

**I: Capacity Building Awards Overview**

NACCHO’s MRC Capacity Building Award is available to all MRC units that meet basic eligibility and application requirements (see Section IV). This award is designed to provide funding for all eligible MRC units to enhance their unit capacity. Capacity Building Awards will be issued for \$3,500 each.

Capacity Building Awards may be used for, but are not limited to:

- Administrative costs and fees, including unit coordinator or director salaries and benefits
- Professional services fees (trainers/instructors, investigative services, consultants)
- Facilities, rentals and audio/visual (A/V) fees
- Uniforms, equipment, and unit resources (e.g., “go-kits,” computer equipment, durable Training and exercises supplies, etc.)
- Travel/transportation services
- Awards, recruiting and outreach (e.g., air time for public service announcements (PSAs), promotional videos, newspaper advertisements, etc.)

**Purpose:**

Collin County MRC is continuing to work on our volunteer leadership capacity. In the coming years, we are expanding the number of volunteers that assist in a leadership role, including co-coordinators. As we expand this number, we need to have our leadership wearing different uniforms than the rest of the MRC in order to distinguish them as command staff. With this award, we will purchase more of our existing red polo shirts for current and future volunteer leaders. These uniforms will also allow us to present a more professional image to the public during recruiting, outreach, and response activities—including our activities related to STEAR and our Challenge Award project.

**Budget:**

Detailed line item budget

Items	Quantity	Unit Rate	Line Total
MRC uniforms	100	\$35	\$3,500
<b>Total for Supplies</b>			<b>\$3,500</b>

## **II: Challenge Awards:**

For the Challenge Awards, narrative responses for some of the questions will be required. All of the narrative responses are limited to 300 words per question. We strongly suggest that you prepare your responses in a Word document to ensure your responses are of the appropriate length.

Below are the types of questions you should be prepared to answer in the Challenge Award application:

### **Project Description:**

*For the focus area you've selected, describe your program, initiative, or activity. Consider the following:*

#### **What is the program, initiative, or activity?**

Collin County MRC will be conducting an extensive disaster risk reduction outreach project targeting Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs, Collin County first responders and Collin County disability management professionals. The goal of this project is to increase Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs preparedness and resilience to disasters and emergency events by bridging the gap between residents, first responders and disability service providers. Outreach efforts of this project will be completed through multiple educational trainings sessions and events held throughout Collin County. Collin County MRC will be conducting trainings targeting Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs which will cover the topics of personal disaster preparedness, importance and benefits of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR), knowledge of and use of the SAFELY OUT program, and importance and benefits of receiving Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). Collin County MRC will also be conducting trainings targeting Collin County first responders which will include how to locate and identify the needs of Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs during an emergency through information found in STEAR and how the SAFELY OUT program will help first responders quickly assess the evacuation needs of Collin County residents with significant disabilities. Lastly, Collin County MRC will be conducting trainings targeting disability management professionals which will encompass the importance of and how to register individuals in STEAR, how individuals can receive a SAFELY OUT kit, and importance of service continuity following an emergency event.

#### **Who (i.e. local health department, local and national partners, etc.) is involved in developing, supporting, or leading the program, initiative, activity?**

Implementation of this project will involve participation of diverse, cross-functional groups to effectively achieve the project objectives and goal. Project involvement and participation will come from the following groups: Collin County Medical Reserve Corps, Collin County Disability Advisory Committee, Collin County first responders, Collin County residents with disabilities, Disability service providers. The Collin County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will lead and implement the current project. The Collin County MRC will be responsible for project coordination, supervision and oversight, delivery of educational trainings on SAFELY OUT, the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), distribution of SAFELY OUT kits, development and administration of evaluation tools, and facilitate cross-functional cooperation among project participants and agencies. With the help of the disability advisory group, the Collin County MRC will foster communication between residents with disabilities, first responders and service providers to successfully achieve the project goals and objectives.

