

**NYC Emergency Management  
Second Accessibility Progress Report  
Under the 2024-2028 Five-Year Accessibility Plan**

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**Introduction**

Local Law 12 of 2023 (“Local Law 12”), codified as section 23-1004 of the NYC Administrative Code, requires agencies to prepare and publish 5-year accessibility plans in consultation with the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD). Proposed plans were required to be published no later than December 31, 2023, and final plans, following a public comment period, were required to be published no later than March 15, 2024, and shared with the Mayor and City Council by March 31, 2024. NYC Emergency Management met all of these requirements on time. Additionally, each agency was required to provide annual reports thereafter on progress made in the past year towards achieving the goals included in their agency’s Five-Year Accessibility plans. NYC Emergency Management released its First Annual Progress Report on May 1, 2025.

This is the Second Annual Progress Report on the progress made in fulfilling the elements articulated in NYC Emergency Management’s Five-Year-Plan pursuant to Local Law 12.

## **General**

Under the NYC Charter and Administrative Code, NYC Emergency Management (NYCEM) is the City agency designated and charged with the responsibility of comprehensive citywide emergency planning for emergencies of wide-ranging types and scale. NYCEM was directly within the Mayor's Office until 2002, when it became an independent agency, headed by a commissioner who reports to the mayor. It is responsible for leading the coordination of various City agencies' responses to both natural and man-made emergencies and potential incidents which require a multi-agency response, in close collaboration with public, private, and community partners, as needed. NYCEM helps New Yorkers before, during, and after emergencies through preparedness, response and recovery.

## **Statement of Commitment**

NYCEM is committed to providing people with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all its programs, services, and activities in a manner that is integrated to the maximum extent feasible, with programs available to all members of the public and, in the case of the workplace, to all employees, invitees and guests who visit or use NYCEM facilities and offices or otherwise engage with NYCEM staff. NYCEM works diligently to include equitable disability considerations into all phases of the emergency cycle from mitigation to preparedness, response, and recovery in the face of the varied emergencies faced by the City of New York (City), its residents, and its visitors. A link to NYCEM's accessibility statement is available [here](#).

## **Disability Service Facilitator and Other Key Accessibility Information**

Dennis R. Boyd, Executive Civil and Human Rights Counsel is the Disability Service Facilitator (DSF) for NYCEM. Saiena Shafiezadeh is the Legal Director of Civil and Human Rights at NYCEM. Both Mr. Boyd and Ms. Shafiezadeh are NYCEM's DAFN Advisors during activations and can be reached by email at [adacoordinator@oem.nyc.gov](mailto:adacoordinator@oem.nyc.gov). Dennis Boyd can be reached by phone at 718-422-4660. Saiena Shafiezadeh can be reached by phone at 718-422-4669. Alternatively, individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities can use the 711-relay service to connect.

The agency grievance procedure is available here: [grievance process](#). The agency website accessibility statement is available here: [NYCEM Website Accessibility Statement](#).

## **Feedback Process**

NYCEM welcomes feedback on both its Five-Year Accessibility Plan and the Annual Accessibility Progress Reports as well as on accessibility issues regarding the agency generally. Members of the public and employees can share any feedback they may have about the agency's accessibility plan, policies, practices, or procedures by email to [adacoordinator@oem.nyc.gov](mailto:adacoordinator@oem.nyc.gov).

## **Progress Report**

This annual progress report addresses the five areas identified in section (b)(2) of Local Law 12 (NYC Admin Code § 1004(b)(2)) and covered by the agency's initial Five-year Accessibility Plan, for the years 2024-2028. Those areas include:

- Physical Access
- Digital Access
- Programmatic Access
- Effective Communications
- Workplace Inclusion

### **Physical Accessibility**

- As published in NYCEM's initial Five-Year Accessibility Plan, NYCEM's headquarters are currently accessible. Additionally, there is an effort underway for a possible expansion of NYCEM's agency headquarters as published in the initial Plan.
- When and if an expansion occurs to accommodate the growth in staffing, as any remediations occur, accessibility will be worked into those remediations.
- The City continues to maintain emergency shelter capacity for up to 156,000 people with disabilities, having remediated 102 NYC Public Schools buildings to meet or exceed ADA standards. Accessible shelters are activated during coastal evacuations and include mobility and communication aids and expanded space for individuals with service animals and mobility devices. Special Medical Needs Shelters are similarly activated for those requiring a heightened level of care.
- The City has initiated efforts to expand accessible emergency shelter capacity for incidents unrelated to coastal storm events.

