

## ADA Focus Group 2– December 11, 2008

	BARRIERS	IMPACTS	SUGGESTIONS
<b>Fundamental need to make the Judicial Branch open and understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metal detectors can frighten people, particularly those with mental illness</li> <li>• Stigma based on perceptions and stereotyping</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of mental illness by Public Defenders and judges and all court staff</li> <li>• Attitudinal barriers</li> <li>• Believe people with mental disease are dangerous</li> <li>• Assumptions by the hearing population (about the deaf and HOH)</li> <li>• Sensitivity awareness, knowledge of issues, uniformity of accommodation training needed for all: Judges, lawyers, marshals, front-line staff</li> <li>• No “passive” learning for deaf population</li> <li>• Cultural differences</li> <li>• Lengthy delays causes waiting, and some cannot cope</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one wants to participate</li> <li>• Difficulty understanding and functioning and participating</li> <li>• People feeling excluded and isolated</li> <li>• High stress</li> <li>• Giving up: unwillingness and/or inability to participate</li> <li>• Giving up rights</li> <li>• Violation of rights</li> <li>• Vulnerable population is (re)victimized by judicial process</li> <li>• Lumping people together, and making assumptions</li> <li>• Cyclical/snowball effect</li> </ul>	<p><b>*NOTE: THIS GROUP SAID THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS ARE UNIVERSAL AND APPLICABLE TO ALL OF THE BARRIERS AND IMPACTS THAT THEY IDENTIFIED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a “tool box” for accommodation</li> <li>• Training to understand the Judicial Branch is not the expert in accommodation</li> <li>• Ask the individual FIRST what they DO or DON’T need</li> <li>• Provide resources when requested</li> <li>• ADA coordinator for the Branch</li> <li>• Training of Judicial Branch staff to help them understand that ADA requirements are the law, and not “special treatment”</li> <li>• Find out at the start of the dialogue what accommodations may be necessary, to prevent delays</li> <li>• Allow a third person—a non-party to the action—to attend proceedings to support the participant Make it easier to request assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Communication improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and access compromised</li> <li>• Language differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impedes justice</li> <li>• Court doesn’t get the full story</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess what the Judicial Branch is doing right: i.e., Mental Health Probation Officers—so that they don’t</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate auxiliary aids</li> <li>• Time issues</li> <li>• Lack of clarity of written materials</li> <li>• Limited communication resources: i.e., CART, ASL, etc.</li> <li>• No passive learning (the deaf don't have the benefit of passively learning, i.e. television, background talking, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inaccurate story or version of events</li> </ul>	<p>have to reinvent the wheel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a team of ADA-knowledgeable people at every site who know how to provide appropriate services</li> <li>• Designate ADA “point persons” and make it known to the public</li> <li>• Develop a common understanding of day-to-day needs</li> <li>• ADA Coordinators should be empowered to act autonomously</li> <li>• ADA advocates similar to Victim Advocates</li> <li>• Regularly monitor ADA compliance from the top down: From behaviors to facilities</li> <li>• Ensure Civil Court also adheres to ADA laws and regulations</li> <li>• Understanding, through training, that aids used by persons with disabilities—whether it's a cane, a service animal, etc.—that those aids are an extension of that individual</li> <li>• Create an ADA Advisory Board to the Branch</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of adequate support systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in ability to cognitively process information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impedes justice</li> <li>• Court doesn't get the full</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehension ability</li> <li>• Lack of one-on-one support</li> <li>• Difficulty in understanding judicial process</li> <li>• Ability to prepare participant</li> <li>• Process can be overwhelming and confusing</li> <li>• Accommodation of support members</li> <li>• Lengthy delays in waiting, can't cope</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• story</li> <li>• Inaccurate story or version of events</li> </ul>

### Training Recommendations from the Focus Group:

1. Front-line people: Understanding differences regarding individuals with hearing impairments (i.e., hearing aids don't necessarily mean someone can hear)
2. Stigma training (etiquette/politeness)
3. Training on the range of abilities
4. Recognize issues but don't make assumptions
5. Don't generalize or try to apply a "one-size-fits-all solution"
6. Listen to the individual making the request: they are the expert about what they need.
7. Staff needs to be more helpful, more polite, and provide better customer service. "Curb the bad attitude," and provide more information about what to expect in court
8. Provide training about all different kinds of abilities
9. Train on consistency, from courthouse to courthouse, facility to facility, process to process
10. Train staff to be more helpful at the door and the clerks' offices
11. Recognize when assistance is actually needed
12. Soften the paramilitary approach of the marshals
13. Train staff to their specific role within the Branch (i.e. marshals at the door offering appropriate assistance, clerks' offices offering accommodations (such as larger-font copies)
14. Include trainers with differing abilities
15. Orientation video for new staff regarding the ADA and keep the orientation current and interesting
16. Annual training for all
17. Create an Advisory Board to the Branch comprised of people of differing abilities
18. Tap in to existing community resources for assistance and guidance