The Collin County Disability Advisor Committee which will include 8 to 10 individuals from the Collin County community who bring unique knowledge and skills that complement the knowledge and skills of the Collin County MRC will be established in order to more effectively reach Collin County residents with disabilities and caregivers of residents with disabilities. The advisory committee will have no direct involvement in the implementation of the project but will make recommendations and/or provide key information and materials to inform the project leaders. The advisory committee will help develop relationships and maintain effective partnerships with appropriate community-based organizations. The advisory group will represent a diverse group of key stakeholders including: Emergency Management, First Responders, Public Disability Service Providers such as Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS) and Lighthouse for the Blind, Private Disability Service Providers, Independent Living Centers, Victims Relief Ministry, Religious organizations, and Residents with disabilities.

**Where is the program, initiative, or activity taking place?**

The current project will take place in Collin County Texas. Collin County is situated in North Texas and comprised of 841.2 square miles. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census, Collin County has an estimated population of 782,341 with a 2013 population projection of 854,778. Collin County has an estimated 283,759 occupied homes with 65,162 households occupied by one or more people 60 years of age and over. Collin County population is comprised of 235,919 (27.6%) individuals under the age of 18; 64,108 (7.5%) individuals age 65 and over; and has an estimated 41,647 (5.7%) unemployed residents.

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census estimates that 8% or approximately 51,830 individuals with disabilities over the age of 5 reside in Collin County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), approximately 16,287 veterans with disabilities reside in Collin County. City-data.com reports that Collin County has approximately 1,587 residents residing in nursing facilities, 48 residents residing in group homes, and 143 people residing in transitional shelters.

**Why is this relevant to your local community/MRC unit?**

Many Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs have limited access to disaster preparedness and evacuation because of physical, cultural and social barriers such as mobility issues and communication difficulties. Recent disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and Rita have confirmed the challenges and barriers people with disabilities encounter in times of crisis. The National Council on Disability (NCD) reported that during disasters, people with disabilities needs for basic necessities were "compounded by chronic health conditions and functional impairments."

One identified major deficit in emergency planning and response has been emergency management and first responder's ability to identify residents with special needs and assess these resident's needs during a disaster. To mitigate this issue, state emergency management and public safety officials have created voluntary registries specifically for community members with special needs as a means for these community members to self-disclose their specific needs should an emergency arise. Information collected in registries such as the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) are designed to help emergency management and first responders better prepare for a disaster by knowing what disaster related needs exist within their community, allowing them to better prepare for and recover from disasters as well as send Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). Other programs, such as SAFELY OUT have been developed to help first responders visually identify those in need of evacuation assistance without having to go door-to-door. Unfortunately though, state and local governments do not currently have an active campaign to education community members about these registries and programs, and the important role this information can play before, during and after a disaster. As a result, only a very small percentage of residents with special needs are registered. Collin County only has 342 individuals or 0.007% registered in STEAR.

**Describe the goals of your project.**

The goal of this project is to increase Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs preparedness and resilience to disasters and emergency events through the following objectives: Increase awareness of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR); Increase Collin County's disability and functional needs population registration using STEAR; Increase the knowledge of Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs on how to prepare for a disaster; Implement the SAFELY OUT program among Collin County first responders and residents with significant disabilities and functional needs; Improve the ability of first responders to meet the needs of residents with significant disabilities and functional needs during an emergency; Increase access of residents with significant disabilities and functional needs to Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), Increase disability management professionals' knowledge of and ability to provide disaster preparedness resources to residents with significant disabilities and functional needs who are receiving disability services.

**Who is the target audience for your project?**

The primary target audience for this project are Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs who require assistance during a disaster or emergency event and their families and caregivers. A secondary target audience of this project are emergency management and first responders who provide assistance to these individuals during an emergency event and those who provide disability management services to these individuals.

**Describe the benefits and impacts your program, initiative, or activity will have on your community and/or participants.**

This project will benefit Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs as well as their families and caregivers, first responders, and disability management professionals in three primary ways. First, the immediate benefit is the acquisition of new knowledge about personal disaster preparedness and preparedness resources available within Collin County for residents with significant disabilities and functional needs.

Secondly, participants will learn about and register themselves in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR). STEAR was developed by the state of Texas and is administered by the Texas Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management to assist local governments with obtaining information on the needs of community members during an emergency event. The registry is designed as a way for residents with disabilities to connect with emergency responders by voluntarily

disclosing what needs they may have during an emergency event. The registry is completely confidential and registration can be completed by an individual or caregiver on-line, via 2-1-1, or through mail or fax. Information provided by individuals' helps local emergency management planners and responders identify the needs in their community. Registration in STEAR will also give participants easier access to Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). WEA is part of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) that FEMA rolled out in 2012.