### **Digital Accessibility**

- In addition to NotifyNYC and social media, NYCEM has been using Nixle, a communication platform that allows public safety agencies, including NYCEM, to share real-time information with residents and other stakeholders, for several years. NYCEM is piloting additional Nixle functionalities to identify various disruptions to road and public transportation, NYC Fire Department and Police Department activity, in addition to other emergencies. This is being done to make Nixle messaging more targeted to specific neighborhoods within NYC.
- NYCEM's Digital Inclusion Officer role continues to advance efforts to improve accessibility for screen readers across both internal and external electronic documents.

## Programmatic Accessibility

- NYCEM promotes inclusion of equitable considerations in the crafting and refinement of its short and long-term recovery operations. To support this, NYCEM provides analytical tools that help City agencies and the public identify and understand how to mitigate risks to and impacts on underserved communities, economies and individuals. These tools analyze critical data and trends to inform more equitable and effective recovery planning.
- NYCEM reinstated its Community Disability Advisory Council, originally established in 2015 to share information with the disability community and gather feedback on the City's emergency management initiatives. The revitalized Council is intended to provide a consistent mechanism for community input. The Council offers guidance to help strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery efforts for people with disabilities before, during, and after emergencies.
- NYCEM offered its employees Language Testing International Commercial Certification so staff can improve language access during agency operations.
- NYCEM has targeted outreach to climate-vulnerable communities to assist New Yorkers most susceptible to harm during severe heat emergencies.
- NYCEM developed the design process for the NYC Risk Landscape, a Reduce Your Risk Guide, and NYC's Hazard Mitigation Plan - a plan created to identify natural hazards and vulnerabilities common to NYC and to develop long-term strategies for reducing them. Graphic materials used in these tools are designed with integrated accessibility in mind. NYCEM's selected graphic design vendor's tasks were required to be accessible in our initial Request for Proposal and their Scope of Work. By incorporating disability, access, and functional needs (DAFN) into the process the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan adopts a broader understanding of New York City's social environment and helps inform broader risk profiles and mitigation strategies.
- To accommodate diverse abilities and interests among agency representatives, mixed engagement methods are being used in the collection of information on the impacts of mitigation actions put in place as part of NYC's Hazard Mitigation Plan. These tools will continue to be used in NYC's Mitigation Actions annual update and in its Mitigation Actions Database, which includes an entry identifying and prioritizing actions that address social vulnerability, including regarding DAFN. This ensures compliance with plan protocols and serves to include potentially overlooked viewpoints. These methods include:
  - Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Lists, and direct submissions through email.
  - In-person meetings, Microsoft Teams meetings, and phone calls.
  - Engagement through lectures and site visits.
- NYCEM has developed the NYC Urban Risk Index, which incorporates variables regarding DAFN into its methodology for calculating risk scores related to various hazards. Some of the themes were modeled after the "Social Vulnerability Index", which inform

risk scoring include, socio-economic status, household composition, disability, minority status and language, as well as housing type and transportation.

