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AB-1069 Older adults: emergency shelters. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 1069

CHAPTER 445

An act to add Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 9860) to Division 8.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to aging.

[Approved by Governor October 07, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 07, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1069, Bains. Older adults: emergency shelters.

Under existing law, the Department of Rehabilitation is required to provide various services, including independent living services, to eligible individuals with physical or mental disabilities. Existing law provides for the operation of independent living centers (ILCs), which are private, nonprofit organizations that provide specified services to individuals with disabilities, in order to assist those individuals in their attempts to live fuller and freer lives outside institutions.

Existing law, the Mello-Granlund Older Californians Act, establishes various programs that serve older individuals. The act requires the California Department of Aging to designate various private nonprofit or public agencies as area agencies on aging (AAAs) to work within a planning and service area and provide a broad array of social and nutritional services.

The act also establishes Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) programs to provide information to consumers and their families on available long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs, with assistance to older adults, caregivers, and persons with disabilities in accessing LTSS programs at the local level. Under the act, AAAs and ILCs are the core local partners in developing ADRC programs.

Existing law sets forth various provisions relating to emergency shelters, including, among others, the California Emergency Services Act. Under that act, the State Emergency Plan is the official document approved by the Governor that describes the principles and methods to be applied in carrying out emergency operations or rendering mutual aid during emergencies. Existing law requires the Office of Emergency Services to update the State Emergency Plan on or before January 1, 2019, and every 5 years thereafter. Existing law authorizes the Governor to assign to a state agency any activity concerned with the mitigation of the effects of an emergency of a nature related to the existing powers and duties of that agency.

This bill would, as part of disaster planning and response, require a representative of the county welfare director, in coordination with the lead local agency designated with sheltering support duties under the State Emergency Plan Emergency Support Functions, to initiate a memorandum of understanding with an AAA, an ILC, or an ADRC program to allow access by the AAA, the ILC, or the ADRC program to an emergency shelter, as defined, established for evacuation purposes during an active event, in order to ensure that older adults and persons with disabilities receive continuous services and necessary support. By creating new duties for local officials, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 9860) is added to Division 8.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

CHAPTER 15. Disaster Planning and Response

9860. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Emergency shelter" means a facility established to provide temporary refuge and essential services to individuals displaced by emergencies or disasters.

(b) "State Emergency Plan" has the same meaning as set forth in Section 8560 of the Government Code.

9861. As part of disaster planning and response, a representative of the county welfare director, in coordination with the lead local agency designated with sheltering support duties under the State Emergency Plan Emergency Support Functions, shall initiate a memorandum of understanding with an area agency on aging (AAA), an independent living center (ILC), or an Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program to allow access by the AAA, the ILC, or the ADRC program to an emergency shelter established for evacuation purposes during an active event, in order to ensure that older adults and persons with disabilities receive continuous services and necessary support.

SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.