Thirdly, participants will learn about and receive the SAFELY OUT kit. The "SAFELY OUT" kit was developed by Citizen Voice in partnership with the American Red Cross in Sacramento, California. The SAFELY OUT kits are designed to assist anyone who may have difficulty safely evacuating should the need arise. They enable easy access to critical emergency information along with a leave-behind alert system that allows the person to call for help and then notifies relatives and first responders where that person has been evacuated to.

**Describe what makes your program, initiative, or activity innovative.**

Barriers to disaster preparedness and evacuation create a critical need to implement innovative interventions that provide alternatives to hard-to-reach populations. The need for innovative evidence-based practices that reduce access barriers and improve disaster preparedness of individuals with disabilities has been highlighted as priorities of both FEMA and the National Council on Disability (NCD). According to FEMA and NCD, individuals with significant disabilities and functional needs are critically under-represented in community disaster preparedness programs. This project will bridge the community preparedness gap, for the first time enabling Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs as well as their families and caregivers to work in collaboration with emergency management and first responders to build a more resilient and prepared community.

In response to the strong demand for community preparedness and resiliency, this project takes a holistic approach by involving all key community stakeholders to achieve the project goals and objectives. This project will engage Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs, emergency management and first responders, and disability management professionals to strengthen the community's ability to respond to the needs of residents before, during and after a disaster. Through disaster preparedness education and preparedness resource distribution, this project will enable the efficient and effective use of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR),

SAFELY OUT kits, and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) to identify community disaster needs and increase community resiliency to disasters.

**Work Plan:**

**Implementation plans:**

**Describe how the project will be carried out. You should list any specific steps you will take.**

The Collin County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will lead and implement the current project. The Collin County MRC will be responsible for project coordination, supervision and oversight, delivery of educational trainings on SAFELY OUT, the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR), SAFELY OUT kits, and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), distribution of SAFELY OUT kits, development and administration of evaluation tools, and facilitate cross-functional cooperation among project participants and agencies. With the help of the Disability Advisory Committee, the Collin County MRC will foster communication between Collin County residents with significant disabilities, first responders and disability service providers to successfully achieve the project goals and objectives.

**List your project timeline.**

**March 2-20, 2015**

1. Advisory Committee formation - Letter of invitation to participate on advisory committee developed and finalized, Identification of contacts and potential committee members, Invitation to participate sent to potential participants, Participant responses returned.
2. Training locations identified and reserved throughout cities in Collin County (Plano, Wylie/Lucas, Allen, McKinney, Frisco, Melissa/Anna, Princeton/Farmersville, Celina/Prosper, Nevada/Josephine).
3. Resident, First Responder and Disability Management Professional Training schedules finalized and published through multiple media outlets and Disability Advisory Committee publishes and distributes training schedule in their organizations.
4. Pre- and post-knowledge training surveys developed and finalized. Training satisfaction survey developed and finalized.

**March 25, 2015**

Monthly Disability Advisory Committee meetings begin which will be held on the last Wednesday of every month.

**April 1, 2015 – March 1, 2016**

1. Resident, First Responder and Disability Management Professional trainings conducted. SAFELY OUT kits are distributed during resident trainings to Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs. Pre- and post-evaluation surveys and training satisfaction surveys administered during each training.
2. Implementation effectiveness monitored by collecting and analyzing process measure results on a monthly basis.
3. Outcome measure data collected through pre- and post-evaluation surveys and training satisfaction surveys are maintained and responses entered into database.

#### February 2016

1. Analyze outcome measure results by conducting descriptive and statistical analysis on outcome data.
2. Final report prepared for funding agency.
3. Project results published and presented to stakeholders, participants, and national MRC.

#### **What are your sustainability plans for your project?**

The holistic design of this project which engages Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs, emergency management and first responders, and disability management professionals as well as project coordination and implementation by the Collin County MRC are the project's key to long-term sustainability. The foundation and primary support of this project is through the Collin County MRC which will be leading this project every step of the way. This project takes an innovative approach to securing long-term sustainability through stakeholder involvement with the formation of the Disability Advisory committee. While the Disability Advisory committee will not be involved in the direct implementation of the project, one goal of the Disability Advisory committee will be to generate community support among their respective organizations within the Collin County community. As FEMA and the National Council on Disability have pointed out, individuals with significant disabilities and functional needs are critically under-represented in community disaster preparedness programs. Community involvement and support that focuses on meeting the preparedness and evacuation needs of individuals with significant disabilities is one of the primary solutions to long-term community disaster preparedness and resilience.

