

FIREFIGHTER/EMS DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

COURSE CONTENT

- Disabilities defined specific to first responders' needs
- Emergency preparedness and federal guidelines
- Service provision and supports and how to develop collaborative relationships
- Challenging behaviors and responsiveness
- Municipality role and responsibility
- Progressive approaches to addressing emergency situations
- Proper etiquette and interactions skills
- Access and functional needs
- Fire Safety Planner and outreach
- American Sign Language specific to first responders
- Durable Medical Equipment, Assistive Technology
- Community resources and networks
- Current trends and topics

TRAINING OPTIONS

- Full-day in-service
- Half day in-service
- Train the Trainer (two-day course)
- All offered virtual or in-person



Disability Awareness Training (DAT) is nationally recognized as the nation's leader in First Responder Disability Awareness Training. Our programs address the most prominent disabilities, customized for each discipline.

It is widely recognized that everyone needs disability awareness training, and this could not be more prolific than in first response where confusion and uncertainty cannot exist. The Institute on Disability Awareness takes this seriously, knowing that professionals require, and desire, discipline-specific curriculum. DAT has created its programs with direct input from firefighters and EMS and the state offices and

associations that represent them. All disability content is created with persons with disabilities who are subject matter experts in the field. In 2018, the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) contracted with Niagara University to create a specific program for their personnel, setting an example for all fire departments and emergency medical services in nation, taking the product to an elite level.

Firefighter/EMS customized training has videos created with FDNY personnel that teach you through unscripted video interactions, disability-specific videos, fire safety planning and the tools to implement it, outreach strategies and community resources and agencies to connect with, and emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities and access and functional needs.

PURPOSE

Disability awareness training has tailored a presentation for emergency responders designed for firefighters and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. It brings together education on disabilities while enhancing sensitivity. The presentation includes definitions, etiquette and interaction skills, the disabled perspective, challenging behaviors, and current trends and topics, all relevant to first responders.

RELATION AND IMPACT TO FIRE/EMS

The ability to respond appropriately to emergency situations that involve individuals with disabilities has challenged the field for years. High profile events have exposed the lack of training and preparedness in responding to this need. This training addresses every area of response to individuals with disabilities including, but not limited to, characteristics of individuals with disabilities, challenges faced and how to overcome them, federal guidelines (to include the American with Disabilities Act), and supports provided, access and functional needs registry and community proactive approaches, emergency preparedness defined and how to implement, municipality emergency services role, identifying and working with service providers, outreach and fire safety planning, and the latest initiatives and programs.

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LEARNER OUTCOMES

- Disabilities they will encounter and how to appropriately respond
- Will be able to better understand the challenges they face and how to address them effectively
- Emergency preparedness that will allow for proactive response in the township or community being served will be emphasized
- The ability to understand characteristics of individuals across all disability spectrums will be provided throughout the session

HIGHLIGHTS

- Video presentations specific to emergency situation and individuals with disabilities with a breakdown and open discussion allow for all questions to be answered
- An extensive amount of materials specific to first responders is provided

THE PROGRAM IS BUILT OFF THE FOLLOWING PREMISES

1. Every disability has unique characteristics and features, and within each are varying ways of how they present. No one will present the exact same way as the next.
2. The Recognize-Identify-Approach-Interaction-Response (RIAIR) Model allows for first responders to be confident in response to persons with disabilities.
3. 10% of 9-1-1 calls are true emergencies, meaning that 90% of the time there will be interactions that call for accurate, appropriate response.
4. Communication barriers are a major challenge for first responders. Understanding how these present and best practices in overcoming them are crucial, having an understanding of how to communicate and use of the tools to assist are necessary for a productive response.
5. Proactive education and awareness are imperative in first response. Reactive response jeopardizes persons with disabilities and can put them in peril.
6. Fire Safety and emergency needs planning has different components and aspects for persons with disabilities. Outreaching to persons and providers and the tools to address this are critical to health and wellbeing.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Program's Director has been in the field of disabilities since 1986. In 2004 he started Disability Awareness Training when he was approached by the Association Development Group who recognized the need for training when disability advocates challenged one of their clients. DAT came together with Niagara University when they collaborated on, and was awarded, a grant from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Council to create First Responders Disability Awareness Training. Since that time NU has conducted over 400 sessions in 22 states and one territory. Disability Awareness at Niagara University was launched in July 2024 to enhance all operations allowing for even more precise and effective education for a multitude of professions, also featuring Disability Awareness 101 e-learning.

"This needs to be part of the EMS curriculum! There is so much not taught in the basic EMS programs, this is by far a great class for all providers."

GET IN TOUCH

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Disability Awareness Training specializes in customizing disability awareness training for professional needs and interests. Contact us for more information.