

Minutes
Americans with Disabilities Act Committee
Public Service and Trust Commission

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee met at 90 Washington Street, fourth floor conference room, Hartford, CT, on January 9, 2009.

In attendance: Sandra Lugo-Gines, Co-Chair, and Patrick Caron, Co-Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

1. The minutes from the November 14, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved by the Committee.
2. Discussion of results from the Focus Groups held on December 2, 11, and 18, 2008: The committee discussed the summary of its three focus groups. More than 20 people, including those with disabilities and those who advocate on behalf of people with disabilities, attended the groups, which were conducted, respectively, in East Hartford, Wethersfield, and Wethersfield. The Committee said a number of issues and concerns were raised by Focus Group attendees, many of whom recommended training for all Branch staff on issues ranging from etiquette to cultural sensitivity to understanding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The complete tabulations of the focus groups will be available online on the Committee's homepage of the Branch website. Some focus group participants suggested that the Branch consider reviewing or updating its auxiliary communication aids with more up-to-date equipment. The Committee co-chairs will schedule a visit to the New England Assistive Technology Resource & Education Center to investigate the availability and suitability of current adaptive technologies, and report back at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.
3. Update on ADA content for Judicial Branch internet Website: The Committee reported that photos and descriptions of all wheelchair access entrances to courthouse facilities have now been posted. The information can be accessed at the Branch's website by clicking on the "Court Directions and Phone Numbers" link on the left-hand side of the Branch homepage, and locating the appropriate Judicial District or Geographical Area facility.
4. Update on ADA link launch: The Information Technology Division is continuing Beta testing of the Committee's newly-created ADA link which

will appear on the Branch's homepage. The committee has created four pages for the initial ADA link: an overview, a list of Court Operations and Court Support Services Division ADA contact people, wheelchair access to court facilities (see No. 3 above), and currently available equipment and services. The Committee is also working with CSSD to determine wheelchair access to its facilities, and will include that information in the ADA wheelchair access link when it is completed by CSSD. Additionally, the Committee is developing a Frequently Asked Questions page for inclusion on the ADA page, and there was discussion on whether there should be a link specifically for jurors with disabilities. Finally, the Committee is looking at developing two additional ADA page links: requesting an accommodation, and filing a grievance. Both of those pages need to be written by Committee and assessed by the Branch's legal staff before being included on the ADA link. However, the initial ADA page will likely be before the end of January 2009, with or without the accommodation request and/or grievance link.

5. Schedule future meetings: To help insure that it is meeting its charge and making progress towards achieving full accessibility to its programs, services, and processes, the Committee will hear a presentation on developing performance measures from Branch program manager Steven Marhefsky at its next meeting on Friday, February 6, 2009, at 10 a.m. in the fourth-floor conference room at 90 Washington Street, Hartford, CT.