

SPECIAL EDITION - The Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Minute

January 12, 2025

"January 2025 Wildfires"

In this special edition of the AFN Minute, we're focusing on the January 2025 wildfires. First, we express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the city, county, state, federal, and community-based organizations actively engaged in the ongoing response efforts. Second, we want to highlight some of the resources available to support disaster survivors, including individuals with access and functional needs.

CA dot gov logo with a red star and brown bear silhouette

The state has launched a new website – **CA.gov/LAfires** to support wildfire survivors with resources and information.

The President has signed a Major Disaster Declaration, which includes Individual Assistance. This makes vital resources available to many impacted Californians. The information below provides guidance on how to access those resources.

How to get help?

Registering for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance is the first essential step to accessing federal resources. There are three different ways to register:

1. Online at **DisasterAssistance.gov**. Applying online is the easiest, fastest, and most convenient way to apply.
2. On the **FEMA App** for mobile devices
3. Call the FEMA helpline at 1-800-621-3362: Available daily from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. (PST).
 - Help is available in **over 40 languages**.
 - If you use a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service, or other

- To watch a video featuring American Sign Language (ASL) and captions about how to apply, visit **FEMA Accessible: Registering for Individual Assistance - YouTube**.
- Assistance for small businesses is available through the federal **Small Business Administration (SBA)**.
- If you lost your job due to the fires, **apply for benefits** through the State of California.

What is Individual Assistance?

Individual Assistance includes multiple federal programs to help disaster survivors start to recover. These programs include, but are not limited to:

- Serious Needs Assistance for lifesaving and life-sustaining items, including prescriptions, infant formula, breastfeeding supplies, diapers, consumable medical supplies, durable medical equipment, personal hygiene items, and fuel for transportation.
- Advanced Financial Assistance
- Housing
- Rental Assistance
- Funds for Repair / Replacement of Damaged Homes
- Disaster Legal Services
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance
- Other Needs Assistance

Where can I go for assistance?

In the days ahead, Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) will open to assist survivors who have suffered disaster-related losses or damages. DRCs, which are accessible, include support from local, state, federal, and non-profit agencies. Accommodations are available upon request at each DRC, including:

A list of accommodations: Assistive Listening Devices, ASL Interpreters, Mobility Aids, Language Services, Someone to Explain,

Help Reading and Writing Documents with icons.

Visit a DRC for help with federal aid applications, housing and rental support, or to learn more about disaster assistance programs. **Stay tuned for updated location information and details.**

California Department of Social Services Logo

The California Department of Social Services' Disaster Guide for Immigrants provides information about the types of federal, state, and local disaster assistance services available in California. Although some of the resources are restricted to individuals or households with eligible immigration status, there are many services available to all Californians impacted by disasters.

The guide can be downloaded here:

- English: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/13/DisasterAssistanceGuideforImmigrantCaliforniansFinal.pdf>
- Spanish: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/13/DisasterAssistanceGuideforImmigrantCaliforniansSpanishFinal.pdf>

Listos California logo with red star and golden bear

Listos Guidance

Listos California has gathered key resources to support impacted communities.

The text "Come up with an evacuation plan for your family" on a map with different location icons all connected by roads.

1. Share SoCal Wildfire Social Media Kit through social channels, e-newsletters, and direct communications- The new **social media**

toolkit is available featuring graphics, posts, and resources to help raise awareness about actions Californians can take to stay safer during wildfire evacuation, in dangerous air quality, and during power outages. The social kit is available in English and Spanish.

A mobile phone showing information from Listos California in Spanish

2. **Sign up for alerts** at listoscalifornia.org/alerts - Each county has its own alert system. This easy-to-use, free tool allows you to search by zip code. You can choose how to get alerts sent to you when you sign up, including cell phone, home phone, email, text messages, and in some cases, devices used by people with hearing or speech disabilities.

Listos resource hub webpage

3. **Wildfire and wildfire smoke resources are available in 12 languages** at listoscalifornia.org/resources/ - Explore valuable resources (guides, videos, and posters) that can be shared with those in your community to prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfires.

Listo's California flyer with information on the difference between an evacuation order and a warning.

4. **Know the difference between evacuation warnings and orders-** Knowing the difference saves lives. Use this **flyer**, available in multiple languages, to share with those in affected areas.

A flyer showing what to do during a power outage

5. **Prepare for power outages** - even if you are outside active wildfire areas, there may be power disruptions. In addition to these **practical tips**, be sure to fully charge your cell phone, battery-powered medical devices, and backup power sources before the power goes

out. If possible, buy manual alternatives for your electric devices that are portable, dependable, and durable. For example, a manual wheelchair, walker, or cane as a backup for an electric scooter.

All emergencies are dynamic, your commitment to sharing timely helpful tips may save a life.

The following resources can support individuals and families with access and functional needs to improve preparedness for any emergency:

The **LA County Wildfire Resources** website lists resources and services that residents and businesses in Los Angeles County can use to begin the recovery process after the recent fires.

The Los Angeles Aging and Disabilities Department logo

- The Los Angeles Aging and Disabilities Department has launched the "**Wildfire & Windstorm Resources webpage**" offering essential resources for local residents. It includes information from LA County Emergency Services, how to get food pantry assistance, water notices from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), transportation services, and much more.

The California state Council on Developmental Disabilities

- The "**Let's Get Prepared**" guide by the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities is a fantastic resource. The guide is designed to help individuals with disabilities address the specific needs they may face during an emergency. If you have a disability, extra planning is essential. This resource will guide you through the preparedness process.

California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and the California Department of Aging (CDA), California Governor's Office of Emergency Services Cal OES logos

