
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1068 (Bains) - Emergency services available during natural disasters

Version: July 1, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0, G.O. 15 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 1068 would require the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to develop a working group to make recommendations regarding the best policies and practices for the evacuation and sheltering needs of older adults and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities during emergencies.

Fiscal Impact: The California Health and Human Services Agency estimates a one-time General Fund cost of \$500,000 for a consultant to assist in establishing the working group, facilitating its meetings, developing the workgroup's findings and recommendations, and drafting the workgroup's report to the Legislature.

Background: The State Emergency Plan guides state agencies, local jurisdictions, and the public on emergency management. The plan describes the methods for conducting emergency operations, rendering mutual aid, emergency response capabilities of state agencies, resource mobilization, public information, and continuity of government during an emergency or disaster.

The State Emergency Plan includes the California Emergency Support Functions, which detail primary activities essential to addressing the emergency management needs of communities in all phases of emergency management. One of the Emergency Support Functions is mass care and shelter. Stakeholders participating in this function provide coordination, collaboration, and resource identification for mass care and shelter activities. The State Emergency Plan assigns the California Department of Social Services as the primary department and the California Health and Human Services Agency as the coordinating agency for mass care and shelter functions, and tasks other state departments/offices with supporting functions.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require, no later than July 1, 2026, the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to develop a working group to make recommendations regarding the best policies and practices for the evacuation and sheltering needs of older adults and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities during emergencies, including, but not limited to, mutual aid evacuations, in coordination with all of the following:
 - The California Department of Aging.
 - The California Department of Rehabilitation.

- The Emergency Medical Services Authority.
- The Office of Emergency Services.
- The Office of the State Long-Term Ombudsman.
- The State Department of Public Health.
- The State Department of Social Services.
- Stakeholders representing long-term care facility operators, staff, and residents, local government, foundations, and academic researchers.
- Require, no later than July 1, 2027, the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to submit the recommendations of the workgroup to the Office of the Governor and to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature; and require the report to include, but not be limited to, the identification of statutory and regulatory changes that are needed to implement the evacuation and sheltering needs of older adults and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities.
- Repeal the bill's provisions on January 1, 2030.

Related Legislation:

SB 352 (Reyes) would require that area agencies on aging (AAAs) and independent living centers be prioritized for state assistance during a disaster, as specified; and require that Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) programs additionally provide disaster and emergency preparedness training, as specified. The bill is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1069 (Bains) would require a lead agency designated with sheltering support duties under the State Emergency Plan to coordinate with an AAA or ADRC program to allow access by the AAA or ADRC program to an emergency shelter during an active event. The bill is scheduled to be heard on August 18, 2025 in this committee.

-- END --