

## Questions and Answers

1. Are there regulations regarding clients with dementia?
  - a. Clients with mild to moderate dementia as specified in Florida statute, are appropriate for Special Needs Shelters. Worth knowing moderate clients can be confused by crowding and noise and unfamiliarity with shelter location.
  - b. Quieter areas in the shelter should be identified and used, if space available.
  - c. No regulation for separate facility or rooms.
  - d. Often, shelters do not have staff or capability to handle each of those patients diagnosed as having “mild to moderate” cognitive impairment.
  - e. FL Statute 381.0303(3) – All special needs shelters must establish designated shelter areas for persons with Alzheimer’s disease or related forms of dementia to enable those persons to maintain their normal habits and routines to the greatest extent possible. ([http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.0303.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.0303.html))
2. Federal and state laws and service animals:
  - a. Consult the Americans with Disability Act ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov))
  - b. FL Statute 418
3. If a disability advocate shows up at a shelter, what should the response be?
  - a. If an advocate shows up, most likely someone has contacted the agency and submitted a complaint.
  - b. Agency will show up, present credentials, and work to resolve issues.
  - c. Agency will report to Shelter Unit Leader and introduce themselves.
  - d. If an allegation is related to abuse, Disability Rights Florida does not need permission to enter. Federal regulation allows entrance.
  - e. Emergency Management DEM controls access to shelters via deputy sheriffs. Access may not be permitted due to safety concerns. Depends on purpose of visit.
  - f. Main goal is to protect those clients in shelters.
  - g. Access to shelters is a local issue, should be worked out locally.
4. If there is a client in a shelter that needs a place to go, can Disability Rights Florida be contacted for assistance in placing the client?
  - a. Cash assistance cannot be provided.
  - b. A list of referrals is available on the Disability Rights Florida website.
5. Is there anything that states how many service animals each client may bring to a shelter?
  - a. If each service animal provides a specific function, all must be allowed.
6. What can counties use as a quick reference guide?
  - a. Information is broken down by issue and posted on the Disability Rights Florida website. Most questions can be answered by reading through the disaster preparedness section on the Disability Rights Florida website.
7. Can you explain how Disability Rights Florida works with FEMA?
  - a. When a disaster is declared, FEMA contacts Disability Rights Florida to designate a point of contact.

- b. Disability Rights Florida one of several organizations that assist with locating local resources.
- 8. Who can be contacted about ADA issues?
  - a. Each county has an ADA coordinator.
  - b. Sometimes school districts have ADA coordinators.
  - c. Disability Rights Florida can conduct research if a specific county is seeking additional support, or if a citizen has a question.
  - d. The Governor's Office also has a coordinator.
- 9. Resources for those with vision or hearing loss:
  - a. Federation for The Blind ([www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org))
  - b. Some community resources include equipment loan processes to assist in communicating with clients.
    - i. Hearing devices MAY BE available on loan
    - ii. Centers for Independent Living, or FFAST  
(<http://www.floridacils.org/LocateYourLocalCIL.html>)
    - iii. Catholic Charities (<https://catholiccharitiesusa.org/find-help>)
- 10. Are there any other options for communicating with blind clients, especially as it pertains to the SpNs Registry?
  - a. Email
  - b. Phone
  - c. Text messages
  - d. Clients should identify the best way to contact them.
  - e. If attempts are made to make contact., suggest documenting those attempts.

**Disability Rights Florida**  
800-342-0823  
[www.DisabilityRightsFlorida.org](http://www.DisabilityRightsFlorida.org)  
  
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