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California Commission on Aging

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California Commission on Aging Releases New Policy Brief on Disaster Response and Recovery for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The California Commission on Aging (CCoA) announced the release of a new policy brief summarizing key findings and recommendations from its report, *Rebuilding Lives: Disaster Response and Recovery for Older Adults and People with Disabilities in California*. The policy brief is now available on the [Commission's website](#) and provides actionable guidance to improve emergency response and long-term recovery for older Californians affected by natural disasters.

The policy brief builds on the full report, which was formally presented by CCoA Chair David Lindeman, PhD, on **November 5, 2025**, at the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging Annual Conference. The report and brief were developed in response to the significant and well-documented disproportionate impact disasters have on older adults and people with disabilities—populations that face higher fatality rates and substantial challenges in rebuilding their lives.

The brief outlines **eleven recommendations** spanning:

- **State administrative actions**
- **Local administrative actions**
- **Statutory or budgetary changes**

These recommendations offer practical goals for policymakers, emergency planners, aging and disability service providers, advocates, and community partners committed to reducing risk and improving disaster recovery outcomes for vulnerable Californians.

Both the report and the policy brief draw on expert testimony from **Recovering Together**, an informational hearing held by CCoA on May 22, 2025, at the Braille Institute in Los Angeles. The hearing brought together leaders in aging and disability services, emergency response officials, county agencies, nonprofit service providers, and individuals with lived experience to examine the challenges arising during the January 2025 Los Angeles wildfires—including the Eaton and Palisades fires. Their insights informed CCoA's analysis of systemic barriers and opportunities for improving resilience.



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CCoA encourages agencies, organizations, and community partners across California to review and share the new policy brief. Its recommendations provide timely, targeted guidance for strengthening the state's preparedness as California's aging population grows and climate-related disasters escalate in frequency and severity.

As the state's principal advocacy body for older adults, the California Commission on Aging advises state leaders, legislators, and governmental agencies on policies and programs that promote fairness, autonomy, choice, and dignity for all older Californians.

The policy brief and full report are available at ccoa.ca.gov.