

Emergency Preparedness: Integrating Access into Business Resiliency and Adaptation Plans

2025 Webinar Collaboration Series
Thursday, November 13, 2025

The flyer is a vertical rectangular graphic with a light blue background and a dark blue border. At the top right, the Pacific ADA Center logo is displayed. The main title is centered in a white rounded rectangle with a dark blue border. Below the title, the event details are listed on the left, and a graphic of a city skyline with a warning sign is on the right. At the bottom, the CCDA logo and Pacific ADA Center logo are shown.

PACIFIC ADA CENTER

Emergency Preparedness: Integrating Access into Business Resiliency and Adaptation Plans

2025 WEBINAR
COLLABORATION SERIES
ONLINE LUNCH & LEARN
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13
12 - 1 PM

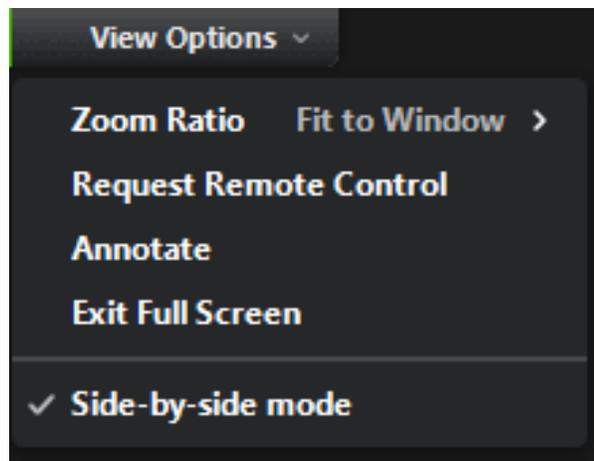
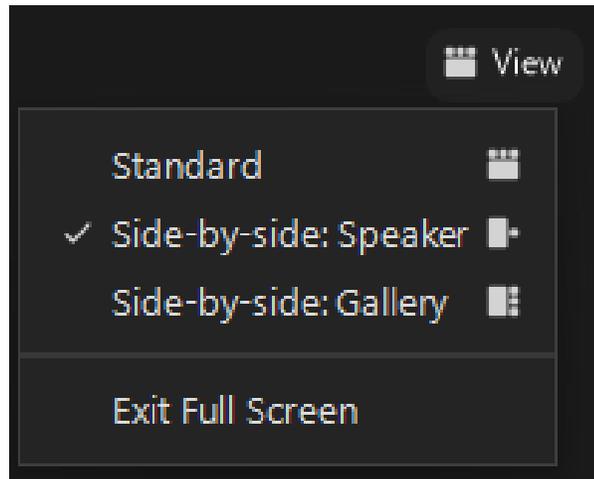
CCDA | California Commission
on Disability Access

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- Please keep your audio muted during the webinar.
- Please use the Q&A feature to post questions.
- Chat feature is distracting for people with vision disabilities who use screen reading software.

