosophy

- FAST will help assess people with access and functional needs and assist them by helping them get what they need to stay in a general population shelter
- FAST will help distinguish people who have access and functional needs from those who have medical needs.



# FAST description and duties

- Trained government employees and private non-profit personnel, and volunteers
- Deployed as shelters open and may work until no longer needed
- May serve several shelters and could also work in Disaster Recovery Centers
- In-depth knowledge of populations they serve, their cultures, and service networks.





# FAST qualifications

- Have at least two years' experience working with specific populations
- Complete the FAST training and certification
- Pass a background check
- Work under difficult and stressful situations



# FAST experience

Members should have a combined experience working with people who have/are:

- Mental health needs
- Developmental and other cognitive disabilities
- Low vision/blindness
- Deaf/hard of hearing
- Aging
- Chemical dependencies
- Physical health conditions (nursing support services)
- Physical disabilities
- Cultural/religious needs
- Communication barriers





# FAST duties

Teams will work in coordination with shelter managers to conduct assessments of individuals and arrange for accommodations by requesting resources such as:

- Durable medical equipment (DME)
- Consumable medical supplies (CMS)
- Essential medications
- Communication access
- Personal Assistants (PAs)







# FAST training

- **Length:** 16 hours over two consecutive days
- **Number of participants for each session:** target is 40
- **Trainers represent a variety of disciplines**
- **Modeled after Department of Homeland Security-approved program**



# 2011/12 FAST Pilot Project Pierce County Partners

- Pierce County Emergency Management
- Pierce County Community Connections
- Tacoma Area Coalition for Individuals with Disabilities (TACID)
- American Red Cross, Mount Rainier Chapter
- Associated Ministries
- Center for Independence
- CS Hard of Hearing Resource Specialist
- City of Lakewood
- City of Tacoma
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Region X
- Hearing Speech and Deafness Center
- Helping Hand House
- Northwest Center for Independent Living
- OptumHealth
- Tacoma Goodwill Industries
- Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
- U.S. Health and Human Services, Children and Family Services
- Washington State Dept. of Social and Health Services



# Establishing **FAST** in Pierce County

- Pierce County Department of Emergency Management is taking the lead.
- Planning group is a coordinated effort between community partners
- Natural next step for the High Risk Populations Disaster Planning Coalition that began in 2007



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