

Pennsylvania Special Needs Registry

Lessons learned from past disasters tell us it is never too early to prepare. Advanced planning and preparedness is especially important for people with special needs, which is defined as those individuals who cannot receive, understand or act upon emergency protective orders. During a natural or manmade disaster that requires evacuation, it is important that everyone be prepared to evacuate him or herself to the greatest extent possible. However, there will be those who must rely on emergency responders despite their individual preparedness efforts.

In those instances, emergency responders must be able to rapidly identify the location, accessibility issues and mobility requirements.

The Special Needs Registry is a free, voluntary, and strictly confidential program. It is designed to help those who would have difficulty during an evacuation, because of physical or cognitive limitations, language barriers, or lack of transportation. It will help your first responders make the best use of limited time and resources to help those with no other options for evacuation during an emergency.

Individuals (or caregivers on their behalf) are able to register electronically, by accessing www.specialneedspa.org or contacting their municipal emergency management coordinator or county EMA office. Numerous communities, civic, faith-based, medical, and non-profit organizations are also helping to register people with special needs.