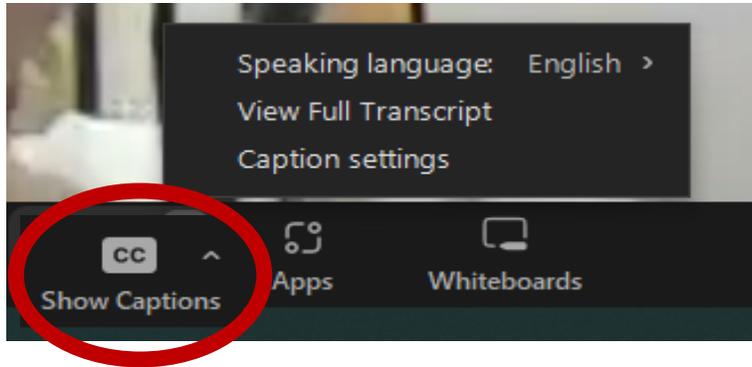
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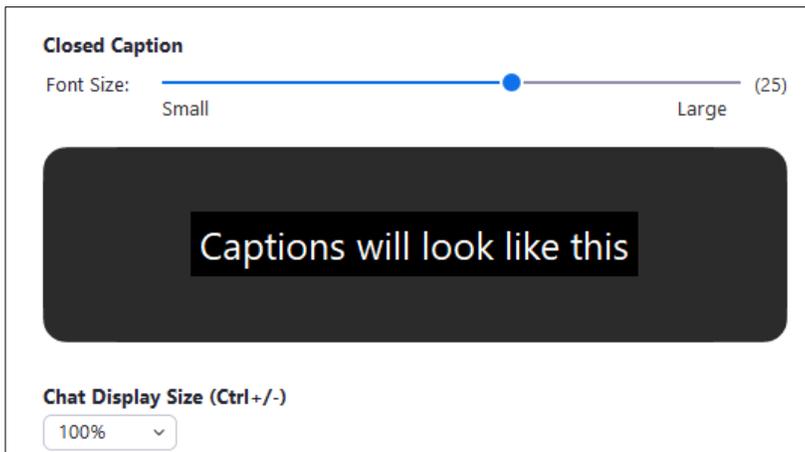
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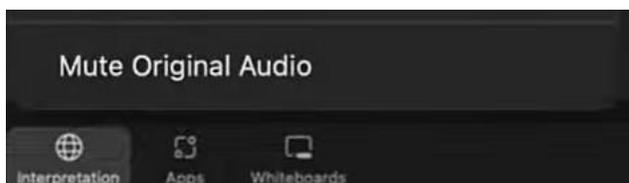
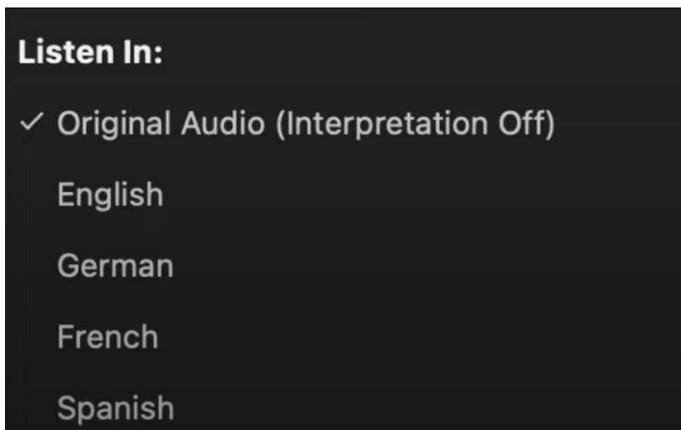
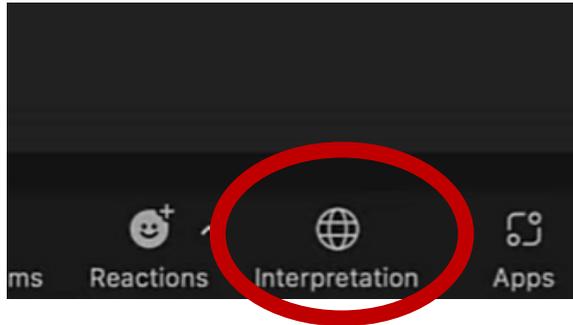
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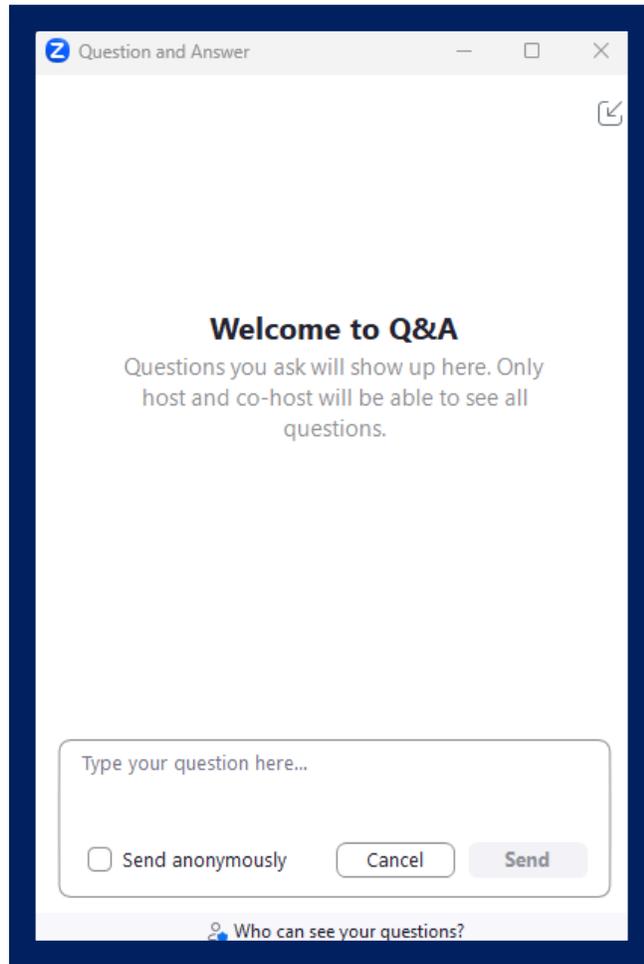
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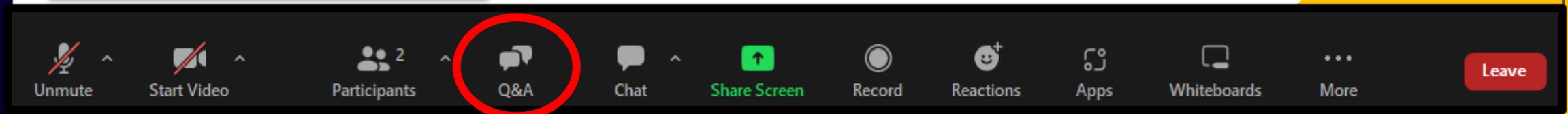
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Q&A Session:

