# Building Relationships with Local Emergency Management

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**Identify**
- Start with your State Emergency Management & Response Agency, then find city, county/parish agencies.
- Locate volunteer agencies i.e., VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters), CERT (Certified Emergency Response Team), LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee), Red Cross, Salvation Army, faith based and non government organizations.
- Find out who your Disability Integration Advisor is with FEMA
- Compile a list

**Get Acquainted**
- Review available information for each identified agency to determine their set up & operation, including, and especially, how they handle emergencies for people with disabilities
- Tap into any social media offered, facebook, newsletters, list serves, twitter and others and sign up to receive any alerts and information
- Contact each by phone or email & schedule a casual meeting (lunch, coffee) w/ the Director or their designee
- Attend training sessions offered by the agency

**Schedule Meetings**
- Determine if the entities have regularly scheduled meetings and/or task forces you can be involved in
- Let them know how they can become actively involved in your CIL or SILC
- Determine if they offer emergency preparedness/response training & how the CIL/people w/ disabilities can get involved

**Get Involved**
- To ensure disability inclusion: Take any training they offer to the public and attend meetings and conferences when possible
- Participate in training offered by your state EMA or FEMA to learn more about various topics
- Offer training to them that the CIL provides, i.e., disability awareness & inclusion

**Get to Work!**
- If an appropriate committee does not already exist to ensure that people with disabilities are being well served and included in disaster preparation and response, discuss the creation of such a committee with these agencies and get it started.
- YOUR GOAL: People with disabilities have a voice within the emergency responder community in your area!