

**OHIO**  
**January 2007 Quarterly Report**

**I. General Information**

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*State:* Ohio    *FEMA Region:* V

*Person Submitting Report:*

- Name: Brad Schwartz
- Agency: Ohio EMA
- Title: State Planner
- E-mail: baschwartz@dps.state.oh.us
- Phone: 614-799-3839                      Fax: 614-799-3652

*Other individuals in State Delegation:*

- Name: Carol Shkolnik
- Agency: Ohio Department of Aging
- E-mail: cshkolnik@age.state.oh.us
  
- Name: Tanya Fernandez-Mote
- Agency: Governor's Council on People with Disabilities
- E-mail: waddlewemeet@yahoo.com
  
- Name: Maureen Crossmaker
- Agency: Ohio Legal Rights Service
- E-mail: mcrossmaker@olrs.state.oh.us
  
- Name: Dr. James Bryant
- Agency: Ohio Department of Health
- E-mail: james.bryant@odh.ohio.gov
  
- Name: James Clinkscale
- Agency: Ohio Rehabilitation Service Council
- E-mail: james.clinkscale@rsc.state.oh.us

**II. State Delegation Meetings/Teleconferences**

The State of Ohio Delegation met a number of times during the months of October and November to plan for a day-long conference, "Including People with Disabilities in Emergency Management" to be held at Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio in December 2006.

A consortium of State of Ohio agencies serving individuals with disabilities and Ohio's Developmental Disabilities Network came together and developed a "Be Prepared" packet specifically for people who have daily functioning needs. Supporting agencies include the Ohio Departments of Health (ODH), MRDD and Aging, Ohio Legal Rights Service, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Ohio State University Nisonger Center UCEDD, University of Cincinnati UCEDD, and Governor's Council on People with Disabilities (GCPD). ODH is printing some copies of the Packet, but the packet is available on the web at <http://olrs.ohio.gov/beprepared/beprepared.htm>.

### **III. Emergency Planning Highlights**

Emergency Support Function #6 – Mass Care – of the State Emergency Operations Plan has been updated to include functional need elements and to be responsive to the federal Target Capabilities List.

### **IV. Emergency Preparedness Highlights**

On December 7, 2006, a working conference, "Including People with Disabilities in Emergency Management" was held at Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio. The Conference, sponsored by the College's Development Foundation, brought together people from diverse fields. This was the first time in Ohio that State and local emergency management, and sheltering, and disability communities came together to discuss issues, meet people who have varied roles, hear about pockets of excellence, and think about next steps at the State and local levels.

The conference was co-sponsored by State of Ohio Agencies responsible for emergency management, disability and aging services, and Ohio's Developmental Disabilities Network. These agencies included the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA); ODH, MRDD, Mental Health, and Aging; Ohio Legal Rights Service, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Ohio State University Nisonger Center UCEDD, University of Cincinnati UCEDD; and GCPD.

Conference participants included people with disabilities, State and local health and disability agencies; providers; first responders, including emergency management, fire, police and emergency medical services; American Red Cross and other shelter and disaster experts. Columbus State's J.R. Thomas brought in the Keynote Speaker, Hilary Styron, Director for the National Organization on Disability's (N.O.D.) Emergency Preparedness Initiative.

Brad Schwartz, State Planner, OEMA, facilitated the afternoon's Orientation Seminar. The Orientation Seminar afforded opportunities for participants to talk together, understand diverse perspectives and roles, and increase their awareness of the heightened urgency about the need to include people with daily functional needs in all phases of emergency planning. The goals of the afternoon Orientation Seminar were to inform people with disabilities about the importance of making and practicing a personal plan, and cross-pollinating all disciplines – emergency management, shelter staff, providers, advocates and

people with disabilities – so that people with functional needs will be included in emergency preparedness and management.

Mr. Schwartz introduced the functional needs framework, long familiar to the disability community which has embraced its focus on ability. Ohio has adopted the five-category Functional Needs Framework as presented in the 2006 paper by Kailes and Enders and encouraged local emergency planners that were present to consider using this framework in their local planning.

Questions about State planning for pandemic influenza were fielded by Dr. James Bryant, Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Planning and preparedness for a pandemic include “sustenance sheltering,” during which people will be encouraged to stay away from others as much as possible and maintain social distancing. Distribution of food and other goods needs to be planned, especially when numbers of health care workers, emergency responders, and utility workers are too sick or contagious to respond. Participants were urged to regularly visit ODH’s pandemic influenza web site, [www.ohiopandemicflu.gov](http://www.ohiopandemicflu.gov).

Dr. James Bryant, Ohio Department of Health, and Maureen Crossmaker, Ohio Legal Rights Service, facilitated a session on personal preparedness. Their goals were to inform and educate people with functional needs about the importance of taking personal responsibility for emergency preparedness, and to increase knowledge and skills across disciplines so people with disabilities and others with functional needs will be better included in all phases of Emergency Management.

In closing the Orientation Seminar, Mr. Schwartz expressed his hope that all participants will return to their communities and assess emergency operations plans, response plans and standard operating procedures and evaluate how address individuals’ functional needs.

The final comment of the day was from an Emergency Manager who summed up the day and the work ahead. She had not known much about the topic coming into the session, and remarked that, regardless of our jobs, our professions, or what agency we are with, we have a collective responsibility to respect everyone’s human dignity and take care of each other as neighbors.

#### **V. Emergency Response Highlights**

Please see report in section IV, above.

#### **VI. Emergency Recovery Highlights**

Please see report in section IV, above.

#### **VII. Next Steps**

We are developing a Functional Needs Tab to ESF-6 – Mass Care. This Tab will focus on the actions of State Agencies to provide guidance, direction and resources during disasters

and emergencies to the local agencies they support that provide assistance to citizens with functional needs.

We are developing a distribution plan for the “Be Prepared” packets being printed by ODH so that we get them into the hands of individuals and families who will use them.

**VIII. Other**

None