- Will be at the end of the presentation
- Selected questions will be answered



Emergency Preparedness: Integrating Access into Business Resiliency and Adaptation Plans Agenda

1. Introductions:

a. April Dawson Rawlings

Executive Director, California

Commission on Disability Access (CCDA)

b. Jan Garrett

Deputy Director of ADA Programs,

Pacific ADA Center

2. Training Segment: Integrating Access into Business Resiliency and Adaptation Plans

3. Resource Round-Up

Agenda Continued

4. Questions and Answers Session

5. Closing Remarks

Learning Objectives for Today

1. Implement strategies for maintaining operational resilience while ensuring accessibility for employees, customers, and stakeholders with diverse needs.
2. Identify and utilize key local and national resources that support inclusive emergency preparedness and recovery for businesses.
3. Understand the critical role of inclusive practices in emergency response planning and how it directly impacts employees, customers, and community engagement.
4. Evaluate the intersection of business continuity planning and inclusion and apply inclusive practices to strengthen overall business resilience.

What the California Commission on Disability Access Offers

- Small Business Education and Outreach
- Technical Materials and Trainings
- Listening Forums and Webinars
- Disability Access Litigation Data Tracking
- Annual Report to State Legislature



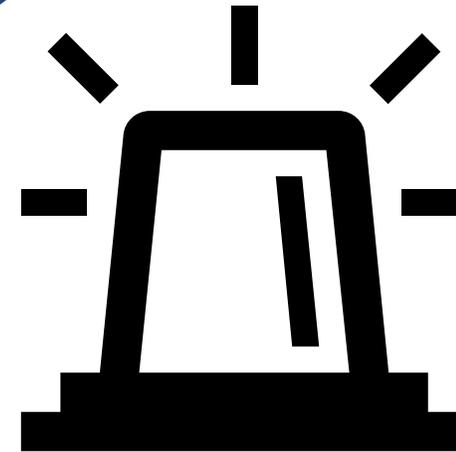
What the Pacific ADA Center Offers

- Technical Assistance
- Trainings
- Webinars
- Materials
- Conferences



Why This Matters and Is Critical

- Rising Frequency of Emergencies
- Business Adaptability is Critical
- Inclusive Response Ensures Continuity



