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THIRD READING

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Bill No: AB 1069  
Author: Bains (D)  
Amended: 5/23/25 in Assembly  
Vote: 21

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SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/30/25  
AYES: Arreguín, Ochoa Bogh, Becker, Limón, Pérez

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORG. COMMITTEE: 15-0, 7/8/25  
AYES: Padilla, Valladares, Archuleta, Ashby, Blakespear, Cervantes, Dahle,  
Hurtado, Jones, Ochoa Bogh, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Wahab,  
Weber Pierson

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

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**SUBJECT:** Older adults: emergency shelters

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This bill requires a lead agency designated with sheltering support duties under the State Emergency Plan to coordinate with an area agency on aging (AAA) or Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program to allow access by the AAA or ADRC program to an emergency shelter during an active event.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing Law:

- 1) Establishes the Older Americans Act, which promotes the well-being of Americans 60 years old and above through services and programs designed to meet their needs. (42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 3001 et seq.)

- 2) Establishes, within the Older Americans Act, the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and requires states to establish and operate a Long-Term Care Ombudsman program for the purpose of identifying, investigating, and resolving complaints that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of residents of long-term care facilities. (42 U.S.C. 3058(g))
- 3) Establishes the Mello-Granlund Older Californians Act, which establishes the California Department of Aging (CDA) and sets forth its duties and powers, including, among other things, entering into a contract for the development of information and materials to educate Californians on the concept of “aging in place.” (Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 9100 et seq.)
- 4) Establishes the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman under the CDA for the purpose of protecting and advocating for the rights and health and safety of long-term care facility residents, and in providing leadership, direction, and support to local Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs. (WIC 9700 et seq.)
- 5) Requires the Secretary of California Health and Human Services (CalHHS), in coordination with the Director of CDA, to lead the development and implementation of the Master Plan on Aging. (WIC 9850)
- 6) Establishes the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program to provide information to consumers and their families on available long-term services and supports programs and to assist older adults, caregivers, and persons with disabilities in accessing long-term services and supports programs at the local level through ADRC programs operated jointly by Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and independent living centers. (WIC 9120(a))
- 7) Requires AAAs and independent living centers to be the core local partners in developing ADRC programs. (WIC 9120(c))
- 8) Requires an ADRC program to provide all of the following:
  - a) Enhanced information and referral services and other assistance at hours convenient to the public;
  - b) Options counseling concerning long-term services and supports programs and public and private benefits programs;
  - c) Short-term service coordination; and

- d) Transition services from hospitals to home and from skilled nursing facilities to the community. (WIC 9120(d))
- 9) Requires the ADRC program to be administered by CDA, in collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation and Department of Health Care Services. Provides that the ADRC program is contingent upon appropriation of funds in the annual Budget Act. (WIC 9120 (b) and (g))
- 10) Develops a core model of ADRC best practices by CDA and the ADRC Advisory Committee to include person-centered practices; public outreach and coordination with key referral sources; formal follow up and data sharing. (WIC 9120(f))
- 11) Establishes the California Emergency Services Act, which provides the Governor with the authority to proclaim a state of emergency, and provides the Governor, during a state of emergency, with complete authority over all agencies of the state government and the right to exercise within the area all police power vested in the state by the Constitution and laws of California, and in exercising these powers, gives the Governor the authority to promulgate, issue, and enforce such orders and regulations as he deems necessary. (Government Code (GOV) 8625, 8627, and 8571)
- 12) Defines three conditions of emergency for purposes of the California Emergency Services Act, including a “state of war emergency,” a “local emergency” that is within the territorial limits of a city or county, and a “state of emergency,” as specified. (GOV 8558)
- 13) Under the State Emergency Plan, requires the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services to coordinate with representatives, including, but not limited to, social service agencies, nonprofit organizations, and transportation providers, from the access and functional needs population regarding the integration of access and functional needs into the State Emergency Plan. (GOV 8570.4)
- 14) Defines the following terms for purposes of the California Emergency Services Act:
  - a) “Emergency plans” means those official and approved documents which describe the principles and methods to be applied in carrying out emergency operations or rendering mutual aid during emergencies. These plans include such elements as continuity of government, the emergency services of governmental agencies, mobilization of resources, mutual aid, and public information.

- b) “State Emergency Plan” means the State of California Emergency Plan as approved by the governor. (GOV 8560)

This bill:

- 1) Defines the following terms for purposes of disaster planning and response:
  - a) “Emergency shelter” means a facility established to provide temporary refuge and essential services to individuals displaced by emergencies or disasters.
  - b) “State Emergency Plan” means the State of California Emergency Plan as approved by the governor.
- 2) Requires, as part of disaster planning and response, the lead agency designated with sheltering support duties under the State Emergency Plan Emergency Support Functions to coordinate a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with an AAA or ADRC program to allow access by the AAA or the ADRC program to an emergency shelter established for evacuation purposes during an active event, in order to ensure that older adults and persons with disabilities receive continuous services and necessary support.

## **Background**

*Purpose of this Bill.* According to the author, “As a physician, I have seen the needs of those in shelters who are struggling to meet their basic health needs. Allowing service providers into evacuation shelters enables trusted partners to provide continuity of care and will likely enfold more of the vulnerable communities toward services. This is even more important underserved areas, who are already stretched thin with services for older adults and people with disabilities.”

