

Minutes
[Advisory Board on the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)
10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 22, 2017
Community Court
80 Washington Street, Hartford, CT

In Attendance: Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll, Chair; Ms. Isabel Alvarez, Atty. Mark Ciarcello. Ms. Doreen Del Bianco, Mr. Charles Epstein, Atty. Maureen Finn, Ms. Kathleen Gensenheimer, Ms. Kristen Gianonio, Atty. Paul S. Hartan, Mr. Michael Hines, Ms. Laura Jovino, Atty. Viviana Livesay, Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines, Atty. Deirdre McPadden, Atty. Jessie Opinion, Atty. Lori Petruzzelli, Ms. Mary Sitaro, Atty. Tom Smith, Atty. Cynthia Theran.

Also present: Attorney Joseph D. D'Alesio; Ms. Heather Collins, Mr. Daniel Irace, Ms. Regina Picard.

- I. Welcome:** Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll III welcomed the members, and thanked Atty. Finn for her years of service to the Board. He also welcomed Atty. Petruzzelli from the Legal Services unit, who will be working with Atty. Livesay on ADA issues on Atty. Finn's retirement. Judge Carroll also welcomed Atty. Hartan, Chief Administrative Officer of the Supreme and Appellate courts and new ADA Contact and Board member, and Atty. Opinion, who will replace Atty. Smith as the Appellate Court Contact and Advisory Board member, on Atty. Smith's retirement later this spring.
- II. Approval of the Draft Minutes** of the September 2016 Meeting: The minutes were approved without changes.
- III. Discussion of Annual Report goals**, by Division:

The members discussed a variety of potential goals for submission to Chief Justice Rogers to be included in the Annual Report.

 - A. Administrative Services:** Ms. Gensheimer told the Board that the Division would like to begin the process of creating ADA training for Judicial Branch supervisors on their rights under Title I of the Act. The Branch complies with Title I, which "*prohibits private employers, State and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating*

against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.” Ms. Gensheimer will be forming a subcommittee to help develop the training. Board members were invited to volunteer.

- Ms. Jovino told the Board that the Administrative Division has requested a specific budgetary amount to address the physical accessibility of Juror areas, including Jury Assembly rooms and restrooms, in the Branch’s six most-used Jury areas.
- Walkability from jury and courthouse parking, including areas that do not have court-specific parking, will be assessed with the assistance of the Branch’s Access to Facilities Workgroup and District Liaisons across the state. The information (specific directions, estimated distances) will be posted on the Directions pages for each Judicial District.

B. **Court Support Services:** Ms. Alvarez told the Board that the Division is considering offering its staff the option to complete an online training, “*ADA Basic Building Blocks*,” developed by the ADA National Network. Currently, CSSD has a requirement that its division employees complete two hours of ADA training annually; many attend the Branch’s “Nuts & Bolts of the ADA,” a Superior Court Operations-developed 2.5-hour training, and some have attended the 2-hour “Popcorn & Possibilities” training. The CSSD members will meet with ADA office staff to discuss providing assistance with co-facilitating the training.

C. **External Affairs:** Ms. Del Bianco reported that External Affairs as part of its Speakers bureau outreach, will advertise the availability of Judicial Branch ADA experts to address community groups.

D. **Information Technology:** Ms. Sitaro said that the Judicial Branch is seeking a Request for Information (RFI) on providing access to audio recordings to external stakeholders, via audio-streaming of recordings

made on the Branch's digital audiorecording system. The RFI is due in early April.

E. Superior Court Operations:

- The Branch should consider the feasibility of using videoconferencing for some routine appearances. Attorneys Livesay and Petruzzelli told the Board they will research options and report back.
- The Branch should reassess its ADA internet homepage for reader usability/intuitiveness. A review of the Victims Services webpage (<http://www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim/index.html#FAQs>) and the Family Services homepage (<http://www.jud.ct.gov/CSSD/family-faq.htm>) may serve to guide the review. If possible, the webpages should also be made available in Spanish, Polish, and Portuguese. An emphasis should be made to use Plain Language principles.
- Online forms should be checked for Section 508 accessibility and new forms should be developed using this accessibility standard. This should be a joint Court Ops/IT division recommendation/undertaking.
- Instructional videos on how to use ADA auxiliary aids, including FM kits, , and pocket talkers, should be made to teach Branch staff to properly use the equipment.
- The Branch should consider developing or expanding its Speaker Series, featuring experts on disability rights, people with disabilities, and trending ADA issues.

IV. Sign language Interpreter Update: Ms. Lugo-Ginés told the Board that there are now three sign language vendors contracted with the Judicial Branch to provide these services.

V. Schedule next meeting: Judge Carroll thanked the Board for its work and noted that the Judicial Branch continues its compliance with both the mandates and the spirit of the ADA as both a Title I and Title II entity. He noted that every Division has a commitment to ensuring that the administrative processes which govern the

application of the ADA, to ensure equal access to justice for all people. The Board will reconvene in late May or early June to finalize the report to the Chief Justice. A Meeting Notice will be publicly noticed on the Board's homepage, http://www.jud.ct.gov/Committees/pst/Advisory_ADA/default.htm The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.