Training Segment: Integrating Access into Business Resiliency and Adaptation Plans

ADA Business Overview

- The ADA is a Civil Rights law
- Its origins are in the Civil Rights and Disability Rights Movements
- In 2009, the ADA Amendments Act clarified that the definition of disability should be broad in its coverage



ADA Business Overview Continued

The ADA was signed on July 26, 1990

- Title I: Employment
- Title II: State and local government
- Title III: Public accommodations
- Title IV: Telecommunications
- Title V: Miscellaneous

Transportation is also covered under the ADA

Businesses Open to the Public

Businesses and non-profits of any size open to the public are considered public accommodations and must comply with:

- Under federal law, ADA Title III
 - Both building owners and businesses who operate in those buildings are covered
- In California, many laws including California Building Code Chapter 11B

Businesses Requirements Under ADA Title III

- Provide an equal opportunity for people with disabilities to access their goods and services
- Remove physical barriers to accessibility when readily achievable
- Provide effective written and verbal communication to people who have disabilities that affect communication
- Make reasonable modifications of their policies, practices, and procedures when necessary to provide an equal opportunity

What Disasters and Emergencies Could Businesses Face?

Disasters and Emergencies

- COVID-19
- Earthquakes
- Fires
- Heavy Snow
- Floods
- Power Outages



Why Preparedness Matters

- The cost of unpreparedness can be loss or revenue, customers, and reputation
- Importance of serving all customers during emergencies
- Accessibility can be overlooked if not planned



Strong Businesses Make Plans and Continue Operations During and After Disasters and Emergencies

What Is Business Continuity Planning (BCP)?

- A plan to maintain or restart essential operations during a disruption
- Supports flexibility
- Businesses value:
 - Meets obligations, protects employees, and serves customers

What Should Businesses Consider in BCP?

- Identify what services must continue
 - Know what to do **during** a disaster or emergency
 - Know how to continue operations as soon as possible once the immediate danger has passed
 - Know how to deliver goods and services during the recovery period
- How will you provide them accessibly?
- Accessibility as a core BCP element
- Building a resilience mindset
(flexibility and responsibility in adapting)

What Issues These Plans Should Address

- Keeping staff and customers safe during a disaster / emergency
- Evacuation plans
- Communication plans
- Ability to continue operations
- Information and assistance businesses may need from their city and/or county
- How to secure funding for rebuilding, if necessary, after the disaster / emergency

When A Business Pivots Roles and Adapts During Emergencies

- A restaurant becomes a donation center, a retail shop becomes a cooling center, a facilities warehouse becomes a shelter hub
- New access barriers can arise
- ADA obligations remain during emergencies, access must scale/measure with business adaptation
- ADA obligations do not pause

Potential New Access Barriers Can Arise

- Common Issues
- Again, ADA obligations remain during emergencies, access must scale/measure with business adaptation

Strategies For Inclusive Emergency Planning

- Temporary layout that preserves clear and wide paths that maintain accessibility
- Accessible signage and alternative formats for new services or entrances
- Bathrooms remain ADA complaint
- Staff training in supporting customers with disabilities
- Integrating accessibility into your emergency preparedness checklist and BCP

Integrate Accessibility Into Your BCP

- Add accessibility checks to every emergency scenario
- Involving people with disabilities in planning
- Make accessibility a standard part of readiness, not a footnote

Resource Round-Up

Resource Round-Up

- Federal Level:
 - Small Business Administration (SBA) Resources
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Internal Revenue Service (IRS) –
Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief for
Individuals and Businesses

Resource Round-Up Continued

- State Level:
 - Cal OES
 - Go-Biz
 - California Business Resiliency Program
 - California Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)

Resource Round-Up Continued

- Local Resources:
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Emergency Management Agencies

Resource Round-Up Continued

- Resources for Inclusive Emergency Response Planning
 - Pacific ADA Center
 - FEMA Guides and Information
 - ADA National Network: Emergency Preparedness Resources
 - California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFLIC)

Questions & Answers



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Stay Connected with the California Commission on Disability Access

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