Corporate Disability Sensitivity

Disability sensitivity at the corporate management level must be a different perspective than that of front-line staff. It must begin from the policy level and understanding that policies are not always carried out as intended. They can often result in unintended consequences. These circumstances can result in risk at the legal and marketing level.

Utilize your corporate influence and contractual clout to bring customer and provider corporations into these understandings. It is hoped that the following will be viewed from these perspectives.

Questions should be directed to Douglas Towne Chair and Chief Executive Officer of Access Ready at:

(C) 727-452-8132

chair-ceo@accessready.org

Emergency Management

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES must be considered in any facility's evacuation plan.

* Compile a voluntary list of people with disabilities who are regulars at your facility, such as employees, students or residents.

* While you are compiling this list, let people know that even though they may not consider themselves to be "disabled," they should be included if they may need help during an emergency.

* Keep the list updated to include people who are temporarily disabled, such as a pregnant woman or someone with a broken limb.

* Interview each individual on the list to plan the most effective way to assist them in case of an emergency.

* For example, as you evacuate a person who uses a wheelchair, be sure to bring the wheelchair along, too.

* A person with a cognitive disability may get confused and need assistance in following directions.

* A person who is blind, even if they know their way around the facility, will need to be accompanied during an emergency, especially when large numbers of people are involved.

* Also develop a plan for an emergency that may affect people who are not attached to the facility, such as customers, theatergoers, patients or other members of the public.

* Practice the evacuation procedures and keep your plans up to date.

* COVID-19 has presented a totally different kind of emergency and therefore requires a different level of emergency management.

Primarily this relates to how a corporation can suddenly move its workforce from a traditional brick and mortar setting to a work from home model.

This requires considering how employees and potentially customers will access the necessary computer systems from home in a secure way. That access will also have to be accessible to employees and customers with disabilities.

For customers accessibility should already be built into existing systems.