
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 837 (Reyes) - Disaster and emergency preparedness

Version: January 5, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: January 20, 2026

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: SB 837 would require that Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) programs provide disaster and emergency preparedness training, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) estimates General Fund costs of \$372,000 in the first year and \$247,000 ongoing thereafter to support implementation. This includes contract costs of \$125,000 per year for the Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) to include individuals with lived disability experience to review and/or develop new trainings, guidance, and other documents; and state staffing resources to collaborate with the ADRCs and OAFN, develop curriculum and online modules, and provide on-demand contract instruction for ADRCs.
- The California Department of Aging (CDA) indicates no immediate fiscal impact to the department, but notes that providing information on existing emergency preparedness and response tools and resources could result in minor and absorbable costs and the potential creation of new tools could result in additional cost pressures on the department (General Fund). The CDA also indicates unknown likely costs to ADRCs to provide the disaster and emergency preparedness training (General Fund).
- The Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) anticipates minor and absorbable costs, to the extent that existing emergency preparedness and response tools would be utilized.

Background:

Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). Cal OES is responsible for overseeing the state's response during all major emergencies and disasters. This includes responding, directing, and coordinating state and federal resources and mutual aid assets across all regions. Cal OES also supports local jurisdictions and communities through planning and preparedness activities, training, and facilitating the immediate response to an emergency through the longer-term recovery phase.

Independent Living Centers (ILCs). The DOR oversees ILCs, which are consumer-controlled, community-based, nonresidential private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with a range of disabilities. ILC services include:

- Information and Referral
- Independent Living Skills
- Transition and Diversion
- Housing
- Advocacy
- Peer Counseling
- Personal Assistance Services
- Assistive Technology

Area Agencies on Aging. The CDA administers programs serving older adults through contracts with local area agencies on aging in 33 locations across the state which provide a wide array of services on a community level to seniors and adults with disabilities. Each county is required to have an area agency on aging to ensure all communities have access to local aging programs and provide information and services for older adults. There are fewer area agencies on aging than counties in California, so some area agencies on aging serve multiple counties.

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Program. Current law establishes the ADRC program to provide information to consumers and their families on available long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs and to assist older adults, caregivers, and persons with disabilities in accessing LTSS programs at the local level through ADRC programs operated jointly by area agencies on aging and ILCs. An ADRC program operated by an area agency on aging and an ILC must provide all of the following:

- Enhanced information and referral services and other assistance at hours that are convenient for the public.
- Options counseling concerning available LTSS programs and public and private benefits programs.
- Short-term service coordination.
- Transition services from hospitals to home and from skilled nursing facilities to the community.

Proposed Law: SB 837 would require that an ADRC additionally 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; and require that the training:

- Utilize existing emergency preparedness and response tools developed by Cal OES, CDA, DOR, and other relevant community partners.
- Raise awareness of existing available resources and guidance, including, but not limited to, local alert systems, local emergency plans, information from the local fire department, information on emergency transportation and evacuation resources, and information related to utility services during emergencies and natural disasters.

Related Legislation: SB 352 (Reyes, 2025) was similar to this bill (September 5, 2025 version). The bill was subsequently amended for a different purpose.

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