



**Funded by  
the European Union**

## **Vision Disability**

A person who is blind or has reduced vision may have difficulty reading signs or moving through unfamiliar environments during an emergency. They may feel lost and/or dependent on others for guidance.

### **Emergency plan for a person with Vision Disability**

- Have a longer white cane available to readily manoeuvre around obstacles (there may be debris on the floor or furniture may have shifted).

- Familiarize yourself in advance with all escape routes and locations of emergency doors/exits on each floor of any building where you work, live and visit.

- Identify all emergency supplies in advance with fluorescent tape, large print or Braille text, such as gas, water and electric shutoff valves.

## - Recommended Additional Items Checklist

- Large print timepiece with extra batteries

- Extra white cane, preferably longer in length

- Extra vision aids such as an electronic travel aid, monocular, binocular or magnifier

- Talking or Braille clock

- Extra pair of prescription glasses (if applicable)

- Any reading devices / assistive technology to access information or portable CCTV devices

# Assisting a person with a Vision Disability – what to do

- For people who are deaf-blind, draw an "X" on their back with your finger to let them know you can help them.
- To communicate with someone who is deaf-blind, trace letters in their hand with your finger.
- To guide a person, keep half a step ahead, offer them your arm and walk at their pace.
- Do not shout at a person who is blind or has reduced vision. Speak clearly and provide specific directions.
- Provide advance warning of upcoming stairs, major obstacles or changes in direction.
- Watch for obstacles that the person could walk into.
- Never grab a person with vision loss, unless it is a matter of life or death.
- Do not assume that the person cannot see you.
- Avoid the term "over there"; describe positions such as, "to your right / left / straight ahead / behind you", or by using the clock face positions (i.e., the exit is at 12 o'clock).
- If the person has a service animal on duty, ask them where you should walk to avoid distracting the animal. Do not separate the service animal from its owner.