Additionally, this project is designed to not just reach and target Collin County residents with significant disabilities but also Collin County emergency management and first responders. Up-to-date information on community needs during a disaster is the key to preparing, responding, and recovering from a

disaster or emergency event. This projects incorporation of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR), SAFELY OUT and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) ensures that there will be long-term benefits to all of the Collin County community.

**Budget:**

**Detailed line item budget of your estimated program costs.**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit Rate</b>	<b>Line Total</b>
<i>SAFELY OUT kits</i>	<i>Distribute to Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional needs</i>	<i>1,450</i>	<i>\$10.00</i>	<i>\$14,500</i>
<i>SAFELY OUT kit shipping cost</i>	<i>Cost to ship SAFELY OUT kits to Collin County MRC (100 kits per shipping box)</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>\$33.33</i>	<i>\$500</i>
<b><i>Total for Supplies</i></b>				<b><i>\$15,000</i></b>

**Evaluation:**

**Describe how you will obtain and report data, as well as measure your project's success and community impact.**

The Collin County MRC will evaluate the effectiveness of this project by utilizing both process measures and outcome measures. Process measures are designed to evaluate the implementation of the project and the outcome measures are designed to evaluate the effect of the project. Process data will be collected and monitored throughout the project implementation. Short-term outcome data will be collected through the use of pre- and post-surveys at each resident, first responder and disability management professional training session. A formal pre- and post-survey will be developed during the first month of project implementation to measure participant knowledge acquisition. A training satisfaction survey will also be developed during the first month of project implementation. Results of this project will be published in the Collin County MRC newsletter and website, Monthly TALON MRC meetings, and a final year-end report. Individuals who participated in the training sessions and those individuals who registered in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) will receive a copy of the project results via email or mail. Results of this project will be presented to city officials and emergency management officials at public city council meetings throughout Collin County. Project

results will also be presented to the disability management professional community via local conference or webinar.

**Consider:**

**What evaluation tools will you be implementing to measure success?**

*Process data* to be collected include: Number of trainings conducted, Are educational materials and preparedness resources distributed during each session, Number of SAFELY OUT kits distributed, Number of 72-hour disaster preparedness kits distributed, Number of training sessions that reference and discuss benefits of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR), Number of training sessions that reference and discuss benefits of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), Collin County residents with significant disabilities and functional identified and located using GIS.

A formal pre- and post-survey will be developed during the first month of project implementation to measure participant knowledge acquisition. A training satisfaction survey will also be developed during the first month of project implementation. *Outcome data* will be collected through the administration of formal surveys during each training session and include: Knowledge and attitude about personal disaster preparedness by residents with disabilities, Knowledge about content and use of SAFELY OUT kits by residents with disabilities, Knowledge about the benefits of STEAR registry and WEA, Number of residents with disabilities registered in STEAR, Knowledge of first responders and service providers about how to serve residents with disabilities in an emergency, Knowledge of services providers about how to outfit facility to be disaster prepared.

**How will success be defined for this project?**

Success of this project will be defined by the projects ability to meet and achieve the project goals and objectives. Analysis of process and outcome data will determine if the project was able to: Increase awareness of the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR); Increase Collin County's disability and functional needs population registration using STEAR; Increase the knowledge of Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs on how to prepare for a disaster; Implement the SAFELY OUT program among Collin County first responders and disability and functional needs population; Improve the ability of responders to meet the needs of residents with significant disabilities and functional needs during an emergency; Increase access of residents with significant disabilities and functional needs to Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). Long-term success of this project will be defined by Collin County's resilience to disasters and response to disasters through: Resource

distribution plans are implemented during an event; STEAR registry used for distributing supplies prior to an event to Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs; Number of STEAR registered residents with significant disabilities and functional needs located and served during an event; Number of Collin County's residents with significant disabilities and functional needs that use the SAFELY OUT kit during a disaster or emergency event.