*California’s Aging Population.* California is home to a growing aging population. According to the Older Americans Act 2021-2025 State Plan on Aging, by 2030, 25% of the state’s population, an estimated 10.8 million people, will be 60 or older. This will be the first time older adults will outnumber those 18 and under. The state is making efforts to meet the needs of this growing population. In January 2021, the Newsom Administration published its Master Plan for Aging, which is intended to be a ten year blueprint for state government, local government, the private sector, and philanthropy to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes and “continue California’s leadership in aging, disability, and equity.” The Master Plan for Aging outlines five goals, twenty-three

strategies, and over 100 initiatives. The five goals of the Master Plan are: housing for all ages and stages; health reimagined; inclusion and equity, not isolation; caregiving that works; and affording aging.

*AAA and Independent Living Centers.* CDA administers programs serving older adults through contracts with local AAAs. These agencies provide a wide array of services on a community level to adults age 60 and over. AAA programs often include long-term care ombudsman services, nutrition services, caregiver support and respite, Medicare counseling, legal referrals, transportation, and case management. There are 33 AAAs across the state and each county is required to have an AAA, so some agencies serve multiple counties.

Independent living centers are disability-led organizations that support people of all ages and all types of disabilities. Their core services include information and referral, peer support, independent living skills training, individual and systems advocacy, and transition services. Independent living centers are not residential facilities; they are community-based hubs for resources and connection.

*ADRC.* ADRCs are collaborations between AAAs and independent living centers. Christina Mills, executive director of the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) writes, “We partner as ADRCs, which makes it easier for individuals to get the right help regardless of where they start—a No Wrong Door approach. There are cultural differences between the two communities [...] but the truth is: disabled people are aging, and older adults are often aging into disability.” Together, AAAs and independent living centers coordinate a variety of supportive services to seniors and people with disabilities. Anyone, regardless of age, income, or disability, may receive ADRC services. However, not all AAAs provide ADRC services. ADRC services may include enhanced information and referral services, options counseling, short-term service coordination, and transition services.

*Mass Care and Shelter.* 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 2009 State Emergency Plan established the California Emergency Support Functions, which include 18 primary activities essential to addressing the emergency management needs of communities in all phases of emergency management.

One Emergency Support Function is mass care and shelter. Stakeholders participating in this function provide coordination, collaboration, and resource

identification for mass care and shelter activities. County welfare departments are the lead for local mass care and shelter activities, which includes feeding, basic first aid, bulk distribution of needed personal services items, and providing short-term emergency shelter or housing for persons displaced from their residence because of a disaster incident, among other activities.

*State Auditor Report.* In December 2019, the California State Auditor released a report that found that three audited counties—Butte, Sonoma, and Ventura—had not adequately followed key practices for emergency planning, including having emergency plans for alerting, evacuating, and sheltering residents and assessing the needs of their communities in advance of disaster events.

The report described the following services that individuals with access and functional needs may require in natural disaster situations: equipment in emergency shelters, such as wheelchairs, accessible cots, walkers, and accessible showers; interpreters or documentation in Braille; and medical supplies, such as oxygen. Additionally, according to the bill sponsor, shelters do not always have incontinence supplies or appropriate storage for medication, and may not be prepared to accept individuals with service animals.

Every county must have an access and functional needs representative to support older adults and people with disabilities. However, according to the bill sponsor, the county representative may not have expertise and may be pulled in multiple directions during a large scale disaster.

### **Related/Prior Legislation**

AB 1068 (Bains) would require the Secretary of CalHHS, in coordination with various state departments and long-term care stakeholders, to develop a working group to make recommendations regarding the evacuation and sheltering needs of older adults and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities during emergencies. AB 1068 is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 582 (Stern) would establish licensing policies during federal or state declared emergencies or disasters for facilities licensed by CDSS, the State Department of Public Health, and the State Department of Health Care Services. SB 582 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 435 (Wahab), as heard by this Committee, would have required an RCFE licensed for 16 or more residents to have an alternative source of power to protect

resident health and safety for no fewer than 72 hours during any type of power outage. The bill would have additionally required an RCFE to follow emergency and disaster preparedness measures, as specified, depending on the chosen type of alternative power source. SB 435 was amended out of this Committee's jurisdiction.

SB 352 (Reyes, 2025) would require, in specified circumstances, that AAAs and independent living centers be prioritized for state assistance when a state of emergency is proclaimed. The bill would require ADRC programs to provide disaster and emergency preparedness training specifically designed to help older adults and people with disabilities prepare for emergencies and ensure their safety before, during, and after natural disasters and other emergency events. SB 352 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

### **Comments**

The recent fires in Los Angeles highlighted the need to improve disaster and emergency response and evacuation plans for the elderly and for those with disabilities. According to the author, during LA wildfire response AAAs and independent living centers were not allowed inside shelters to meet with clients, in part to maintain the privacy of other individuals at shelters. This bill seeks to address this issue by allowing counties, AAAs, and ADRC programs to coordinate to ensure continuous services and supports for clients without causing disruptions to others' privacy at shelters.

[NOTE: See the Senate Human Services Committee and Senate Governmental Organization Committee analyses for additional background on this bill.]

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No    Fiscal Com.: Yes    Local: No

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 8/21/25)

California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (Sponsor)  
Alzheimer's Association  
Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles  
Alzheimer's Orange County  
Alzheimer's San Diego  
California Collaborative for Long-term Services and Supports  
California Commission on Aging  
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers  
California Long Term Care Ombudsman Association

California Retired Teachers Association  
County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors  
County Welfare Directors Association of California  
Disability Rights California  
LeadingAge California  
The Arc California

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 8/21/25)

None received

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR:** 78-0, 6/2/25

**AYES:** Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

**NO VOTE RECORDED:** McKinnor

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8/21/25 16:45:39

\*\*\*\* **END** \*\*\*\*