## **Effective Communication**

- In 2025, NYCEM began using pre-written templates for Advance Warning System (AWS) alerts. Previously, alerts were directly predicated on content from NYCEM press releases. The new templates contain additional actionable language tailored to service providers, including a sample script for providers to use when conducting outreach to their DAFN clients. NYCEM currently has templates for various hazards, as well as pre-season messaging templates for summer and winter.
- Multilingual Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), a federally managed program that sends geographically targeted emergency notifications to mobile devices to warn the public about imminent threats, disasters, and urgent safety information, will expand to support the 13 most commonly spoken language in the United States (Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, German, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese) & American Sign Language (ASL) via form-fillable template. ASL alerts will be supported by video templates. This is expected to be implemented by mid-2027. The NYCEM Public Warning team regularly conducts WEA drills to ensure that Public Warning Specialists craft and deploy emergency alerts that are easily understandable, clear, and accessible.
- Strengthening Communities is an initiative led by NYCEM's Community Engagement unit to enhance local emergency preparedness via localized plan developments and other supports. Participating groups work to address a range of community needs. NYCEM actively promotes increased access to funding opportunities, including grants for community-based organizations. Notably, both past and current cohorts of the initiative have been well represented by organizations that provide services to people with disabilities.
- NYCEM's Ready New York City (ReadyNY) program has helped New Yorkers — including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs — prepare for emergencies by providing guidance on creating emergency plans, gathering supplies, and assembling Go Bags. As part of this effort, Ready New York: My Emergency Plan, a specialized workbook, has supported individuals in building a support network, capturing important health information, planning for evacuation, and preparing emergency supplies. First responders and caregivers have also used the workbook to assist people during emergencies. Additionally, ReadyNY has delivered accessible presentations through trained staff and NYC CERT volunteers, offering events in multiple languages and formats at workplaces, schools, community centers, and houses of worship, with accommodations available to meet diverse needs.

## Workplace Inclusion

- NYCEM contributed to the Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan and the City’s first True Cost of Living Measure Inaugural Report, both of which were released in April 2026. These reports together established a new framework for how New York City measures affordability, understands equity, and plans for a more equitable future.
- NYCEM continued with a new cohort of the agency’s Equity and Diversity Council, made up of volunteer staff convened regularly to advance equity, inclusion, and belonging within the Agency. The Equity and Diversity Council has continued to present its Religious Literacy Series to agency staff, wherein it discusses and highlights the cultural and religious practices of different communities in NYC.
- NYCEM has offered three Conflict Resolution Training sessions to staff in partnership with the Center for Creative Conflict Resolution at the City’s Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH), equipping staff with tools to manage and resolve workplace conflicts.
- As a coordinating agency, NYCEM regularly conducts “exercises” - realistic emergency preparedness scenarios – in collaboration with partner agencies and organizations. DAFN considerations are routinely incorporated.
- From May 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026, NYCEM conducted 63 exercises that incorporated DAFN considerations. Below are examples of some specific exercises that included a disability component.
  - In April 2026, NYCEM’s Exercises unit conducted a series of sessions with representatives from more than 25 agencies to demonstrate the use of the Emergency Public Information Protocol (EPIP), a tool used to help city agencies coordinate the dissemination of critical information in a timely, accurate, and easy-to-understand manner, to discuss public messaging for upcoming Summer 2026 events. These sessions followed the newly revised Emergency Public Information Plan, which outlines how New York City manages communication during emergencies with an emphasis on language access. Through these exercises, participants worked through how to tailor incident-related messaging to make it accessible and inclusive.
  - The 2025 Pre-Season Winter Weather Workshop strengthened interagency readiness for the winter season by discussing citywide plans, protocols, and operations to explore agency roles and responsibilities, and key decisions. A Public Health and Vulnerable Populations breakout group during the exercise encouraged discussions regarding outreach and messaging.
  - The 2025-2026 Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Functional Exercise Series convened NYCEM on-call teams and EOC liaisons to assess the City’s capacity to communicate and coordinate effectively in the EOC during a complex coordinated attack impacting New York City in preparation for the 2026 World Cup.

Participation included City, State, and regional partners and tasks and discussions included considerations regarding language access and access to City resources.

### **Consultations and Feedback**

NYCEM has a dedicated team of employees across the agency which focuses on developing planning, mitigation, response and recovery work geared towards people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. This group meets monthly, often inviting community-based advocates who serve the disability community, elderly populations, non-English speakers, children, and people who are unhoused, among others. The group seeks feedback from these advocates about how best to serve their constituents. These lessons learned are incorporated into the methodology of the agency, by providing input into agency planning efforts throughout the year. NYCEM is also currently working to convene service providers with various specialties across the disability community to identify ways the Agency can better tailor planning, response, mitigation and recovery to particularly identified needs.

### **Conclusion**

This Second Annual Report reflects NYCEM's continued commitment to accessibility for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in emergency services, in accordance with Local Law 12. Through sustained collaboration and inclusive planning, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts, NYCEM continues working to ensure that emergency preparedness and response are accessible and equitable for all New Yorkers.