

## **Minutes**

### Advisory Board on the Americans with Disabilities Act

**11:00 a.m.**

**Tuesday, February 2, 2021**

**Remote Conferencing via Teams**

**Members present:** The Hon. Patrick L. Carroll III, Chief Court Administrator, Chair, Atty. Brittany Kaplan, Atty. Carl D. Cicchetti, Mr. Charles Epstein, Ms. Kathleen Gensheimer, Ms. Laura Jovino, Ms. Sandra Lugo Gines, Mr. Michael Hines, Atty. Deirdre McPadden, Atty. Cynthia Theran.

**Others present:** Atty. Tais Ericson, Atty. Lori Petruzzelli, Atty. Viviana Livesay, Atty. Stephen Ment, Atty. Richard Loffredo, Ms. Heather Collins, Ms. Allison Gill, Ms. Regina Picard.

- I. **Welcome:** Board Chair, Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll III: Judge Carroll welcomed the members, guests and support staff, and noted the importance of the ADA to the Branch. The global pandemic has created a number of challenges to court operations over the last 11 months, he said, and the Branch has worked diligently to ensure continued compliance with the Act.
- II. **Approval of the Draft Minutes of the May 2019 Meeting:** A motion was made to approve the draft minutes of the Board's last in-person meeting and was seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously without change.
- III. **Discussion and Approval of the Draft 2019—2020 Report of the ADA Advisory Board and Division Report-outs:** A draft copy of the Advisory Board's annual report was circulated to members prior to the meeting. Due to the pandemic, the annual report was made a biennial report covering the Board's oversight in 2019 and 2020. The members discussed their respective Division highlights, as well as overall Branch actions in support of the ADA, including:
  - **Training:** Hundreds of Branch employees across all five divisions were trained in the biennia, and mandatory ADA-related training has now been completed by all Branch staff. Additionally, all new employees must complete a course on ADA basics within 3 months of hire. Additional online courses will be developed in the coming year.

- **Facilities:** Improvements to juror bathrooms in six judicial districts were completed, and two employee bathrooms were updated in 2019-2020. Five additional districts are expected to be assessed in 2021-2022, with remediation plans developed.
- **Legal Services:** Processes for non-party support persons were expanded to allow for this accommodation in remote proceedings.
- **Technology:** Many processes have been expanded to include access by telephonic and/or videoconferencing as a result of the pandemic, which has had the benefit of improving access to people with disabilities. (Judge Carroll noted that the Judicial Branch has now begun livestreaming certain civil processes.) That has included securing certain remote auxiliary services.
- The Draft Report was amended and approved as amended, unanimously by the Board, and will be posted to the Board's website.

IV. **Next Meeting:** A meeting will be scheduled at a later date. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.