

**Minutes**  
**of**  
**The Connecticut Judicial Branch**  
**Advisory Board On The Americans with Disabilities Act**

**Tuesday, October 1, 2013**  
**225 Spring Street**  
**Wethersfield, CT**

**In attendance:** Judge Patrick L. Carroll, Chair; members: Atty. Stephen Ment, Atty. Mark Ciarciello, Atty. Tom Smith, Ms. Mary Sitaro, Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines, Atty. Deirdre McPadden, Atty. Eileen Condron, Ms. Christine Elkins.

**Members absent:** Atty. Cindy Theran, Atty. Pamela Meotti.

**Also present:** Atty. Joseph D. D'Alesio, Executive Director, Superior Court Operations Division; Atty. Maureen Finn, legal advisor to the Advisory Board; Ms. Heather Collins, support staff to the Board; Mr. Daniel Irace, Court Operations.

- I. Welcome:** Judge Carroll called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and thanked the members for attending. Ms. Lugo-Gines introduced Mr. Irace to the Board; Mr. Irace is joining the Executive Director's staff to assist her with ADA accommodations for the public.
- II. Approval of June 18, 2013 Draft Minutes:** The Minutes were provided to the members prior to review at the meeting. Atty. Ment made a motion, seconded by Ms. Elkins, to approve the minutes, which was further approved by Judge Carroll, Atty. Ciarciello, Atty. Smith, Ms. Sitaro, Ms. Lugo-Gines, Atty. McPadden, and Atty. Condron.
- III. Discussion and Prioritization** of the Recommendations of the [Board's first Annual Report](#) to Chief Justice Rogers:
  - **Website:** Ms. Sitaro and Ms. Lugo-Gines: The Judicial Branch continues to ensure that its webpages are ADA accessible, and in working with Information Technology Staff on using accessibility design methods. This initiative is ongoing.
  - **Online Resource Information:** The internal Web Board has agreed to work with the Board to develop an ADA resource page. Examples of resources include Executive Branch agencies, but also legal information and other resources available to the public. Atty. McPadden will work with her Law Librarians and staff to review the Law Libraries pages for helpful ADA information and resources, and submit them to the ADA Advisory Board

for review and inclusion on the proposed Resources page. This initiative will be updated at the next Board meeting in December.

- Signage: Atty. Ment said that four local ADA Contact people will serve on an internal localized signage workgroup in the Litchfield Judicial District. The Contacts will be looking for ADA-related signage. The workgroup's assessment is expected to take some months, but an update will be provided at the December Board meeting.
- Training: Ms. Lugo-Gines and Atty. McPadden noted that the Branch received a grant from the federal Strategic Justice Institute to provide more than two dozen classes on "Successful Interactions with People with Hidden Disabilities." Instruction began in September and will continue through 2014. The class is open to every Judicial Branch staff member. Ms. Lugo-Gines also continues to work with JD Chief Clerks to bring personalized training to Branch staff at locations across the state. These nuts-and-bolts information sessions are open to all staff, regardless of division, and have been well attended. They will continue to be ongoing as time allows. Branch staff also has access to online training through the internal Learning Management System.
- Audio Delivered Information: This idea is still in its infancy; Ms. Lugo-Gines will do outreach to the IT Division to ascertain its feasibility of audio recording one or two basic ADA procedures or FAQs and posting to the website. This will assist readers with low or no vision, and people with low literacy skills.
- ADA accommodations at meetings that are open to the public: Ms. Collins included the notice on the Board's Meeting Notice, with contact information for the public. She will contact support staff at active Branch committees, commissions and workgroups that they too should provide this additional information, even though requests for accommodation can be made at any time to any local Contact person.
- ADA Notice on Branch forms: After discussion about various options, it was agreed that the Branch should, through either the Legal Services Unit or the Web Board, post on the top of the official Internet *Forms* page the general ADA Notice of Accommodation. The Notice is included on forms as they come for revision or are created; providing the Notice on the page in general is an additional step to notifying the public on how to ask for an accommodation.
- Plain Language: This is a generally accepted principle for the Branch with respect to public documents and forms.
- ADA Information in other languages: The Branch's internal review board, that screens requests for official Branch document translation into languages other than English, has received this request for the [Guide to Understanding the ADA \(JDP-ES-284\)](#). The request is in line with other forms and publications.

- Commentary and feedback: The Board earlier this year posted a Notice seeking commentary and feedback in anticipation of its report. In its report the members recommended that such a feedback forum be made permanent. Atty. Finn and Atty. Viviana Livesay will work to create an ongoing Notice that will be posted on the ADA Home Page. Comments must be non-case-related and/or non-case-specific. It is anticipated that this Notice will be posted before the end of this year.
  - Outreach: Continues to ADA Contacts and Branch staff in general through an electronic newsletter to the Contacts.
- IV.** Updates from members on status of wheelchair policy: Wheelchairs are an item or device of a personal nature and are not required to be provided to the public under Title II. However, incarcerated defendants who are in the custody and care of the Judicial Branch are subject to other protections than Title II. The Legal Services Unit is working to establish a policy that addresses this. An update will follow in December.
- V.** Schedule next meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, December 12 at 2 p.m. in the Bridgeport juvenile facility. A notice and agenda will be posted closer to the date.
- VI.** Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.